RULEBOOK

Burger Games 2005

Before and during World War Two, prominent Nazi and Axis scientists undertook unprecedented scientific project ranging from cruel medical experiments on human test subjects to top-secret expeditions into the Antarctic. They were called Black Files Research from the beginning. The name has stuck.

Some of their findings were made public and even today there is controversy over the ethics of using medical data obtained from concentration camps. Others were kept secret, although V-rockets and XXI subs gave a fleeting taste of what might have been achieved had they been completed.

At the end of the war these scientists vanished along with their notes, results, closest aides and billions worth of gold looted from occupied Europe. Later, during the Cold War, some of them resurfaced, either in person in the form of their research notes.

Horrible experiments and crimes against Humanity went ahead in utmost secrecy, on either side of the Iron Curtain. They worked wonders, broke new ground and rewrote scientific history, but even researchers themselves were sometimes appalled at their discoveries. Nothing was ever made public. Very few people even knew of their existence.

Fall of Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War re-shuffled the deck. Many projects were downscaled or moth-balled in the black file archives of the Cold War. Some were picked up great corporations working as military contractors for Kremlin, Beijing and Pentagon.

Others vanished, leaving behind neither witnesses, papers nor money trail for investigators or auditors to follow. They may have gone private, or worse. Some were just abandoned, left to rust, rot and lie in wait in the blanks of maps. Here be monsters.

All this is Top Secret. Powers-that-be do their utmost to ensure it, but even they could not catch them all. There have been big incidents like Chernobyl, Three Mile Island or Black Mesa. There are casual witnesses, escaped test subjects, rogue agents, disgruntled employees and even leaders whose conscience got best of them.

All agree on one thing: the experiments must be stopped! For the past few years they've been networking and gathering assets and intelligence. Today, they are ready to make their move. They are called Code/X and that is all you need to know.

I am sorry, but you already know too much. I should just shoot you but Code/X has need for your talent and the means to pay for it. I'd be your courier and you'd keep your mouth shut and enjoy the big bucks. So which will it be? The Red Pill? Or the Lead Pill?

CREATING A CHARACTER

Just like in most other roleplaying games, Code/X character is a resident of the game world and whose role in the game the player is playing. He or she can be anyone or anything, but as a rule of thumb characters in survival horror adventures are survivors themselves: tough cookies who can and will play it hard with the danger. Looking at the movies and video games of the genre, we can deduce that they are typically:

Ex-military (Far Cry)
Rogue Agents (Resident Evil)
Rescue Workers (Cold Fear)
Soldiers (Doom 3)
Mercenaries (Predator 1)
Police Officers (Predator 2)

Gordon Freeman (Half-Life 1&2) is really the odd one out: he is an accomplished physicist and researcher. His physical fitness and ability with weapons remain a mystery.

You character does not need to a carbon copy of any known character or hero, let alone a tank with every pocket bulging with weapons. But he or she must be able to look after herself, or else he will be a burden instead of a benefit to the group.

Character background:
Think up a mental image of your desired character. It is often easier than you think. Then come up with a name you are not ashamed of, write down a few details as to what he did before, why and how he fall in with Code/X. Then think up a callsign, something easy and cool you can refer to and is quick to shout in a firefight. One or two syllables.

Meeting with Code/X:
For playing Code/X it is often immaterial why and how the character got involved, but if you must know, here are three suggestions as to how it usually goes:

Rogue agents are ex-workers for the bad guys, who out of ideological, material or strictly personal reasons turned against their employers. Finding out that you have been assisting in a genocide of hundreds of human test subjects tends to jolt most people. Turning yourself over to the cops would lead to an asylum or an arranged death. Code/X lets you redeem yourself.

Witnesses are people who have seen something they should not, whether by accident or by having first been test subjects themselves and then escaped. Bad guys actively hunt down witnesses to silence them for good. Code/X offers both protection and a chance to hit back.

Mercenaries are in it for the money. Of course, after the first job they are also witnesses and can never leave, but it is the same for most black ops. At least Code/X is (usually) doing good things.

1. CHOOSE ABILITIES

Once we have a mental picture of the character and some notes as to what he has done before and thus might be able or unable to do, it is time to transfer those notes into game mechanics, namely ***Abilities.*** All characters have ten different abilities, reflecting their gifts, skills and talent in different activities and walks of life. Later in the game, more experienced characters who have survived a number of missions are more powerful due to higher ability scores. Experience and danger are the best teachers.

You have 100 points for abilities. Any unused points are lost. The cost and significance of different ability levels is listed below:

Ability	Cost	Description
-2	1	Non-existent
-1	3	Poor
0	6	Average
+1	10	Skilled
+2	15	Veteran
+3	21	Senior
+4	28	Expert
+5	36	Master

2. CHOOSE SPECIALISATIONS

If an ability is more than 0, the player can pick one ability-related specialisation for every point of ability score. For example, a character ability of +3 would know three specialisations. These are more narrowly focused areas of expertise, skill and special ability. When an ability roll deals with an issue the character has specialised in, you can roll three dice and pick the two highest scoring dice for the result.

It is hard to pinpoit what exactly constitutes an acceptable specialisation. It has to be limited enough to represent a specific skill or clearly defined area of expertise, yet general enough to be of an actual use fo the character. Ability descriptions contain suggestions for typical Code/X specialties. You may stick to them or come up with your own as long as it is approved by the Gamemaster.

For example, with Aim +3 the character would have three related specialties. Being an ex-mercenary, the player picks Pistols, Rifles and Throwing. He is good shot with any weapon, but has put extra hours in learning to use small arms and grenades.

Academic (AC)
General education, scientific knowledge, formal training and the like. In a modern society, academic education is also often a measure of social standing and background.

Specialisations: ***Business, Earth Sciences, Engineering, Hard Sciences, Human Sciences, (Language), Law, Life Sciences, Politics, Religion***

Agility (AG)
Mobility, speed and athletic grace. Agile characters excel in sports, are hard to hit and good at creeping up to the enemy.

Specialisations: ***Climbing, Dancing, Leaping, Motorcycles, Riding, Sneaking***

Aim (AI)
Shooting or throwing straight, everything between a rock and a machinegun. Some people can hit targets even blindfolded, so it is not always about senses.

Specalisations: ***Archery, Bazookas, Machineguns, Pistols, Rifles, Shotguns, Throwing, Gunnery/Aircraft, Gunnery/Vehicles***

Charisma (CH)
Influencing others, making a good and convincing impression, trying to pick up girls at a local club, lying convincingly or wooing an audience in a stage show.

Specialisations: ***Acting, Art (choose one) Barter, Contacts, Etiquette, Fashion and Style, Oratory, Play (instrument), Seduction***

Initiative (IN)
Reflexes and sensory awareness, taking in and processing sensory information, learning from hands-on experience and drawing conclusions from observations very quickly. Characters with high initiative often come across as clever, but it is not really the same thing as intellect.

