

# ... SR3 TO SR4 CHARACTER CONVERSION GUIDE ...

*Shadowrun, Fourth Edition (SR4)*, presents a completely new rules set from the previous *Shadowrun, Third Edition (SR3)*. For this reason, we strongly suggest that if you wish to convert your player character that you simply re-build the character using the *SR4* character creation rules with an adjusted amount of Build Points (see below).

For a quicker conversion, without re-creating the character, follow the guidelines below. This will result in approximate conversions rather than exact duplicates, but this process is easier and accurate enough to satisfy the needs of the game.

If you simply need to convert NPC stats, we suggest using the quick conversion rules below.

## REBUILDING THE CHARACTER FROM SCRATCH

To rebuild your character from scratch, simply build your character over using the standard *SR4* character creation rules and the suggested amount of allocated Build Points (400). Once the character generation is complete, spend all of the Karma that character has accumulated to improve the character, using the standard *SR4* character improvement rules (see p. 263). You should, of course, make an effort to bring your character's new attributes, skill, qualities, and so on as close as possible to their *SR3* equivalents.

Gamemasters should keep in mind that starting *SR4* characters are generally of lower power than their *SR3* counterparts, so rebuilding from scratch will likely lead to less intimidating characters. This can be viewed as an opportunity to start afresh with the character and build him back up, from low-life street punk to prime runner badass. Alternately, the gamemaster can choose to provide the character 50 extra Build Points at character creation (to start with 450 BP total), to bring the character more in line with his previous talents.

## THE QUICK CONVERSION METHOD

To simply port over your character's stats to the new *SR4* system, adjust your character through the following steps. Gamemasters and players should keep in mind that conversion is not an exact process, so a certain amount of creativity and flexibility is required when translating a character. Try to keep it balanced, and as always, the gamemaster has final say.

### Step 1. Attributes

First, multiply your character's natural, unaugmented (no bioware, cyberware, or magical bonuses—but counting the metatype modifiers) *SR3* attributes by  $\frac{2}{3}$  (x 0.66, round up) to calculate the character's *SR4* attributes.

No natural attribute may be greater than the maximum unaugmented attribute for the character's metatype, as noted on p. 73, *SR4*—unless the character has the Exceptional Attribute quality (see p. 78, *SR4*). If the character's converted attributes exceed the maximum, reduce the character's attribute to the maximum.



**Quickness:** The SR3 Quickness attribute has been split into the SR4 Agility and Reaction attributes; multiply the character's Quickness by 2 and assign these points to the Agility and Reaction attributes. You must assign at least 1 point to each.

**Intelligence:** Similarly, the SR3 Intelligence attribute has been divided into the SR4 Intuition and Logic attributes; multiply the character's Intelligence by 2 and assign these points to the Intuition and Logic attributes. You must assign at least 1 point to each.

**Initiative:** Calculate the character's SR4 Initiative as normal (Reaction + Intuition).

**Edge:** Your converted character's Edge attribute is equal to half the character's Karma Pool (rounded up) or 6 (7 for human), whichever is lower.

**Magic and Resonance:** These are covered further on below.

**Essence:** Cyberware, bioware, and Essence are handled somewhat differently in SR4 than in previous editions. Because of this, players and gamemasters should re-calculate a character's Essence rating according to the cost of SR4 implants. In some cases, this will give characters a higher Essence score, while in others it might actually lower the Essence score.

Characters whose Essence reaches zero or below don't die, but must reduce the number of implants in their bodies until the new Essence is greater than zero. Magicians and technomancers whose Magic or Resonance attribute reaches 0 burn out and become mundane, unless they eliminate some of their implants.

*A gamemaster wants to convert the character Mihoshi Oni, the prettiest troll you've never met, for his SR4 game. Mihoshi has the Exceptional Attribute (Charisma) quality, and the following attributes:*

<i>Body</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Charisma</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Quickness</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Strength</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Willpower</i>	<i>6</i>

*Multiplying by 2/3 and rounding up, Mihoshi's attributes become:*

<i>Body</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Charisma</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Quickness</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Intelligence</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Strength</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Willpower</i>	<i>4</i>

*Now the GM doubles Mihoshi's Quickness and Intelligence attributes and assigns them to her Agility, Reaction, Intuition, and Logic attributes. The GM divides the Quickness points (3 x 2 = 6) evenly between Agility and Reaction (3 each), but decides that Mihoshi is more likely to be guided by her feminine Intuition, so puts a few more Intelligence points (4 x 2 = 8) into Intuition (5) at the cost of Logic (3).*

