



BAZAAR/MARKETPLACE

Primary Juncture(s): Contemporary, Past, Ancient **May Also Be Found In:** Future, Netherworld

Surroundings: A busy, teeming city with a major port or significant crossroads of trade, ancient streets of cobblestones surrounded by stone and brick walls, or a modern high-tech city full of high rises and cheap tenement apartment buildings.

Feng Shui Site?: Maybe.

DESCRIPTION

Built in a bustling commercial district, the market is located on a long main street that stretches for several blocks. The entrance is marked by a towering red paifang (a ceremonial gate) and when the market is active the street is closed to vehicle traffic with low metal barricade fences.

The stalls are set up in the street each evening just before dusk and are constructed from all manner of building materials, but are mostly metal or bamboo frames covered with cloth or plastic sheeting for walls, and the roofs are made from sheets of corrugated plastic or metal. Extension cords snake

through the stalls from nearby buildings and are strung up on the stalls to provide power to hanging lights, either bright bare bulbs, or long flickering fluorescent lamps.

Cheap folding tables are arranged with an array of different goods. Some are laid out individually or together in boxes. Wire racks hang from the stall walls to display even more merchandise. All sorts of goods can be found from clothing, accessories like sunglasses, jewelry, and watches, to souvenirs, second-hand books, recordings, antiques, and small electronics goods. Everything there is cheap and usually shoddy, but if you are willing to haggle, fantastic bargains can be found.



Some street markets specialize in different goods like computers, consumer electronics, electronic components, or produce like fruits, vegetables, seafood, meat, and precious commodities like silks, silver, gold, and other precious metals and stones.

After nightfall the market becomes crowded with people, tourists and local shoppers all pack the street looking for deals and excitement. At its peak, negotiating a way through the throng can be hard going and people are packed in shoulder-to-shoulder. After a long busy night all the merchants begin to tear down their stalls and pack up their goods in the early morning. By dawn the street is once again empty and ready for the day's traffic.

The buildings on either side of the street are a mixture of old and new architecture with ground floor shops and either more shops or apartments above. The exposed pipes run up the sides of the buildings and air conditioners hang out of windows occasionally dripping onto the store awnings below. Brightly painted signs flash with neon and blinking bulbs are hung everywhere, on the sides of buildings and hanging from wires strung far above the stalls on the streets below.

The ground floor shops are mostly restaurants, bars, nightclubs, with the occasional moneychanger, goldsmith, or antique dealer. Narrow side streets lead off of the main road with similar shops and stalls, eventually leading to the narrow dirty alleys behind these shops, which are littered with trash. The smell of rotting garbage permeates. The farther from the main market street the less touristy it becomes.

In these shady side streets the shadows grow darker and the stalls aren't as well lit, but it's where more dangerous and esoteric goods and services become available. Knock-off items, pirated media, and stolen goods are just the beginning. The line at which the stalls, stores, and restaurants give way to the seedier redlight district is often blurry.

THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN DURING THE FIGHT

Improvised Weapons: Pushcarts and dolleys. Wooden pallets. Scarves. Clothes. Bolts of fabric or rugs. Various meats (duck, fish, etc.) and the hooks used to hang them. Extension cords. Umbrellas. Souvenirs. Knives for sale. Handfuls of spices from big open baskets or platters. Various fruits and vegetables. Pots and pans. Just about any loose item from a stall or shop.

- A large awning or stall roof held up by rope or poles which can be cut and dropped on a foe or gang of mooks.
- Bamboo or metal scaffolding is being used in a nearby building construction, and it makes a perfect set of monkey bars and poles to climb and slide down on.
- Crashing through a second story window lands the hero in the middle of a brothel, harem, or other house of ill repute, and the surprised denizens start to throw things or chase after the hero.
- An awning can be used as a trampoline and bounced on for advantage or to the consternation of a foe.
- Stacks of large barrels or baskets to hide behind or in. They can be knocked over and rolled towards foes. They can also be carried off or rolled down the street especially if someone is inside them.
- Actual applecarts and many other types of carts and tables to literally upset or overturn.
- Gunfights in fruit and vegetable market stalls turn into the produce into salad.
- Glass windows on shops can be tossed or leapt through. Also, all that glass occasionally needs to be replaced and so window repairmen are frequently carrying large panes of glass through the streets.



