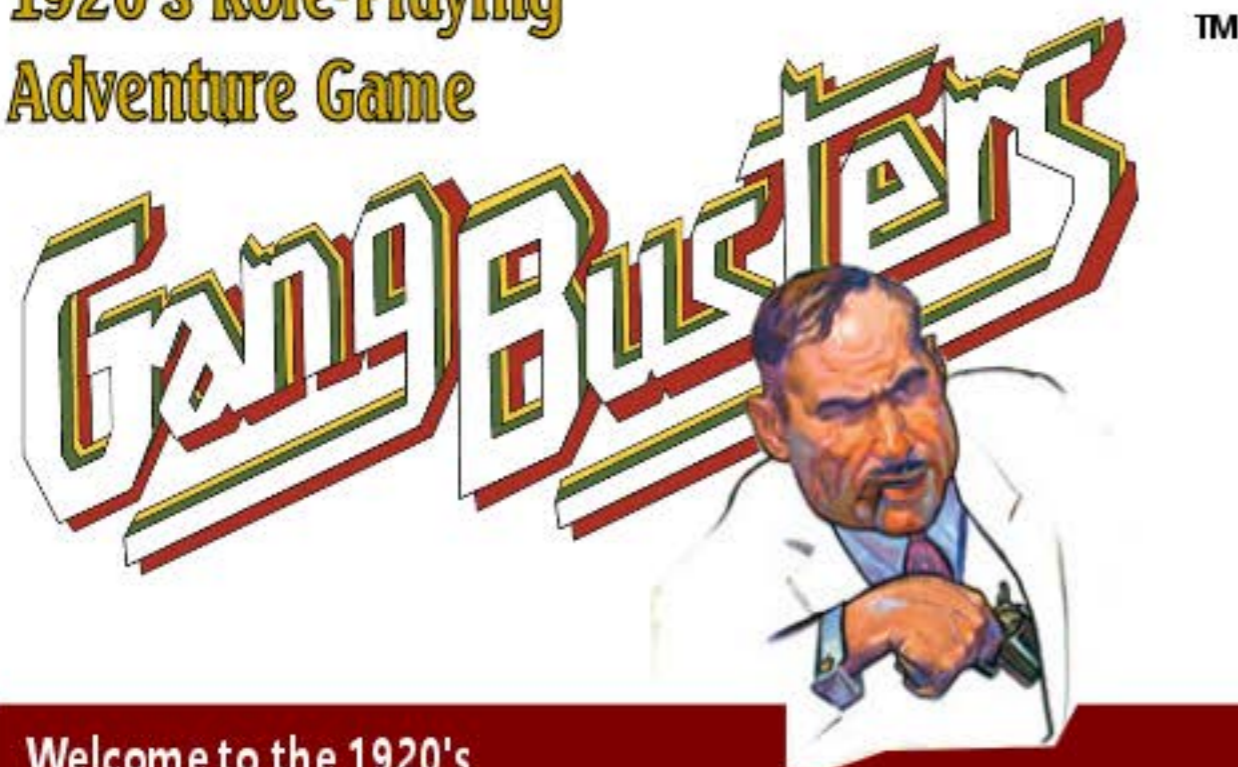


1920's Role-Playing  
Adventure Game



Welcome to the 1920's  
A time of G-Men, Gats, Gun Molls, and Gangsters!  
Take on the role of a P.I. where every case could be your last.  
Uncover crooked politicians, criminal syndicates  
and even Creatures of the Night. Unravel two-fisted  
tales of twisted terror and dispense Tommy Gun Justice.

Take your first steps into the Prohibition Era! Within you'll find  
simple rules for creating and customizing your own Private Eye,  
as well as a system for running spellbinding cases, crafty criminals,  
and creatures of the night. Whether you crave gangsters and gumshoes,  
or battles against tentacled terrors. This book has you covered.

The only limit is your imagination!

*Return to the thrilling days of yesteryear!*



The Blue Book Detective Agency Mark Hunt 2016  
GANG BUSTERS TM Rick Krebs

*Gang Busters*  
**WEIRD & TALES**  
PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS™  
THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY



**BEGINNER RULES**

*Gang Busters*

**WEIRD TALES**  
**&**  
**PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS**  
THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY  
**BEGINNER GAME**

***By MARK A HUNT***

*EDITING AND ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT BY MATTHEW POOK*

*LAYOUT BY MICHAEL DARWIN*

# Black Mask

GAMES BY MARK HUNT

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The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game is a supplement for the GANGBUSTERS 1920s adventure game, and requires the GANGBUSTERS rulebook for more detailed play.

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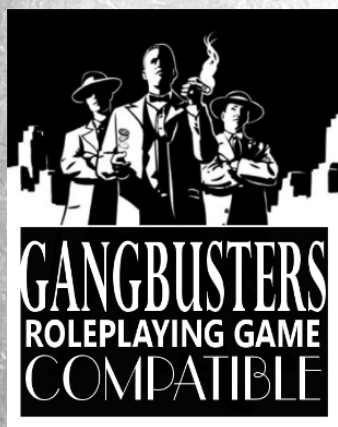
## WELCOME TO THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY!

---

Interested in the Prohibition Era of the Roaring Twenties and Dirty Thirties? You are not alone! This is the roleplaying game of Gangsters, Gun molls, Gumshoes, and G-Men.

**The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** is a preview version of the **Gangbusters® 1920s Roleplaying Game** that provides players with a chance to try out the game system without much in the way risk or obligation. The booklet you now hold gives you all the information you will need to create a Private Eye for the **Gangbusters Roleplaying Game**, as well as a brief overview of how to play the game and for one player as the Judge or referee, to run the game for the others. Many rules contained in the complete **Gangbusters Rulebook** have been omitted from The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game so as to present a streamlined and simpler game.

Once you have played a game or two, you will probably want to take a look at the full rules for **Gangbusters**.



The rules of this game were designed specifically to work with the **Gangbusters RPG**; they can, however, work just as well as a stand-alone game setting. We will produce other products bearing this logo and all of them are compatible with each other. This will allow you to mix and match new options to add to you adventures.

# WELCOME TO THE PROHIBITION ERA!

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**The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** is a complete, stand-alone product and contains everything that two or more players need to roleplay characters involved in the action and adventure of the 1920s. Players can enjoy many hours of entertainment with just the contents of this book.

Players who are ready for a more complex, in-depth roleplaying experience can pursue further adventures with the **Gangbusters Core Rulebook**. This **Beginner Game** is the starting point for a complete line of roleplaying products, including pre-written adventures, sourcebooks with more content for both players and the Judge, and much, much more.

## INTRODUCTION

---

*"You can get much farther with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone." - Al Capone*



## THE AMERICAN DREAM

In the 1920s the thought of getting ahead made people do anything to reach the top. Throughout this decade, morality was absent. Mobsters like *Al Capone* and *Dutch Schultz* epitomized this ideal. Prior to the problems created by mob bosses and crime families, the American Dream was achieved by coming to America, working hard, and climbing the socioeconomic ladder. During the 1920s this changed as people looked for a faster way to get to the good life. People killed, stole, and bribed their way up the ladder, in the process corrupting the once great American Dream.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE GAME

**The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** is set during the Roaring Twenties and Dirty Thirties. It has all the usual trappings of the period: Prohibition, mob bosses, tommy gun-toting thugs, jazz club speakeasies, torch singers, swanky parties, illicit booze and cigarettes aplenty, and more, but what the game is really about is rather simple. **The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** is a

good old fashion game of Cops and Robbers. This is because it is set during a time when America produced some of its most legendary figures. This is the era of *John Dillinger*, 'Baron' *Herman K. Lamm*, 'Scarface' *Al Capone*, 'Pretty Boy' *Floyd*, 'Baby Face' *Nelson*, 'Ma' *Barker*, and *Bonnie & Clyde*. This is the time of *Eliot Ness and the 'Untouchables'*, *Melvin Purvis*, *J. Edgar Hoover*, *Sam Spade*, *Philip Marlowe*, and a host of others, real and imaginary figures who fought crime and injustice wherever they found it. Whether you join the in the crusade to stamp out lawlessness or join in on the criminal spree that is gripping America is up to you.

### HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED

***The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game*** is very much like the games of cops and robbers that so many of us played when we were children. In game a number of players, typically between two and six, will each portray the important people or player characters in the stories that they telling, stories of crime, corruption, and temptation. These stories will bring the characters into conflict, sometimes with each other, but mostly with the cast of each story, crooks, cops, G-men, reporters, and more. Instead of just guessing who does what, who succeeds, and who fails when these conflicts arise, the rules presented in ***The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game*** describe how to decide the outcome of such conflicts. Although there are not many rules in the game, it is the responsibility of another player, known as the Judge, to interpret these rules fairly for the other players. . The Judge is responsible for handling situations that are not covered by the rules, making fair evaluations of what the player characters do and deciding what happens as a result. This is not a game in which the players and the Judge are competing against each other, even though the Judge is responsible for creating and presenting the challenging and dangerous situations and diabolical foes that the player characters will encounter during the game as part of telling their stories. Failure is a possibility, but the Judge must guide the game fairly and the player characters should fail because they made mistakes or were not quite skillful or smart enough, and not because the Judge was being unfair.

## WHO ARE THE PLAYERS?

---



### JUDGE

The Judge picks a story to run. These stories are known as 'scenarios'. A scenario provides the Judge with the structure of a story to present to the players. The Judge's role is a little like that of a director making a film in which the actors have no idea how the story will develop. To extend that analogy, the players are like actors who have the freedom to improvise their own scripts.

The Judge serves as a referee, his job is to keep the story moving and interpret the guidelines and make judgement calls that keep the play going. While the players will decide what their characters do and say, it is the Judge who decides what the members of the cast, each known as a Non-Player Character or NPC, will do and say when the player characters interact with them.

### THE OTHER PLAYERS ARE PLAYERS

The other players, typically anywhere between two and six, take on the roles of individual characters in the game. There are six pre-generated characters included in this book. Each pre-generated character will tell you about the character you have chosen to play and provide you with some information about how to play the game. Over the course of the game, you will choose what your hero does



and says, and use the dice and game rules to determine whether your character succeeds or fails. A character controlled by a player is called a Player Character or PC. Most of the play is a verbal exchange in the form of a group conversation with many twists and turns and fun on the way. The Judge sets the scene, describing the environment and the NPCs present before giving an indication of what they are doing. In response, each of the players will tell the Judge what their player character intends to do. This might to interview a potential witness, hide in cover so that a conversation might be overheard, search for clues, attempt to break a tail, punch out a gungel before he draws on you, and so on. The possibilities are endless, but once a player has decided upon his character's actions, the Judge then tells them whether they can do it and, if not, what happens instead.

Sometimes the outcome of an action is uncertain. This is where dice prove to be more useful than in a game of Craps. The game rules use dice to determine if an action succeeds or fails when a dramatic 'conflict' presents itself – for example, can Nick Angelino leap from the careening car with the sawn-through brake cable without hurting himself and can Vincent Orsini tell if the dame who wants to hire him is telling the truth or not? Only the dice will be able to tell.

## THE DICE

There are two types of dice that are used in the game the six-sided dice and the ten-sided dice. When the lowercase letter d is followed by a number, it refers to a die with that many sides. For example, a d6 is a six-sided die, and a d10 is a ten-sided die. Sometimes you roll multiple dice and add them together; in these cases, the number of dice goes in front of the 'd' and the type of die goes after it. For example, 2d6 means 'roll two six-sided dice and add them together'. At other times, you might be asked to roll a d3. For example, 1d3 means 'roll one six-sided die and half the result'.

## d100%

Percentile dice work a little differently. You generate a number between 1 and 100 by rolling two different ten-sided dice. One

(designated before you roll) is the tens digit. The other is the ones digit. For example, if you roll six on the tens die and seven on the ones die, then you have rolled 67. Two 0s represent 100.

## MODIFIERS

A modifier is any bonus or penalty applying to a die roll. A positive modifier is a bonus that is added to the result of the dice roll, while a negative modifier is a penalty that is subtracted from the dice. This is expressed as a + or - after the die roll type. For example, 1d10+1 means roll a ten-sided die and add one to the result, whereas 2d6-2 means roll two six-sided dice and subtract two from the result.

## AN EXAMPLE OF GAME PLAY

The actual play of a game is a constant conversation between the players and the Judge. Each player tells the Judge what his character is going to do; the Judge tells the players what happens as a result of their actions. The easiest way to learn how to play **The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** or the **Gangbusters RPG**, is actually to play it, but you can get some idea of how an RPG is played by watching someone play it, possibly online (there are plenty of recordings). Nevertheless, the following will give you some idea how the game is played.

Mark is the Judge and is running a game for his friends Louise, Rick and Will. Louise is playing Monica Delacroix, Rick is playing Nick Angelino, and Will is playing Vincent Orsini. Both Nick and Monica are partners in an agency started by an experienced private investigator, John Martin (a character played by the Judge). Vincent is an independent private eye who has brought a special case to them for help on. The Sullivan gang is a main suspect in this case.

The game starts with the characters presenting their plans for the week to the Judge. Nick is shadowing Sullivan, Monica is staking out Sullivan's hotel room, and Vincent is catching up on paperwork until he either hears from either Nick or he goes to take over from Monica. Meanwhile, Sullivan and his hoods have planned to rob a bank in a small town about 30 miles outside of Lakefront City. They have slated

the job for 3 p.m. Wednesday afternoon, just as the bank is about to close. Our example will follow the dialogue between the characters and the judge.



*JUDGE:* Okay, from looking at your plans for the week, I can tell you that not much happens on Monday or Tuesday. Nick, you shadow Sullivan, but he only does the usual things: goes out to eat, window shops, and so forth.

*MONICA:* Do I notice anything unusual around Sullivan's hotel? I'm running the stakeout from a room above the grocery store across the street.

*JUDGE:* No, you don't notice anything until Wednesday. At about quarter past one in the afternoon you see two of Sullivan's old playmates, 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno

Antonino, go into the hotel.

*MONICA:* Okay. Do either of them look like they're packing heat? (Monica makes an Observation check and rolls 24, which is under her Observation Ability.)

*JUDGE:* Not that you can see. They are acting a bit shifty though and you can see 'Lucky' Nelson looking over his shoulder to see if they have been followed.

*MONICA:* I duck back out of view of the window.

*JUDGE:* Okay. Neither appears to spot you and they enter the hotel. (The Judge rolls an Observation check for 'Lucky', but the result of

77 is higher than either gang member's Observation Ability.) Do you keep watching the hotel?

*MONICA:* Yes, but I am going to be more careful as I don't want to spotted.

*JUDGE:* Okay. About fifteen minutes later you see 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino exit the hotel and make their way back to their automobile. Both are carrying heavy, lumpy bags and are trying to act nonchalant.

*MONICA:* Okay. I think that the job is on. I am going to run downstairs to the payphone and call Vincent.

*VINCENT:* I am due to take over from Monica at two o'clock, but I need to get an update from her, so I am going to drive over there. Do I see anything?

*JUDGE:* Yes, you do. You spot 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino just as they turn on to Highway 37, but up ahead you also see Monica on the corner of the street.

*VINCENT:* Okay. I am going to drive over and pick Monica up. Once she is in the car, I am going to turn round and head for Highway 37 where I want to catch them up.

*MONICA:* Once I am in the car, I ask, "Did you see 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino back there in that Model A Ford? I am sure they're packing heat now and are on their way to do the job."

*JUDGE:* Vincent, the good news is that neither 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino took any notice of you because you were going in the opposite direction, but once you have turned round, you can no longer see them. You saw them heading onto Highway 37, so if you want to make a Driving check to catch up with them, you can.

*VINCENT:* This should be no problem as my Driving Ability is pretty good. (Vincent rolls an 09 and succeeds.)

*JUDGE:* Pretty good. You make good time and within a few minutes find yourself a few cars back from the Model A Ford driven by 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino. Meanwhile, Nick, at about the same time, you see Sullivan get into a car that has just pulled up on the

street corner. The car pulls away into the traffic. What are you going to do?

*NICK:* Well, Vincent has the agency car, so I had better hail cab. I step to the curb and shout "Taxi!" Once inside, I lean forward and say to the cab driver, "Follow that car..."

Can the cab driver tail Sullivan? Will 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino spot Monica and Vincent? What will happen when Sullivan and his gang get to their destination and can the heroes stop them? Hopefully these questions will be answered as the game is played out to its conclusion.

### SOME GAME TERMS

Roleplaying games like The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game and the GANGBUSTERS RPG use lots of terms and abbreviations that might be unfamiliar to you. 'Judge' as a term has already been introduced to you and so has the abbreviations PC (Player Character) and NPC (Non-Player Character). They are listed below along with many other terms for easy reference.

*Campaign* – A campaign is a collection of stories or scenarios that fit into a larger narrative. A campaign may or may not have a definitive or predefined end point.

*Check* – The check is made by rolling percentile dice. The most common types are attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks and luck throws.