<i>Agility</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Intuition</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Reaction</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Logic</i>	<i>3</i>

*Checking Mihoshi's stats against the table on p.73, SR4, the GM notes that even with her Exceptional Attribute (Charisma) quality, Mihoshi's converted Charisma is too high. Not without regret for the prettiest troll you've never met, the GM reduces Mihoshi Oni's Charisma to 5.*



### SR3 TO SR4 ATTRIBUTE AND SKILL CONVERSION

SR3	SR4 (2/3)	SR3	SR4 (2/3)
1	1	11	8
2	2	12	8
3	2	13	9
4	3	14	10
5	4	15	10
6	4	16	11
7	5	17	12
8	6	18	12
9	6	19	13
10	7	20	14



#### Step 2: Skills

Multiply all SR3 skill ratings by 2/3 (round up) to find their SR4 equivalents. Any converted skill rating above 6 is reduced to 6 (or 7 if the character has the Aptitude quality).

Each SR3 skill is converted into the nearest equivalent SR4 skill or skill group. A handy table is provided below. If a character has all the skills in a skill group (see p.110), he has the option of converting his independent SR3 skills into the SR4 skill group. The resulting group has the average of the skill ratings (rounded up).

Skill specializations carry over; note specializations with a (+2) after the skill rank on your SR4 character sheet.

**Computer skill:** In the case of the Computer skill, characters (particularly hackers and technomancers) receive both the Electronics and the Cracker skill groups, at the converted rating.

**Language skills:** A character is assumed to be proficient in his native language; denote skill in such languages with an "N" in place of the rating.

**Magic and Resonance skills:** Skills dealing with Magic and Resonance are described below.



Moving on, the gamemaster needs to convert Miboshi Oni's skills. Her SR3 skill list is as follows:

<b>Active Skills:</b>		<b>Knowledge:</b>	
Athletics	4	English	5
Clubs	1	Read/Write	2
Computer	2	Japanese	6
Edged Weapons (Katana)	5 (7)	Read/Write	3
Etiquette	8	Japanese Culture	4
Muay Thai	4	Professional Bodyguarding	10
Negotiation	9	Russian	4
Stealth	5	Read/Write	2
Whips	6	Underworld Politics	5
		Yakuza	10

The GM notes that most of these conversions are simple. Miboshi doesn't hack computers, so the GM decides that her Computer skill simply converts to Computer skill. Muay Thai is a martial art from the Cannon Companion, so the GM decides it converts to a specialization of Unarmed Combat. Whips is an Exotic Melee Weapon skill.

Miboshi's knowledge of professional bodyguarding may be great, but her converted skill rating (7) is too high, so the GM adjusts it down to 6. Miboshi has the Aptitude quality for the Yakuza knowledge skill, though, so that rating converts to 7.

Noting that Miboshi has the Blades, Clubs, and Unarmed Combat skills, the GM could give Miboshi the Close Combat skill group, but decides not to. Satisfied, the GM calculates Miboshi's SR4 skills as follows:

<b>Active Skills:</b>		<b>Knowledge:</b>	
Athletics skill group	3	English	4
Blades (Katana)	4 (+2)	Japanese	N
Clubs	1	Japanese Culture	4
Computer	2	Professional Bodyguarding	6
Etiquette	6	Russian	3
Exotic Melee Weapon (Whips)	4	Underworld Politics	4
Negotiation	6	Yakuza	7
Stealth skill group	4		
Unarmed Combat (Kicking)	3 (+2)		



