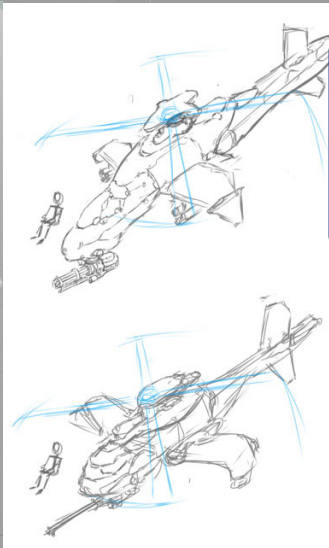
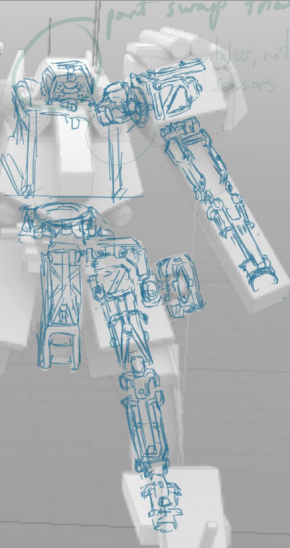
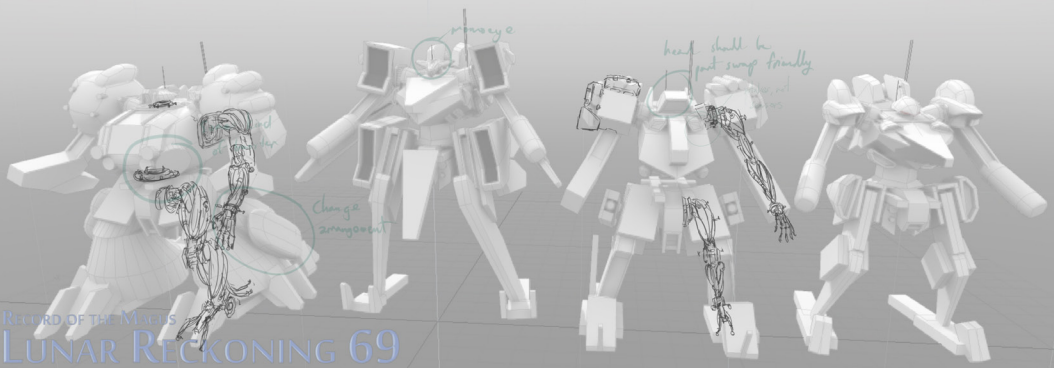
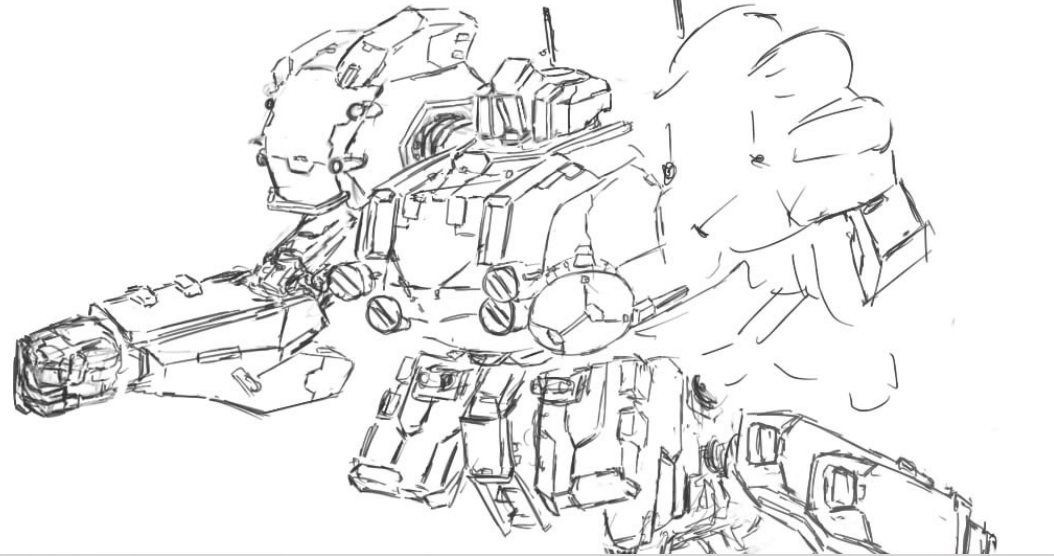


RECORD OF THE MAGUS

LUNAR RECKONING 69



Personal Skills
Beta 3 Test Version
January 2013





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Some content in this document was adapted from the work of Jim McGarva on *The Sacred BBQ*. This content was used with permission and is subject to change at any time.

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Personal Skills

Though you are all soldiers, there can and will always be a time when bringing a four metre humanoid war machine to the fore is inappropriate at best. For those times, be it gathering information on your next mission target, trying to find a supplier for parts and ammunition, or just a night at the pub gone wrong, you pull out your Personal Skills!

Essentially, **Personal Skills govern everything that the combat system does not**. This is when you get to play your character as a person with skills, interests, hopes, and dreams outside of the life of a Magus. Just pretending to be that other person for a while is how most of it goes, acting as you would in their shoes, reacting to the different situations the GM presents and helping make some of your own. When you don't know exactly what's going to happen next, you pull out your dice out and let fate — and your skills — decide the outcome.

Notes on the New Version

The new Personal Skills system is focused on **storytelling** and **quick play**, rather than simulation and complexity. Rather than taking a prescriptivist approach, with specific rules for each action taken and a list of skills to be chosen, this system glosses over the precise mechanics of a given action and focuses instead on what is important — the impact of success and failure on the narrative.

In addition, the Personal Skills system may be used **as much or as little as players wish**. The rules are flexible enough that **extended Personal Skill sessions** are possible, but they are also light enough to easily **get out of the way** if you would prefer to focus on combat as much as possible.

The new Personal Skills system contains no content from the older version and is **an adaptation of existing content by another author**, specifically the skills in the system *The Sacred BBQ* by Jim McGarva, with several modifications and changes. McGarva's content is **used with permission**. The original system was once described as a 'ten-page storygame with a grid', but a ten-page storygame is all that was really needed.

For more information, visit www.island3.com

Personal Skills Table

There is no degree of success with Personal Skills — you are either **Skilled** or **Unskilled**. This means that resolving Personal Skill checks is extremely simple. Just **roll 1d6** (one six-sided die), and check the Skilled or Unskilled column!

Roll on 1d6	Skilled	Unskilled
1	Twist	Twist, and gain a Personal Condition
2	Twist	Twist
3	Success, but gain a Personal Condition	Twist
4	Success	Success, but gain a Personal Condition
5	Success	Success
6	Success, and you gain a Bonus	Success, and you gain Skill Progress

As the table indicates, **Unskilled checks** have a **50% Success rate** by default, and **Skilled checks** have a **66% Success rate**. This Success rate can be modified by other factors, but even Unskilled checks have a relatively high rate of success. **This is a deliberate design decision**. This system does not concern itself with exactly how well-trained a person is or exactly how difficult a task is; instead, it focuses on generating interesting scenarios for the player characters to challenge.