*Class* – This is a depiction of a wide variety of archetypes that a character may portray, such as P.I, Reporter, Gangster, Police or even FBI agent.

*Judge* – The player whose task it is to serve as the referee for the rules and to present the world of GANGBUSTERS and its inhabitants to the other players.

*Level* – This is a numerical representation depicting the relative toughness of a PC or NPC in the game world. The range is from 1-10 with a one being new and inexperienced and ten being a dedicated and lethal foe.

*NPC* – Non-Player Character. Any character not played by a player, but by the Judge.

*PC* – Player Character. The protagonist whose actions are controlled by a player.

*Scenario* – A scenario provides the Judge with the structure of a story to present to the players and a general outline of events that take place during the game session.

*XP*s – XPs or Experience Points are earned when a private investigator solves cases and earns income for doing so. Acquire enough XPs and a character will go up a Level.



## THE PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

---

The private investigator (P.I.) is a detective who offers his services for hire to the general public. A private investigator can take a wide variety of cases, including running routine credit checks, recovering lost or stolen property, obtaining evidence to be used in lawsuits, solving crimes which have the police baffled or have not been reported to the police, and finding missing persons.

### ***PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR (P.I.) VERSUS PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR***

*In the Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game, every character is both a Private Investigator (P.I.) and a private investigator. There is a difference between the two in the game. The P.I. is the character's Class, the career or archetype that makes him distinct from other Classes. In the GANGBUSTERS RPG, there are several different Classes that a player could choose from to define his character, such as Police, FBI, Prohibition Agent, Reporter, and Gangster. NPCs can also have their own Classes. Each Class grants a host of bonuses and allow a character to take actions that he otherwise could not. In the Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game, only the P.I. Class is covered.*

*If Private Investigator (P.I.) is the character's Class, then private investigator is his job. It is what he does every day to earn an honest (maybe not so honest) buck, hunting for clues and testimony to solve cases. The difference between Private Investigator (P.I.) and a private investigator is a fine line, but it needs to be drawn because in game, a character could be working as private investigator, but actually have another Class. For example, a character might be a Prohibition Agent working undercover as a private investigator or a Gangster working as a crooked private investigator! This is not something that you need to worry about in the Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game, but when we refer to P.I. it is the character's Class and his job when we say private investigator.*

## QUALIFICATIONS

All private investigators must be licensed by the state where they have their office. A beginning private investigator can get a license by paying a \$50 licensing fee. Anyone who has been convicted of a felony cannot obtain a private investigator's license.



## POWERS

Any character with a private investigator's license has the following powers and privileges:

- He can carry a concealed weapon;
- He can arrest anyone who is wanted by the police;
- He can arrest anyone he sees actually committing a crime.

## LICENSE REVOCATION

A private investigator's license will be revoked if the private investigator does any of the following:

- Interferes with law enforcement officers performing their duties;
- Engages in gross misconduct, as determined by the chief of police in the city where the P.I. is working;
- Is convicted of a felony.



Note that the first two of these are judged by the local chief of police (whether an NPC or PC). The final decision concerning the revocation of a private investigator's license is left up to the campaign Judge to decide. Once revoked, a license cannot normally be restored.

## EMPLOYMENT

A private investigator can operate as an independent, as a partner in a small agency, or as the employee of a large detective agency.



## INDEPENDENTS

Any income a private investigator keeps for himself must be earned by working on special cases, as explained below.

## PARTNERSHIPS

A partnership is a special business arrangement in which each of the partners owns a certain percentage of the company, and is entitled to that percentage of the company's earnings. A beginning private investigator can be offered a partnership by an NPC private investigator, at the Judge's discretion. If a PC does form a partnership with an NPC, use the following procedure to determine the PC's income each game week:

1. Roll 1d10 and subtract two. If the result is zero or less, treat it as zero.
2. Multiply the result of the die roll by \$25.
3. Add any money earned that week by the PC's partner.
4. Multiply the sum from step 3 by the percent of the partnership owned by the PC. The result is the PC's income for that week.

*EXAMPLE OF PLAY: John Martin, an established NPC private investigator, offers a 25% partnership to the beginning PC P.I., Nick Angelino. At the end of the first week of play, the Judge rolls a d10 and gets a seven; subtracting two gives a result of five. He multiplies this by \$25, getting \$125. During that week, John Martin also made \$50 on a case. This is added to the \$125 for a total of \$175. Nick's earnings for the week are 25% of \$175 or  $(0.25 \times \$175 = \$43.75)$ .*

## EXPENSES

Independent private investigators and private investigators in partnerships must provide themselves with an office, a secretary, and a city business license. These cost between \$50 and \$75 per week, but all P.I.s are assumed to earn enough money in minor cases to cover these and other office expenses. If any private investigator goes six weeks without a special case, and does not have at least \$100 in reserve, that P.I. must get a special case the next week or he will be unable to pay his expenses and will be kicked out of his office.

## LARGE AGENCIES

A private investigator can try to get a job with a large detective agency. Beginning detectives must make a Presence check by rolling 1d10. If the roll is equal to or lower than the PC's Presence, the PC has landed a job. A Private investigator who has reached Third Level or above can get a job with a large detective agency without having to make this roll. A beginning private investigator is paid \$25 per week by the agency. In addition, he may receive bonuses if his employer (usually an NPC played by the Judge) is impressed with his work.

## SPECIAL CASES

A special case is any case brought to a private investigator by a PC; or any case brought to a private investigator that the game Judge decides is a special case. A private investigator can obtain special cases in the following ways:

- Employees of large detective agencies will always be assigned to special cases by their agency;
- All cases brought to a private investigator by other PCs are special cases;
- A private investigator has a 10% chance per Level per week of obtaining a special case, if he is not already working on one (these must be made up by the Judge);
- The campaign Judge can give a P.I. a special case at any time. Ideally, the Judge should prepare one or more special cases for the private investigator before the game begins and have it ready to play when the P.I. next gets a special case. Sometimes though, such cases often can

be made up on the spot; see the example under How to Play a Private Investigator.

### FEEES FOR SPECIAL CASES

Independent private investigators and private investigators in partnerships must negotiate their own fees with the client who brings them the case. First Level private investigators should try to get at least \$10 per day plus expenses. This figure may be higher if the case involves special dangers. A private investigator of higher Level can command much higher fees.

Private investigators who work for a large agency are paid a salary, so the fee the agency charges the client is of little interest to them. However, agency employees can negotiate with the client for a higher fee for their agency if the case involves more work than was expected. In such cases, the investigator usually will receive a bonus in addition to his regular salary.

### ***FEEES FOR SPECIAL CASES TABLE***

<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>WEEKLY PAY</b>
1-3	\$25.00
4-5	\$50.00
6-8	\$75.00
9-10	\$100.00

### HOW TO PLAY A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

The following are tips for players with Private Investigator characters:

- Become acquainted with as many PCs and NPCs as possible. You never know when you might need a tip or a favor. Private investigators should make a point of becoming acquainted with the local police, ward bosses, politicians, crime reporters, and bootleggers as well as the secretaries in the offices of the high and mighty. They are valuable sources of information.
- Make good use of public information sources such as credit bureaus, car license branches, city agencies which give building permits, zoning changes, business licenses, etc. They are easy sources of fast and often very important information.
- Always protect your license. Essentially, this means either being on good terms with the Chief of Police, or having information about him that he does not want the public to hear. You may sometimes have to bend a few laws to get the information you need for a case.
- Always get at least part of your fee in advance.

- Try to have at least one person who will have your back no matter the risk or implications.

*EXAMPLE OF PLAY: Vincent Orsini has set up an office as an independent private investigator. Vincent is still a Level 1 P.I., so he has a 10% chance per week of getting a special case. On the third week, Vincent gets lucky and rolls 09 on percentile dice; he gets a special case.*

*The Judge tells Vincent that a young blonde woman comes to his office, sobbing over the disappearance of her father, a prominent local businessman. He has been missing for three weeks. The police are baffled. Can he find her father?*

*Vincent quickly negotiates his fee, and takes \$100 in advance. He then questions the lady in detail, learning all he can about her father, his business, and the circumstances surrounding his disappearance. The Judge, who is playing the daughter, makes up most of this information in response to Vincent's questions. Vincent learns from the woman that her father was the president and founder of Fabco Manufacturing Co. He had an annual income of \$21,000. He was last seen three weeks ago, at 5:30 on a Friday afternoon, in his office at the plant. The last person to see him was his secretary. He never came home that night and has not been seen since. He had no known enemies and no problems at home.*

*Vincent begins his investigation by checking with a friend at the police department to see what the cops have on the case. He calls another friend at the local newspaper to see what he knows about Fabco. He checks into the company's finances by asking some discreet questions of local stock brokers and investment analysts.*

***Before the investigation gets very far, of course, the Judge will have to decide what really has happened to the girl's father, but we will end our example here. Your character might have to work on a similar case in your campaign!***

## UNDERSTANDING THE CHARACTERS

---



To play a detective employed by *The Blue Book Detective Agency* you need to create a character. Before your character can take his first steps you need to find out what he is capable of. When he has to fire a gun or drive a car in a highspeed chase, your character has to rely upon the natural talents that represent his intrinsic abilities to interact in the game world. These intrinsic abilities are defined by eight characteristics or Abilities.

### FEMALE CHARACTERS

---

There is no difference in playing a male or female during this time. Female Police Officers, Detectives, Reporters, Gangster, Lawyers and P.I.s exist at the time. While some slights may have been hinted at them, no more than playing various ethnic types during this time. It is the hopes that you play with a mature modern view in how you treat your players during the course of the game. Game play has its emphasis on brains over brawn and playing a female should not be a hindrance.

### ABILITY SCORE EXPLANATION

---

In *The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game* we use numbers to show how your character compares to those around him. These numbers, or ratings, are assigned to five different Abilities: Muscle, Agility, Observation, Presence, and Luck. In addition, each character has ratings for three other factors: Hit Points, Driving score, and Punching score. The ratings for these three factors are derived from the ratings for the five Abilities.

## MUSCLE (MS)

Muscle is used to measure how strong and physically fit the character is. This is a blend of brute physical power and general health. Should you want to know how much a character can lift, it is equal to three times his Muscle score in pounds.

## AGILITY (AG)

Agility measures the character's body control, hand-to-eye coordination, and manual dexterity. It indicates how accurately the character can punch and shoot, and how well he can perform difficult physical actions.

## OBSERVATION (OB)

Observation is a mix of the character's mental acuity and alertness. Thus it measures his cunning and ability to make leaps of logic and intuition as well as how good he is at noticing the concealed, the unusual, or the out of place... This sort of preparedness requires mental discipline and also hinges upon the character having the wisdom and foresight to keep a variety of essential tools and supplies close at hand.

## PRESENCE (PR)

Presence represents the character's force of personality, moxie, and a measure of how easily he can influence those around him. This can be to instill faith and trust in his friends, allies, and subordinates, and to charm others, but it can be used to intimidate them too. It can also be a measure of the character's personal looks, whether he is attractive or even tough or imposing he seems to be.

## LUCK (LK)

Luck is the character's success or failure apparently brought about by chance rather than through his own actions. This is that purposeless, unpredictable, and uncontrollable force that shapes events favorably or unfavorably for an individual. It might cause the fatal shot to bounce off a policeman's badge or the awning to snap as you dangle off a roof. The character's Luck score is the percentage chance that the unthinkable might happen, either saving him from certain death or leading to uncanny events.

## DRIVING (DR)

This is a measure of how well the character can drive a car or truck under normal road conditions. Under normal conditions and for regular actions a character is not required to make a check or roll against this ability. When those actions are complicated by fancy maneuvers or difficult weather, or road conditions, then the character operating the vehicle must demonstrate his expertise with a skill check.

## HIT POINTS (HP)

A character uses numbers to track both of the life threatening and superficial injuries that he could suffer during the course of his investigations. The numbers reflect how much physical damage he can withstand before he is knocked out or killed. The higher this rating the more resilient he is.

## PUNCHING

A character's Punching score is the number of points of bruises the character causes when he hits an opponent in an unarmed attack.



## CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS

In a campaign, each player needs information about his character's age, weight, height, distinct features, marks or scars and ethnic background. This information can help others identify your character if he is unconscious, missing, or a suspect in a crime.

## ETHNIC BACKGROUND

Ethnic Background is the national origin or racial type of a character's family. This background can affect how NPCs react to a PC or other NPCs. A player can choose any ethnic back ground for his or her character.

For game purposes, most people in a city are considered to have a special background called assimilated. A typical assimilated

character is white with a European heritage. Assimilated characters have blended in with the majority of a city's population and are not considered to have any special ethnic background. Specific ethnic backgrounds that were common in cities of the period are French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Irish, Italian, Black, Chinese, Japanese, Croatian, Polish, Russian, Hispanic and Scandinavian.

## AGE

At the beginning of a campaign game, a player can roll his characters starting  $3d10+16$ . Or they choose an age from 21 to 26 for his or her character.

### EFFECTS OF AGE

Age affects a character's Muscle, Agility, Observation, and Presence scores. These effects are summarized below.

**Muscle and Observation** - A character's Muscle and Observation scores drop two points at age 65 and two points every year after age 65. These scores are never reduced below 26.

**Agility** - Character's scores for Agility drop one point at age 42 and one more point every two years after age 42. These scores are never reduced below 26.

**Presence** - A character can add one point to his Presence at age 45, one point at age 55, and another point at age 65. A character's Presence score can never be greater than 10.

## BASIC CHARACTER CREATION

Although *The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game* includes six ready-to-play pre-generated characters, you can also create your own character. To do this, all you have to do is follow the ten steps outlined below. If you are planning to play a more detailed game, you will find more information for characters in the *Gangbusters Core Rulebook*. *The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game* also includes rules for *Strange and Mysterious Powers*, but these are optional and a player character cannot have any of them unless he has permission of the Judge. Thus they are not included in the steps outlined below. The creation of Rick's character, Nick



Angelino, is used as an example throughout the process.

1. You will want to record all the scores you generate in pencil as some of the information you write down may change during the course of the game.
2. Write your own name in the space marked 'Player.' This will help you and the game Judge know which character sheet is yours.
3. To get your character's Muscle (MS), Agility (AG), and Observation (OB) scores, roll percentile dice (d100) for each one in turn. Once you have generated a separate score for each of the three find the number you rolled on the *Abilities Modifier Table*. Add the modifier to your dice roll and record the new total on the character sheet.

### **ABILITIES MODIFIER TABLE**

DICE ROLL	MODIFIER
01-25	+25
26-50	+15
51-70	+10
71-90	+5
91-100	+0

*EXAMPLE: Rick is creating his character, Nick Angelino. He rolls 42 for his Muscle, 72 for his Agility, and 56 for his Observation. Looking at the table, he adds +15 to his Muscle, +5 to his Agility, and +10 to his Observation. This gives him final results of Muscle 42, Agility 72, and Observation 66.*

4. Presence (PR) is rated from 1-10 so instead of a d100 you roll a 1d10 to get the rating. Add that number to the modifier found on the *Presence Modifier Table*.

### **PRESENCE MODIFIER TABLE**

DICE ROLL	MODIFIER
1-3	+2
4-7	+1
8-10	+0

*EXAMPLE: Rick continues creating Nick Angelino and rolls 1d10 for his Presence. He rolls 6 and adds +1 as per the PRESENCE MODIFIERS TABLE to give a final result of 7.*

5. The character's Luck (LK) score is generated by rolling d100. The number rolled on the percentile dice is divided by two. Round up to the nearest whole number.

*EXAMPLE: Rick rolls percentile dice for his character's Luck score. The dice roll is 87. Rick divides 87 by two and gets 43.5. Rounding this up gives a result of 44, which is Nick Angelino's beginning Luck.*

**6.** To determine how much damage a character can take, or Hit Points (HP), add his Muscle and Agility scores together and divide this sum by 10 (rounding up to the nearest whole number). Then add 5 to generate his Hit Points score.

*EXAMPLE: So far Nick has a Muscle score of 42 and an Agility score of 72. Rick adds these together to get the sum of 114 and then divided by 10 to get a result of 11.4. This is rounded up to the nearest whole number, 12, to which 5 is added to give Nick a final result of 17 Hit Points. Rick's character has a Muscle score of 72 and an Agility score of 28. Rick adds these together and gets a sum of 100. Dividing by 10(Round up to the nearest whole number), Rick gets the sum of 10 and then he adds five points for a final result of 15 Hit Points.*

**7.** To determine your character's Driving (DR) score, add his Agility and Observation together and divide by two (rounding up to the nearest whole number).

*EXAMPLE: Rick adds Nick's Agility and Observation scores of 72 and 66 together to get a total of 138. He divides this by two to give a final result of Driving 69.*

**8.** Each character also has a Punching score. To determine his Punching score, simply refer to the Punching Score Table and note down the number given alongside your character's Muscle score. This is his Punching score.