Specialisations: ***Aircraft Pilot, Dodge, Drive, Forensics, Perception, Quickdraw***

Medical (MD)
Art of medicine and hands-on treatment of accident patients or combat injuries. General medical knowledge and recognition of poisons, drugs, infections and various diseases. Using medical instruments.

Specialisations: ***Animal Medicine, Bioweapons, Chemical Weapons, Diagnosis, First Aid, Narcotics, Medical Science, Pharmacy, Psychiatry, Surgery***

Melee (ME)
Skill and ferocity in hand-to-hand combat, with or without weapons. Master fighters usually master many different weapons and fighting styles. Melee combat skills have been in wane because of firearms, but they are effective, silent and always with you if you can get close enough.

Specialisations: ***Knives, Swords, Axes, Clubs, Unarmed (Martial Arts), Dirty Tricks, Wrestling (non-lethal takedown)***

Strength (ST)
Physical strength, hitting and lifting power, bulk, muscularity and constitution. Useful for tearing jammed hatches open, or throwing some extra weight behind a punch. Also the basis for some sports, endurance tests and resistance to toxins.

Specialisations: ***Pain Treshold, Resistance to Disease, Resistance to Poison, Stamina, Swimming, Weightlifting***

Technical (TE)
Mechanical aptitude and affinity to all things technical, from low-tech carpentry to tuning car engines and figuring out the controls of a nuclear reactor.

Specialisations: ***(Craft), Demolition, Electronics, Engineering, Lockpicking, Mechanics, Security Systems, Sleight-of-hand***

Willpower (WI)
Authority, force of will, excerting commanding influence over yourself and others. Strong-willed characters are obstinate but often brave. Sometimes high willpower manifests also as a fiery, fearless temper. At other times an icy-cool demeanor that never cracks.

Specialisations: ***Intimidation, Keep Cool, Leadership, Meditation, Streetwise***

3. PICK EQUIPMENT

Code/X provides the characters with equipment and plenty of money to live on (around $50,000 per mission), so acquiring equipment usually isn't a problem (choosing what you want to take with you is). If the Gamemaster wants to make money and availability of items an issue, characters have **$5000 + (AC+CH) x $1000** to start with and equipment can be purchased from the list below. Since Code/X is set in the modern world, anything available in stores is also available to the characters.

Illegal equipment like weapons can be more difficult to obtain, but since most mission locations are close to areas of unrest, it is not unheard of assault rifles being sold on market square (Kabul, Mogadishu etc.). Cost is usually twice the listed cost, unless the character has connections through his skills and background that can provide them at a listed price.

Carrying stuff around:
This is where the fun starts. Items come in five different sizes according to shape, weight and how easy they are to carry. The character as 4 + ST slots for equipment. A bit item such as an assault rifle or a backpack takes up a whole slot, but then again you can stuff up to four medium-sized items into backpack. What item is of what size is arbitrary, but below are some suggestions:

Pocket item (none): if it fits into a trouser pocket it is not worth counting. These include smallest pistols, all pistol clips, cell phones, cigarette lighters etc. up to the size of a thick wallet. Also standard clothing items are not counted.

Small item (0.5 slots): if it is small enough to be carried on a belt or in a holster, but too big to fit in trouser pockets, the item is small. This includes most pistols and machine pistols, hand grenades, helmets, bazooka ammo, good-sized flashlights, combat knives, medkits etc. Small items take up half a slot.

Big item (1 slot): if it is too big to have a holster or a utility belt holder, but can be carried slung onto your back or held with one hand, it is a big item and takes up a whole slot. Submachineguns, assault rifles, satchel charges etc. belong to this category. Note that special clothing or armour, such as padded winter clothing or a wetsuit, count as big items.

Special rule: Backpacks or utility belts are big items, but they can hold up to four small items and an infinite number of pocket items, thus expanding the volume of the slot they are in. They cannot hold a big item, although backpacks with a solid frame have room for small, rolled up tents (big item) and the like.

Huge items (3 slots) like a body, a wounded comrade, or a bicycle can be carried but take up a lot of space. Then again, if they can be dropped when the action starts, that additional penalty for overload does not really matter.

Or, you could skip encumbrance rules entirely and stick to common sense. Rifle rounds are pocket items, but nobody carries a thousand of them and you know it.

Overburdened?
The character has -1 penalty to all physical activity for every beginning slot above the encumbrance limit.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT:

Arctic Clothing	$1000
Backpack	$200
Binoculars	$100
Briefcase	$100
Bulletproof Case	$200
Camo Clothing	$500
Camping Kit	$100
Cell Phone	$100
Cutting Torch	$50
Digital Camera	$250
Duct Tape	$5
Equipment Harness	$350
First Aid Kit	$100
Flashlight	$20
Geiger Counter	$300
Goggles	$10
Headset Communicator	$200
Holster + Belt	$50
Laptop Computer	$2000
Lockpicks	$50
Medical Field Kit	$1000
Night-vision goggles	$5000
Palmtop Computer	$300
Power Tool Kit	$200
Radio Jammer	$5000
Rations, 1 day	$15
Rope, 25m	$100
Scuba Gear	$300
Shotgun Microphone	$1500
Sleeping Bag	$100
Tent, 4-person	$200
Water Bottle	$20

VEHICLES

Canoe	$500
Car	$15,000
Helicopter	$100,000
Motor Boat	$30,000
Motorcycle	$8,000
Small Plane	$200,000
Small Yacht	$50,000
Sports Car	$150,000
Truck	$20,000

PERSONAL PROTECTION

Motorcycle leather	$1000
Light Ballistic Vest	$300
Ballistic Vest	$600
Chainmail shirt	$400
Battle Vest	$1000
Assault Vest	$1200
Knee and Elbow guards	$150
Light Helmet	$100
Heavy Helmet	$300

WEAPONS

Brass Knuckles	$20
Switchblade	$20
Combat Knife	$70
Foil	$100
Machete	$100
Sword	$250
Axe	$150
Chainsaw	$200
Baton	$10
Spanner	$50
Crowbar	$30
Baseball Bat	$50
Staff	$50
Stun Baton	$150
Spiked Club	$100
Riot Shield	$200
Bayonet	$60
Pistol	$300
Revolver	$500
Machine Pistol	$1000
Submachinegun	$1500
Hunting Rifle	$700
Assault Rifle	$2000
Sniper Rifle	$2000
Sawn-off Shotgun	$500
Pump-action Shotgun	$700
Assault Shotgun	$2400
Light Machinegun	$3500
Heavy Machinegun	$6000
Grenade Launcher	$1500
Rocket Launcher	$8000
LAW	$800
Bazooka	$4000
Thrown Knife	$40
Shuriken	$50
Hand grenade	$80
TNT stick	$50
Satchel Charge	$200
Longbow	$200
Crossbow	$300
Flamethrower	$2000

ACCESSORIES

Low-light Scope	$1000
Silencer, pistol/rifle	$100/$200
Targeting Scope	$200
Clip/Magazine/Belt	$20
100 box of pistol ammo	$200
50 box of rifle ammo	$200
50 box of shotgun ammo	$250
Special ammo	x 2
Launcher Grenade	$10
Rocket	$50
Arrow	$2

4. CALCULATE STATS

When it is all said and done, it is time to tally up Stats. These are figures used by the rules to determine factors like reaction speed in combat or the ability to withstand damage. They are affected by both attributes and skills.