Successes, Twists, and Personal conditions are described in later sections, but here's the short version for now: a **Success** is achieving whatever goal you set out for when rolling the skill, a **Twist** is when something goes wrong in some way as you try and complete your task, and a **Personal Condition** is a penalty to future rolls. **Skill Progress** lets you learn more skills, and a **Bonus** gives you a future advantage.

When to Use Skills

Most of the time, you can roleplay just by describing what you're doing — talking, putting around, doing routine maintenance or enjoying your time off the battlefield. When there is a **chance of failure and consequences for doing so**, a **time-sensitive situation**, or **forces opposing your actions**, you **roll Personal Skills**. You also roll Personal Skills when **fighting outside your APU**.

If there is no chance to fail an action, or no consequence for doing so, or when time is not a factor, **don't roll Personal Skills for that action!** Personal Skills are meant to **resolve difficult situations** — you shouldn't be rolling Personal Skills to find your lost car keys or buy cheap liquor.

Most skills can be rolled **Skilled** or **Unskilled**. In an age of ubiquitous information, most people can pick up a surprising number of tidbits, enough to try even dangerous tasks without being fully knowledgeable on the subject at hand...and sometimes, you might not have an option. Rather than outright declaring a skill can't be done, the GM should instead **use Advantage and Disadvantage**, described later, to discourage the untrained from trying brain surgery. (See *When Not To Use Skills* for more.)

The GM is perfectly within their rights to say a given action can't be attempted. While a permissive approach should be taken, sometimes your intent and task just won't line up the way you want. That said, **the GM must tell you this beforehand**, so that your victory is never taken away from you.

Of course, some groups may have their preferences. Some groups prefer to not use socially-oriented skills, others might want to not use skills at all and instead roleplay in a freeform fashion. Others still might want to use another system for non-combat situations, or even non-mechanized combat. **This is all perfectly acceptable!** There is no one way to play, and the Personal Skills system may be used or not, as you wish.

Example

In an ordinary situation, your typical party will not need to roll to repair their own APUs. Either they'll have mechanics working on their suits, or they won't have time pressure that matters to the narrative. However, if the party learns that their ship or base will be attacked in 24 hours, suddenly repair time becomes significant! Even a few wasted hours could be a huge blow to their defense, and that's when you pull out your repair Personal Skills.

Another time, you might end up in a situation where your APU can't move (due to losing all its Armor Points) and you have no recovery option. If you're in neutral or allied ground, a Personal Skill roll isn't necessary, and you can assume that you eventually get things working or some kind of evac. But if you're in hostile territory, suddenly failure has major consequences — who knows when the enemy will return? That's a great time to pull out the dice once again.

Advantage & Disadvantage

While the basic skill roll is easy to grasp, sometimes you need to take into account significant positive or negative circumstances. If you're heavily outnumbered or in over your head in some way, you're not really going to have the best chance of making it out alive. Sometimes, though, you'll hold all the cards! When there's significant factors working for or against you, that creates **Advantage** and **Disadvantage**.

The GM can **give out both Advantage and Disadvantage** based on the situation at hand, but usually, **only the latter should be a common factor**. Players have **several ways of gaining Advantage** and otherwise improving their rolls, so don't give away Advantage on a whim, unless the situation truly calls for it. Many specific rules grant Advantage or Disadvantage in certain situations.

When you have **Advantage**, you roll 2d6 and **take the highest result**. This changes your chance of Success to 75% on an Untrained check and 89% on a Trained check — giving you a major advantage in the former case and a near-guarantee in the latter.

When you have **Disadvantage**, you roll 2d6 and **take the lowest result**. This changes your chance of Success to 25% on an Untrained check and 44% on a Trained check; while not completely devastating, it's a significant reduction in either case.

Multiple sources of Advantage or Disadvantage do not stack. In addition, if you have **both Advantage and Disadvantage** at the same time, even if one has multiple sources, they **cancel one another out**, and you roll 1d6.

Regardless of whether you have Advantage or Disadvantage, rolling **two sixes** grants you **an additional Legend Die!** (See 'Legend Dice and Tricks') for what this grants you. While this isn't something to rely on, at a 1/36 chance, it can be a helpful bonus where it counts.

Sweet Success & Big Bonuses

When you roll a **Success**, you get just that. **Whatever you wanted to happen, happens.** You open the lock, you sweet-talk the enemy ace, you get your hands on the munitions you need. You have achieved your intent. The GM and other players can embellish the details, but they **may not take away your victory** — after all, if you were going to lose all along, why did you roll in the first place?

Even if you succeed, however, you may get into some trouble along the way. Sometimes, you may gain a **Personal Condition** when you succeed. This **doesn't take away your victory**, but it will make life a bit harder for a while.

If you're good enough at what you do, and luck favors you, sometimes you can even get more than you expected! If you are rolling Skilled and roll a 6, **you gain a Bonus.** A Bonus is **free Advantage for the character who got the Bonus on a future roll**, due to the circumstances of your Success. Maybe you made a new friend who has expert knowledge, maybe you get a few passwords for the corporate computers you need to place surveillance programs on, or maybe you got some special training you can recall at a vital moment.

The player who got the Bonus gets to decide what it is. The GM and other players can chime in if the idea is awkward, but the ultimate decision goes to the player. In addition, **the player may choose some intangible advantage instead**, if they wish, such as taking less time than expected with their task.

Example

Tears in Rain is using her Artificial Muscle Repair skill on the party's suits to get them ready for combat in time for the sortie. Because of the time-pressure, she's under extra risk, as each minute given to the enemy is another they have to gather intel and get reinforcements. Luckily, she rolls a 6 on her check, and thus succeeds on repairing the artificial muscle of the APUs within the requisite time frame.

In fact, for her Bonus, rather than gaining Advantage later, she declares that she finished the repair in record time! While not directly advantageous to any future rolls, the GM makes sure to take it into account when it comes time for combat to roll around...at least, assuming the rest of the repairs go off without a hitch.

Twists & Failures(?)

A **Twist** is just that — **something goes wrong**. A Twist is **not always a failure**; the GM is perfectly within his rights to decide that you succeeded at your intent! However, a twist **always changes the situation**. Suddenly, you've got something new to deal with, whether it be your gun jamming at an inopportune moment, your ex-wife serving you legal papers, or even your ship suddenly buckling and tipping over! **Whatever serves the story best — as long as there are consequences.**

LR69 is not concerned with granular success and failure per se. Sometimes, **failing just isn't very interesting**. If it's going to be a binary choice between succeeding and failing, why not just flip a coin? If failure doesn't matter, why did you bother rolling a skill at all?