### **PUNCHING SCORE TABLE**

<b>DICE ROLL</b>	<b>MODIFIER</b>
01-20	1
21-40	2
41-60	3
61-80	4
81-100	5

*EXAMPLE: Rick's character has a Muscle score of 37. Checking the Punching Score Table, he records that his character has a Punching score of 2.*

**9.** Select three skills. One is equal to that of a Trained Professional (35%), while the other two are equal to that of a Skilled Amateur (25%).

**10.** Give your character a name and background. Spend your starting funds as you so desire.

**10.** Give your character a name and background. Spend your starting funds as you so desire.

*EXAMPLE: Rick decides that his character, Nick Angelino is of Italian background, so he speaks English and Italian. Nick grew up in Little Italy and could have ended in a life of petty crime like many of his school friends. Instead he decides not to break his mother's heart and goes back to school so he could first graduate and then go to night school. Before working as a private eye, Nick was a night watchman.*

*Rick knows that every character starts the game with two suits of clothes, including coats, ties, wallet, watch, comb, and other small personal effects, plus \$50. He has Nick buy a Kodak Vest Pocket Camera, a blank journal, a pair of x4 binoculars, and a cheap handgun, an Iver Johnson Safety Automatic .38 S&W calibre revolver. This costs him \$48.60, leaving him little over a dollar in his pocket. Nick really needs to start working!*

*Rick's character, Nick Angelino, is now complete and ready to play. All he has to do is note down his details on a character sheet. In the meantime, this is what the character looks like.*

**Nick Angelino** — Private Investigator (Age 25, Italian American) Level 1 P.I.

**MS** = 42; **AG** = 72; **OB** = 66; **DR** = 69; **PR** = 7; **LK** = 44; **HP** = 17

Punching: 3

Skills: Law 35%, Criminal Activities (25%), Dodge & Defense (25%)

Carries: Iver Johnson Safety Automatic .38 S&W calibre revolver, pocket knife.

# SKILLS

Skills represent the enhanced abilities and knowledges of a character. While having a skill will benefit the character, he should not feel that he cannot attempt a task simply because he does not possess a given skill. Having a skill simply improves a character's chance of achieving his stated goals.

Skills act in two different ways.

First, they give a character the ability to perform an ordinary task, such as hold down a job as a cabbie, charm a crowd, or spot a forgery.

Second, when a character goes to investigate a scene the Judge may ask if he has an appropriate skill that relates to the clue at a scene. If you do, you will automatically get the clue if there is one. Yes, automatically – no roll is required. It is up to the player to figure out what to do with the information gained, not struggle to get it.

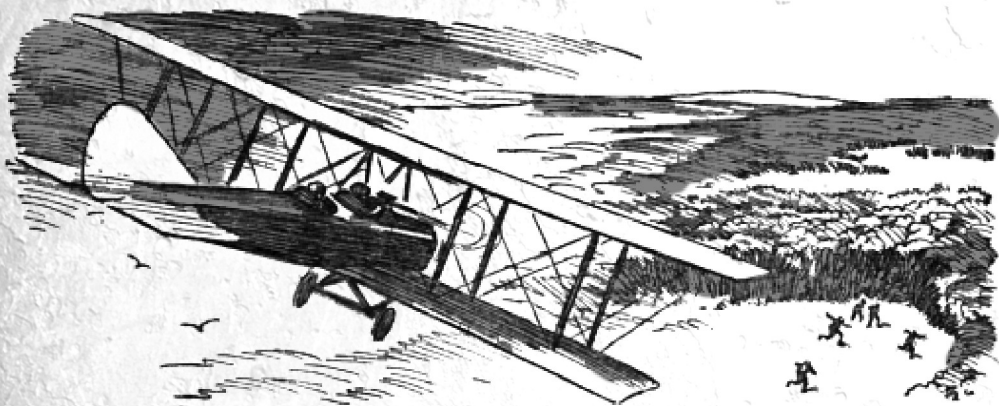


## SKILL RANKINGS

Each skill has a ranking, from 'Unskilled' to 'One of the Best in the World'. Each ranking has an associated percentile value against which a skill check can be made.

### SKILL RANKINGS TABLE

RATING	PERCENTAGE	EXPERIENCE COST
Unskilled	5%	0
Some Exposure	10%	500
Familiarity	15%	1,000
Skilled Amateur	25%	2,000
Trained Professional	35%	3,000
Expert Professional	55%	5,000
Professional Mastery	65%	10,000
One of the Best in the Country	80%	20,000
One of the Best in the World	90%	25,000



## SKILL LIST

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This section details all of the skills used throughout the game.

### ACTING

Acting is the art of pretending to be someone else. It is an important skill when faced with the dubious necessities of some criminal investigations. An Observation Roll can be made to see if someone is not who they are pretending to be. At the Judge's discretion, a roll can be made against the Disguise Specialty of the Craft skill to gain a bonus to the Acting roll.

### AREA KNOWLEDGE

Sometimes it is important for an investigator to intimately know his surroundings. The difficulty of an Area Knowledge Roll mostly depends on how big the area is, or if the investigator would have any reasonable knowledge of it from newspapers, maps, writings, or from having passed through the area.

### ARTISTRY

This Skill covers any form of art that an investigator might possess. An investigator may be a wonderful singer, an agile dancer, or an accomplished painter. Most upper-class female characters will have at least one Artistry specialty that they cultivate before entering the social season for the first time.

### CHARM

Sometimes personal magnetism is all an investigator needs to get

answers. The Charm Skill is opposed by Observation. Just because a target is Charmed does not mean he will do whatever is asked of him without hesitation. The target is not being mind-controlled. Charm means that the target is beguiled, making it more likely that he will accept a suggestion, be distracted, or otherwise be prepared to please the charmer. Seduction is using Charm as a way of suggesting possible romantic encounters. Friendly Persuasion makes a target regard the charmer in a favorable light. Altering Emotions could potentially defuse a fight. Misdirection is the Specialty of making someone focus on one location, object, or person to the exclusion of everything else.

## CLIMB

This is the physical art of scaling an object. The difficulty depends on the height, scalability, and danger of the obstacle to be climbed. This skill covers the smallest fence to the highest mountain peak.

## COMMERCE

Commerce is the skill of conducting a particular trade. A Commerce roll could be used when asked to recall a specific fact about a trade or while working the trade to make money. Almost any business can be made into a Specialty.



## CRAFT

This Skill is used when you want to make something with your own hands. It might be building a model ship, welding an iron door, or sewing clothes. It also covers the nefarious art of forging documents and counterfeiting money.

## CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

This Skill represents the hodgepodge of skills that criminals may find useful in their endeavors. Such as being able to crack a safe or pick a pocket.

## CUSTOMS

Customs is a skill used to recall or perform certain customs of a class or nationality of person. Perhaps an investigator needs to know how to

introduce himself to German royalty or avoid a scandalous misstep at a London social occasion.

## DODGE & DEFENSE

This is the skill of avoiding injuries due to attacks. A character can make a Dodge & Defense roll to oppose any Fight or other Attack Roll to avoid being hit.

## DRIVE & PILOT

This Skill is used to steer and operate anything other than automobiles and trucks.

## ENDURANCE

Endurance is a physical Skill that represents how well a character holds up to extended physical strains, such as running and swimming over long distances. Specialties include the type of activity performed.

## FIGHT

The Fight Skill covers all forms of unarmed combat, fisticuffs, and other fighting arts. Fight rolls are opposed by Dodge & Defense Skill Rolls.



## HIDE

Hide is the skill used when you want to conceal either yourself or an object. It is normally opposed by an Observation roll.

## HISTORY

As the skill name implies, History is the Skill for remembering historical events.

## HUNTING

Hunting is the art of trapping or finding prey. It is useful when tracking criminals or when a fellow has been invited on a Big Game Safari.

## JUMP

Much like the Climb skill, this is a physical skill for exactly what the name implies, that is jumping onto, over, and off of objects.

## LANGUAGE

Investigators with this skill understand multiple languages. It is assumed that characters who are not assimilated speak their Ethnic tongue plus English.

## LAW

Investigators with this skill understand crime and punishment as well as criminal proceedings. This skill also covers non-criminal aspects of the law.

## MEDICINE

Medicine is the skill of healing wounds. First Aid is required to treat a person at an injury level of Wounded or less.

## MENACE

Menace is using your appearance or words to inspire fear in a target. Menace can compel the target to comply with demands, flee, or even surrender. It is normally opposed by an Observation roll.



## NAVIGATE

This skill is used to find the way to a particular destination. It differs from Area Knowledge. Area Knowledge provides details about specific area, but Navigate provides the know-how to get to the desired location across a specific type of terrain.



## ORATORY

This is the art of speaking. With the Oratory skill an investigator can make a rousing speech, convince a police officer that he belongs at the investigation, or persuade someone to provide him with some extra information.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

This is both the art of taking clear and usable pictures and then developing them. It also includes the knowledge of using the flash powder to take photographs in the dark and mixing the chemicals necessary to develop them.

## RESEARCH

To unravel mysteries, an investigator may have to research topics. This can be the simple task of reading newspapers, but it can involve time spent in the local library, police archive, or museum.

## RIDE

In most cases, the Ride skill applies to that of riding horses, but in rare cases it could apply to exotic animals such as camels or elephants. It could even apply to riding the running boards on most cars as well.



## SAILING

The Sailing skill includes all aspects of sailing, including handling the ship and its sails, navigation, and making repairs. It covers boats and ships of all sizes powered by sails, from a small sloop to a large three-masted schooner.

## SCIENCE

The Science skill covers a character's understanding of scientific endeavor. It includes both his knowledge of science and his ability to apply it and conduct research. Specialties are the specific branches of science.

## SHOOTING

The Shooting skill covers every type of projectile weapon, from a bow and arrow to an artillery piece. It includes both discharging a weapon and maintaining it.

## SOCIAL SCIENCES

Where Science covers the study of hard sciences such as Chemistry and Physics, the Social Science skill is the study of humanity and human society.

## STREET SMARTS

Street Smarts measures the character's ability to use the underbelly of a criminal network or city to his advantage.

## SWIM

Much like the Climb and Jump skills, this is a physical skill for exactly what the name implies, that is, swimming. Specialties of Swim are typically types of bodies of water.

## THEOLOGY

Theology is the study of religion and all its earthly and heavenly aspects.

## WEAPON

The Weapon skill is used when a character wants to fight in hand-to-hand combat using melee weapons rather than unarmed.



# MONEY

Each character needs money to survive, just as real people do. A character earns money by working at his career, which is explained later in the rules.

## STARTING MONEY

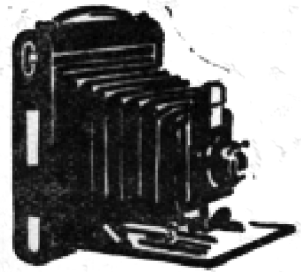
At the beginning of a campaign game, each character has the following:

1. Two suits of clothes, including coats, ties, wallet, watch, comb, and other small personal effects.
2. \$50 in cash.

Each character must use his \$50 to buy anything else that he wants at the start of the game.

## BASIC EXPENSES

Each character must pay \$20 each week to cover basic expenses. Basic expenses include rent, food, laundry, etc. The rent pays for a furnished room in a cheap hotel or apartment building. Basic expenses do not include a car.



<b>Clothing</b>	<b>Cost</b>		
Belt	\$1.00	Goggles (Aviator/Motorcycle)	\$4.89
Boots, Calfskin riding	\$10.00	Hat, Dress	\$2.49
Coat, Cloth	\$6.98	Hat, Newsboy/Golf cap	\$0.89
Coat, Dress	\$6.75	Hat, Stetson	\$3.98
Coat, Leopard	\$92.00	Jacket, Leather flight	\$20.00
Coat, Mink	\$585.00	Jacket, Rugged leather	\$17.00
Coat, Overcoat	\$11.00	Jacket, Soft leather	\$10.00
Coat, Raincoat	\$2.69	Pants, fine	\$3.00
Dress, fair (full body)	\$3.00	Pants, work	\$1.25
Dress, good (full body)	\$10.00	Set, Heavy Clothes	\$5.00
Dress, Wool	\$1.95	Set, Fine Clothes	\$10.00
Gloves, leather driving	\$1.00	Shirt	\$0.69
Gloves, canvas work (six pair)	\$0.39	Shirt, suede hunting	\$3.00
		Shoes, men's	\$4.00

Shoes, women's	\$0.69
Shoes, Leather	\$1.79
Shoes, Reptile leather	\$6.00
Silk necktie	\$0.79
Silk Stockings	\$0.69
Suit, Golf	\$20.00
Suit, poor	\$12.00
Suit, fine	\$32.00
Suit, Tuxedo	\$25.00
Suit, Wool (men's)	\$10.50
Suit, Wool (women's)	\$3.98
Sweater, pullover	\$1.95
Sweater, wool	\$1.69

<b>Personal Effects</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Backpack, cloth	\$2.00
Backpack, leather	\$6.00
Bandolier	\$0.50
Briefcase	\$1.00
Cigarette Holder	\$1.00
Holster	\$1.00
Pearls, Cultivated Oriental	\$35.00
Perfume, per ounce	\$1.00
Purse	\$1.00
Satchel, leather	\$0.90
Spectacles	\$9.00
Wallet	\$2.00
Watch (wrist/nice)	\$22.00
Watch (wrist/average)	\$5.00
Watch (pocket/nice)	\$10.00
Watch (pocket/average)	\$4.00

<b>Housing/Lodging</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Farm & 6 room house	\$4,250.00
Italian villa, 12 rooms	\$17,000.00
Sears Homes "Kit", 6 rooms	\$2,800.00
Silver Cloud travel trailer	\$695.00
3-room apartment	\$15.00/month
Hotel, Waldorf Astoria (NYC)	\$5.00-\$10.00 /night

<b>Gadgets</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Alarm clock	\$1.00
Ariel antenna set	\$2.00
Camera - Bantam, field model	\$110.00
Camera - Kodak, Brownie	\$3.00
Camera - Kodak, Vest Pocket	\$20.00
Headphones	\$1.25
Microscope x425	\$16.00
Microscope x100	\$5.00
Movie camera, 8mm	\$29.50
P.A. system	\$37.00
Radio	\$75.00
78 RPM Record	\$0.50
Record Player	\$9.00
Typewriter	\$37.00

<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Bicycle	\$7.00
Book (blank diary/journal)	\$0.60
Book (fine journal w/lock)	\$2.50
Cigarettes (pack)	\$0.15
Cigarette lighter	\$0.39
Dental filling	\$1.00
Drawing set	\$7.00
Fireproof safe	\$12.00

<b>Miscellaneous (Cont'd)</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Fountain pen	\$0.85
Handcuffs	\$5.00
Ink	\$0.20
Kit, Archaeology	\$20.00
Kit, Carpentry Tools	\$10.00
Kit, Lock picking	\$10.00
Kit, Mechanical Tools	\$25.00
Kit, Medical	\$10.00
Kit, Welding/Cutting	\$95.00
Newspaper	\$0.05
Novel, pulp	\$0.10
Pipe	\$0.83
Scissors, fine	\$5.00
Slide ruler	\$3.00

<b>Household Items</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Bed (Double) & spring mattress	\$14.95
Bedroom set, 3-piece	\$49.95
Bed sheets, Double	\$0.74
Blanket, Wool	\$1.00
Brush set	\$2.00
Chair, Lounge	\$19.95
Chair, Wing	\$39.00
Combs	\$0.09
Dining Room set	\$46.50
Electric Coffee Percolator	\$1.39
Electric Iron	\$2.00
Electric Mixer	\$9.95
Electric Portable Sewing Machine	\$24.95
Electric Shaver	\$15.00
Electric Washing Machine	\$47.95
Face Powder	\$1.50
Flatware, Silver plate, 26 piece	\$5.00

Lamp, Copper	\$1.95
Piano, Grand	\$395.00
Razor (10)	\$4.00
Razor blades	\$0.49
Rug, wool	\$5.85
Secretary, Colonial walnut	\$54.00
Soap (12 cakes)	\$0.40
Sofa, Chippendale mahogany	\$135.00
Stove, gas	\$23.95
Table, Bridge	\$1.00
Table, Louis XV walnut dining	\$124.00
Table, mahogany coffee	\$10.75
Tablecloth, linen	\$1.05
Tooth brush	\$0.10
Tooth paste (large)	\$0.25
Vacuum cleaner	\$18.75

<b>Automobile Services</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Automobile Tires, (set of 4)	\$6.35
Engine, V-8, Factory rebuilt	\$40.00
Fan belts, Ford & Chevrolet	\$0.12
Gasoline (per gallon)	\$0.10
Motor Oil (per quart)	\$0.15
Parking, All day	\$0.09

<b>Weapons &amp; Ammo</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Pistol, .22	\$5.00
Pistol, Beretta palm-sized	\$30.00
Pistol, Colt	\$25.00
Revolver, .38	\$20.00
Revolver, .357	\$22.00
Rifle, .22	\$5.00
Rifle, Hunter	\$30.00
Rifle, Elephant Gun	\$70.00

Shotgun, Pump 12g	\$60.00
Scope	\$60.00
TNT (per stick)	\$5.00
Whip, Bullwhip	\$2.00
Ammo, .22 caliber	\$0.02
Ammo, handgun caliber	\$0.03
Ammo, rifle	\$0.07
Ammo, shotgun	\$0.05

<b>Adventuring Gear</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Binoculars, x4	\$8.00
Binoculars, x5	\$12.00
Binoculars, x6	\$14.00
Canoe, wood	\$12.00
Compass	\$1.50
Cooking Gear	\$1.25
Cot	\$4.00
Fishing Pole, average	\$1.50
Fishing Pole, nice	\$10.00
Flashlight, w/2 batteries	\$0.79
Gas Lantern	\$5.69
Gas Mask	\$7.00
Grappling Hook	\$2.00
Parachute	\$20.00
Shovel/Pick	\$1.00
Sleeping bag, summer	\$1.00
Sleeping bag, winter	\$3.00
Telescope	\$16.00
Tent, 7'x7' waterproof	\$11.00
Tent, Pup	\$5.00
Tent, Umbrella waterproof	\$22.00
Twisted linen line	\$30.00

<b>Vehicles</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Motorcycle	\$200.00
2-seater	\$300.00
4-seater	\$500.00
2-seater Sportster	\$2,500.00
Limousine	\$3,000.00
Truck	\$750.00

<b>Criminal Services</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Hit by a Street Thug	\$400.00
Hit by a Hitman	\$1,000.0
Hit by a Torpedo	\$20,000.00
Forged Document	\$150.00
Plastic Surgery	\$500.00
Hired smuggler/burglar	10% of loot

<b>Living Cost, Monthly</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Poor	\$20.00
Average	\$50.00
Good	\$90.00
Wealthy	\$200.00
Luxurious	\$1,000.00
Ultra-rich	\$3,000.00
Minor social event	\$100.00
Small social event	\$300.00
Medium social event	\$1,000.00
Large social event	\$2,000.00
Gigantic social event	\$10,000.00

## WEAPONS

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Handguns, rifles and shotguns can be bought in gun shops or through criminal suppliers. Guns bought from gun shops will be registered with the local police. Automatic weapons (Thompsons and B.A.R.s) can be bought through military surplus stores under severe restrictions, or from criminals. The prices shown for weapons are general guides; the Judge can adjust the prices as he sees fit, due to circumstances or the quality of the weapon sought. Guns bought from criminals may cost as much as twice their listed value and may leave the purchaser open to blackmail or at least owing the seller a favor... or two.