Movement: 3 + AGI (minimum of 1)
This is the number of metres the character can move during his combat action in addition to some task. He can move four times this much if he skips the action and concentrates on running. Climbing, Crawling or Swimming movement rates are half of this and no running is possible. Movement speed can be temporarily increased with suitable task rolls.

Melee Defence: 8 + AG + ME
This is the basic difficulty treshold for hitting the character in close combat, as long as he remains active and unrestrained.

Ranged Defence: 8 + AG + IN
This is the basic difficulty treshold for hitting the character in ranged combat, as long as he remains active and unrestrained.

Injury Levels:
These figures determine what kind of injuries the character sustains from hits. When the attack damage is figured out, any armour worn by the character is subtracted from it and the remainder is compared to his injury levels. The range the remainder falls in determines the severity of the hit. All figures are to be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Scratch	**0...**
Wound	**(10+ST+WI)/2...**
Serious Wound	**(Wound x 2)...**
Critical Wound	**(Wound x 4)...**
Killed	**(Wound x 8)...**

Average person has injury levels 5/10/20/40. Hit of less than 5 points is a Scratch, 5-9 points is a wound, 10-19 points is a serious wounds, 20-39 points is a critical wound and 40+ kills him outright.

Toughness: 0+(WI/2) (min. 0)
Injuries cause injury penalty, which is subtracted from all action rolls. Maximum penalty is -6 and beyond that the character is in shock. However, characters with high willpower can ignore some of the pain and subtract their WI value from the penalty before applying it to the action rolls. And with WI +6 (or boosted by drugs) they could ignore injuries completely, until they suddenly go into shock when the penalty goes to -7 or more. Your average person takes pain as it is, however.

6. Finishing touches

As the final step the player must describe his character and decide things like gender, some details about personal history and how did the character get involved in Code/X. Usually the more detail he can come up with, the more fun the character is to play. It is also recommended to give the character a quirk or two, or vices if he has some negative stats.

Poor ST might indicate he is a chain smoker, while poor WI might leave him addicted to tranquilizers or something else that will calm his poor nerves. All this is added to the details and mental picture you had of him at the start of character creation. And a final note: your character speaks one additional language for every positive point of Academic.

GAME SYSTEM

To play Code/X, you need at least one six-sided die, preferably two or three. The basic component of the game system is the action roll, made when the Gamemaster does not want to decide the outcome or consequence of some action himself. Default action roll is **2D + relevant Ability** score and the result must ***exceed*** the difficulty treshold.

6	**Easy**
8	**Routine**
10	**Challenging**
12	**Difficult**
14	**Very Difficult**
16	**Near Impossible**
18	**Absurd**

Roll is open-ended, so if both dice scored "6", **roll 1D6 and add it to the result.** If that too scored "6", keep rolling. There is no maximum result.

On the other hand, **if both dice scored "1", it is automatically a Catastrophic Failure**. Anything that is rolled can also be botched.

Success and Failure

Any roll exceeding the treshold is a **success**, and if it exceeded the treshold by +5 or more, it is a **critical success** where everything went better than expected.

Result equal to the treshold is **"almost made it"** and while it did not succeed, it was not a total loss and could be salvaged with further effort.

Result less than the treshold indicates a **failure**. Character could not do the task and cannot try again unless there is a significant change in circumstances. Failure by a margin of 5 or more, or a "natural 2", indicates a **catastrophic failure** where the character actually made things worse.

If the task was Difficult, a roll of 2-7 would be a catastrophic failure, 8-11 a failure, 12 an "almost made it" -roll, 13-16 a success and 17 or more a critical success.

Negative abilities:

If the relevant ability score is negative, for every negative point you must roll one extra die, and then pick the two worst-scoring ones.

For example, if the ability is -1, you would roll 3 dice. If the results are 5, 2 and 3, you discard 5 and pick only 2 and 3, for a total of 5. If at least two of the dice scored "1", the roll would be an automatic catastrophic failure.

Since there are no specialisations, the character has little hope in succeeding in anything above "Routine" difficulty.

Specialisations:

If the character also has a specialisation relevant to the task, the player rolls one extra die and picks the two highest-scoring dice. Numbers-wise specialisation corresponds to a +2 add to the ability score, but the increased chance of an open-ended roll and reduced chance of an automatic failure are even more important benefits.

If the character had specialisation, he would roll three dice. With scores 5, 2 and 3, he would pick 5 and 3 for a total of 8. For an automatic failure, all three dice would have to score 1. Odds of that happening are one in 216.

Gamemaster can also decide that some tasks require the specialisation to be possible at all. For example, high Initiative means nothing in the cockpit of a helicopter, if the person does not have any training with it. He probably could not even start the engines.

Contested roll:

If two characters are testing their skill against each other, both make an action roll and the highest result wins. With relevant modifiers, of course. Combat is also a kind of contested roll, but there the objective is to exceed a fixed treshold, namely Melee or Ranged Defence. If Gamemaster would prefer fixed tresholds as a whole, 9 + Difficulty Modifier would do the trick.

Shit-hits-the-fan roll:

Sometimes it is impossible to decide if and how the characters could affect the situation and it all boils down to luck. In that case, player or Gamemaster rolls a single die, the lower the result, the worse the situation. Rolling 1 means something exceptionally bad and rolling 6 some kind of an unexpected benefit.

For example, the character fires off a long burst in a laboratory, instantly reducing test tubes, pipes, contains, jars and whatnot into fragments, trash and shreds. Is there a fire? Is there a dangerous chemical reaction? Will he get splashed by the zombie enzyme?

The gamemaster rolls 1D and result is 2. Not good. Multicoloured puddles on the floor begin to boil and suddenly the air above them bursts into green-blue flames. Characters would do wisely to get out as soon as possible. On a roll of 1 there could have been an explosion, or the shooting character would have been sprayed with acid.

On a roll of six, he would have been sprayed with a mysterious chemical that heals his injuries, or a whole bunch of enemies would have gone up in flames.

Using Karma:

After each Code/X mission the character gets one Karma point. This can be used to increase an ability by +1 or buy a new specialty (assuming the ability score is higher than the number of existing specialties). Karma Point can also be used to ask for a re-roll of any roll concerning the character, from his action rolls to a roll on who gets hit by a falling boulder.

COMBAT SYSTEM

The first rule is that combat is fast, mobile and fluid. If the player hesitates, so does the character. It is about snap judgements, and mistakes will be made. The second rule is that combat is supposed to be FUN!