## ACTIVE SKILL CONVERSION

<b>SR3 SKILL</b>	<b>SR4 SKILL EQUIVALENT</b>
Assault Rifles	Automatics
Athletics	Athletics skill group
Aura Reading	Assensing
Bike	Pilot Ground Craft
Biotech	First Aid
Build/Repair	Aeronautics, Automotive, Industrial, or Nautical Mechanics; or Hardware
Car	Pilot Ground Craft
Clubs	Clubs
Computer	Computer, Data Search, Cracking skill group and/or Electronics skill group
Conjuring	Conjuring skill group
Cyber Implant Combat	Blades or Exotic Melee Weapon
Demolitions	Demolitions
Diving	Diving
Edged Weapons	Blades
Electronics	Computer, Hardware, or Electronics skill group
Etiquette	Etiquette
Gunnery	Gunnery
Heavy Weapons	Heavy Weapons
Hovercraft	Pilot Ground Craft
Instruction	Instruction
Interrogation	Intimidation or Negotiation
Intimidation	Intimidation
Laser Weapons	Exotic Ranged Weapon
Launch Weapons	Heavy Weapons
Leadership	Leadership
Lighter Than Air Aircraft	Pilot Exotic Vehicle
Motorboat	Pilot Watercraft
Negotiation	Negotiation or Con
Pistols	Pistols
Pole Arms / Staffs	Exotic Melee Weapon
Projectile Weapons	Archery
Rifles	Longarms
Rotor Aircraft	Pilot Aircraft
Sailboat	Pilot Watercraft
Ship	Pilot Watercraft
Shotguns	Longarms
Sorcery	Sorcery skill group
Stealth	Infiltration or Stealth skill group
Submachine Guns	Automatics
Submarine	Pilot Watercraft
Throwing Weapons	Throwing Weapons
Unarmed Combat	Unarmed Combat or Dodge
Underwater Combat	Exotic Melee
Vector Thrust Aircraft	Pilot Aircraft
Whips	Exotic Melee Weapon
Winged Aircraft	Pilot Aircraft



**Step 3: Qualities**

SR3 Edges and Flaws convert to the closest equivalent to SR4 qualities.

We also recommend that converted characters be allowed up to 5 BP worth of negative qualities that can only be spent on positive qualities before play.

*The gamemaster considers Mihoshi Oni's Edges and Flaws:*

**Edges:**

*Aptitude (Yakuza)  
Double Jointed  
Exceptional Attribute (Charisma)  
Friends Abroad*

**Flaws:**

*Jack Itch  
Police Record*

*There are no comparable qualities for either Friends Abroad or Jack Itch in the SR4 basic rules. The Friends Abroad edge applies to Mihoshi's contacts, so the GM decides to simply give Mihoshi a smattering of extra contacts in foreign locales instead. Jack Itch is a minor inconvenience, and one better suited as a roleplaying quirk for the character.*

*The GM drops those two, but also decides to take a 5 BP negative quality (Allergy) to give Mihoshi a positive quality (First Impression).*

*Here's how Mihoshi Oni's qualities turn out:*

**Qualities:**

*Allergy (Silver, Mild)  
Aptitude (Yakuza Knowledge skill)  
Double Jointed  
Exceptional Attribute (Charisma)  
First Impression  
SINner (Criminal SIN)*

**Step 4: Magic**

Magicians and the understanding of magic have advanced a great deal thanks to cutting edge research and the unearthing of long-buried secrets. What was state-of-the-art in 2064 is ancient history in 2070. Players and gamemasters alike should read over the *Awakened World* chapter carefully, and familiarize themselves with the changes in the system.

SR3 magicians start play in SR4 with a Magic attribute of 4 or their maximum Magic attribute due to Essence loss, which ever is lower. Adepts and mystic adepts should convert their adept powers to the nearest SR4 equivalents. Spellcasters translate their SR3 spells into the SR4 equivalents; note, however, that spells no longer have individual set Force ratings. If an SR3 spell or adept power has no equivalent, the character may pick another SR4 spell or power instead.

**Tradition:** SR3 magicians convert to the SR4 tradition closest to their own. An SR3 magician with a totem, idol, or loa automatically gains the Mentor Spirit quality, choosing an

equivalent archetype. Note that hermetic libraries were incorporated into lodges; SR3 characters with hermetic libraries can convert them into an SR4 lodge with a rating equal to their library's rating.

**Magical Skills:** The magical skills of Aura Reading, Conjuring, and Sorcery in SR3 have diversified in SR4. Multiply these skills by 2/3 (round up) and convert them into Assensing, Conjuring skill group, and Sorcery skill group, respectively. The Centering and Divining skills no longer exist, though characters retain the appropriate performance skill associated with each (becoming Artisan skill).

Convert Enchanting skill as normal and record it on the SR4 character sheet; it will be dealt with in the upcoming *Street Magic* advanced magic supplement.

Any skill rated above 6 is reduced to 6 (or 7 if the character has the Aptitude quality). Skill specializations carry over; note specializations with a (+2) after the skill rank on your SR4 character sheet.