## GUNS

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### .25 ACP PISTOL

The .25 is a very small pistol using the .25 ACP cartridge. Most of these pistols are cheap and of poor quality, known as 'Saturday Night Specials'. The gun is not very powerful and has little stopping power, but is favored for its small size and low price, making it ideal as a backup weapon or for use in committing crimes.

*Example Model: **Colt M1908 Vest Pocket** — Attacks: 3; Ammo: 6 (box)*



### .38 SPECIAL REVOLVER

The most popular revolver in America, the .38 Special is the standard police sidearm almost everywhere in the US. While lacking the heavier stopping power of a .45, the .38 Special is still quite powerful and has better penetration.

*Example Model: **Smith & Wesson Model 10** — Attacks: 2; Ammo: 6 (cylinder)*

### .45 ACP PISTOL

The .45 is a heavy pistol using the .45 ACP cartridge. The pistol is primarily used as the standard military sidearm, and sees little use by civilians.

*Example Model: **Colt M1911** — Attacks: 3; Ammo: 6 (box)*

## 12 GAUGE PUMP ACTION SHOTGUN

A standard, 12 gauge shotgun with a quick pump action. Originally designed for the military for trench warfare, it is popular with police for crowd control and breach entry, as well as criminals wanting a higher-powered, multi-shot weapon. (Double-barreled and single-barreled breech-loaded shotguns are also commonly available and will be more likely found in rural areas.)

*Example Model: **Winchester Model 12** — Attacks: 2; Ammo: 5 (tube)*

## THOMPSON SUBMACHINE GUN

The Thompson is a submachine gun capable of firing in semi- or fully-automatic mode, using the .45 ACP pistol cartridge. It was designed for the military as a trench sweeping weapon, but has become popular amongst both criminals and law enforcement. Even then, possession of the gun is quite rare by either side and quite expensive.

*Example Model: **M1921 Thompson Submachine Gun** — Attacks: 3/Burst; Ammo: 20 (box), 50 (drum)*

## BROWNING AUTOMATIC RIFLE (BAR)

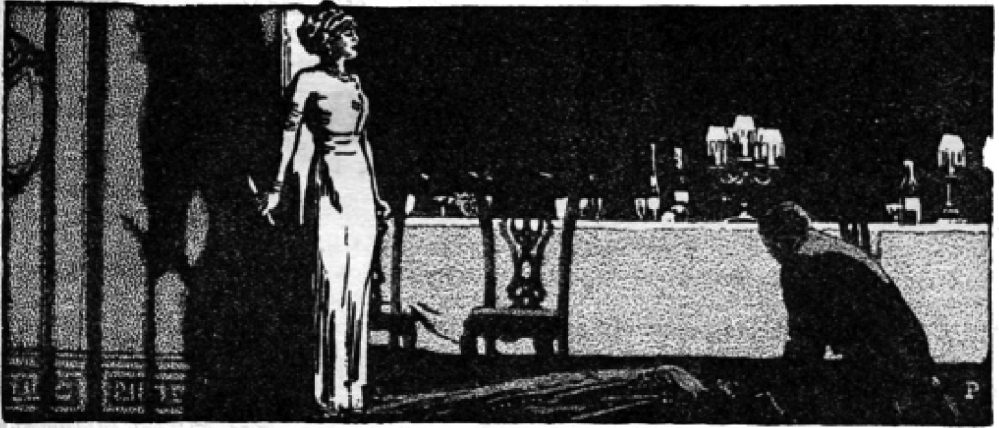
The Browning automatic rifle is capable of firing in either semi- and fully-automatic mode using the .30-06 Springfield cartridge. It is designed to be man-portable and allow for shoulder-fire, but the heavy recoil from burst fire requires using a bipod or other bracing. The BAR is strictly a military weapon, though robberies of these weapons by criminals have occurred (usually with weapons stolen from National Guard armories) and they are popular on the black market. Rifles which also fire the .30-06 Springfield cartridge, but which are not capable of firing in either semi- and fully-automatic mode, such as the M1903 Springfield rifle, are also available.

*Example Model: **M1918A2 BAR** — Attacks: 3/Burst; Ammo: 20 (box)*



## GAME SYSTEM

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### CHANGING THE RULES

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As stated below, the Judge can modify any rule to handle a special situation. This should be done on a case by case basis while still being consistent to avoid confusing the players or being unfair to them. For the most part though, the rules should cover most situations that arise in the game, but The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game is above all your game and you and your players are free to make it the game that you want.

The Judge and players may also decide to expand their campaign by adding rules to cover new character careers (or Classes), animals, airplanes or anything else they decide they want. However, it is suggested that such changes should be made only after extensive play with the rules as they are. This allows everyone the opportunity to get a feel for how The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game is played as written. In addition, changes made to the rules by a Judge or player who is not completely familiar with all of the rules could seriously affect the game's balance, giving some characters a greater advantage in the game than others.

### WHEN TO ROLL THE DICE

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The dice only need to be rolled when dramatic situations in the game arise. Driving down a well-lit street is not a dramatic situation, but chasing a speeding truck filled with stolen booze while being chased by the cops most definitely is!

Before the dice are rolled, the player and the Judge should agree what the intended outcome of the dice will be. Most of the time this will be obvious, such as attempting to land a punch on a goon or maintaining a tail on a suspect. If your skill roll is successful, you achieve your goal.

## CHECKS

When a character needs or wants to do something dramatically important in the game, he must attempt a test or check against one of his skills or Abilities. The check is made by rolling percentile dice. The dice roll is compared to the score for the Ability or skill being checked. If the result of the dice roll is less than or equal to the skill or Ability score, the check is successful and the character was able to achieve his desired goal. If the dice roll is greater than the skill or Ability score, the check has failed and the character was unable to do what was intended. The realization of failure does not need be always immediate and obvious. For example, when a player fails a check to spot someone tailing his character, the Judge should not just tell the player that his character has failed to spot the tail. After all, this would be a sure sign that someone is following the character. Since this is definitely a failed Observation check, the player should not know that his character is being tailed until he either becomes aware of it later himself or it is spotted by another player character.

## WHICH ABILITY TO CHECK

Most things can be done by simply rolling under a particular Ability. Most of the time, the choice of Ability will be obvious.

## SKILL SUCCESS CHECK TABLE

SKILL RATING	CHANCE	SKILL RATING	CHANCE
Unskilled	5%	Expert Professional	55%
Some Exposure	10%	Professional Mastery	65%
Familiarity	15%	One of the Best in the Country	80%
Skilled Amateur	25%	One of the Best in the World	90%
Trained Professional	35%		

*EXAMPLE: If a character wants to leap over a fence, he makes an Agility check; to bust down a door, he makes a Muscle check; and to figure out a clue, he makes an Observation check. At other times, the Judge will need to decide which Ability is appropriate.*

## MODIFIERS

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In *The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game*, everything is designed to keep the game light and fast. With that in mind we keep the modifiers to rolls rather simple. If you feel that a character should suffer a penalty, then assign one to the check. Similarly, if you think that the situation is easier than the norm, then assign the character a bonus to the check. In either situation, the modifier is applied to the rating of the relevant Ability before the dice are thrown.

*EXAMPLE OF PLAY:* Following on from our example of play, Monica Delacroix and Vincent Orsini are tailing 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino who they suspect are their way to meet with their boss, Sullivan, and carry out a job. They are driving behind their quarry on Highway 37 when it begins to rain heavily, making the road conditions and visibility a whole lot worse. The Judge calls for Driving check from Vincent to be able continue following the two gang members and informs him that because of the worsening conditions that there is a -10% penalty to be applied to Vincent's Driving Ability. For the purposes of this check, Vincent's Driving rating is reduced from 75 to 65.

### ADD +20 TO THE CHECK IF:

The task represents a simple action for which success is common enough to be expected, but things could still go wrong. Examples include swimming across a pool, reloading a gun while on horseback, jumping over a small fence, shooting a target at point blank range, and so on.

### ADD +10 TO THE CHECK IF:

The task represents a very easy action for which success is common enough to be expected, but things could still go wrong. Examples driving through a cluttered street, tailing a marked car, stitching up a pair of pants, shooting a target at close range, and so on.

### -10 TO THE DIE ROLL IF:

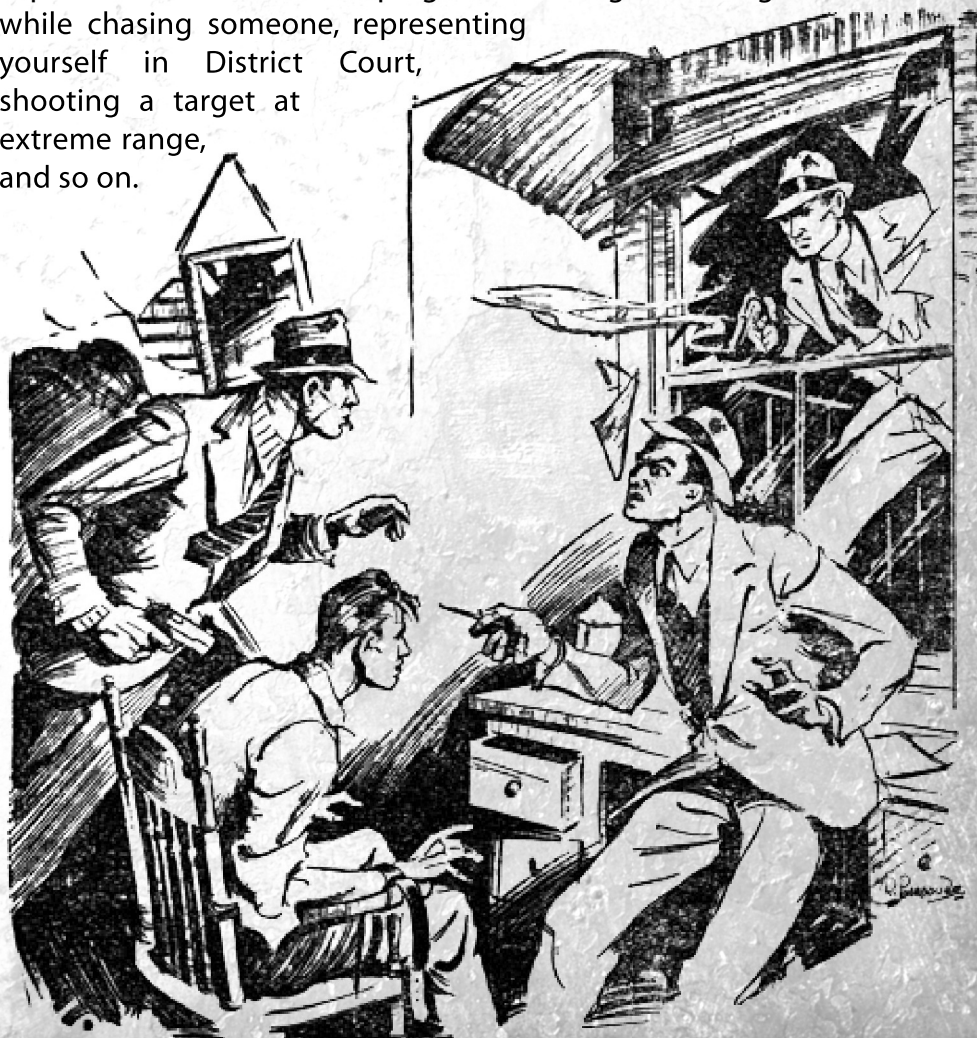
The task represents a routine action for which success is common enough to be expected, but for which failure is not surprising. Examples include picking a typical lock, stitching up a small wound, spotting a cab tailing you, shooting a target at medium range, trying to strike a target with a melee attack while engaged in combat, and so on.

**-20 TO THE DIE ROLL IF:**

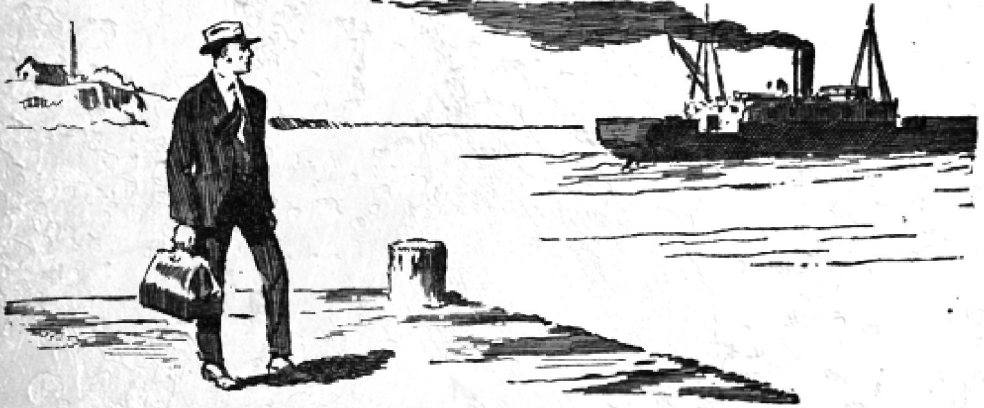
The task is much more demanding and while success is certainly feasible, failure is not uncommon. Examples include cracking a safe, setting broken bones or suturing large wounds, spotting a sniper without getting hit, shooting a target at long range, and so on.

**-30 TO THE DIE ROLL IF:**

The task is so daunting it taxes a character and is likely to push him to his limits. Failure is likely to be the outcome and while success is difficult to achieve, it is possible. Examples include picking an exceptionally sophisticated lock or safe, leaping from building to building while chasing someone, representing yourself in District Court, shooting a target at extreme range, and so on.



## MOVEMENT



Movement gets characters from one place to another. It includes walking, running, crawling, jumping, leaping, and difficult movements. In The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game maps and counters are used to track the movement of both the player characters and the NPCs.

### KEEPING TRACK OF MOVEMENT

Using the Counters. Use one counter to represent each player character or NPC. As a character moves, move his counter the appropriate number of squares on the map. Each player can keep track of the direction that his character is facing by pointing the top edge of its counter in that direction.

### USING MAPS

The most common measurement is a scale of one square = 15 feet. This scale map is used when characters are moving in cars or when details about the interiors of buildings are not needed. The interiors of buildings are a scale of one square = 5 feet. This scale is used during gunfights and chases, when building floor plans and other details are needed.

The distance a character can move on foot in 1 turn is listed below in the Movement Actions Table. Counters can move in any direction on the square grid of the map, including diagonally.

A character can move freely through a square that contains other friendly characters. This applies to both player characters and NPCs.

If the counters and maps are used, a character can make one 90° turn

or two 45° turns at any point during his move. Miniature figures can be turned up to 90°.