OPEN AIR BAZAARS & COVERED MARKETS

This description is modeled on street markets in Contemporary Hong Kong, but in other junctures and locations such markets differ slightly. In the Ancient and Past Junctures stalls and tents were set up in big open areas surrounded by walls or rows of shops.

In the Future Juncture marketplaces are set up inside some vast ruined structure for protection from the elements. In the Netherworld bazaars and marketplaces are all great conglomerations of different styles, and the stalls sell everything imaginable; even the treasures and remnants of lost worlds are freely traded there.

Some bazaars have stalls that were made into permanent structures and the walkways in between them were roofed over. In a few locations the streets and walkways are replaced with canals and rivers and the stalls were replaced by boats, barges, bridges, and even stilted houses built right on the waterways.

- An awning of a stall or on the side of a building can be used to break a fall.
- An awning can be torn or split dropping anyone unlucky enough to be on top of it.
- Live animals kept in cages which can get broken releasing the animals and causing additional chaos.
- Ladders to climb and use as levers, bridges, seesaws, or improvised weapons.
- Crates and boxes to be thrown and smashed, or used as a breakfall.
- Market streets are too narrow for cars but scooters, mopeds, and motorcycles can drive through the narrow walkways and alleys without too much trouble. In a covered market they can also be driven along the roof.
- Street lamps can be climbed or knocked down.
- Signs can be dropped on foes. Or if they are neon or electric signs, foes can be electrocuted or impaled on the broken glass tubes.
- An awning or side of a stall can be stabbed through causing anyone unlucky enough to be hit to be pinned, or to fall through it.
- A large open section of the market with a park, fountain, public square, or even a gallows.
- Wires, strings of lights, banners and clotheslines strung between buildings to swing or slid on, or use them to break your fall.
- Chase down an alley and round a corner only to find it empty then shouts coming from the completely opposite direction
- Old men playing chess at an outdoor café.
- The hero interrupts some mooks gambling in an alley, leading to even more angry foes.
- Buskers and street performers, such as fire eaters, sword swallows, knife throwers, Chinese opera performers, and musicians.
- Torches or braziers are lit at night to provide light and warmth. (*Past Juncture, Ancient Juncture.*)
- Flammable liquids like propane tanks for cooking, gasoline for generators, and alcohol for sale.
- Tables of ice or tubs of water at a fishmonger's stall spilled all over the street.
- Large umbrellas for outdoor tables at restaurants snatched up and used as improvised parachutes.
- Chase down an alley and round a corner only to find it empty then shouts coming from the completely opposite direction
- A pickpocket steals something from the hero, but where did they go?
- A mob of beggars, children, or irate shopkeepers who swarm the heroes.

WHO YOU MIGHT FIGHT HERE

Local organized criminals. Whether a gang of street punks or actual gangsters or triads. Bazaars and marketplaces are notorious hangouts and revenue generators for criminals. They run protection rackets on local shop and stall owners, they reap profits from every vice imaginable, and they sell of all sorts of illegal goods. As a result, they defend their territories tenaciously, and are constantly looking for new territory to acquire. Heroes often get in the way of these turf wars.

Local authorities. Cops keep the peace in marketplaces and they like it when things go smoothly, quietly, orderly, and only the accepted number of tourists get fleeced. Cops wage a constant low-key battle to police the criminals that run the bazaars.

Demonic forces. A supernatural creature bound to an antique in ancient times has now broken free and is using the market as its new hunting grounds.

Angry stall owners. If the heroes cause too much of a ruckus, they're likely to find out that some of the stall and shop owners just happen to be retired kung fu masters, sorcerers, or transformed animals. Their chi is powerful, their techniques are strong, and they are defending their livelihoods. So watch out.