Combat turns:

Actual combat takes place simultaneously and in real-time, but for the sake of playability it has been divided into turns, which can take anywhere from 2 to 10 seconds or more. Typically the game moves back and forth between narrative and turn-based time flows. Actual attacks and exchanges of fire are in turns, while a brief respite behind a cover is in narrative mode. Do not take turns too seriously. They are an artificial abstraction of a very complex and fast event.

During a combat turn, each able combatant has one action available to him. Basically anything the character does on his own volition counts as an action.

- **Fire a weapon**
- **Attack in close combat**
- **Move more than Movement x 1**
- **Jump**
- **Climb Movement/2**
- **Reload weapon**
- **Change weapon**
- **Pick something up**
- **Set something on the ground**
- **Pull a level**
- **Get down on the ground**
- **Stand up**

Being thrown across the room by an explosion is not an action. Dropping something, by accident or intention, is not an action, but setting something down is.

Keep it going! Using 3-second combat turns means that while using turns, the player has on the count of three to decide what his character does. If the player hesitates longer than that, so did his character and the turn is lost. But Gamemasters should use common sense with this. For example, if the player asks for more information about the situation and is not obviously stalling the game, he should be allowed to.

Initiative:

In combat, it is crucial to know who goes first. This can often be deduced from the circumstances. Surprise attacks always go first, or if you have the gun out but the other party does not, it does not matter when in the round they can pull it out.

When it can't be determined, it is resolved with an **Initiative roll**. Some specialisations may give bonuses to the roll. For example, if two gunmen are facing each other in a quickdraw duel, specialisation ***Quickdraw*** can come in handy, since the highest result goes first. Equal results mean simultaneous actions.

Close Combat:

Hitting the enemy in hand-to-hand combat calls for a **Melee roll** against the target's **Melee Defence.** There can be modifiers to the roll, but usually no more than +/-3 from circumstances and whatever the current Injury penalty is.

-?	**Injury penalty, if any**
+/-?	**Weapon Accuracy, if any**
+1	**Attacking from behind**
+1	**Target movements restrained**
+2	**Surprise attack from behind**
+3	**Hitting a sleeping target**
-1	**Fighting from the ground**
-1	**Broken or unstable ground**
-2	**Attacker movements restrained**
-1	**Medium weapon in tight space**
-2	**Large weapon in tight space**
-1	**Poor Visibility**
-2	**Blindfighting**
+1	**Charging (first round only)**
-1	**Target partially protected (wall, shield)**

Melee parry

The character may also declare he is defending with whatever he is holding. If the GM thinks the object can be used to block enemy attacks, the character may make a Melee roll against all close combat attacks that turn, and the difficulty treshold of hitting him is either the roll result or Melee Defence, whichever is higher. If the attack roll is lower than the parry roll by a margin of 5 or more, the attacker was disarmed.

Special moves

Over the course of the game the characters will probably want to do fancier close combat moves than just punches and kicks. Rather than have detailed rules for every eventuality, the GM could just ask the player to describe what the character is trying to do and then impose penalties from -1 to -3. If the attack still hits, it has the desired effect, scaled with the margin of success.

For example, the character wants to grab a wrestle hold of his opponent. This is a fairly simple move in combat, but since the enemy is using machete, a weapon of some reach, GM imposes a penalty of -2 since the character must get past the machete first. But the attack roll succeeds with a margin of +3. After some quick thinking, GM decides that the opponent of knocked over and pinned to the ground for the next three turns, after which holding him still is a Strength vs. Strengh -contest. Of course, this only applies to human-sized opponents. No pinning down Rhinos, please!

In another example, the character is charged by a freaky mutant on a mountain path. Player tells GM his character wants to Judo throw the mutant off the mountain. GM says it is a -3 penalty move but the player goes for it anyway. He barely succeeds (thanks to Unarmed Combat specialisation) with a margin of +1. GM decides the mutant got tossed for about 1 metre. Fortunately for the character, the path was only 1 metres wide, so this is enough to send the mutant right over the edge. With 100+ metres to the bottom it is an instant kill.

Fighting with two weapons:
As the downside, weapon specialisations no longer apply. It is not possible to specialise in two-weapon close combat. As the upside, the player gets to decide which weapon is the actual offensive weapon. The supportive weapon can either be used to give a +1 bonus to the attack roll, or for more effective defence giving +1 bonus to Melee Defence against all incoming close combat attacks. If Melee ability is high enough it may actually be worth it, fighting with two weapons.

For example, the character has a machete and a combat knife. He uses the machete for attack and knife is the supporting weapon. He can no choose between +1 bonus to the attack roll with the machete, or a standard attack roll and +1 bonus to Melee Defence.

Getting the hell out of Dodge:
If the character is not feeling aggressive (concentrates on defence) and has nothing to parry with, he can also try dodging out of the harm's way. This means that during the turn whenever he is attacked, he can make an **Agility roll**. The difficulty of hitting him is either the roll result or **Melee Defence**, whichever is higher. Dodging has the additional benefit of allowing the character double Movement for that turn, so it is a good first move when you are about to flee.

Close Combat Fumbles:
Many games feature length tables of all sorts of funny results when somebody fumbles in combat. There is no time for that in Code/X, so depending on circumstances, close combat fumbles mean one of four things: Dropping/breaking the weapon, Hitting yourself, hitting a friend, or hitting something you really, really, should not have hit. This is a good time for a **shit-hits-the-fan roll.**

Close Combat parry against ranged attacks:
With a shield-like object it is possible to stop or deflect stones, arrows and in some cases even bullets. Policemen use different kinds of shields, but a trashcan lid can stop stones and a manhole cover can even stop or deflect bullets. Just carrying something that big with you adds +1 to Ranged Combat Defence if it has a fair chance of stopping the projectile.

Concentrating on defense (skipping the attack action for the turn) with an object like that allows the character to make a Melee roll against every visible ranged combat attack. Either that roll or Melee Defence+1 is used as the difficulty treshold for attacking him. Whichever is higher.

WEAPON NAME	Acc	Dam
Unarmed combat	0	2+ST
Cannot parry armed attacks		
Brass Knuckles	0	3+ST
Cannot parry armed attacks		
Switchblade	+1	3+ST
Target armour is halved		
Combat Knife	+1	4+ST
Target armour is halved		
Foil	+2	2+ST
Target armour is halved		
Machete	+1	5+ST
Target armour is halved		
Sword	+2	5+ST
Target armour is halved		
Axe (2-handed)	0	6+ST
Target armour is halved		
Chainsaw (2-handed)	0	9+ST
Baton	+1	3+ST
Spanner	0	4+ST
Crowbar	0	5+ST
Baseball Bat (2-handed)	+1	5+ST
Staff (2-handed)	+2	3+ST
Stun Baton	+1	2+ST
Electric shock		
Spiked Club	0	8+ST
Riot Shield	0	3+ST
Wearer partially protected		
Bayonet (on a rifle, 2H)	+1	5+ST
Target armour is halved		
Rifle butt (2-handed)	0	5+ST

Ranged Combat

In these days, most combat is ranged, meaning it is fought with thrown weapons or projectiles, the most common of which are obviously firearms.