## MOVEMENT ACTIONS

1. Walk (5 feet)
2. Run (15 feet)
3. Crawl (2½ feet)
4. Leap (15 feet)
5. Jump (10 + feet)
6. Fall Prone
7. Stand Up (can be combined with Drawing a Weapon and Turn Around 180 Degrees)
8. Turn Around 180 Degrees (can be combined with Standing Up and Drawing a Weapon)
9. Open and/or Move Through a Door (move up to 5 feet)
10. Break Down Door
11. Move Up or Down Stairs, Ladder or Fire Escape (5 feet per turn)
12. Crouch or Drop Behind Cover
13. Get into or Out of a Car
14. Stand Still
15. Pick Up Object
16. Fall from a Height

## DRIVING ACTIONS

1. Start an Automobile Engine
2. Drive
3. Racing Turn
4. Bump
5. Cut Off



## FIST FIGHTING ACTION

1. Close for Fistfight (10 feet)
2. Fight Fair
3. Fight Dirty
4. Hold
5. Break Free
6. Maneuver
7. Disarm
8. Fire Pistol / Rifle / Shotgun / Submachine Gun

## GUN FIGHTING ACTIONS

1. Draw or Holster a Weapon
2. Fire a Weapon
3. Reload
4. Clear a Jammed Weapon
5. Aim (optional)





Tom  
Sullivan  
1939



## COMBAT

*"When in doubt, have two guys come through the door with guns."*

*– Raymond Chandler*

When combat occurs, whether it is with fists, knives, pistols, or tommy guns, all characters and those NPCs controlled by the Judge, act in order of their Observation (OB) scores. The highest OB acts first and then the others go in descending order from there.



The person with the highest Observation can process what is happening faster than those around him. Whether or not they connect with their attacks are based on their Agility (AG).

The duration of a combat round in The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game is best described as 'long enough for everyone to take one significant action'. The flow of the round is controlled by the Judge and although rules for exact movement and maneuvering are given, they do not have to be used when playing The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game. Instead, the Judge should make a call on how far and where a person or car can move, always keeping in mind that he should simply give everyone a chance to do something quickly while keep the game moving.

The Judge keeps track of time in a campaign game. Time can pass in seconds, minutes, hours, days, or weeks, depending upon what is happening in the game.

### DEALING WITH FIREARM ATTACKS

A character can shoot a firearm one or more times using this action in a round. As part of this attack, the character can move up to half his normal move rate, but all shots are considered wild (see below) if he moves more than 2 yards.

**Prepared Shots:** All combatants with a readied and aimed firearm may fire in Observation (OB) order before all other actions occur.

*EXAMPLE: The Sullivan gang has arrived in the town and managed to rob the bank by the time Monica Delacroix and Vincent Orsini arrive, They have heard shots fired inside and leaping out of the car, draw their guns and aim at the bank's front doors. The Judge states that this is a Prepared Action Shot and both will be able to fire first on the members of the Sullivan gang as they barrel out of the bank.*



**Normal Action Fire:** If a character had a firearm ready and has fired a shot as per the Prepared Shot Action and the firearm can be discharged more than once in a Round, then a second, single shot can be fired during the normal Observation (OB) order as part of Normal Action Fire. Alternately, a readied gun can be aimed and fired during the normal Observation (OB) order.

*EXAMPLE: Sullivan and his fellow bank robbers have exited the bank to Vincent yelling at them to give themselves up. The Judge tells Monica and Vincent that the bank robbers are holding their guns and can each take a Normal Action Fire as well as they can. Sullivan will open fire first as his Observation (OB) is higher than Monica and Vincent, who will shoot followed by 'Lucky' Nelson and Bruno Antonino.*

**Readying and Firing Weapons:** An unready firearm can be drawn and readied along with the Normal Action Fire, but the weapon can only be fired once during the Round. The drawing/readying of the firearm occurs

in normal Observation (OB) order while the firing of the gun occurs at Observation (OB)-10. This means that in effect, while a character can draw and shoot his gun, there is the chance that another character or an NPC who already has his gun ready can shoot first.

*EXAMPLE: Finally, on the next round, Nick Angelino arrives in his taxi. He sees what is happening and leaps from the cab while drawing his gun. The Judge tells Nick that since he is moving and readying his weapon, he can fire during Normal Action Fire, but at OB -10. This means that during this round he will be able to fire a single shot, but it will be after 'Lucky' Nelson has fired because the gang member's OB is temporarily higher.*

**Wild Shots:** A combatant may fire his weapon without any aiming at all. Wild shots have a -30% penalty and the recoil penalty is doubled for subsequent shots.

*EXAMPLE: Already under fire from Monica and Vincent, the bankrobber Bruno Antonio is surprised to be shot at from another direction by Nick. Bruno responds by turning and shoots without aiming. He takes a Wild Shot at a -30% penalty.*

## AUTOMATIC FIRE AND BURSTS

Weapons capable of automatic fire can fire multiple shots as part of a single attack called a Burst. In The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game, the only guns capable of firing a Burst are the Thompson Submachine Gun and the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR).

**Short Burst:** A short Burst fires five shots at once at a single target. If the attack hits, the damage is doubled. (Although five shots are fired, not all of them hit the target.)

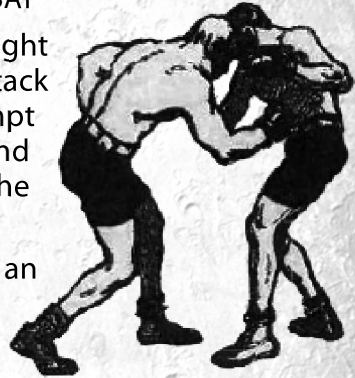
**Long Burst:** A long burst fires ten shots at once at either a single target or two targets standing next to each other (roll for an attack against each). An attack against a single target does five times the normal damage, or double normal damage against both targets if firing at two.

**Extended Burst / Spray:** An extended burst fires twenty shots at once over a 15° area. Roll to hit for each target in the area, up to a maximum of ten targets. The total damage taken by targets is ten times the normal damage, divided by the number of targets.

## FIGHTING RULES FOR CLOSE-QUARTERS COMBAT

Every time you are attacked you may choose to fight back (attempt to avoid, block, or parry an attack while making one of your own) or dodge (attempt to avoid the attack completely). Both attacker and defender roll percentage dice and compare the levels of success on their Agility checks:

- If you are fighting back, you need to roll an Agility check lower than your attacker.
- If you are dodging, you need to roll an Agility check lower than your attacker.



It is a simple matter – whomever rolls lower on their Agility check wins the exchange and either avoids receiving any damage or inflicts damage on their opponent.

## HIT POINTS, WOUNDS, AND HEALING

Whenever a character is damaged, whether as a result of a fight or an accident, the points of damage are deducted from the character's Hit Points. Hit Points cannot fall below zero or be recorded as a negative value, but when a character's Hit Points reach zero, he falls unconscious and is close to death (Dying). At the end of the next Round and every Round thereafter, he must make a successful Luck roll or die. Only getting some type of medical treatment will stop them from dying.

A character who has wounds must make a healing roll (using Muscle) at the end of each week. If successful, he regains 2 Hit Points, or 1d6 Hit points if he is under medical care for that week. It may take a while to fully recover from a horrific injury or accident.



## OTHER FORMS OF DAMAGE

There will come a time when the Judge will be forced to assign amount of damage caused by some random event. Whatever the cause, consider using the chart below as a handy guide. The Judge is of course free to choose any type of damage as he sees fit.

### OTHER DAMAGE SOURCES TABLE

DAMAGE SOURCE	DAMAGE
Punch; kick; head-butt; weak acid; breathing smokey atmosphere; a thrown fist-size rock; falling (per 10 feet) onto soft ground	1d6
Falling (per 10 feet) onto grass; club; strong acid; breathing water; exposure to vacuum; small-caliber bullet; arrow; fire (burning torch); mild acid	2d6
.38 calibre bullet; falling (per 10 feet) on to concrete; axe; fire (flamethrower, running through a burning room); being 6-10 yards from an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite; strong acid; a mild poison	3d6
Hit by a car at 30+ mph; being 3-5 yards from an exploding hand grenade or stick of dynamite; a strong poison	4d6

## COLLISIONS WITH OTHER VEHICLES

A car colliding into another car takes damage based on the nature of the collision.

**Head-On Collision:** Combine the speeds of both vehicles. Each vehicle takes 1d6 damage per 10 mph, while passengers in each vehicle take 3 damage per 10 mph.

**Sideswipe:** A sideswipe does 1d6 damage to the vehicle hit and 1d6-1 damage to the attacking vehicle. Passengers in each vehicle take 1d3-1 damage.

**Rear End Collision:** Subtract the speed of the vehicle hit from the attacking vehicle. The vehicle hit takes 1d6 damage per 10 mph while the attacking vehicle takes 1d6-1 damage per 10 mph. Passengers in each vehicle take 3 damage per 10 mph.

**T-Bone Collision:** Use the speed of the attacking vehicle. The vehicle hit takes 1d6 damage per 10 mph while the attacking vehicle takes 1d6-1 damage per 10 mph. Passengers in each vehicle take 3 damage per 10 mph.

## COLLISIONS WITH PEDESTRIANS

A car colliding into a pedestrian takes no damage from the collision, except cosmetic damage, while the passenger takes 1d6 per 10 mph the vehicle was travelling at.

## SPECIAL MANEUVERS

Special driving maneuvers can be attempted by the driver when the car has all tires intact and is traveling at high speed.

**Bootleg Reverse:** A car making a bootleg reverse uses the brakes to cause the vehicle to skid into a 180° turn and come to a complete stop. This maneuver is often performed as a way to quickly reverse direction. The maneuver takes two rounds to complete – one to turn to 90° and another to complete the skid to 180°.

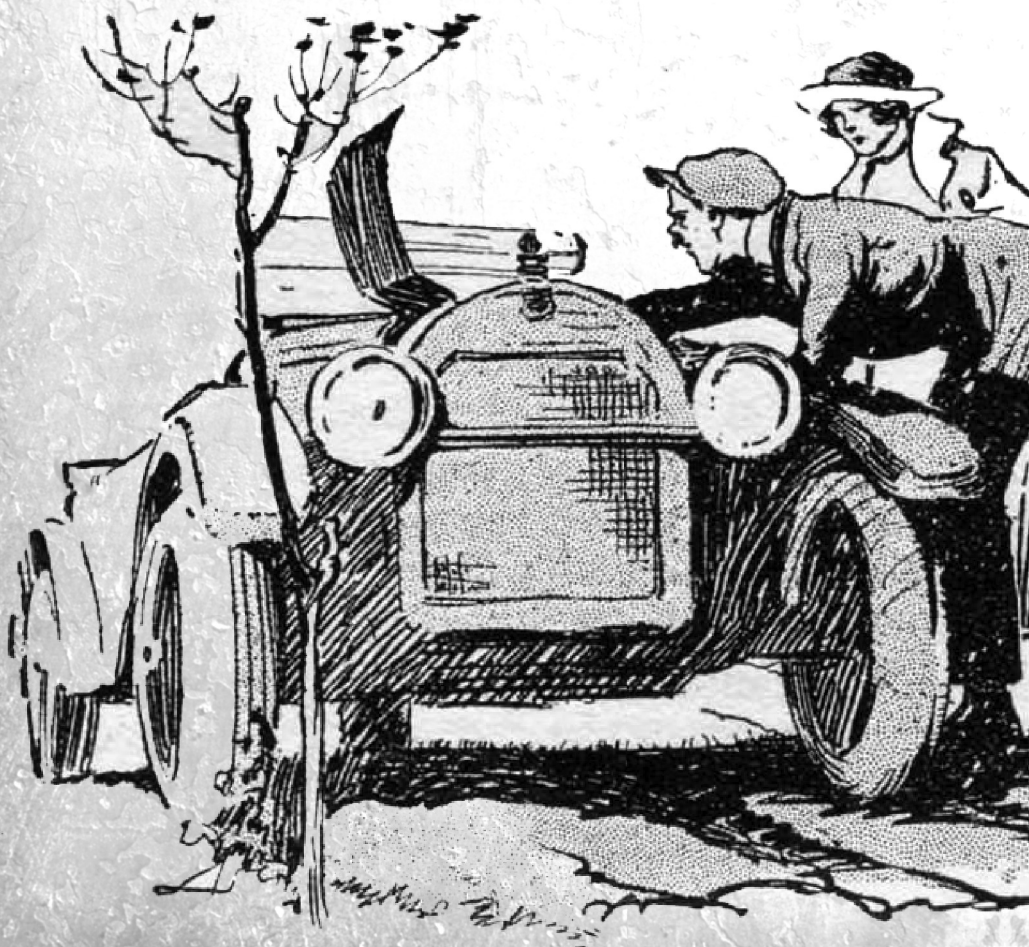


## VEHICLE HITS

When vehicles are hit, roll for hit location to determine the effect.

### VEHICLE HITS TABLE

ROLL	TYPE	DAMAGE EFFECT
1-2	Tire Hit	<i>Vehicle takes 1 point of damage and suffers a Tire Blowout (see Crash Table)</i>
3-5	Internal Damage	<i>The vehicle takes normal damage, the engine is critically damaged and will stop in 1d6-1 rounds</i>
6-10	Body Hit	<i>The vehicle takes normal damage (See also Passenger Injuries)</i>



## AUTOMOBILES

Here is a list of classic American automobiles from the era.

### **AUTOMOBILES TABLE**

<b>TYPE</b>	<b>PASSENGERS</b>	<b>MAX SPEED</b>	<b>HIT POINTS</b>
Coupe	1-3	50 mph	25
Limousine	1-7	70 mph	40
Sedan	1-4	60 mph	35
Sport	1-2	75 mph	25
Sport Touring	1-6	65 mph	30
Touring	1-6	60 mph	30
Truck, Light	1-3	50 mph	50
Truck, Heavy	1-3	50 mph	70





## GAINING EXPERIENCE

Characters are awarded Experience Points (XP) for doing what they do best, for Private Eyes this is by making money by solving cases. Killing is not rewarded, but is sometimes necessary to get the case solved. Sometimes it is best to operate with caution, subterfuge, trickery, and misdirection. As a character earns XP he will gain Levels.

### EXPERIENCE TABLE

ACTION	XP EARNED
Fee per case	1 xp / \$1.00
Bonus money	1 xp / \$1.00
Conviction due to investigative work	2,500 xp x Level of the convicted character
Solve a special case	1,000 xp x Level of client
Politician convicted due to investigative work	10,000 xp x level of politician

## LEVELS

### LEVELING TABLE

LEVEL	XP NEEDED	XP TO SPEND
1	0-9,999	0
2	10,000-29,999	10,000
3	30,000-59,999	20,000
4	60,000-99,999	30,000
5	100,000-149,000	40,000
6	150,000-199,999	50,000
7	200,000-249,999	50,000
8	250,000-349,999	50,000
9	350,000-499,999	100,000
10	500,000+	150,000

A character's Level is an indication of how successful that character has been at his career. It measures how much professional respect that character has among NPCs in the same career. The Level of a character or an NPC can also be used as a general guide to what level of society a character is accepted in. Levels are an easy way to express the number of XPs a character has earned. All PCs begin a campaign game as First Level characters.

*EXAMPLE: PC Nick Angelino begins a campaign game as a First Level character with zero XPs. After five sessions of play, he has earned 10,500 XPs. This is enough to advance Nick to Second Level. When his XP total passes 30,000, Nick can advance to Third Level, and so on.*

## **BENEFITS OF GAINING LEVELS**

When a private investigator (P.I.) goes up a Level, he gains in several ways. First, he can improve his character's Abilities and Skills; and second, he can gain Special Benefits and Personal Edge. Gaining Special Benefits and Personal Edge is a simply a matter of taking benefit granted or making a selection from those listed, but to improve his Abilities and Skills, a character has to purchase them using the amounts listed in the 'XPs to Spend' column of the Level table.

*EXAMPLE: Nick Angelino has earned 10,500 XPs. This is enough to advance Nick to Second Level. Under the 'XP to Spend' column for being Second Level, he has a total of 10,000 XPs to spend on Abilities and skills.*

### **BENEFITS TABLE**

<b>LEVEL</b>	<b>BENEFIT</b>
3	<i>The character's Presence score is temporarily increased by two points (to a maximum of 10) whenever he or she is dealing with NPCs of the opposite sex.</i>
5	<i>The character's Luck score is permanently increased by 10 points.</i>
7	<i>The character can lose his license only if convicted of a felony; his prestige is enough to prevent local officials from removing this license.</i>
10	<i>The character gains the permanent friendship of any congressman, senator, governor or judge of his or her choice.</i>

## IMPROVING YOUR CHARACTER

Gaining experience is the primary means by which a player can customize his character. Each player should receive XPs from the Judge as he continues to play the same character and he can spend the points listed under 'XP to Spend' as a reflection of character's experience to improve their characters.

A character can spend any number of XPs up to the number shown under 'XP to Spend' to improve his Ability scores and his Skills. The points spent are subtracted from the 'XP to Spend' total shown on the character sheet.