Some Twists are **just failures**. This doesn't mean that the character can just try again without consequence (see 'Fun Once'), but they don't get what they want, and will have to take things on a different way. Oftentimes, a Twist is a **conditional success** — a jury-rigged repair which might fail at the worst possible time, a favor owed to a shady contractor, or something else that will go wrong at the worst possible moment!

Twists can be **big or small**. GMs are advised to use a mix of Twists — after all, you don't want big and dramatic shit happening every five seconds, otherwise it stops being big and dramatic. Similarly, if all your Twists are just little things, you lose the risk and the excitement, and everything becomes routine. Similarly, Twists should also be **a mix of failures and conditional successes**, depending on the task and the needs of the narrative. Sometimes, getting what you want at a cost is a harsher blow than failing outright.

The most important thing to keep in mind is that Twists are meant to **keep things interesting**. You're telling a story — and all the best stories have twists and turns, big and small. Just failing at something isn't very interesting — who wants to watch the hero fail at picking a lock, just to have them do it again without any consequences?

Make something happen! **Success is never as sweet without the chance for something going horribly wrong.**

Example

Let's continue following Tears as she now works on the ship's IWACS systems. While she has the right skills for the job, she rolls a 2 and incurs a Twist! The GM must now come up with something new to add to the story — and they decide, in this case, that Tears *successfully* fixed the system, but discovered along the way that there was a backdoor that left communications wide open! Even though Tears didn't fail the task, she now has a much bigger problem to deal with, as the party must now figure out who broke in, and secure their system against further threats.

In another scenario, Darker Star is trying to secure airspace clearance for the party's transport choppers, and negotiates with a local government official. He also rolls a 2, and this time, the GM decides that he fails on his task — the official he spoke to won't allow Darker Star to abuse his authority for the sake of his mission, and tells him that there will be no airspace clearance for him or anyone else speaking on his behalf! With this route cut off, the party now needs to figure out a new way of getting their suits off the ground.

Fun Once

The Twists mechanic is related to one very, very important rule — **you may only roll for a given task and intent once**. No matter what you were trying, you make no more than one roll for it, and then you're done, Success or Twist.

This applies to the GM as well. You roll once for a given task, no matter how complex the task is — if you're trying to sneak into a private party, you don't roll to sneak past the bouncer, then to sneak into the VIP lounge, then to sneak past your old flame. You roll once, and then if you get a Twist, the GM decides which of these people catches you in the act.

That's why we have Twists and not Failures. The idea is that a Twist **changes the situation** sufficiently that trying the same thing again isn't going to happen. Sometimes this is because **you had a conditional success** — you got what you wanted, sure, but now you need to deal with the consequences of it rather than trying to finish the job you botched. Other times, this is because **your Twist made your previous task moot** — who's going to stand around disassembling a computer terminal over and over until they succeed, when there are armed guards rushing your position? Still other times, the task is **naturally a one-time approach** — if you crash and burn while trying to impress a snobby Colonist, she's not going to just wait there and let you keep trying until you roll a success.

When Not to Use Skills

There are two situations where skills shouldn't be rolled, and one where the skill should be made extra difficult. Skills shouldn't be used when an intent or action is **complex** or **inappropriate**, and **difficult** skills should be rolled with Disadvantage...so long as something is at stake.

Complex situations are situations which can't be resolved in a timely fashion. Trying to invent a new type of weapon is a reasonable action for an engineer, but it would take years of research and development — **too long for a single roll**. In other words, complex actions are those a character is *capable* of, but can't be resolved in a simple or timely fashion. **Don't roll when something would be too complicated or take too long.**

Inappropriate situations are where a skill is **essentially impossible**. You can't make your APU teleport, no matter how hard you try. Convincing a corporation to cease arms manufacturing just by talking to its CEO over lunch isn't going to happen. **Don't roll when an action is simply never going to succeed.**

Difficult situations are where a character wishes to do something probably difficult, but not impossible. Doing an eight-hour suit repair job in two isn't going to be easy, but it might happen. Convincing a PMC to perform a dangerous mission for no upfront pay will take a lot of charm, but it's not unheard of. Difficult actions **should be rolled**, but **Disadvantage should be given** and **any Twist on the roll should be significant** to reflect the difficulty and the cost of failure. A failed repair could completely trash the suit, and an incensed PMC might well refuse to associate with the character...or worse!

If a character is trying to perform a difficult action **when nothing's at stake**, don't roll — **just say yes**. If a character wants to hit a target dummy in the head from a few miles away during small arms training, or anything similarly impressive, **if they have the relevant skill, let them**. (If they were trying to do it to impress someone or in real combat, though, that's a difficult roll instead — this rule only applies **if absolutely nothing is hanging on success**.) Mages are supposed to be amazing, after all!

How to Use Skills & Aspects

When you decide that using a skill is necessary, figure out what you want to do (your intent) and how you want to do it (your task). The GM gets to decide which skill or skills are appropriate to roll based on your task (though you may make suggestions); if there's more than one, you may pick whichever one you like. Roll 1d6, check the table, and you and the GM can figure out just what happened along the way!

While this is all very well and good, and probably self-explanatory you can do more with Personal Skills than you might initially realize. Personal Skills have four aspects, or ways in which they can be used. Most skills will have all three of these aspects, though some might be missing one or two.

Example

Let's say Sledgehammer wants to find a way to make a bazooka that shoots other bazookas. While this might well be possible (if extremely unlikely), it would require decades of advancement in fabrication technology and most likely an entirely new understanding of physics, and thus it is **too complex** at best.

Or another time, Sledgehammer says she wants to shoot herself out of an airship's main railgun. This would probably be hilarious to watch, but Sledgehammer is too large to fit inside, not the least bit aerodynamic, and most importantly not magnetic, this is **impossible**. Why Sledgehammer keeps asking these things is one of the great mysteries of the universe.

The GM is probably getting tired at this rate, but Sledgehammer has one more request — she wants to kick down a secured bedroom door in order to visit a depressed party member. This is **difficult**, and if this were a highly tense combat situation, Sledgy would likely be rolling with Disadvantage and incur huge penalties if she failed, but since it doesn't matter one way or another in this instance, the GM **says yes** and lets her do what she wants. Even if it's not always appropriate, sometimes you can have fun with things, right?

First, and most obvious, having a Personal Skill gives you **practical applications** — you can **do what the skill says**. If you have a Lockpicking skill, you can pick locks. If you have a Basketweaving skill, you can weave baskets. Sometimes this is less obvious with some skills, but assume you have the knowledge required of the field — someone skilled in Tort Law could draft up a contract, or someone skilled in Geography would know how to operate GIS systems.

Second, having a Personal Skill grants you **knowledge about the skill** in question. Someone skilled with Handguns knows about different models of handgun, and someone skilled with IWACS Operation knows about different IWACS systems.