Hitting the enemy in ranged combat is an **Aim roll**, with target's Range Combat Defence as the difficulty treshold. There are often modifiers to the roll.

-?	**Injury penalty, if any**
+/-?	**Weapon Accuracy**
+1	**Point blank range**
-1	**Medium Range (beyond listed)**
-2	**Long Range (beyond listed x 2)**
-3	**Extreme Range (beyond listed x 4)**
-1	**Target moving at vehicle speeds**
-3	**Target is moving at flight speeds**
-1	**Poor visibility**
-3	**No visibility**
+1	**Previous action was to aim at target**
-1	**Target has partial cover**
-2	**Target has good cover**

In combat it is usually best to follow "KISS" -principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid) and apply no more than two modifiers to any given situation.

The Gamemaster will have to pick the two most relevant to the situation. For ranged combat, they are typically range and target movement.

Remember that a total modifier of -3 would make hitting nearly impossible for most.

Burst fire: +1 to attack roll
Automatic and semi-automatic weapons can fire "short, controlled bursts" of 3 rounds each. In semiautomatic weapons this effect is achieved by pulling the trigger three times in rapid succession. Firing a burst consumes 3 rounds and gives +1 bonus to attack roll.

Long burst: +2 to attack roll
Fully automatic weapons can fire a long burst, compensating the lack of accuracy with the sheer volume of lead. Long burst gives +2 bonus to attack roll but consumes 10 rounds of ammunition. Anything in the vicinity of the target is likely to get hit, so the GM may call for a "shit-hits-the-fan roll" to see if there are special effects (vehicles blowing up, punctured pipes spouting plumes of steam etc.) Even if he missed the target, the target take collateral damage.

Full burst: +3 to attack roll
Firing 30 rounds or more at the target gives +3 to the attack roll and everything around the target is comprehensively riddled with bullet holes. In addition to hits on the target, the GM may impose shit-hits-the-fan rolls for all adjacent targets to see if they are hit by stray bullets, explosions and other collateral damage. Full burst from a machine gun can wipe out the whole group.

As a rule of thumb, hits from stray bullet hit from a long burst has a margin of success 1D3 and a stray bullet hit from a full burst has a margin of success 1D3+1. These are important in figuring out the Attack Damage. Of course, not all collateral damage is in the form of stray hits. If the targets are behind a wall of sandbags and can't be hit, collateral damage might mean kicking up so much dust they can hardly see or breathe for the next couple of turns.

Dodge: Running for Cover
Ranged attacks can be dodged just like close combat attacks. The character forfeits his offensive action for the turn and instead can move twice his movement and make **Agility rolls** against all incoming attacks. The difficulty treshold used for the attack is either the roll result or his Ranged Combat stat, whichever is higher. In most cases, dodging means running or leaping for cover. If this cover is low, like a ditch or a low wall, dodging turn ends with the character prone on the ground (and hopefully safe behind the cover).

Explosions
Area-effect weapons, namely explosives, are used to take out groups or targets, or clear locations of visible or hidden enemies. Static explosions are used to knock down walls, doors or other obstacles. Damage is inflicted by overpressure, heat and flying fragments (in some cases the explosive device carries the fragments with it as shrapnel). Collateral damage is extensive.

Explosive damage is given by dice. The roll is open-ended, so all dice scoring "6" are re-rolled. There is no maximum damage. A successful hit from an explosive round means the target is on ground zero and takes the full explosive damage. For every two metres or an obstacle between the explosion and the victim reduces the damage roll by 1D6. Obstacle reduction can be much greater (2D6, 3D6, more) depending on circumstances. Lying on the ground always counts as an obstacle.

If an explosive misses its target, it goes of 2 metres away in a random direction. Add +2 metres more for every point of negative margin. However, it always travels in straight or at most ballistic line, so if the path to the target was through window and the grenade goes 2 metres aside, it explodes against the wall.

Timed explosives, like hand grenades, have a small delay between landing and going off. When it lands, people in the vicinity, including the actual target, can use any remaining ***Movement*** to get away from the device. Those lying on the ground have their Movement values halved.

If somebody is a hero and throws himself on the grenade, he takes double dice, while for all others the damage dice are halved (rounding down). Helmet, backpack, having another body beneath etc. can reduce the damage by two to five dice, but it is still dangerous business.

Hand grenade (dam 6D6) lands right between Alex and Jay. Alex has moved already but Jay hasn't. Jay uses his Movement of 4 to get away, but since he was on the ground he only makes 2 metres away. Alex, with just 1 metre remaining, rolls on top of the grenade, smothering it. Alex takes 12D6 and is blown to bits. Jay takes 3D6 (half the dice) - 1D6 (for the distance), leaving 2D6 for damage roll. He probably walks away from the explosion and lights a candle for Alex.

Fire attacks
Random source of heat inflicts **1D6 x Fire Strength** damage at the end of each turn of contact. For casual or glancing contact the roll is 1D3. Whether or not the character caught fire is up to the GM, clothing and what causes the fire. Wading through a lake of burning gasoline is bad for health.

Being hit by a flame weapon usually douses the target with extra-sticky burning fluids, such as napalm. The actual attack inflicts **Margin of success x Fire Strength** damage by the end of the turn (note that while the damage could be lethal, the victim might still try to do something with the last two seconds of his life).

If the victim keeps burning, he keeps taking damage. Margin of success (or the roll result) is reduced by 1 for every successive turn until the fire goes out. If the victim can feel pain he has a -3 penalty to everything while on fire. Most will panic. Rolling on the ground or having someone smother the flames reduces the margin or roll result by -2 per round. Dousing the victim in water or fire retardants puts the fire out immediately. Fire-proof suits make the victim effectively immune to flames, short of dropping him into a volcano.

Margin 3 hit inflicts Fire Strength x 3 damage. At the start of next round, target burns for FS x 2 damage and the third round it is FS x 1.