A character is never forced to spend XPs. A character can save the XPs he has recorded under "XPs To Spend" until he is ready to spend them.



### IMPROVING BASIC ABILITIES

To improve an Ability, a character pays the cost listed and increases the Ability by the value listed. If improving the Ability would also increase a derived Ability, then that Ability also goes up.

#### IMPROVING ABILITIES TABLE

IMPROVEMENT	COST
+1 to Muscle Score	2,000 xp
+1 to Agility Score	5,000 xp
+1 to Observation Score	3,000 xp
+1 to Presence Score	20,000 xp

*EXAMPLE: Having attained First Level, Nick Angelino has 10,000 XPs to Spend. He increases his Agility by 1 and his Observation to 1. This costs him 8,000 XP and gives him Agility 73 and Observation 67. The improved Abilities also mean that his Driving increases, from 69 to 70.*

### IMPROVING SKILL RANKINGS

In addition to using his 'XP to Spend' to improve Abilities, a character can also use them to improve his Skills. When a character improves a skill,

he must buy every rating, step by step. This is because each rating in a skill represents a substantial degree of training and practice. Therefore it is not possible to skip a rating in a skill. In practical terms, if a character has a skill rated at Trained Professional and he wants to improve it to Professional Mastery, he must first spend 10,000 XPs to improve its rating to Expert and then another 20,000 XPs to gain the Professional Mastery rating. This would cost the character 30,000 XPs and might take him more than going up a single Level to attain.

Aside from the game terms, it may also be useful to consider what a skill rating represents in a more narrative sense.

### **SKILL RANKINGS TABLE**

<b>RATING</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>EXPERIENCE COST</b>
Unskilled	5%	0
Some Exposure	10%	500
Familiarity	15%	1,000
Skilled Amateur	25%	2,000
Trained Professional	35%	3,000
Expert Professional	55%	5,000
Professional Mastery	65%	10,000
One of the Best in the Country	80%	20,000
One of the Best in the World	90%	25,000

## PERSONAL EDGE

One of the biggest advantages of gaining a Level is that a player gets to define a Personal or Professional Characteristic and give it a Personal Edge that will grant him an advantage or the 'edge' in certain situations. This Personal Edge can be a catchphrase, a description, a feeling, or anything that describes how the character is better at a certain thing. Every time a character gains a new Level, he defines and records a new Edge on his Investigator Profile sheet.

Normally, when a character takes an action, he makes a check against an Ability. He can only do this the once and in that instance, cannot reroll the dice. Except that is, if he has a Personal Edge that applies. In which case, the player can reroll the dice for the Ability check and select the best result.

No matter how many characteristics a character may have they can never reroll the dice more than once per instance. When a Characteristic applies to any Roll, the investigator's player may ask for a reroll and keep most favorable. Only one reroll can be gained in this manner, no matter how many Characteristics apply to the situation.

EXAMPLE: For example, Monica Delacroix is working a case and finds a clue in the form of a complex code that she knows that she needs to unravel. Monica does not have a skill that applies, but unlike the other private detectives in the agency, she has been to college and also has the 'I researched this' Edge. The Judge allows her a Luck check, but unfortunately, she rolls 87 and fails the check. The Edge allows her another roll, this time a 14. Studying mathematics has paid off!

*Example Personal Edges:*

<i>Social Climber</i>	<i>Deduction Expert</i>	<i>Fencing Master</i>
<i>Stronger Than I Look</i>	<i>Daredevil Pilot</i>	<i>Puzzle Master</i>
<i>Familiar with Crime</i>	<i>Incredibly Observant</i>	<i>You Can't Fool Me</i>
<i>The Belle of the Ball</i>	<i>Accomplished Painter</i>	<i>Boxing Champion</i>
<i>Getaway Driver</i>	<i>Armed and Dangerous</i>	<i>I Researched This</i>

## THE JUDGE



Being the Judge in game of The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game is a lot of fun. It also is a big responsibility. This part of the game is written with the beginning Judge in mind. It explains what the Judge needs to do in order to start a campaign, how to keep a campaign running, and how to keep the game lively, interesting, and above all, fun!

In some ways, the Judge is the most important player in the game. It is his job to do the following tasks:

1. He designs the city where the campaign will take place.
2. He designs each individual adventure and special case that slowly build up into the campaign.
3. He plays the roles of all NPCs in the city.
4. He serves as the eyes and ears for the player characters. He tells the player characters what they can see, what they can hear, and what is happening all around them at any time.

The Judge is also the final authority on all rules interpretations and may modify the rules as he sees fit to handle special situations. This does not mean that the Judge can dictate the game and its rules to his players. If a player does not like the way the way in which the Judge is handling the game, the player can make suggestions, but this should be handled in a reasonable manner and not become a disagreement. Neither the player nor the Judge should argue with each other. Ultimately, if the differences

of opinion cannot be reconciled otherwise, the player should leave the game.

The key thing to keep in mind is that the game is supposed to be fun and compared to that, all other factors are secondary. Here are just a few general and setting-specific tips:

- 1.** This is your game. If a rule does not suit your purpose, change it.
- 2.** Keep it low. Most enemies and problems in a noir setting are of low level and mundane in nature, regardless of their importance to the characters.
- 3.** Make each NPC, even if insignificant, interesting and colorful when first describing them. Give them individual mannerisms, phrases, and tones of voice.
- 4.** Avoid using game mechanics in your speech whenever possible and instead describe skill uses and their effects as graphically as you can.
- 5.** Life as a private eye is hard. Do not be afraid to hurt the characters, but do not go out of your way to kill them arbitrarily (a private eye rarely dies of a single shot).
- 6.** Always give the players and their characters a chance, no one wants to play a game stacked against them.
- 7.** The players are not their characters. Each character probably knows more about life in the 1920s and 1930s than you or your players. Do not punish a character for something that he would know about the 1920s, but his player does not. Not everyone is passionate about history!

## SETTING THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE

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We cannot tell you every detail about the world of *The Blue Book Detective Agency*, to make the game truly your own you have to fill in the blanks. It should be whatever is enjoyable for you and your players. Nevertheless, we can suggest some things that are likely to work for some games of *The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game* and give it the right sort of atmosphere.



The World of the 20s and 30s – America, the Roaring Twenties and the Desperate Thirties

What should the world of the 1920s and 1930s look like to a role-player of today? Imagine the streets of Chicago, Model T Fords lining the curbs. Notice the variety of people around you: the handsomely dressed men in pinstripe suits, every one with a hat firmly on their heads; the 'flappers' young women in 'scandalously' short skirts with their hair bobbed, the latest fad; the wise-cracking cub reporters laughing loudly to themselves, straw hats tipped jauntily back on their heads. The sights and sounds of the city can also be sinister, such as the dark-suited gangsters peering nervously from an alleyway, sounds of gunfire echoing away above the rooftops. Recruiting posters for the Great War with their famous Uncle Sam image have long since disappeared to be replaced by colorful posters advertising the latest vaudeville shows or the hottest movie release. Leaflets can be found eliciting support for women's suffrage on many signposts. Newspaper boys can be found on nearly every corner, each selling one of a half dozen papers published in 1920s Chicago. Flappers draw whistles from many men they pass, but the latest fashion of men's suits for women draws only stares.

The sounds of the big bands and Dixieland jazz are everywhere. The Charleston was the latest dance, and people brought the dances and the



music into their homes via the latest invention, the radio. The relatively low price of the Ford Model T and then the Ford Model A allowed more people the freedom to travel greater distances than to the next big town over. Indeed, it allowed a near-steady shipment of bootleg alcohol to enter Prohibition America from Canada.

When a PC enters an area, describe what he can see and smell and hear (and sometimes taste too, since that works with smell). When he picks up or looks at an object, describe what it looks like and what it feels like in his hand. You might even want to tell what it says if there is writing or marks on the object. Sometimes you might want to prepare such objects ahead of time, especially if they are clues. It takes a bit of extra effort, but giving the players a handout – as they are known, especially a good looking one, really helps to involve them in the game.

When a PC meets an NPC for the first time, especially someone important to the scenario or campaign, first tell them what the NPC looks like and is wearing, but then bring the NPC alive with voices, accents, motives, quirks, and background. This can be lots of fun and it helps to create colorful and interesting NPCs that your players will remember. If you get short of ideas, take inspiration from movies, television series, books, and even relatives. It really only takes a second to develop them into believable characters in your world.

Encourage the players to share ideas and give input into the various adventures, scenes, objectives and the challenges that their characters should face. Be alert and responsive to what your players are saying and discussing, pacing and timing are very important to keeping your game fresh and the players excited and enthused. If things drag, turn up the heat, if things are going at a breakneck pace, give the PCs a small rest. Then when in doubt throw something a la Raymond Chandler at them to get them excited and back into the game.

If you need to clarify ideas, themes or issues then do that. Decide on the flavor of your game and do the best you can to stay consistent with that theme, be it an epic struggle of cops versus robbers, slightly comedic or light, or a noir filled melodramatic tapestry that hangs in the backdrop over the adventure. To help visualization, there are lists of the films, books, and more that helped inspire ***The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game*** to found in the bibliography.

# CRONIES

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One of the best ways to bring a campaign world to life and help the players invest their characters in that world is through the use of helpers, friends, and sidekicks that the player characters get to know and befriend. While each player character is going to know all sorts of NPCs, many of them minor in terms of the story, like the corner shopkeeper, the newsboy, their significant other, a doctor, a lawyer, and so on, Cronies are different. A Crony is someone whom a player character goes to see when he wants something or needs help. This might be to get some information about a suspect, to get a gun with the serial numbers filed off, or even simply to get permission to visit the local speakeasy. A player character will have a working relationship with each Crony he knows, based on fear, trust, respect, or just a need to help each other. Sometimes, just as a player character might go to one of his Cronies for help, one of those Cronies might come and ask the player character for his help!

Each character can maintain the devotion of a number of NPCs equal to his Presence stat. It is suggested that at the start of the game, each player should select two Cronies that his player character already knows and work with the Judge to determine their relationship with them as part of his Background.

The following listing of possible contacts is not intended to represent the only choices available to the Judge. Contacts in other fields can be created and assigned as the Judge desires. To help the Judge use the listed contacts below, the areas or tasks where each type of contact can be helpful is also listed. Again, the areas listed is not complete but can be used as an indication of the abilities and limitations of the contact.

**Assistant Clerk of Courts:** Obtain transcripts of trials or other legal proceedings; evaluate current trials and judges on the bench.

**Assistant to the Chief of Police:** Tips regarding raids and major police actions; access to criminal records and personnel files; pass information to the Chief of Police.

**Bookie:** Reveal who is into whom for a lot of money; who bets heavily and on what; introduce to other bookies, bettors and gamblers; general underground information; tips about the next dog or horse race, or boxing match.

**Illegal Casino Operator:** As with bookie; also, what contracts are out; what people are in town; whom people are working for and where they get their money.

**Clerk, City Hall of Records:** Provide records concerning land deals, court cases, business deals, health and fire safety violations, marriages, divorces, city licenses.

**Clerk, Police Files:** Provide criminal records, previous aliases, addresses, and methods; fingerprints and pictures; possibly evidence and case notes.

**Clerk, State Division of Motor Vehicles:** Identify license plates, driver's licenses; possibly provide driver's license.

**Criminology Lab Technician:** Take fingerprints, blood tests, and run ballistics tests; examine possible evidence for clues.

**FBI Field Agent:** Provide FBI files; pass information to higher persons; provide names and addresses of criminal suspects.

**Fence:** Inform of who was involved after a crime; obtain stolen or untraceable goods; identify who might be working for others; possibly tips on upcoming jobs.

**Nightclub Owner:** Tell who has been seen with whom, who has been spending money, who is and is not in town; give an introduction to illegal casino operators and 'respectable' underworld figures.

**Police Detective:** Provide records, as police records clerk; also, tip off raids; provide assistance; pass information to higher sources.

**Reporter:** Provide information from the newspaper morgue; tips on graft and corruption in city government; place articles or notices in paper as desired by character; give an introduction to 'newsworthy' people.

**Small-Time Thug:** Provide tips on upcoming jobs; inform who is working for whom and where they might be found; describe or detail different types of jobs or rackets; what contracts are out and on whom; who is in town and what money or items might be in town.

**Stockbroker:** Who owns what; how a company is doing; who is making money and who is losing money; unusual expenditures or trends; possible mergers or force-outs; give an introduction to important financial figures.

**Taxi Driver:** Ready access to a vehicle; where places are, locations of illegal casinos, crap games, etc.; description of type of activity or quality of an area; possible identification of fares.

# NPC'S

This is a handy list of the typical NPCs. The Judge can mix and match to make countless NPCs or roll up new ones. The Judge should assign Levels and skills as needed to fit the story they are telling. Of course you can always use the USUAL SUSPECTS card set as a ready source of NPCs.

## **NPCs TABLE**

<b>NPC NAME</b>	<b>MU</b>	<b>AG</b>	<b>OB</b>	<b>PR</b>	<b>DR</b>	<b>LU</b>	<b>HP</b>
FBI Agent	80	85	90	7	88	30	22
Prohibition Agent	50	60	54	5	57	12	16
Patrolman	75	65	63	5	64	23	19
Police Sergeant	80	67	72	6	70	25	20
Police Captain	78	66	85	7	76	33	20
Detective	83	72	87	6	80	28	21
Private Investigator	73	68	89	6	78	42	20
Newspaper Reporter	55	60	93	4	77	16	17
Independent Punk	60	65	85	3	75	18	18
Gangster	73	58	57	5	59	14	19
Gangster Enforcer	98	72	43	8	58	12	22
Gangster Driver	37	92	88	3	90	09	18
Gangster Hitman	71	88	83	5	86	15	21
Gangster Gun Moll	33	75	78	7	77	13	16
Syndicate Boss	62	54	89	9	72	39	17
District Attorney	51	48	90	8	69	40	15
Judge	45	39	96	9	68	26	16
Defense Lawyer	48	43	45	7	67	22	15
Corporate Executive	48	52	74	6	59	16	20
Store Clerk	47	53	44	8	64	37	13
Blue Collar Worker	83	62	82	6	53	20	15
Career Girl	28	43	65	5	63	22	16
Flapper	31	62	73	7	68	11	13
Ward Boss	61	49	83	8	66	24	16
Derelect	44	32	28	1	30	48	13

## STRANGE AND MYSTERIOUS POWERS

These are optional rules designed to add a little of the mysterious and the fantastic to a Judge's campaign. Be warned that they take **The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game** away from the straight cops and robbers genre of **Gangbusters** and into the territory of *The Shadow*, *Black Bat*, *G-8*, *The Spider*, *The Phantom Detective*, and other Pulp heroes and anti-heroes. This is likely to change the tone of the game, making it more like what a 21st century readership would think of as the Pulp magazines of the 1920s and 1930s.

If the Judge decides to take his campaign down this route, the traditional set-up in the Pulp would be for one character, the protagonist, to have the strange and mysterious power, as with *The Shadow* or *Doc Savage*. Unless the playing group is willing to play in this format, it is not recommended as it does mean that the focus of game shifts to the player character with the power. Instead, it is suggested that each character have his own secret power to aid him in fight against crime, or indeed, his stand against the Law.

Each character has a 25% chance of having a mysterious power at the start of **The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game**. Once a player has finished creating his character have him roll percentile dice. If the result is 25 or less, that character has a power. If the roll is failed and the character does not have a power, the roll can be made each time he gains a new Level.

Unlike the other skills, this power is randomly selected on a d10. The possession of the power has nothing to do with the Ability scores of the character, although the effectiveness of the power does.

### SECRET POWERS

*For a game in keeping with the Pulp, we suggest that each player keep his power a secret until it is revealed at a dramatic moment during the game. In fact, we suggest that the Judge talk to each player whose character has a Power separately and if the character wants to use the power in the game, he pass the Judge a note. Not only does this make the game even more mysterious, it stops The Blue Book Detective Agency Beginner Game becoming a game about crime busting low-powered superheroes.*

In the descriptions of the powers, it is sometimes noted that a "focus" is required (45% chance). A focus is an object or device (Judge's choice) that must be displayed prominently before the power will take effect. The focus must be eye catching and unusual in nature and of some significant value. Such items typically include amulets, rings, gems, clasps, watch fobs, and pendants.

Beginning characters do not possess a focus; they must find or make one. If the Judge wishes the character to find his or her focus, it is necessary that the Judge place the item in some location where it can be found and then provide the character with some incentive or clues to investigate that location. When a character finds his or her focus, he or she will instinctively realize its true value. Some locations where a focus might be found (aside from the den of some criminal) include curio shops, junk dealers, museums, or the bric-a-brac shelf of the character's crazy world traveling Uncle.