This knowledge can be used in one of two ways: you can either ask the GM what you know about a given situation beyond what you can observe casually, given this knowledge; or you can **declare something about the world** in relation to this skill.

The former lets players use their specific knowledge to **know things their characters would know, but they might not**. When looking at a pistol, for instance someone skilled with Handguns can identify the model and calibre of that pistol, and whether it's a ballistic or linear model. This *usually* **doesn't require a roll** — the GM will give you this information for free, unless there's a consequence for failure or a particularly good Twist to be had.

The latter allows players to **say a little about the world** and have a bit more control over it, either **in general or specifically**; our IWACS Operator might say that each individual IWACS node uses its own frequency, or that the enemy's operator is a former colleague! This **cannot be used to contradict known facts**, of course; anything already known is fixed and can't be changed this way. If your **idea is cool**, there's **no pressure**, or the GM **can't think of a good Twist**, your declaration **becomes fact...** but in **any other situation**, you **must roll!** ("No, he's not your former colleague...but he is your ex-husband!")

Third, and perhaps most interesting, is that having a Personal Skill allows you to **contact someone related to that skill**. A Fencer might know some champion swordsmen, or a Codebreaker might know someone who is good with encryption.

This **almost always requires a roll**, and you can often make **interesting Twists** out of **who they find** specifically. It could be an enemy agent, it could be someone the character owes money, or it could be someone who can't do what you ask for!

Finally, you may use a skill to **notice something about a situation**. This replaces the catch-all 'perception' skills often used in other games, though some of those skills might exist as well, depending on the GM and players' preferences. This can be used either to **detect details the GM has decided on** ahead of time, or it can be used to **create new details** by making declarations about what the character perceives, similar to the process detailed in the second aspect. And like before, **these details cannot contradict known facts**.

Example

The first aspect is the most obvious, and one that has been seen before with Tears' repairs. A skill lets you do something, and most of the time, you'll be relying on this.

In terms of the second and fourth aspects, Murakumo might look at some display swords while touring a corporate mogul's collection. His Fencing skill lets him determine that these swords are actually made of modern materials. Later on, when he has to escape the mogul's penthouse with vital forensics, he rolls his Fencing skill to declare that the swords have been sharpened and are loose — and successfully grabs a weapon to defend himself during his escape!

The third aspect would allow for a lot of interesting options. Murakumo could use his Forensic Analysis skill to contact a local forensics lab. Unfortunately, a Twist comes up, and the lab in question 'loses' the evidence, forcing the party to raid the lab to get it back and find out who set them up!

Picking Skills & Stretching

Picking a skill is usually fairly self-explanatory. If you want to shoot someone, choose a relevant Combat skill. If you want to buy something, use your Resources. The problem comes up in certain **grey areas** — is a person who is an accomplished diplomat automatically good at lying? Can a nuclear scientist handle a hydrospanner and fix a fusion engine?

Most RPG skill systems take one of two approaches — either they have an expansive list of skills which only cover very specific situations, or they have a smaller list of more general skills. Since **LR6g has no default skill list**, GMs and players can **decide how general or specific** they want their skills to be. For instance, most groups will likely just check one

skill for combat, but others might split combat into multiple skills both offensive and defensive. Some groups may have a generic 'Persuasion' skill rather than a selection of different social skills.

The default assumption is that skills are fairly narrow. In addition, **players should not stretch** — that is, they **shouldn't try to use skills that don't clearly apply** to the situation. Intimidating a few lowlifes in a bar is a simple task, but where tact and respect are called for, intimidation isn't going to be the right approach. Someone with training in Psychology can easily diagnose mental illness and provide therapy, but don't let players say that someone with Psychology should obviously be able to manipulate people and tell when they're lying. **Don't let your players do this to you!**

Design Notes on Stretching

The stretching rule may seem at odds with the relatively freeform nature of this system, but it's really quite simple. Most systems require investment of valuable resources into skills, making skills which are as broad and useful as possible the norm, or otherwise making a bloated skill list a significant issue for characters with few skill points to use. (Let's face it, it was never a good idea to put any points into Use Rope.) Oftentimes, the systems with the most specific skill lists are also the ones which make investment in skills required for any measure of success, combining the worst of both worlds, as players fall further and further behind in their capabilities relative to other characters.

LR69 can get away with specific skills for two very good reasons. First, **the difference between Skilled and Unskilled is very small** — with a 50% chance of succeeding on an ordinary Unskilled roll, not having a skill is not the game-breaker it can be in other RPGs.

Second, and more importantly, **players are not required to spend resources on new skills**, instead gaining them automatically. This factor is especially significant when you realize that **no combat resources need be spent on skills**, or vice versa. this allows for very specific and esoteric skills to be used without needing to worry if they'll ever come up. If they don't come up, well, you'll probably get another skill that will at some point, and you didn't screw yourself out of fighting ability for it either!

Unskilled Rolls

It's assumed that **most skills can be rolled Unskilled**. A base level of competence at most tasks is assumed — you can probably drive a car even if you're not an amazing driver, and even if you're not good at fixing things, you can probably still hold a spanner. **GMs should give as much leeway as possible** for untrained skill use — if there's any possible way it can be done Unskilled, let them try, and give them Disadvantage if it's particularly difficult.

Some tasks are **too difficult** or even **impossible** to roll Unskilled, though — you can do stitches without training, but open heart surgery is another matter. Someone with some advanced computer experience could probably try a hack, but someone who has trouble with their phone probably couldn't. As a rule of thumb, **let someone roll Unskilled on a particularly 'difficult' skill if they have the Category the skill belongs to**. In some cases, disadvantage can also be added instead. (See 'When Not to Use Skills' for more details.)

Personal Conditions

Sometimes, things go wrong. Getting shot is never a good time. Neither is losing your last payment in a poker game. Even when things go your way, you can get injured, enraged, or otherwise rattled — this is known as a **Personal Condition**. Personal Conditions impose **negative effects** on a character's actions, both on the Personal level and, on occasion, in mechanized combat.

Personal Conditions happen **on certain die results**. They can happen on **either a Success or a Twist** — even the wrong kind of victory can ruin a person. The GM gets to decide the Personal Condition in question and why you got it.

Most Personal Conditions are **Minor** — you can recover relatively quickly from them, and their penalties aren't going to cause too much pressure. However, **any character who suffers from a Minor condition is at risk of gaining a Major condition** — having **three Minor conditions** at the same time automatically imposes a Major condition, which replaces the previous Minor conditions. (New Minor Conditions may still be gained, which can then be converted to Major Conditions themselves.)

Minor Personal Conditions **do not stack with one another**, either the same condition or a different one. However, **multiple instances of the same Personal Condition** still count for the three-conditions rule.

Minor Personal Conditions have **fairly easy recovery**, but are **not devastating on their own**. You will **not always have the time to recover**, or be in a situation where recovery is possible; operating with a single Personal Condition is not a game-breaker, and time pressures can force characters to work through them.