***Accuracy (Acc)** is added to attack rolls made with the weapon.*

***Damage (Dam)** is the weapon damage. +ST indicates that user's Strength is added to the value.*

***Rate of Fire (RoF)** indicates how fast the weapon can be fired. "1" means that one round can be fired per turn. SA indicates a semiautomatic weapon, which is also capable of burst fire. "A" indicates a fully automatic weapon also cabable long bursts and full bursts. "Slow" in the notes section means the weapon takes one turn to reload after firing.*

***Range (Ran)** is the most effective, or "short" range of the weapon. Firing at targets beyond that range is penalised.*

***Magazine (Mag)** tells how many rounds the weapon's magazine, clip or belt can hold before it needs to be reloaded. Thrown weapons obviously have no magazine at all.*

***Notes** tells any special rules. Against shotguns target armour is doubled, against edged or pointed weapons it is halved. Some weapons inflict damage by fire, while others are explosives.*

WEAPON NAME	Acc	Dam	RoF	Ran	Mag	Notes
Pistol	0	6	SA	30	12	
Revolver	0	8	1	50	6	slow
Machine Pistol	0	7	A	20	20	
Submachinegun (2H)	+1	7	A	100	30	
Hunting Rifle (2H)	0	11	1	200	8	
Assault Rifle(2H)	0	12	A	150	30	
Sniper Rifle (2H)	+1	12	SA	300	8	
Sawn-off Shotgun (2H)	+2	6	1	5	2	double armour, slow
Pump-action Shotgun (2H)	+1	8	1	15	6	double armour, slow
Assault Shotgun (2H)	+1	8	A	15	24	double armour, slow
Light Machinegun (2H)	0	13	A	150	100	acc -1 if hip-fired
Heavy Machinegun (2H)	0	15	A	250	100	mounted
Grenade launcher (2H)	0	6D6	1	30	1	explosion
Rocket Launcher (2H)	0	10D6	1	60	4	explosion, slow
LAW (2H)	+1	8D6	1	100	1	explosion, 1-shot
Bazooka	0	12D6	1	150	1	explosion, slow
Thrown Knife	-1	3+ST	1	10	-	halve armour
Shuriken	0	3+ST	1	20	-	halve armour
Hand grenade	-1	6D6	1	30	-	explosion
TNT stick	-2	4D6	1	20	-	explosion
Satchel Charge	-3	15D6	1	10	-	explosion
Longbow	-1	7	1	80	1	halve armour
Crossbow	0	10	1	60	1	halve armour
Thrown rock	-1	2+ST	1	30	-	
Molotov's Cocktail	-1	7	1	20	-	fire, slow
Flamethrower	0	9	A	30	30	fire

Weapon Accessories
In these days it is possible to buy all sorts of gadgets to a firearm. Some of the most common are:

Laser sights which project a visible beam of light to wherever the weapon is pointing. +1 to accuracy up to 50 metres and the weapon does not have to be aimed by looking through its sights.

Scope sight is a miniature telescope with a targeting reticule, attached on top of the weapon. When aiming through it, range penalties are ignored up to long range, but the attacker has to stationary when firing. There are scopes with thermal imagers or nigh vision capabilities.

Armour piercing ammunition is designed to project its energy on the penetrating point, piercing easily but causing less trauma in the tissue it passes through. Available only for firearms. Weapon damage is reduced by 2, but target armour protection is reduced by 10, making most ballistic vests useless.

Anti-personnel rounds such as glasers and hollowpoints expand within the body of the target, disrupting tissue at a much larger area. The downside is that they have hard time getting through armour. Add +2 to weapon damage, but target armour protection, if any, is doubled. Great against civilians, poor against soldiers.

Bayonet is blade that can be attached under the barrel of a rifle, turning it into a kind of spear. It is meant for close combat, but the weapon can be fired with bayonet attacked, with -1 penalty to Attack roll.

Superclip is an extra large magazine available for most weapons using box magazines. The weapon becomes one size class larger with it attached, but the magazine capacity is doubled.

Attack Damage:

For most weapon attacks (apart from explosives, damage inflicted upon a hit is **Margin of success x Weapon damage.** This is called Attack Damage. For stray bullets it is 1D3 x Weapon damage for long burst and (1D3+1) x Weapon damage for full bursts.

For example, if the character is using an assault rifle and rolls 13 when target RD is 10, the margin of success is +3. Attack damage would therefore be 3 x 12 = 36, enough to put an unprotected person into shock outright.

Armour Protection (AP) of the target is subtracted from attack damage. A bullet proof vest would provide an armour protection of 4 and in the case above would save the target's life, although he would still be severely wounded.

Armour Protection is an abstract average of both actual stopping power and how much the armour type covers. Higher attack damage implies hitting a more sensitive and less armoured spot.

ARMOUR	AP
Motorcycle leather	2
Light Ballistic Vest	3
Ballistic Vest*	4
Chainmail shirt*	5
Battle Vest**	7
Assault Vest***	9
Knee and Elbow guards	+1****
Light Helmet	+1****
Heavy Helmet	+2****

**** -1 penalty to acrobatic movements (climbing, jumping, dodging, stealth, close combat with fists or short weapons)***
***** -1 penalty to acrobatics and movement rate.***
****** -2 penalty to acrobatics and movement rate.***
******* Only when worn together with some type of armour***

Armour Protection works just as well against explosion damage and is especially good at stopping flying debris. It is less effective against overpressure.

Armour works poorly against fire. Unless the suit covers the whole body (motorcycle leather usually does, by the way), AP is halved against fire damage. Remaining AP is subtracted from fire strength ***before*** multiplying it the margin of success or a die roll.

Character with total AP of 8 is hit with a margin +3 by a flamethrower (damage 9). Half of AP is 4. 9 - 4 = 4. Final damage is 3 x 4 = 12 (and 8 and 4 in following turns. Ouch, but not as bad as it could have been.

Injury Effects:

Final Damage is compared to target injury levels. The most severe injury level value the final damage is equal or greater to tells the severity of the injury. Different creatures and items have different kinds of injury levels. The levels here apply to most living creatures:

SCRATCH is a painful jolt and a bruise. If the target still makes an action this turn, he has -1 penalty to it, but no lasting ill effects.

WOUND maybe just a flesh wound but it still bleeds, internally or externally. Target receives Injury Penalty of -1. Requires medical attention.

SERIOUS WOUND knocks the target down and aborts any actions for this and the next turn. Injury Penalty -2. Requires medical attention.

CRITICAL WOUND knocks the target out of the fight and into shock. Most are unconscious, but some are known have crawled or shoot themselves to end the pain. Target remains in shock until medical attention has been received.

KILLED is a very messy instantly fatal wound.

Injury Penalty is about pain, disorientation, cramps, blood loss and fear. Multiple wounds add up to the injury penalty, until it reaches the maximum of -6. Beyond that the character goes into shock and any further injuries will kill him.

Injury Penalty is applied in to all physical and mental activity. It is also subtracted from movement rate (down to a minimum movement of 1). However, strong-willed characters can ignore some of the pain. If the character has Toughness greater than 0, injury penalty is not reduced by only the part exceeding toughness is subtracted from action rolls. Drugs can also help.

As a rule of thumb, heavy-duty painkillers reduce the physical penalty by 1 (but add -1 to the mental penalty), while PCP-level combat drugs reduce the physical penalty by 3, but effects on the mental state of the patient can be dramatic or zombifying.

Untreated Injuries can spell trouble. In nature, even a mild injury will eventually take down most animals. Any injury worth an Injury Penalty is often too much for the body to compensate. For each hour the character remains untreated, he must make a ***Routine ST-roll*** modified with the Injury Penalty applied to the roll. Failure increases Injury Penalty by -1. Eventually the character will go into shock and die. Wound degradation does not occur while the victim is undergoing treatment. Even if he cannot be treated, continuous treatment (tying up at least one person) can delay wound degradation for several hours, giving the victim time to reach a proper medical facility.

