

6c. Psionics

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Psionics is the ability to impose the power of one's mind upon the physical world or the mind of others. Like all powers, psionic abilities are Traits associated to the Concentration skill. A psychic is usually born with these abilities, and requires training to control and master them. Depending on your setting, psionic abilities and Manipulation Traits may require a teacher, a book, or other knowledge source to learn them.

Power families

Psionic powers belong to one of four main families: Heal, Sensitivity, Telekinesis and Telepathy. All other powers are considered Stunts of one of these four, and have the basic power in the family as a prerequisite. Depending on the setting, your psychic may need to be born with the basic Trait of each family in order to learn it, whereas he or she can learn new stunts that belong to the same family. Alternatively, some species may have the innate potential of using one core power (usually Telepathy or Sensitivity), although they need someone to teach them the Trait to use it properly and to learn its Stunts. You may need a mentor to learn the base power for each family, and can discover the other Traits as you progress in the exploration of your mind's potential.

Attributes of Psionics

Psionics is a power type that a practitioner can manipulate with Manipulation Traits. Several attributes of psionic powers are non-standard, and behave slightly differently than how explained in the general rules for powers.

The Combine Manipulation Trait is not available to psychics. The few powers that have the Combine attribute usually have several variants. A psychic can use the default levels of Combine to use the different variants together, if he or she knows both. Psychics can also acquire the non-standard trait of Overcome.

Attribute	Default value	Manipulation via Trait
Combine	-	No
Might	1	Yes
Overcome	-	Yes
Range	-	Yes
Targets	-	Yes

The default values for non-manipulated attributes is always zero, with the exception of Might. This is different from other Power Systems, as the default value for Targets is zero and not one. This means that a non-manipulated psi power can only be cast on oneself if it lacks the Target attribute, and on a target one is touching if it lacks Range.

A Psychic can always add 1 point to any asterisked attribute in absence of the appropriate Trait by taking one Penalty per missing Trait. Thus a Psychic who knows only Telepathy can use it on a single target he or she is touching by rolling on the raw skill, or on a single target at Close Range by rolling on the raw skill with a further Penalty. This represents the difficulty of using latent powers without training.

Unlike other power systems, Psionics treats the Overcome attribute as not being automatically applied to powers that can work on an unwilling target. The psychic must have Overcome as a Trait in order to use powers at full efficiency on unwilling targets, otherwise he or she will suffer the Penalty for lack of a Manipulation Trait.

With the exception of Overcome, attributes that do not have a * score do not cause any Penalty for the lack of the appropriate Trait. The default value provided is used instead. For instance, Heal can be used on a wound without need of the Target Manipulation Trait.

Channelling

Channelling for a psychic is equal to 10% of the character's raw Concentration skill, rounded up. In addition to its standard function of limiting pre-activation of powers, the Channelling score also limits the total number of Manipulation points a psychic can apply to a single power. There is no maximum for each single Manipulation, just a cap to the total manipulation points added.

For example, a young psychic might want to cast Heal 6 (Might manipulation of +5) on one target (no Target manipulation, as the default value is 1) that he is touching (no Range manipulation). This adds up to a total Manipulation of 5. Assuming the magician had a Concentration skill of 51%, his Channelling would be 6, and the casting would be possible. Should the power user try to cast Protection 6 with a +2 to Range, instead, to affect a friend at Short range, that would add up to a total Manipulation score of 7, which exceeds his Channelling of 6 and makes the feat impossible. To reach the desired Range, the psychic would be forced to resort to a weaker Might, for instance Protection 5.

Using Psionics

For each attribute manipulated when using a Psionic Power in Advanced Combat, the psychic must spend one Life Point. Overcome is not counted, as the attribute is not actually manipulated but just added. The number of Manipulation points applied is not important, only the total number of Manipulations used. The time needed to use the power is just one Concentration action, no matter the manipulations used. If a power is not manipulated at all, it still requires one Concentration action and costs the psychic one Life Point.

Psionics allows all forms of extension for the duration of powers, except permanence. Thus a psychic can either pre-activate a power or use it with an extended duration, and in both cases this will use up Channelling points. Improving powers with long meditations similar to a magician's rituals is also possible for a psychic, if appropriate to how Psionics is described in your setting.

Psionic ability list

Absorb [energy], Astral Projection, Confusion, Detect Substances, Detect [power], Dominate, Heal, Illusion, Levitation (Fly), Location, Neutralise [power], Palsy, Project Senses, Psychic Perception (Second Sight), Pyrokinesis/Cryokinesis (Project [Fire/Cold]), Resist [power], Smother, Telekinesis, Telepathy.