Some Personal Conditions are **Major**, however. Most of the time, Major conditions are gained through **multiple Minor conditions**, but any character who tries to **push themselves too far** — like taking on an entire hit squad with a rocket launcher, or trying to bluff your way out of a prison sentence — can get a Major condition **through a single roll**. While this should always be rare, it should also never be off the table!

Unlike Minor Conditions, **Major Condition penalties** do **stack**, both with themselves and with any Minor Condition penalties.

Major Conditions, **unlike Minor Conditions**, have an effect on **combat** as well. Fighting with a Major Condition is inadvisable.

Minor Personal Conditions

Angry characters have **Disadvantage to all Personal Skills in social situations, or other situations which require unusual forethought, focus, or precision**. Angry is not just a minor state of irritation — it is a full-blown rage which makes rational thought and action difficult. Recovering from Angry requires **time spent alone and doing something the character enjoys**. While the time involved is variable, the character **must go to an effort to recover**, usually keeping them from making Personal Skill rolls in the meantime.

Winded characters have exhausted themselves, physically or mentally. They're not just a bit tired, they're completely unenergetic! Winded characters have **Disadvantage on all Personal Skills involving physical activity**. Recovering from Winded requires **time spent alone and relaxing**, whether it be a nap, a cool drink, or something else to refresh themselves. Just like Angry, it requires **some time and effort**.

Major Personal Conditions

Injured characters have an injury which **impedes them greatly**, such as a **broken bone** or a **gunshot wound**. Injured characters take **-1 to all Personal Skill rolls** (minimum 1), and their **initial Initiative roll** in combat and their **Initiative Increase rolls** are **halved**. (Their bonus still remains the same, however.) Recovering from Injured requires **medical treatment and a full day of rest**. Injured is a **rare condition** which should only be in place when an action taken is particularly risky.

Distraught is a condition equivalent to Injured mechanically — **-1 to all Personal Skill rolls and major combat penalties**. Distraught characters are **seriously mentally disturbed** — they may be depressed, despondent, furious, or any other mental state which severely handicaps them. Recovery, however, is **somewhat different** — rather than medical treatment, **one of the other characters** must go out of their way to **make the Distraught character feel better** or otherwise **deal with their issue**. (This usually means more than a get-well card.) Either way, **a full day of rest** is still needed.

Categories & Skill Progress

Each character has access to several Categories of Personal Skills. Categories are **umbrellas for related knowledge**. A character with scientific knowledge finds it easier to pick up other scientific knowledge, but might have more trouble with legal theory, so the latter is harder for them to learn.

Categories are considered **locked** or **unlocked**. Unlocked Categories are easy to learn new skills in, while locked Categories must be unlocked before new skills can be earned.

At character creation, **characters get three Categories**. They may still **learn skills in any category at creation**, but if the Category is locked, they can't learn more.

If you end up with a skill you can't categorize, just list it as **Other**. **Characters are always treated as having Other unlocked**. This can easily represent hobbies or other areas of expertise which might come in handy, but are not necessarily appropriate to include under the major categories. If you can't pick between two Categories, **let the player have the skill if they have one of them unlocked, or pick later otherwise**. The GM is also perfectly capable of **making up new Categories**, just like skills, if the particular game requires it.

In *LR6g*, player characters are **encouraged to make unskilled rolls**. The main reason for this is that Personal Skills are not gained over time in the same way their piloting skills are — instead, you gain **Skill Progress**. Skill Progress lets you **learn new Personal Skills** and **unlock new Categories**.

When you **roll an unskilled check** and **get a 6**, the GM will decide if the skill fits **one of your unlocked Categories**. If it does, **you gain that skill**. If it doesn't, **mark down one Skill Progress roll for the Category it fits**. Once you have **two Skill Progress rolls** in a Category, you **unlock both the Category and the skill you got the second roll with**.

Because of this, **the best way to get skills is to use them!** While it's **perfectly acceptable to specialize**, you can eventually gain skills in many different fields over a long period of play. **Don't be afraid to perform Unskilled checks** if the situation calls for it.

Category	Description	Example Skills
Athletics	Any skill which requires physical strength or prowess.	Acrobatics, Sprinting, Sneaking, Heavy Lifting
Academia	'Pure' knowledge, usually of the social sciences or other non-practical areas of expertise. Also includes legal knowledge.	Political Science, Sociology, Film History, Trade Law
Applied Sciences	Engineering and other sciences which are 'high level'.	Civil Construction, Starship Engineering, Rocket Engine Design
Combat (Special)	Skills used in non-mechanized combat situations. These are granted by weapon. All players have access to this Category.	Pistol, Sniper Rifle, Sword, Knife, Heavy Rocket Launcher
Computers & Electronics	Skills that represent knowledge of computer systems, military or otherwise.	IWACS Operation, Encryption, Electronic Lockpicking, ICE Breaking
Investigation	Skills which help in an investigation of a situation, criminal or otherwise.	Database Search, Fingerprinting, Forensic Analysis, Autopsy
Maintenance	Maintenance for mechanized units, or particular subsystems thereof. Also applies to civilian vehicles.	Fusion Engine Repair, Automobile Repair, Hovercycle Maintenance, Artificial Muscle Maintenance
Medicine	Skills involving the medical sciences, be they basic techniques or more advanced fields of study. Both applied and theoretical medicine apply.	Combat Surgery, Psychology, Applied Cybernetics, Traditional Medicine
Physical Sciences	More esoteric and high-level scientific skills that nevertheless still qualify as natural sciences.	Newtonian Mechanics, Principles of FTL Travel, Explosive Chemical Formulas
Resources (Special)	A skill which represents means of gathering material goods. All players have access to this Category.	Stolen Goods, Socialite Friends, Family Fortune, Smuggling Contacts
Social	Skills that involve interaction with other people, whether you are truthful or not, and whether you are speaking or listening.	Bluffing, Contract Negotiation, Intimidation, Big Moral Speeches, Lie Detection
Vehicle Operation (Special)	A skill which allows you to pilot a vehicle of some kind. This is not used in combat, but rather for chases, tricky maneuvers, and other situations where the combat rules may not apply. All players have access to this Category.	APU, Sportwalker, Motorcycle, Personal Rotorlift Vehicle (PRV)

Unlocking a skill or category does not mean your character suddenly develops knowledge out of nowhere. Both you and the other players are **always learning new things** about your characters; this could simply be an aspect of your character that hasn't been seen before. You could also have been reading a bit about it on the side, or had training from another character — whatever fits!

Don't worry about having too many skills, either. Learning new skills helps you expand your repertoire with things you didn't think of early on, and helps give you and the GM new ideas and situations for what to do next. Besides...**player characters are supposed to be awesome.**

Linked Tests & Helping

Not all tasks are performed alone. Sometimes, extra preparation is required before the final operation. Other times, you might want to set things up so the operation goes more smoothly. Still other times, the entire party might come together to complete an important task. Either way, whether it's a voluntary choice or a requirement of the situation, these tasks are represented by **Linked Tests** and **Helping**.