**Initiation:** Initiate grades in SR3 carry over to SR4. For each grade, the magician may choose one metamagic technique from the list on pp. 189–190. Alternately, a character can choose to sacrifice a grade of initiation to increase his Magic attribute by 1 instead. The Magic attribute may not exceed 6 + Initiate Grade – Essence loss (round up).

**Foci:** Foci in SR4 have split along with the skills associated with them. If an SR3 character has a spell category or specific spell focus, the player or gamemaster must decide whether it is a spellcasting focus or counterspelling focus. Likewise, an SR3 spirit focus is either a summoning, banishing, or binding focus. Expendable spell foci no longer exist.

*Laura want to convert her magician character to SR4. Her character is Snowblood, a Wiccan who follows the Sumerian goddess Inanna as an aspect of Great Mother. Her relevant SR3 stats are as follows:*

<i>Essence</i>	5.5
<i>Magic</i>	8
<i>Initiate Grade</i>	3

**Active Magical Skills:**

<i>Aura Reading</i>	3
<i>Conjuring</i>	5
<i>Enchanting</i>	3
<i>Sorcery</i>	7

**Spells:**

<i>Create Water</i>	2
<i>Heal</i>	3
<i>Lightning Bolt</i>	6
<i>Manaball</i>	10
<i>Mind Probe</i>	5

**Foci:**

*Stacked Combat Spell Focus 3/Weapon Focus 3 (Athame)*

*Laura could use the rules to come up with her own Wiccan*



tradition for Snowblood, but the shamanic tradition laid out in the SR4 rulebook suits Snowblood fine. To represent Snowblood's connection to Inanna, Laura gains the Mentor Spirit quality and the Dark King archetype. Snowblood knows Inanna as the Dark Queen who descended into the Underworld, where she suffered great trials and learned dark wisdom.

In SR4, Snowblood's Magic rating starts at 4 (4 is lower than her maximum Magic of 5 due to Essence loss). Laura decides that she will keep her Initiate grade of 3 and takes three metamagical techniques: Flexible Signature, Masking, and Shielding.

Converting Snowblood's skills is relatively easy, but there doesn't seem to be an equivalent for the Create Water spell. Laura grins as she substitutes in Turn to Goo on Snowblood's character sheet.

Finally, Laura needs to convert Snowblood's ritual dagger, or athame, a stacked focus. The weapon focus converts easily, and Laura decides to make the combat spell focus a counterspelling focus.

Recording the changes, Snowblood's new SR4 stats are:

Essence	5.5
Magic	4
Initiate Grade	3

#### Metamagic Techniques:

Flexible Signature  
Masking  
Shielding

#### Qualities:

Mentor Spirit (Dark Queen)

#### Active Magical Skills:

Assensing	2
Conjuring skill group	4
Enchanting	2
Sorcery skill group	5

#### Spells:

Heal  
Lightning Bolt  
Manaball  
Mind Probe  
Turn to Goo

#### Foci:

Counterspelling Focus 3/Weapon Focus 3 (Athame)

### Step 5: The Matrix, Deckers, Riggers, and Otaku

Of all the aspects of *Shadowrun*, the Matrix has changed the most between editions. Thanks to wireless networking and augmented reality, every character—not just deckers/hackers and riggers—is online and wireless-enabled all of the time. This means that all characters should consider taking Computer or Data Search skill. Players and gamemasters alike should read over the *Wireless World* chapter carefully, and familiarize themselves with the changes in the system (at the very least, read

*What Every Runner Needs To Know About Hacking* on p. 224).

**Otaku/Technomancers:** SR3 otaku become technomancers in SR4 and start play with a Resonance attribute of 4 or their maximum Resonance attribute due to Essence loss, which ever is lower. Submersion grades in SR3 carry over to SR4. For each grade, the technomancer chooses one echo from the list on p.238. Alternately, the character may sacrifice a submersion grade and increase his Resonance attribute by 1 instead. The Resonance attribute may not exceed 6 + Submersion Grade – Essence loss (round up). After calculating Resonance, characters can calculate their Living Persona ratings from the table on p. 233.

The Channels of the otaku no longer exist. Instead, technomancer characters have access to the Resonance skills Compiling, Decompiling, and Registering (detailed on pp. 119 and 234)—grouped together as the Tasking skill group. Technomancers receive a Tasking skill group with a rating equal to (Charisma + Intuition + Logic + Willpower) ÷ 4 (round up). The maximum rating for this skill group is 5.