### **MYSTERIOUS POWER TABLE**

<b>ROLL</b>	<b>POWER</b>
1	<i>Command</i>
2	<i>Confusion</i>
3	<i>ESP</i>
4	<i>Foresight</i>
5	<i>Hypnotism</i>
6	<i>Invisibility</i>
7	<i>Luck</i>
8	<i>Fear</i>
9	<i>Shadow Control</i>
10	<i>Luck</i>

**Command:** With this power, the character may add +3 to his or her Presence at will. When choosing to do so, all actions that can be normally attempted under Presence will be figured as if the character had this as his or her normal Presence. However, the use of the power is more draining than normal Presence use, and so 30 points are temporarily lost from Muscle every time this power is used. They are regained after a full night's rest.

**Confusion:** character possessing this power may attempt to confuse those with a lower presence than their own within sight. To do so requires that the character have a focus and that he or she be within 10 yards of those being confused.

The chance of success is equal to five times the character's Presence. If this number or less is rolled on percentile dice, the victim is confused. Confused persons may not take any actions against the character and will react as follows (roll 1d10):

#### **CONFUSION EFFECT TABLE**

<b>ROLL</b>	<b>EFFECT</b>
1-3	<i>Does nothing, takes no actions</i>
4-6	<i>Retreats if possible</i>
7-8	<i>Attacks another person (determine randomly)</i>
9	<i>Acts in an irrational manner</i>
10	<i>Temporary Amnesia for 1d6 hours</i>

The confusion power requires a full turn to activate and will cause a temporary loss from Luck of 30 points. Any number of people may be confused up to the characters Presence score so long as they meet the previously given conditions. Those people who are familiar with the power of the character (i.e., those who know the character well) will be unaffected by the power.

**ESP:** Under certain conditions, a character with this power may attempt to discern the thoughts of others and sense hazy images of the immediate surroundings of the person so scanned.

The power is sensitive to great activity or emotional distress and so the character must first be able to relax and concentrate for 15 seconds, before indicating what person he or she would like to scan. Percentile dice are rolled and compared against the Luck of the person scanned, plus the scanning character's presence. If the dice roll is under the adjusted

number, the attempt has been successful. If the percentile roll is 10 or less, the contacted mind could be any person within 1-6 miles due to uncontrollable error. (Such an error could be a good method to lead characters into new adventures.)

Thoughts obtained will seldom indicate the age, sex, name, etc. of the person, and his or her true motives may often be carefully hidden or buried. ESP may at times only give a suggestion of what is sought to be learned.

**Fear:** Through the use of a focus, the character may cause unreasoning panic in those who observe him or her. The chance of success is a percentage equal to the average of the character's Presence and current Luck. This power requires that the character stand motionless for a full turn in full view of his or her intended victims, concentrating on his or her focus.



When this time has passed (provided the character has not been shot or otherwise had his or her concentration broken), all people in sight of the focus who either do not know the character or have some reason to fear him or her must roll percentile dice. If the number rolled is equal to or less than the character's success number as figured above, the victim will first attempt to flee, or failing that, do one of the following two things (Judge's choice): Cower or hide, attempting to avoid the gaze of the character.

Using the fear ability is a strain on the character, both mentally and physically. Each time the use of the power is attempted, the character will lose 1d10 bruises until restored, as if it were lost due combat.

**Foresight:** Due to his or her mental training, this character is often aware of things others might not notice. The character may also ask 3 yes-or-



no questions of the Judge per adventure. These questions must deal with some action that the character plans to take, or be based upon information that character might realistically know or suspect.

Hence, a question such as, "Is he the ringleader of the smuggling ring?" would only be permissible if the character had some cause to suspect that person. The questions have a 10% chance of being answered incorrectly; this is secretly determined by the Judge.

**Hypnotism:** This power may only be used in non-combat situations and requires the use of a focus. By use of the focus, the victim is placed in a light, sleep-like trance. While the victim is in this state, the character may attempt to implant suggestions or extract information. To determine the chance of success, subtract the victim's Presence from that of the character to obtain a plus or minus-number. This number is then multiplied by 10. If the number or less is rolled on percentile dice, the attempt succeeds.

Certain suggestions, particularly those that would result in the death of the victim or someone close to that person, are more difficult to plant successfully. For these, there is only a 10% chance that the suggestion will be acted on after it has been made.

**Invisibility:** Use of this power automatically renders the character invisible to most persons around him or her. No die roll is required, as the success of the power is usually automatic.

However, those with an Observation of 90 or higher will be able to see the invisible character and will be able to direct others to that character. The act of confounding the senses of others is a physical and mental strain, so much so that one bruise hit point is lost for every minute or part of a minute that character remains invisible. Hit points lost may be regained through rest, as if they were normal hand-to-hand combat wounds.

**Luck:** A character with the power of luck has certain automatic advantages, provided that character's luck is determined to be "good" for that adventure. At the start of an adventure, the Judge secretly determines what the character's luck is, with a 50% chance of it being good, 40% normal, and 10% bad. Good luck gives the character a +10 to all chances to hit, whether in gun or hand-to-hand combat. Furthermore, the character is allowed a die roll to see if he or she succeeds in doing anything that would be feasible or remotely possible, even in situations where such success would normally be

considered nearly impossible. It is up to the Judge to set the difficulty of the die roll. The less chance there is that something could actually happen, the harder the die roll will be to make. Hence, if a character with good luck were to fall from a plane at 5,000 feet, there might be a 10% chance that he or she could survive the fall relatively unhurt by landing in tree branches or a deep lake. All die rolls of this nature should be made secretly by the Judge. This roll is in addition to the characters normal Luck roll! The Judge must also be careful to see that characters with luck do not tyrannize the game, demanding die rolls for entirely inappropriate situations.



It is the responsibility of the player to suggest how such a lucky event might come to pass, and he or she cannot think of a method, the Judge is not required to give any die roll.

Bad luck affects the character by reducing his or her gun and hand-to-hand chances to hit by 10. Bad or normal luck will also decrease the percentage chance of near-impossible success, perhaps (but not necessarily) all the way to zero.

**Shadow Control:** When using this power, the character will appear to be within a mass of inky shadows in which no clear features are discernable. These shadows will move with the character as flitting shapes. All attacks against a character using this form of the power will be treated as if he or she were a concealed target. The character may also use the power to create shadows of specific objects, even though the particular object may not actually be present at the time, or to alter the shadow cast by an object which is present. Both forms of the power require a source of light and shadow, hence the power will not be of use in a totally dark or shadowless area. Creating the shadows or shadow images causes a temporary loss of 5 points of luck. Such losses may be regained through rest.

**Sight:** Those characters with the power of sight have developed and trained their senses to an extent that augments their vision. Such a character can see details of objects at twice the distance for a normal character, thus doubling the encounter distance (unless circumstances dictate otherwise). The character is also able to sense his or her way through areas of total darkness, smoke, or fog. Even if blindfolded, the character will be able to find the general location of all objects or people within 10 feet of him or her. Attacks made under such conditions will only suffer a -10 penalty on the chance to hit. Furthermore, characters with sight will be able to notice smaller details and will be +10 when searching for any stated thing.

## DARK SECRETS

Often a character with Mysterious powers has a “dark secrets” that plague them. Those who possess strange powers beyond those of mortal men both, protagonists and antagonists alike tend to have horrible, repressed truths lurking in their pasts that threaten to reveal themselves; the revelation is usually apocalyptic on a personal scale or at least exposes the character to danger. Those with a power must select a dark secret that lurks in their character’s past.

*For the judge: In general I advise not to bring any of these elements fully into play too quickly. A character’s dark secret work best if used as roleplaying elements that help create tension.*

**Abandoner** – The pressures of family life became too much; you abandoned your spouse and children, leaving them to fend for themselves.

**Plunderer** – At some point in the past you stole an item or treasure of great worth. However, absconding with your ill-gotten gains proved difficult so you were forced to hide your prize.

**Debauched** – You are addicted to sensual pleasure. In fact, you have led other, younger folk down the heady path of the hedonist.

**Drug Fiend** – You are a drug addict. Perhaps you favor the sweet oblivion provided by opium or perhaps you cannot resist drinking yourself into a stupor; in any case, the result is the same: you have lost your family’s fortune to your vice and subsequently run away from them in shame.

**Institutionalized** – At one point in the past you had a complete mental breakdown. The reasons for your breakdown are known only to you, but

if word of your mental instability should become common knowledge, no one will ever be able to trust you again.

**Expedition Survivor** – You were the sole survivor of an expedition into the wild, unmapped places of the earth.

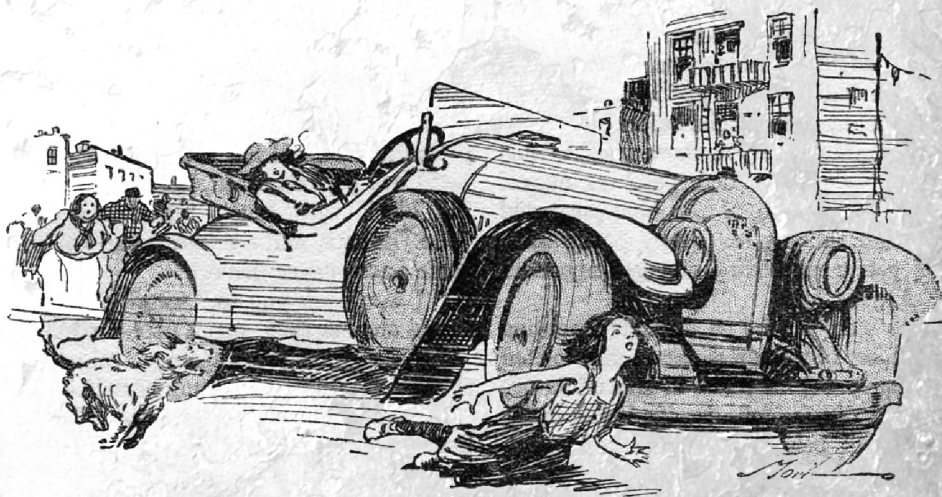
**Silent Witness** – You once witnessed a serial murderer in the midst of dispatching a young child to an early grave, but were too cowardly to intervene or inform the authorities.

**Spy for the enemy** – You were once a willing spy for the enemy in the last war.

**Gambling Debt** – You are addicted to gambling and have racked-up an impressive debt.

**Family Cult** – You belong to a family that is deeply involved in a pagan or demonic cult.

*These are of course samples, should you come up with others ask the judge for approval before using them.*



## CREATING ADVENTURES

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By now we are hoping that you have picked up enough things in ***The Blue Book Detective Agency Quick Beginner Game*** to run a game or two. To make it short you are the narrator of the story who tells the players what their characters perceive and know about the world and circumstances around them and who also decides the actions of the world in which the characters live. Although they get to decide what their characters will do, you decide what effect their actions might have on the current situation. Killing someone without cause could lead to murder charges or spark a gang war. As Judge you must be as fair as possible but also provide them with a good story in return for them providing you with interesting lively characters. You must be as interesting as possible in your descriptions of their surroundings. Try to make the world come alive with the actions of their friends and enemies alike.

Now try to come up with various crimes and adventures you can have your players explore in the prohibition Era. Below is a series of charts and pointers to help you do just that.

What makes up an adventure?

Well that depends on what you consider adventurous, recovering a missing artifact, tailing a bootlegger, or pulling a police raid on the top gang in the city? A chance to explore a lost city? Rescuing a kidnapped child, or better yet being the kidnappers! Be sure to talk with the players and take notes, of the various things they consider adventurous, use it to formulate their exploits and build upon their desires. Once you have some ideas of what

your players like creating Scenarios for BBDA is surprisingly simple, just follow the formula below for recording your information and it should go just fine for you.

Each scenario is organized as follows:

**Story Title:** This is a snappy name to help give flavor for the story.

**Scenario:** This gives the general theme of the adventure.

**Judge Preparation:** This tells the Judge what is needed to set the stage for the adventure.

**The Plan:** This is how one side expects the action to go.

**Setup:** This gives the location of the characters as play begins.

**The Action:** This describes things that will happen during play. Events may not always go as planned!

**The Wrap-Up:** This details the end of the adventure, gives special notes on awarding experience, and outlines any special effect the scenario may have on the entire course of the campaign.

## NAMING ADVENTURES

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One of the first things you can do to help spark your creative juices going is coming up with a name for the scenario. The name can help you answer some of the questions you may have. You don't have to be tied to the first roll but instead use it as a jumping off point to come up with an idea.

Simply combine parts A, B, and C.

### ADVENTURE NAME PT. A TABLE

1d6 RESULT	CRIME
1	<i>Case of the...</i>
2	<i>Lost Files of...</i>
3	<i>The Strange Story of the...</i>
4	<i>Report of the...</i>
5	<i>Road to...</i>
6	<i>Double Crossed by...</i>



## ADVENTURE NAME PT. B & C TABLE

PERCENTILE RESULT	PART B	PART C
01-04	<i>Forged</i>	<i>Hopes</i>
05-10	<i>Missing</i>	<i>Dreams</i>
11-15	<i>Stolen</i>	<i>Mistress</i>
16-20	<i>Broken</i>	<i>Partner</i>
21-25	<i>Runaway</i>	<i>Cemetery</i>
26-30	<i>Back Alley</i>	<i>Plans</i>
31-35	<i>Staged</i>	<i>Rose</i>
36-40	<i>Big</i>	<i>Nights</i>
41-45	<i>Crazy</i>	<i>Heat</i>
46-50	<i>Third Floor</i>	<i>Sleep</i>
51-55	<i>Fallen</i>	<i>Girl</i>
56-60	<i>Blackmailed</i>	<i>Man</i>
61-65	<i>Scarlet</i>	<i>Street</i>
66-70	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Window</i>
71-75	<i>Lost</i>	<i>Weekend</i>
76-80	<i>Glass</i>	<i>Key</i>
81-85	<i>Killers</i>	<i>Kiss</i>
86-90	<i>Confidential</i>	<i>Passion</i>
91-95	<i>Government</i>	<i>Spies</i>
96-100	<i>Insurance</i>	<i>Fraud</i>

### GENERATING THE THEME OF AN ADVENTURE

This is the nominal reason why the party should go on this adventure. Could be as simple as money, or as nuanced as a suspicious hunch. Here are a few examples of adventure leads and ways to get the game started fast.

The PCs are called to rescue a young girl from a fanatical religious cult before she can be sacrificed.

When a college professor who developed a surefire gambling system goes missing, his wife hires the PCs to find him.

A local black Farmer needs to get his produce to market to keep his lands from being sold at auction. The PCs are hired to make it happen.

When a woman is forced to marry her late husband's business partner –

and possible murderer her grown son wants to know why.

The PCs end up in the middle of a taxi cab war when they are hired to help a local taxi company compete against a hostile takeover from a larger company.

A pacifist religious community hires the PCs to run off a group of land speculators without the use of violence.

When a corrupt union official is found dead both sides blame each other and the PCs are hired to find out the truth without tipping off the cops.

When the Mill workers are shut out of the plant when the largest order ever received comes in then the plant burns to the ground a local insurance company hires the PCs to find out what is going on.

Below is a chart to give you a hand with coming up with a reason the scenario takes place; roll 1d6 to see if you roll on the odd or even table.

### **SCENARIO TABLE**

<b>PERCENTILE RESULT</b>	<b>ODD</b>	<b>EVEN</b>
01-05	<i>Destroy a relationship</i>	<i>Uphold an oath</i>
06-10	<i>Secure a payment</i>	<i>Satisfy a curiosity</i>
11-15	<i>Spy on another</i>	<i>End a rivalry</i>
16-20	<i>Silence someone</i>	<i>Escape punishment</i>
21-25	<i>Right a wrong</i>	<i>Prove someone's innocence</i>
26-30	<i>Usurp someone's power</i>	<i>Become infamous</i>
31-35	<i>Find a missing person</i>	<i>Establish a relationship</i>
36-40	<i>Set an example</i>	<i>Regain power</i>
41-50	<i>For entertainment</i>	<i>Make someone envious</i>
51-55	<i>Subdue a movement</i>	<i>Make someone succeed</i>
56-60	<i>Attract a following</i>	<i>Find an antidote</i>
61-65	<i>Find a missing object</i>	<i>Overturn a decision</i>
66-70	<i>Test someone's limits</i>	<i>Avoid responsibilities</i>
71-75	<i>Pay a debt</i>	<i>Make someone angry</i>
76-80	<i>Establish a new identity</i>	<i>Regain fame</i>
81-85	<i>Find a lost treasure</i>	<i>Dominate an organization</i>
86-90	<i>Damage another's reputation</i>	<i>Protect a reputation</i>
91-95	<i>Assume another's identity</i>	<i>Perform a religious ceremony</i>
96-100	<i>Find spiritual enlightenment</i>	<i>Earn money</i>



By now you should have a cool lead in and some type of crime to stop or investigate. Now it's time to come up with a line questioning. This line of questions will help you to embellish on the problem that you came. The questions do not need to be overly complicated simply -How the main crime happened (who, what, when, where, why, how) details.

Who did it? What did they do? When did it or when does it happen? Where does it or where did it take place? Why did it happen and how it happened.

That's it. Just create a series of questions that you want your Detectives to answer. The story will emerge naturally from the process of answering them.