A **Linked Test** consists of two elements, the **Setup** and the **Execution**. The **Execution** is the **originally intended task**, and the **Setup** is the task that **assists the Execution** in some way. For instance, one character could be presenting evidence of illegal weapons shipments out of the Megafloat Zone...evidence that first has to be falsified and planted by another character! The falsification is the Setup, the presentation is the Execution.

When making a Linked Test, **the Setup is rolled first**, even if both actions are simultaneous in the narrative. **If the Setup Succeeds**, the Execution roll has **Advantage**. If the Setup **is a Twist**, not only do you suffer the consequences of that Twist, **the Execution will have Disadvantage!** However, if **the Setup is Success with a Personal Condition**, the Setup succeeds and **no Personal Condition is gained**, but the Execution **has neither Advantage nor Disadvantage**. As such, Linked Tests are **somewhat risky**, especially if the Setup is rolled Unskilled.

While players can **choose to take Linked Tests** if they wish and the GM decides that a Linked Test is appropriate, **the GM may also force a Linked Test on the players** if he feels that setup is required before a certain action — trying to sneak into a highly secure office complex isn't going to happen without prior knowledge of entry points and other relevant factors.

Linked Tests are also a great way to use skills that **might not be directly appropriate** to assist another character. The GM may rule that Aerospace Engineering is too theoretical to use to help repair a chopper, but it can instead be used as a Linked Test to help assess the situation.

Linked Tests can theoretically be **chained indefinitely**, with the Execution on one task becoming the Setup on the next. In practice, **GMs should avoid chaining Linked Tests**, and **players gain little advantage** from doing so.

In some cases, characters will want to help one another in situations where a Linked Test isn't appropriate. In this situation, **Helping** is more appropriate. Not all tasks can be Helped, and some tasks can't be Helped by more than one person — passing a marksmanship qualification can only be done alone, and having five people performing first aid at the same time is just asking for trouble — but in a pinch, Help can turn failure into success and avoid Twists and Personal Conditions alike.

Assuming you're available to Help (nearby and not doing something else) and the Help is appropriate, you may Help another character with their Personal Skill roll. You roll **1d6** if you are **Skilled** in the skill required, and you **roll with Disadvantage** if you are **Unskilled**. Your result doesn't generate Twists or Successes itself; however, if you **roll higher** than the character you are Helping, **that character's roll increases by 1** (maximum 6).

Unlike Linked Tests, **Helping is never harmful**. It may not help in some cases, as the benefits can be marginal, but it will never make your roll less likely to succeed.

Example

Since Moonlight Butterfly and Darker Star both have the same Fusion Engine Repair skill, they decide to help one another fix the engine assemblies of their APUs. Darker Star will be doing the primary roll, and Moonlight will be Helping. Darker Star rolls a 2, incurring a Twist, but Moonlight Butterfly's roll of 5 allows him to treat his roll as 3. Darker Star manages to avoid a twist and successfully repairs the engines, but injures his arm in the process, gaining a Personal Condition (see Personal Conditions).

Later on, Moonlight and Star are told by the GM that money and contacts aren't enough to get the valuable unfabricable parts they need, so instead, they make a Linked Test. Darker Star is the Setup, getting his family contacts to pull some strings with the local authorities, while Moonlight Butterfly makes the actual purchase as the Execution. Darker Star's roll is a 2, however — not only does he find that his contacts are not particularly happy with him and refuse any involvement, Moonlight Butterfly's Execution is now rolled at Disadvantage! Luckily, she rolls a 4 — she manages to make the purchase anyway, despite the earlier snafu, but it was a matter of good luck after bad.

When Helping, **characters almost always use the same Skill**, or at the very least an appropriate one. Helping a character in contract negotiations by carefully checking your books on Tort Law is appropriate, but trying to intimidate a corporate mogul during delicate diplomacy is just asking for trouble.

Contests

Sometimes, **a simple skill roll on the table** isn't enough. When **two player characters** are in opposition, or when **opposing a skilled NPC** with their own motivations, you **don't roll on the Personal Skills Table** — instead, you enter a **Contest**, which is an opposed 1d6 roll between the characters in question. Whoever **rolls the highest** wins, although total victory may not always be achieved!

Contests should only be used when **the other character has their own motivations**, is **particularly skilled**, or is otherwise **story-relevant**. This is always the case for PCs, but most NPCs will not require a Contest. A gunfight with a few random troopers doesn't rate a Contest, but a fencing duel with your former mentor definitely does.

A **Contest** starts by determining **what both characters want** (their intent) and **how they intend to get it** (their task). **Make sure the characters are actually in opposition!** If the characters can both get what they want without the other character losing out, a Contest isn't appropriate.

Second, **determine the skills used** by both sides. (These don't need to be the same skill.) If a character is **rolling Untrained**, they have Disadvantage to their roll in the Contest.

If the winner of the Contest beats the loser's roll by 3 or more, they get a **total victory**, in which they get all of their intent and the loser gets none. However, if the winner **only wins by 1 or 2**, they get their intent, but the **loser** gets to choose one of these ways to **modify it**:

- » The winner's hold on their victory is somehow insecure.
- » The winner loses more than they expected in the process.
- » The loser doesn't pay as high a cost for their loss.
- » The loser gets a small victory of their own, either related to what they wanted or unrelated.
- » The winner doesn't get all they wanted at once — they must do more to get their full victory.

Not all of these options will make sense in every situation. It's up to the GM and the player(s) in question to determine which of these options can be used and how they play out in-game.

If a Contest is **tied**, however, **neither side gets their intent**. This means they *both* lose — **avoid compromise**, whenever possible, and instead think of a way where both sides walk away unhappy.

Regardless of the Contest's result, if an **Untrained** character **rolls a 6** against a **Trained** opponent, they gain Skill Progress like a normal Personal Skill roll. (This doesn't apply if both characters are Untrained.)

Example

Tears in Rain is trying to break into a Neucom subcontractor's secured intranet, and an NPC on the other end is trying to prevent their break-in remotely. Tears wants to get their hands on evidence for weapons sales to an enemy PMC, while the NPC wants to keep all intruders out of the system for their employer. Since their intents are directly opposed, and the NPC is reasonably skilled a Contest ensues; both characters have the required skills, so both rolls are made normally.

Tears rolls a 3, and the NPC rolls a 4. The NPC is successful in preventing the financial data from being stolen. However, Tears chooses to pay a lesser cost for their action; they're successfully able to prevent the NPC on the other end from detecting the break-in point and the intruder's intent. While they'll still need to find another way of getting the data now that the system is more secure, Tears is in no danger of later reprisal.