**Triggered Abilities:** The Matrix Crash of 2064 (detailed in *System Failure*) triggered latent abilities in some individuals. If the gamemaster approves, a character who does not have a Magic rating may spend their 5 BP from a negative quality (see above) on the Technomancer quality, meaning that they are now expressing technomancer abilities. New technomancers of this variety start play with a Resonance of 1 and no complex forms.

**Utilities/Programs and Complex Forms:** Multiply program and complex form ratings from SR3 by 2/3 (round up) to convert them for SR4. If a program or complex form does not have an SR4 equivalent, the character may pick a new one at the same rating. Note that the rating of complex forms are limited by the character's Resonance attribute. The maximum rating for any complex form or program is 6.

**Cyberdecks/Remote Control Decks and Commlinks:** The state-of-the-art moves fast, and in 2070 cyberdecks and RCDs are now clumsy and archaic relics of the old Matrix. For remote control decks, replace them with a commlink with Firewall, Response, Signal, and System ratings equal to the RCD rating times 2/3. Replace cyberdecks with a commlink with Firewall, Response, Signal, and System ratings equal to the MPCP rating times 2/3. Commlink ratings may not exceed 6.

Additionally, every non-hacker character starts out in SR4 with a commlink with Firewall, Response, Signal, and System ratings of 2.

Joey wants to convert his otaku, the aged human sensei known as Otaku Zuku, to SR4. His relevant SR3 stats are:

Charisma	7
Intelligence	11
Willpower	9
Essence	2.8
Submersion Grade	3

#### Relevant Active Skills:

Computer	9
Computer (B/R)	8



**Complex Forms:**

Attack	8S
Black Hammer	6
Lock-On	9
Medic	3
Track	5

With 4 points of Essence loss, Joey is disheartened to find out that Otaku Zuku only has a Resonance of 2 due to all of his implants. He decides to sacrifice his three grades of submersion to raise it to 5, meaning that he starts SR4 with no echoes.

Otaku Zuku's Computer skill converts easily, but the Computer (B/R) skill would best fall under the Hardware skill, which Otaku Zuku has anyway. After calculating the rating for the Tasking skill group, Joey is almost finished. Most of the complex forms translate easily, but SR4 has no equivalent to the Lock-On program, so Joey switches it out for the Exploit program.

After the conversion, here's how Otaku Zuku looks:

Charisma	5
Intuition	6
Logic	6
Willpower	6
Essence	2.8
Resonance	5

**Relevant Active Skills:**

Cracking Skill Group	6
Electronics Skill Group	6
Tasking Skill Group	6

**Complex Forms:**

Attack	6
Black Hammer	4
Exploit	6
Medic	2
Track	4

## SR3 TO SR4 CHARACTER CONVERSION GUIDE CREDITS

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**Step 6: Gear and Contacts**

Players and gamemasters should coordinate to pick out appropriate gear equivalents for their games. If an SR3 item or an equivalent does not exist in SR4, the gamemaster should allow the character to replace it with something worth a roughly equal nuyen amount or to simply sell it for the nuyen value. In addition, all characters should receive a basic commlink for free (see *Cyberdecks and Commlinks*, above).

Contacts have different ratings in SR4. An SR4 contact's Loyalty and Connection ratings each equal the contact's SR3 level x 2. With the gamemaster's approval, Loyalty rating may be adjusted upward or downward by 1 or 2 points by inversely adjusting the Connection rating (and vice versa).

Brick has an Ork Trid Pirate contact at an SR3 level of 2. In SR4 terms, this contact has Loyalty 4 and Connection 4. Brick's player thinks that the character is more trustworthy than influential, however, so he adjusts the Loyalty to 5 and conversely the Connection to 3.

**Step 7: All The Rest**

As always, the gamemaster has the final call on how a character turns out. If there are any parts of the conversion process that raise questions, the gamemaster should simply make a judgment call as to what he thinks best fits the character.

Though the SR4 rulebook is quite comprehensive, it does not cover all of the details provided in many of the SR3 advanced rulebooks. These things will eventually be covered in the SR4 advanced rulebooks—*Street Magic*, *Arsenal*, *Augmentation*, *Unwired*, and the *Runner's Companion*—but until then, you'll simply have to wing it, using the suggestions above as guidelines.

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