Going into shock

Character can go into shock by two ways: One is receiving a Critical Injury and another is having the Injury Penalty exceed -6. Shock victim is basically unconscious, although calling and slapping can bring him around for a minute or two at a time. No actions are possible and any Wound-level hit or worse kills the shock victim. Wound degradation rolls apply (penalty is -6), so an untreaded victim will eventually die.

Dying from shock means a clinical death. Resusciation is possible with blood substitutes and other hospital or ambulance equipment. Also the Black files laboratories Code/X characters occasionally venture into may contain sufficiently sophisticated or even super-science level medical equipment.

Medical Treatment:

Most people try to do something when a friend is dying on their arms. Usually this means applying first aid in some quiet corner. Good equipment works wonders, but lives have been saved with bandages made from torn T-shirts and haemostats made from rubber bands. Applying first aid takes 10-30 minutes and calls for a ***Medical roll.*** The difficulty and modifiers depend on circumstances.

SITUATION	
Target has Wounds	Easy
Target has Serious Wounds	Routine
Target has a Critical Wound	Chall.
Target is in Shock	Chall.
Field conditions	-1
No medical equipment	-2
Ambulance-level equipment	+1
Hospital equipment	+2
Intensive care unit	+3

Successful medical aid halves the Injury Penalty (rounding down) and halts wound degradation. It cannot be applied more than once and Injury penalty treated further. If the character receives further injuries, they can be treated, but injuries treated earlier remain unaffected.

For example, character receives two Wounds and has an Injury Penalty of -2. He receives medical aid and the penalty is halved to -1. He then receives a Serious Wound (IP -2), which brings the total injury penalty up to -3. He then receives medical aid again, but it only applies to injuries received after the last treatment, so the -2 from Serious Wound is halved and the new total is -2.

If Medical is used to bring the character back from shock, the new Injury Penalty after regaining consciousness and the ability to function is -5. Treating a shock victim can easily take more than an hour, but the wound degradation does not occur during the treatment.

Natural healing occurs once the injuries have been treated. If the patient is taking it easy in reasonably clean environments and gets fresh bandages after every wash, there is no need to roll anything. Injury penalty decreases by 1 after IP value days of rest. For example, IP -5 would take five days before dropping to IP -4. The total healing time from -5 to zero would be 5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 15 days. A bit fast, maybe, but then again there is a difference between when one can start moving again and when a doctor and an insur ance company would clear you for work.

If the character is not taking it easy and/or there something wrong about the environment, Strength rolls are needed for the healing to occur at all, and a catastrophic failure leads to wound infection or a tear, so that it begins to degrade again.

Permanent injuries (optional rule) occur when the character takes a critical hit. These include amputations, partial paralysis, bad scarring etc. Whenever the character takes a Critical Wound but survives, one physical attribute is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of -2). Roll 1D6: 1 = STR, 2 = HLT, 3 = AGI, 4 = DEX, 5-6 = Hideous scarring. Losing strength means often back troubles, health means ruptured internal organs, agility indicates loss of limbs or joints and dexterity means having fingers blown off.

Other Hazards:

Besides weapons, there are plenty of other hazards the character may run into.

Fire/Heat damage has already been explained. Glancing contact inflicts Fire Strength x 1 if even that, but passing through a wall of fire or a hot steam plume inflicts 1D6 x FS damage. Typical fire strengths for heat sources are listed on the table to the right.

Torch	3
Campfire	6
Hot steam	8
Burning oil	9
Burning gasoline	10
Chemical fire	12

Poisoning calls for a ST-roll. Difficulty treshold is set by poison type and dosage. Dedicated killing poisons are usually very difficult to overcome, but accidental chemical poisonings due to air or water pollutants found in some black file labs are easier. Any poison usually has two effects: one that applies if the roll succeeds and another in case it doesn't. Surviving a lethal poison will still make the character feel sick and groggy.

Asphyxiation/Strangling are two different things: cutting flow of air into lungs and preventing the flow of blood into brains. The latter can cause unconsciousness very quickly. If the character is only deprived of air, he can remain fully active for five combat turns. He then must an ST-roll and if successful, he can remain active for another five combat turns, after which a new roll is made, each more difficult than the last. If he remains passive, time is increased to ten turns. If he had time to take a deep breath beforehand, the rolls start at ***Easy.*** If not, they start at ***Routine.*** Some people can remain active for several minutes.

If the character is strangled with sufficient force, at the end of each turn he must make ST-roll or pass out. Each roll is more difficult than the last. Rolls usually start at ***Easy.*** Strangled character has -2 to all actions and most panic, trying just remove the strangling object instead of striking at the attacker.

Whether drowned or strangled, once the character is unconscious, he will die if the flow or air remains shut for a further 5+ST minutes. If the flow of air is restored (and lungs emptied of water), they will eventually regain consciousness after an hour or so. Successful ***Medical*** can revive them faster.

Knockout means an aimed blow to the head from a blunt instrument. It is used for non-lethal takedown with batons or sandbags. Aiming at the head calls for a -2 penalty to the attack roll, but if successful the attacker can decide to go for a stun instead of a kill. Damage is calculated as usual, but no actual Injury Penalties, shock or death occurs. Target must make a ST-roll or pass out. Difficulty treshold depends on the injury:

Scratch	***Routine***
Wound	***Challenging***
Serious Wound	***Difficult***
Critical Wound	***Very Difficult***
Killed	***N. Impossible***

Failin the roll means the target is knocked out for 1D6 hours. Naturally, this requires that the target is physically capable of being knocked out. Machines, undead etc. are immune to knockouts.

Falling from height can cause serious injury. If the character falls for more than 3 metres, there is a chance of serious hurt. Base damage is 2 and every metre above three adds +1 to it. Impact on a hard surface inflicts 1D6 x fall damage in attack damage. Impact on a soft surface inflicts half of that.

For game purposes, landing in deep water or on a very good cushion inflicts no damage whatsoever. Also, while landing on a military parachute corresponds to a drop from 5 metres and people break legs doing it, for game purposes parachuting causes no damage.

Most types of armour do not help against falling damage. As a rule of thumb, buildings are three metres tall for each floor.

Character falls off the roof of a four-story building (12 metres). That is 9 metres more than the first three, so base damage is 2 + 9 = 11. This is multiplied by 1D6 and roll is 3. The character takes 33 points of damage. It is a Critical Wound. He lives, but isn't going anywhere.

Acid works like fire: any acid has Strength and the initial damage is 1D6 x acidic strength (or margin of success x acid strenght, if used as a weapon), which is then reduced by one multiplier for every successive round. Unlike with fire, acid eats through almost all types of armour, so if the acid is strong enough to do damage in the first place, Armour Protection is reduced by 1D3 point for each turn. Discarding armour and clothing reduces modifier immediately by one. Burning from acid has the same effects on performance as being on fire.