Legend Dice and Tricks

Player characters are meant to be the stars of the story. While they can, and most definitely will, sometimes fail, they also have the ability to succeed where it really counts. This is represented by their **Legend Dice**. Each character gains **one Legend Die at the end of every session**, and may store **up to five**.

Legend Dice offer **several benefits in mechanized combat**, but with Personal Skills, their main benefit is to **grant you Advantage** at any time — the die you add to your roll being the titular Legend Die. Any time you roll a Personal Skill, you may **spend one Legend Die** for Advantage. **You don't need the GM's permission to do this**, but you must narrate what the Advantage is, be it an element of the current situation, a particularly skilled execution, or a stroke of good luck.

Since **Disadvantage and Advantage** cancel one another out, using a Legend Die to cancel out Disadvantage is usually a bad move. A better option is presented under 'Earning Legend Dice: Flaws'.

Characters may also use their Legend Dice with their **Tricks** — special aspects of your character, particular specialties, or items of wealth or practical use that let you **automatically succeed on certain actions**. New Tricks are granted during the game, and some may have limited uses, but every character has **at least one** that can never be taken away, regarding an aspect of their personal history.

Using a Trick requires **spending a Legend Die**. If the Trick aligns with what you're trying to do (your ask and intent must still be valid), you **automatically succeed** on the action in question, without requiring a roll.

If you **don't have Legend Dice** or want to save them, you can still try using your Trick if applicable, but it's **treated as a Skilled roll** instead, with all the same risks as an ordinary roll.

Either way, **the Trick in question can be used like a roll in any situation where it applies** — whether it be a normal Personal Skill check, a Linked Test, or a Contest. Using a Trick in a **Linked Test** as the **Setup** automatically **grants Advantage to the Execution** (serving as a form of Legend Die donation), and using one in a **Contest** automatically grants you **total victory** unless your opponent is able to use a Trick of their own (which only applies to other PCs).

Example

The party needs to get into a high society soiree...more specifically, they need to be invited, as an armed break-in is likely to go quite poorly. Moonlight Butterfly decides to take the easy way in — once she gets a hold of someone who is going to the party, she activates her 'Social Butterfly' trick, which allows her to get anyone to like her. Spending one Legend Die gets her to talking with this upper-class nitwit, and he gladly invites her to the party...oh, and her friends too, of course!

Gaining New Tricks

Characters primarily **advance** on the Personal scale **by gaining Tricks**. These Tricks represent an increasing repertoire of reliable skills, equipment, and contacts which help you succeed on ever more difficult tasks, even when the odds are stacked against you. These Tricks are **provided by and decided on by the GM alone**, although the GM may take input if they wish.

Roughly **one or two Tricks** should be given out a session, and over the course of an individual plot arc, **one Trick should be given to every character**. Each of these Tricks should have **some significance to the narrative**, either being given for particularly memorable actions, promised to the characters for a job well done, or provided by a major NPC. Not every character will need a Trick every session, but you should **make sure the number of Tricks given out is relatively even**. Don't let anyone get jealous!

Some Tricks are **Limited** — they may be temporary advantages or advantages that are consumed through use. For instance, you may have a **Discretionary Fund** granted to you by Horizon to help you pay for unexpected operating expenses. This Discretionary Fund starts with three uses, and is thus recorded as 'Discretionary Fund 3'. Each time you use it, this Limited Trick is reduced by 1, until it is wholly consumed. Other great Limited Trick options include consumable equipment or owed favors. **Limited Tricks may be given out more often**, as players will be more hesitant to use them and they are only a temporary advantage.

- » **Special Equipment:** Some Tricks just represent **equipment** that's **reliable** and always available to use, and which may have **special properties**. A 'Perfectly Balanced Linear Magnum', for instance, might serve as a Trick in combat that allows you to match any similar foe. It's **not that you can't use a linear magnum without this trick**, it's that **this one is that much better**. Or in another case, a set of 'Neutrino-Comm Detonators' might be appropriate, allowing you to always set off properly placed explosives without fear of jamming or other risks. This is appropriate for **any type of character**, but especially those who **engage in combat** often or who are somewhat **greedy**.
- » **Special Training:** There's always something new to learn, and mastery of certain talents can make even nigh-impossible tasks seem simple. Training from an **expert in the subject** can give you an advantage even beyond being Trained in a skill. This type of Trick is especially appropriate **if the party is inexperienced** and might not have much basic training to their name, or if a character has a **mentor** or other teacher that they have regular contact with.
- » **Special Insight:** This is essentially an advanced form of **learning from experience**. Someone who has a lot of technology-related skills might be very good at what they do, but having a Trick called 'I'll Fix It!' which lets you instantly assess mechanical issues is something else entirely, marking you as one of the best technicians out there. This is appropriate for a character who is highly specialized and uses a particular Category or related skillset a lot.
- » **Special Resources:** Essentially a **more advanced form of the Resources Category**, this represents extremely **reliable funds and connections** which don't have the risk factor of normal Resources. Just like the Resources Category, this may be cold cash, or it may be special contacts or favors owed. These Tricks are **almost always Limited**. Good examples here are 'ESAF Favors Owed', 'Salvaged Parts Pile', or 'Incriminating Video Files'.
- » **Character Growth:** This is a **very personal** type of Trick, which represents **the character's decisions and achievements**. A character who constantly puts themselves in the line of danger to save their comrades — and not just when they know they'll succeed — is a great candidate for a Trick like 'No One Left Behind', which lets them succeed at any task that gets their friends out of trouble. Someone who helps their party pull off a flawless heist could gain a Trick like 'Always Has a Plan', allowing them to succeed on any Setup for a Linked Test. This is often the **most powerful** type of Trick, and should also be the **most rarely provided** — an incentive to make the best story you can!

Earning Legend Dice: Flaws

While the PCs are the star of the story, they are hardly infallible or invincible. They may have an abrasive personality, unresolved mental trauma, or an injury that they struggle against. Even if these factors aren't in play, they might have a shameful secret, powerful enemies, or other problems which come into play at the worst possible times. In exchange for this, they get to shine where it really counts!

All player characters have **two Flaws**, chosen at character creation. These Flaws can be an aspect of their personality, an unfavorable social standing, a physical defect, or anything in between, so long as they are **un-equivocally negative for the character**. (Don't take a flaw like 'Loved By Too Many Women' or 'Cares Too Much', please.) For instance, the sample character Sledgehammer has the Flaw **Poor Depth Perception**, a physical defect, while Tears in Rain has **Known Fugitive**, a social defect.

Design Notes on Flaws

Let's step back for a bit of unfair meta-commentary. In most games, particularly older and poorly designed ones, this is where the authors would go into detail on how Flaws (or their equivalent) give you bonus points, on how players should not take too many, on how the GM should and can enforce the Flaws in question, forcing the GM's view on how the character should act on the player. This is always a shitty and untenable situation that puts the GM and the players into antagonistic roles, encouraging mistrust and passive-aggressive behavior that can, in extreme cases, tear entire groups apart.