Of course a story needs a crime committed, in progress or you to find out who did it. For a single scenario, one or two is sufficient.

Roll a d6 to find a table then roll 3d6 to find out what is the case about.

## THE OBSTACLE

This is the thing that impedes just anyone from resolving the scenario. It could be an armed guard, it could be a puzzle, it could be a mcguffin or a band of cultist. In other words, what encounters must the PCs deal with to solve the case. Who did it? What did they do? When did it or when does it happen? Where does it or where did it take place? Why did it happen and how it happened.

Often when during the course of an adventure 30% of the time at least the PCs learn of some information that changes the party's perspective on how to resolve the adventure. It could be that the killer is actually a good guy, or that the missing person went voluntarily with the kidnappers. This is often the toughest part to think of.

There are two plot twist tables detailed below, roll a single die if it is an Even number use table two, if it is an odd number use table One. Plot twists add complications to an adventure making it much more exciting and challenging. It is recommended you combine multiple plot twists to create a more complex and interesting scenarios.

## **PLOT TWIST TABLE (ODD)**

<b>PERCENTILE</b>	<b>RESULT</b>
01-21	<i>There are innocents nearby that the characters must keep safe while dealing with the adventure</i>
22-30	<i>The victims are really villains and the villains are really victims</i>
31-40	<i>An enemy turns out to be an ally (or a potential partner), either temporarily due to circumstance or permanently</i>
41-50	<i>Someone ambushes, betrays, or gives away the characters (intentionally or by accident)</i>
51-60	<i>The scenario is a ruse intended to capture the character, get information from them, or something similar</i>
61-70	<i>The characters must work alongside an individual or institution they would rather not befriend</i>
71-75	<i>Their opponent is somebody the characters know personally, even respect or love</i>
76-80	<i>The characters meet others who can help them, but will not unless the characters agree to help them with their own cause</i>
81-90	<i>A relationship (romantic or not) between two unlikely or unexpected forces throws a kink in the works</i>
91-100	<i>Someone believed dead turns out to be alive.</i>

## **PLOT TWIST TABLE (EVEN)**

<b>PERCENTILE</b>	<b>RESULT</b>
01-21	<i>There is another individual or institution "competing" on the same adventure, possibly with very different objectives</i>
22-30	<i>The villain is a recurring opponent</i>
31-40	<i>Someone vital to the adventure is being coerced or co-opted (via blackmail, threats, seduction, manipulation etc.)</i>
41-50	<i>Someone is attempting to use the characters for their own ends</i>
51-60	<i>The adventure begins suddenly and without warning; the characters are tossed into the action immediately</i>
61-70	<i>Equipment or information important to the adventure is destroyed, stolen, lost or captured</i>
71-75	<i>The characters must succeed without violence, or with special discretion</i>
76-80	<i>The characters find their way home barred, removed, destroyed or otherwise compromised</i>
81-90	<i>The characters must pretend to be someone with very different allegiances, values or tastes</i>
91-100	<i>The characters are not asked to solve this problem, just to render aid against a backdrop of larger troubles</i>

## SECRETS

Sometimes the villain has a great secret, they may be protecting someone or something... by giving your Villain a secret you can change the whole outcome of a story. Roll 30 or less on d100 and the Villain has one.

### VILLAIN'S SECRET TABLE

PERCENTILE RESULT	RESULT
01-30	<i>Person is someone that one of the players knows from past dealings (former employer, Friend, Enemy, distant relative, etc.)</i>
31-45	<i>They are an impostor and will play the role all the way to death, insuring true Rival survives</i>
46-59	<i>Part of a Fear Cult. Devoted to the practice of cannibalism and human sacrifice to any manner of twisted gods</i>
60-75	<i>Part of a Death Cult. Renegade priest that thinks they can raise the dead and marshal them into an army of followers</i>
76-80	<i>Unholy Priest. Usually a devotee to a corrupting force (lust, greed, vanity) or perhaps the remnants of a previous cult that broke apart</i>
81-85	<i>Is part of an Assassins Society. Guild that kills people for contract (money)</i>
86-90	<i>Devoted to the protection and worship of a device or relic; these groups seldom use the power (or at least full power) of the item they enshrine</i>
91-95	<i>Secret Society. Organization that is not allowed to assemble in public; this group plots violent acts or unlawful activities against a the locals</i>
96-97	<i>Terrible Beast. Inside ancient hall lies a hungry beast waiting for treasure seekers or those foolish enough to wander in error</i>
98-100	<i>Possessed by a Demon and now it seeks to spread misery upon the world</i>

That's it. Just create a series of questions that you want your Detectives to answer. The story will emerge naturally from the process of answering them.

Be sure to come up with stats for your NPCS and ideas for locations that the characters interact with.

## THE WRAP UP

Although there shouldn't just be one way to solve the problem, there should be at least one way to do so. And some benefit to the PCs, even if it's just continued survival when their lives were in jeopardy. Be sure to record if anything major happened in the session that should carry over to the next game. Did someone die, did the police catch the bad guy, did the players wreck the only car in the group? Things like this can have lasting effects on further games.

*Here is a sample adventure scenario:*

## THE MURDER OF TIM HENSON

*(Investigation)*

**The Scenario:** Investigators try to discover who killed Tim Henson of Henson & Pauley Builders.

**Judge Preparation:** A character should know Janet Farmer (receptionist). Also, decide how each NPC will talk to the investigators. Be ready for questions about Henson's known friends, enemies, income, recent activities, and so on; plus similar questions about Janet, Rick Pauley, and others. Decide what will happen if the investigators question those in nearby businesses, like Sam Colton (Hardy's Fine Meats) who will become important later.

The Judge should also keep the NPC police detectives out of this; either arranging for them to have more urgent cases, or having them kept out by the political "pull" of corrupt officials. Let the players ask their own questions as they work out the case step-by-step.

**The Set-Up:** Janet Farmer has alerted the police and her reporter friend. She will later



hire a private investigator. The scenario starts in the office of Henson & Pauley Builders, with Janet, some player characters, and at least two NPC police present.

**The Action:** Janet Farmer, trusted receptionist and secretary for Henson & Pauley Builders, unlocks the office each morning. Today, the door was open. Fearing a robbery, she had gone to the storage room where the safe was kept. There, she found the body of Tim Henson, who had been stabbed repeatedly. The safe door was open and the safe was empty. She called Rick Pauley, Henson's partner, and then the police. She is very upset, as Henson had recently asked her to marry him.

Rick Pauley will reveal, when questioned, that he and Tim Henson had just put \$10,000 in the safe. This was for payroll and recent "unusual business expenses." He also appears very upset and closes the office until after the funeral.

The knife used for the murder is gone, and the safe has no usable fingerprints. All apparent evidence suggests that Henson surprised a burglar. One of the NPC police should suggest that a repeated stabbing doesn't sound like the type of crime a burglar would commit, but this idea will be quickly rejected by the NPC officer in charge. The police will start looking for a thief and murderer.

Later, Janet will call her reporter friend. Rick has asked her to marry him and she has refused. He is an egomaniac who won't accept her refusal and she is afraid. He has a terrible temper- he and Tim have argued in the past. If the characters ask probing questions, she will say she doesn't know if Rick had anything to do with the murder. If the PCs do not suggest it, Janet will think of hiring a private investigator after this talk.

Rick is guilty. He killed Tim Henson and made it look like a robbery. If the investigation seems to be turning away from the robbery motive, he will, reluctantly, mention that he and Henson have had dealings with the Tolino and O'Connor gangs. The \$10,000 was money for bribes. Rick will do all he can to shift suspicion to any other possible murderer.

Two days later, the body of Stan Colton (butcher) will be found. inside the walk-in freezer at Hardy's Fine Meats. He has been stabbed. In his hand is a scrap of newspaper. It is part of a story from the Tribune on the Henson murder. The murder weapon is missing, but might be like the one that killed Tim Henson. Under Stan Colton's fingernails is dried blood. Chemical analysis will reveal the blood is human, type AB negative. Stan Colton's blood type is O positive.

Stan Colton heard Henson and Pauley arguing just before the murder. He

planned to blackmail Pauley, so Pauley murdered him to keep him quiet. Investigation will reveal that Stan Colton always bought his newspapers from Pitzer's News Corner. Any investigator asking Jack Pitzer about Stan will find out Stan stopped by late on the night he was killed. He told Jack that he had to work late. He had to meet someone later at the butcher shop-it was important. He also bought every paper with a story about the Henson killing, and several old papers. (These have stories about the past business dealings of Henson & Pauley builders.) When Jack asked Stan what he wanted the papers for, Stan said: "To set a trap for a rat."

Pauley will have a bandaged hand. He will claim it was scratched by an alley cat he tried to pet. Pauley's medical records are on file in Dr. Joseph Berkeley's office in the Berkeley Clinic. His blood type is AB negative.

Rick has the murder weapon in a briefcase, along with the money, contracts, and bonds that were in the safe. He is thinking about how to get rid of them safely. He doesn't want to touch the knife again-he has forgotten to wipe off his fingerprints - and he is too greedy to get rid of the money and bonds.

One of the documents from the safe is a copy of the expenses from the last Henson & Pauley contract, signed by Pauley. After each item is a note in Tim Henson's handwriting. The notes list different facts and figures for each entry (for example, after the entry: "Grade A concrete - 100 tons at \$12 a ton, subtotal \$1200" is Henson's note: "Mixture, 60% concrete, 40% sand -100 tons at \$5 a ton, subtotal \$500, difference \$700"). Henson had discovered that Pauley was using substandard materials and cheating on the contracts.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY & INSPIRATION

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The beginning Judge may require background information on the 20s and 30s should he want to run a realistic campaign. The best sources of information are the kind that you can research yourself. This is the easiest way to learn the information and these days there are plenty of sources that you can research. The simplest and quickest method is perhaps to look online, but perhaps the most fun is to watch the right film, read a good book, and so on.

This bibliography is just a short list of sources which you can use for finding excellent information for a 1920s and 1930s game campaign. There are of course plenty more and discovering them yourself will be half the fun of doing your own research.

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---

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Broadway (1942)

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Hard Times (1975)

Lizzy & Moe (1985)  
Johnny Apollo (1940)  
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Marked Woman (1937)  
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Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939)  
Paper Moon (1973)  
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Charlie Chan (1939-46)  
Mr. Moto (1937-39)  
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His Girl Friday (1940)  
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Murder My Sweet (1944)



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---

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- The Whole Town's Talking (1935)
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---

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## AFTERWORD

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These rules are not complete, nor are they intended to be. Many sections were dropped from the original outline, including rules for airplanes, swimming, more weapons, security devices, special gadgets, exotic adventures, and more detailed contacts. As such, these (like so many other things) are left to the Judge to design. Or may be found in further material. The Judge is encouraged to put his or her creativity into the game and mold it into the form he or she wants.

Some persons may complain that the rules are not realistic, or are not detailed enough. The intention of this game was to not create a great tome of hundreds of pages of burdensome detail. But a game that is fun and not too difficult to play. The most important fact is that the Judge and the players enjoy what they are doing.

The author would be interested in hearing any responses or suggestions that readers might have for this game. Please be aware, however, that totally negative criticism usually accomplishes little. Those who write should offer constructive suggestions for how things might be improved.

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# ROCK JUNCTION DOWNTOWN



## Points of Interest

Numbers Correspon with numbers on map.  
key shows location on map

- |                   |                           |     |
|-------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| 20 Theaters       | 16 General Logan Monument | H-6 |
| 22 Apollo         | 45 Site of fort Dearborn  | A-6 |
| 23 auditorium     | 47 Van Buren St. Parcel   | F-2 |
| 24 blackstone     | Post Terminal             | C-2 |
| 15 central        | 22 Y.M. C.A.              | C-3 |
| 7 7th Heaven      | 46 Y.W. C.A.              | D-3 |
| 25 Cohan's Grand  |                           |     |
| 9 Columbus        |                           |     |
| 26 Cort.          |                           |     |
| 27 Carrick        |                           |     |
| 12 Great Northern |                           |     |
| 4 Harris          |                           |     |
| 28 Illinois       |                           |     |
| 5 LaSalle         |                           |     |
| 23 Majestic       |                           |     |
| 54 Motokors       |                           |     |
| 30 Olympia        |                           |     |
| 3 Orkestra Hall   |                           |     |
| 31 Palace         |                           |     |
| 13 Playhouse      |                           |     |
| 22 Pow era        |                           |     |
| 33 Princess       |                           |     |
| 8 Roponor elt     |                           |     |
| 7 Seleyrs         |                           |     |
| 6 State Lake      |                           |     |
| 21 Studasker      |                           |     |
| 53 Woods          |                           |     |
- 
- |  |                                 |       |
|--|---------------------------------|-------|
|  | 49 Boston Store                 | C-4   |
|  | 11 Carson Pirie Scott Co.       | C-5   |
|  | 44 Fair The                     | DD-4  |
|  | 50 Willams                      | C-4   |
|  | 53 Letter Bldg. Stores          | C-3,5 |
|  | 17 Mandol Bros                  | C-3,5 |
|  | 48 Marshall Field's Men's Annex | C-3,5 |
|  | 18 Marshall Field Rotal         | C-3,5 |
|  | 52 Stevens Bros                 | C-3,5 |
- 
- |  |                                   |     |
|--|-----------------------------------|-----|
|  | 34 Aurora, Elgin & Lakefront City | B-3 |
|  | 35 Central                        | F-3 |
|  | 31 Rock Junction, North Shore     | D-5 |
|  | & Milwaukee                       | C-1 |
|  | 26 Dearborn                       | G-4 |
|  | 37 Grand Central                  | G-2 |
|  | 39 LaSalle St                     | F-2 |
|  | 40 Northwestern                   | G-1 |
|  | 38 Randolph St                    | G-2 |
|  | 41 Union                          | F-2 |
|  | 42 Van Buren St                   | G-3 |

### Department Stores

### RAILROAD STATIONS

- Railroads
- ===== Elevated Lines
- - - - - Street Car Lines
- . - . - Elevated & Street Car Lines

**Black Mark**  
FARMER MARKETS

# WEIRD & TALES

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS  
THE BLUE BOOK DETECTIVE AGENCY

## CHARACTER SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Alias \_\_\_\_\_

### ABILITY SCORES

Muscle

Agility

Observe

Presence

Driving

Luck

Punching \_\_\_\_\_ Hit Points \_\_\_\_\_

### INJURIES

Wounds \_\_\_\_\_ Bruises \_\_\_\_\_

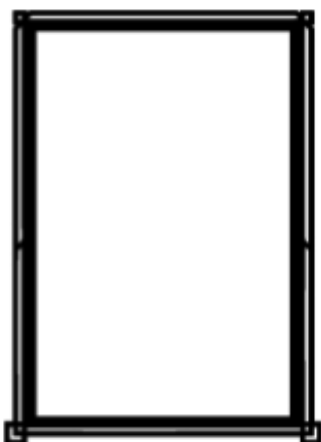
### SKILLS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### EQUIPMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Money \_\_\_\_\_



### DESCRIPTION

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Height \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Ethnicity \_\_\_\_\_

Eye Color \_\_\_\_\_

Hair Color \_\_\_\_\_

Scars/Marks \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL \_\_\_\_\_

XP \_\_\_\_\_

XP Spent \_\_\_\_\_

### CHARGES

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# WEIRD TALES

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS  
THE BLUE BEARD DETECTIVE AGENCY

## CHARACTER SHEET

Name Alice Durer

Alias \_\_\_\_\_

### ABILITY SCORES

**50** **55** **45** **7** **50** **24**

Muscle Agility Observe Presence Driving Luck

Punching 2 Hit Points 16

### INJURIES

Wounds \_\_\_\_\_ Bruises \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

Photography 25% Flash Light

Street Smarts 25% Purse

Shoot 35% Lighter

\_\_\_\_\_ 22cal Pistol

\_\_\_\_\_ Camera

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Money \$25.75

### EQUIPMENT



### DESCRIPTION

Age 24

Height 5'4

Weight 114

Ethnicity German

Eye Color Blue

Hair Color Black

Scars/Marks \_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL 1st Detective

XP \_\_\_\_\_

XP Spent \_\_\_\_\_

### CHARGES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# WEIRD TALES

PARANORMAL INVESTIGATIONS  
THE BULLE TOUGH DETECTIVE SYSTEM

## CHARACTER SHEET

Name Rick Cooper

Alias Coop

### ABILITY SCORES

**64** **42** **61** **8** **50** **15**

Muscle Agility Observe Presence Driving Luck

Punching 2 Hit Points 16

### INJURIES

Wounds \_\_\_\_\_ Bruises \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

Law 25% Flashlight

Street Smarts 25% Lighter

Shoot 35% .38cal Pistol

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Money \$7.75

\_\_\_\_\_



### DESCRIPTION

Age 29

Height 5'8

Weight 166

Ethnicity Assimilated

Eye Color Green

Hair Color Brown

Scars/Marks \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LEVEL 1st Detective

XP \_\_\_\_\_

XP Spent \_\_\_\_\_

### CHARGES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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