Luckily, *LR69* is not most games, and ***the GM cannot use your Flaws against you mechanically in any way***. Flaws aren't meant to punish you, but to give you more room to define your character and the game's story! In fact, for you the player, ***Flaws are completely positive***, and are your main method of ***gaining Legend Dice***.

Certain modern games take other approaches to this problem — in some, flaws can be used against antagonists by the players as well, rather than being only a factor for the PCs; in others, the character power level is balanced based on the points flaws give, rendering mandatory enforcement unnecessary and allowing them to come up more naturally. This approach was chosen because it offered the players the greatest input on the story, in being able to choose how their characters fail as well as succeed.

Flaws can be used in three ways, **all chosen by the player**, but the main way they can be used is to **generate a Twist rather than rolling for a skill**. If a player thinks it would be funny, tragic, or otherwise interesting in some way to get a Twist rather than rolling, this is a great chance to make something fun happen. In addition, there is a **good tactical time** to use Flaws as well — if you are at **Disadvantage**, especially Untrained, invoking a Flaw is an easy way to get something good out of a bad situation.

You get the first say on what this Twist is, telling your own idea for what you think should happen. However, **the GM gets the final say**, and may take your idea unaltered, change it, or give you a new one altogether (as long as it uses your Flaw). No matter which decision is taken, though, the player **gains a Legend Die** for invoking their Flaw.

Example

Let's say Sledgehammer gets into a brawl after trying to strong-arm the wrong mercenary squad...unarmed and without backup, no less. Not only is she Untrained in any sort of martial arts or other close combat, she's also surrounded by half a dozen thugs, putting her at distinct Disadvantage.

Rather than risk herself on a fight she doesn't really think she can win, Disadvantage or no, Sledgehammer instead invokes her Poor Depth Perception flaw — she grits her teeth and grins, taking a big swing at the nearest gangbanger...only to find her fist swiping the air in front of him! Needless to say, she takes a beating and gets captured, forcing the rest of the party to go save her ass. *Thanks a lot, Sledgy.* Hopefully that Legend Die will come in handy during the breakout!

The second way is **very similar to the first** — if you and the GM both agree, you may **generate a Twist even when a roll is not called for**. This Twist must obviously use one of your Flaws, but you should also make sure to **twist the knife**, and make sure the consequences for the Twist are appropriate. If a cowardly character stays out of a major battle, they shouldn't get off lightly — throw them in the brig, or hurt someone they care about! Just like before, **you gain a Legend Die** for doing this.

The third way is less involved. When in a Contest, you may **use a Flaw to break a tie** in your opponent's favor; that Flaw comes up at a vital moment, giving **total victory** away to your opponent. This also nets you a Legend Die.

Of course, Flaws are **descriptive**, and though they can never be used to take away a victory, they may freely be used in narration and are a factor in the fiction. It's perfectly acceptable for players to reference their Flaws without using them as a resource, and for Flaws to be brought up in-game during conversation.

As well, Flaws are not set in stone. At a **narratively appropriate time**, or if a Flaw you chose **doesn't come up as often as you'd like**, you can choose to change it. You may also choose to change it if you **want to focus on other flaws** that the character has developed, using them for your mechanical advantage instead. The other players and the GM get to help decide if it's an appropriate time, but **the ultimate decision is your own** on which Flaws are added and removed.

Earning Legend Dice: Goals

Mages, in theory at least, are representations of an ideal, inspiring others through their battles and their actions. Even those who don't live up to that generally have a reason for fighting, or something to pursue. By pursuing their goals and defending their beliefs, players can gain more Legend Dice to help further their interests.

All player characters have one **Goal**, which may be one of two things. The first is a tangible goal — that is, a certain state of being or event they want to happen. This could be the establishment of an organization or the defeat of a rival, for instance, and it need not be serious — a character could just as easily decide their goal is to 'drink all the beers of the world'. The only thing that matters is that the goal is **achievable within the character's lifetime**. It doesn't have to be realistic, but it can't be something that is impossible.

The second type of Goal is an **ideal**, a code of action that the player lives by. This can be a simple one, like 'defend the weak', or something more complicated, like 'protect the interests of Horizon's benefactors'. There is no limitation to this, though ideals like 'murder someone in every city I visit' are probably not appropriate for most games.

The GM might, in some cases, **request that you have a realistically achievable short-term Goal**, if they are planning a sandbox game or similar. **Talk with your group** about what kind of Goals are appropriate!

In either case, players gain Legend Dice by **pursuing or defending their Goal**. For **pursuing**, you perform any action which will further your Goal in some way — our beer drinker there would be going to the bar. **You are required to roll a Personal Skill check** — the idea is that sometimes it goes off without a hitch, and it sometimes gets you into trouble. However, **you gain a Legend Die whether you Succeed or get a Twist**.

For **defending**, you gain a Legend Die for defending your ideal in some fashion, or living up to it actively. Someone who protects the weak would have to do just that. Again, **a roll is needed**, and you get the Legend Die **pass or fail**.

You can only gain Legend Dice for pursuing or defending your Goal **once per session**. This rule is intended to create ongoing plotlines for your characters and interesting new Twists, not for you to keep gaining Legend Dice by knocking back cans of Wargod's Red.

You can also use your Goal **like a Flaw**. You can deliberately get a Twist, **using the same rules as invoking Flaws**, in a situation where succeeding would violate or go against your goals — someone who has the Goal 'never lie for any reason' may lie if they wish, but if they choose to get a Twist by living up to their Goal, they get a Legend Die.

Unlike pursuing or defending, this can be done more than once a session.

Goals can also be **changed** using the same rules for Flaws, or if the Goal is **achieved** at some point during the game.

Options for Skill Progress

GMs have **different options for Skill Progress** depending on their preferences. The default assumption is that Categories are in use, but skills within a locked Category require that the Category first be unlocked. The **original version** of this system, as penned by Jim McGarva, did not use Categories; Categories are a concession to those who prefer that player characters be specialized in certain fields rather than having free access to whatever is needed.

Some GMs will want to make a **distinction between certain fields of knowledge**, and the **difficulty of learning certain fields**. After all, it's one thing to know how to fix a suit; it's another thing entirely to know how to *build* one.

In this case, unlocking new Categories is more difficult — it requires **three Skill Progress rolls**. You still unlock the last skill you used when you unlock a Category, as normal.

As well, any skill which requires **intense training or education** to learn requires two Skill Progress rolls, not one.

Going further than this is *not* recommended — don't restrict players from gaining new Categories! Mages are *supposed* to be talented, and learning new skills is part of the fun.

Other GMs will want to go in the other direction, and **not tie skills to categories at all**. (Players should still always have one Combat skill and one Resources skill, though, as well as the APU skill.) In this case, **players only need one Skill Progress roll to learn any skill**. This style of play is perfectly acceptable if you don't want to limit character knowledge!