Black file critter spits acid on a character with AP 8, halved to 4 in this case since the armour does not cover the whole body. These "Alien"-level acids have pretty high strengths (10). Margin of success is 3, so on the first turn alone the final acid damage is (10 - 4) x 3 = 18.

The next turn, 1D3 points of AP have been lost, dropping it by 2 to 6 points (only half of which apply). On second turn, the final damage is (10 - 3) x 2 = 14.

Then armour drops by 1D3 again, this time by 1 points and down to 5 (halved, rounding up). Acid damage for the last turn is 7.

Radiation is a fairly common hazard in black file labs. For the sake of playability, there is no need to discern between different types of radiation and Code/X characters don't get fertility troubles or cancer. Radiation level is measured in intervals. Exposure to highly radioactive nuclear waste might mean there is a roll for it every minute, while moving through a nuclear fallout area might call for a roll for each 1, 6 or even 24 hours. Rolls start at ***Easy*** but become successively more difficult. Every failure inflicts inflicts the symptoms of radiation poisoning and inflicts an Injury Penalty of -1.

If the character character leaves the affected area, rolls stop and difficulty treshold begins to decrease back to ***Easy*** at the rate of one level per day.

Character is in a fallout zone until his HLT-rolls reach "Challenging". He then exits the zone and stays out of it for the next day. He then enters a room with high radiation levels. HLT-rolls begin again, but because of the one day interval the opening treshold has decreased to "Routine".

IP from radiation sickness cannot be treated, but neither does it deteriorate once the character exits the irradiated area (assuming he has not gone into shock, in which case he can be treated and will die without medical aid). It will heal naturally. There is no medication for radiation poisoning, but an overdose of iodine before entering an irradiated zone gives the character +2 modifier to the HLT-rolls for the day.

Playing CODE/X:

This game has been modelled after video game shooters and depth of character is not what we are really looking for. Roleplaying a character and inventing things like background details and tragical life story is all well and good, but more importantly the characters must form a cohesive unit or survival rate is going to be very low. So whatever the personality role, players should agree on roles within the group and stick to them.

"Tanks" do the stand-up fights, "Scouts" do the stealthing and bug-hunts, "Scientists" figure out puzzles and clues and "Techs" drive, fix, repair and take things apart. Sometimes with explosives. Once these roles have been agreed on, stick to them and an instant tactical pattern emerges that will definitely help the group to survive. And survival brings not just reward money, but combat experience!

Karma Points:

Successfully completing a Code/X adventure yields the character 1 Karma Point. These points can be used for three purposes:

1. Improve an ability
If the character has survived as many adventures as is the ability value (positive or negative, value 0 counts as 1), he can use the Karma point to increase it by +1. Then he has to survive the new ability value in adventures before he can increase it again. Only one ability increase is allowed between adventures.

For example, with an ability value of +2 (or -2 for that matter), the character has to complete two adventures before he can increase the ability by +1 (either to +3 or -1, depending on the start value). If the ability value is -1, 0 or +1, just one adventure will do.

2. Lean a new specialisation
Character can have up to positive ability value in specalisations for that ability. If the ability value is increased, it leaves room for new specialisations. Learning one costs a Karma point. Only one specialisation can be learned between adventures.

3. Luck rolls during the game
By expending a Karma Point, the player can ask for a re-roll of any roll made for or concerning his character. Usually the event portrayed by the original roll happened, but the character was just amazingly lucky. A deadly shot ricochets from a pendant, a deadly fall was cut short by a branch sticking out of the cliff. After giving up on a locked door the character slams his fist against in frustration, and that's when it clicks open. You get the picture.

Academic (AC)

Agility (AG)

Aim (AI)

Charisma (CH)

Initiative (IN)

Medical (MD)

Melee (ME)

Strength (ST)

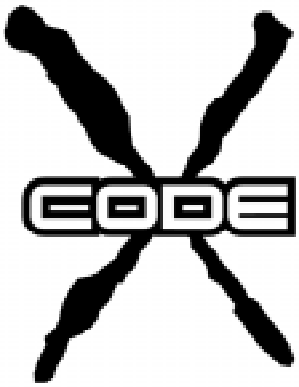
Technical (TE)

Willpower (WI)

Karma

Name_____
Callsign_____

Age ___
Sex ___
Height ___
Weight ___
Hair_____
Eyes_____



Initiative		**Wound**	+
Movement		**Heavy W.**	+
Ranged Def		**Critical W.**	+
Melee Def		**Killed**	+

Injury penalty

Toughness

Encumbrance

Injury notes:

Equipment	Equipment	Equipment	Equipment
Equipment	Equipment	Equipment	Equipment

Minor equipment:

Vehicles and property:

Cash _____
Savings_____

WEAPON	Acc	Dam	RoF	Ran	Mag	Notes

Magazines:

ARMOUR

Total:

Team Mates	Roles

Completed scenarios:

GAMEMASTER'S BOOK

This is a game of dungeon crawl. Despite the guns, the science, the setting, this is a game of dungeon crawl, with contemporary or futuristic analogues of typical fantasy archetypes. There are mercenaries instead of fighters, scouts and ex spec-forces instead of thieves, scientists and medics instead of magicians and techies instead of dwarves and bards. Treasures are money, superscience items and the reward for completing the mission. Monsters are usually man-made horrors of evil scientists and experiments dating back to Nazis or even before. Focus is on action and achievement, with horror and character immersion coming in second.

CODE/X is dubbed a Survival Horror roleplaying game, but what is survival horror in the first place? The game has the setting of a horror game but unlike in Call of Cthulhu and other traditional horror RPGs, they are taking the fight to the enemy. It is a just like in fantasy dungeon crawls: it is the characters who are intruding into the monsters' territory and gunning them down in search of riches and glory. While CODE/X bestiary features incredible, horrible and powerful monsters, characters themselves are even the deadliest creatures in the game. Their odds of survival are no better or worse than in most fantasy roleplaying games and should they fall, they will take quite a few enemies with them. "Horror" does not come from fears of personal safety, but from the contrast between the mundane, everyday setting, and the existences of monsters and secret laboratoroties.

CODE/X draws its one half of its inspiration mainly from video games such as *Resident Evil, Far Cry, Half-Life, Doom, Cold Fear* etc. These in turn draw upon a wealth of books and movies covering both horror and action. Sometimes these cross over and the film *Resident Evil* is a very good example of what CODE/X is trying to achieve. Although this game is set in our time and world, it has plenty of futuristic and sometimes also ancient themes. The overall approach is more scientific than occult, but there are elements of both. Before attempting to run CODE/X, the Gamemaster should be familiar with at least some works of the genre and pay attention what kind of characters they feature and how stories and settings are constructed.

CODE/X is built for speed. Hitting and killing the enemy takes only a single roll of dice and the system is geared so that both opponents and characters can be removed from combat quickly but a medic in the party can ensure that most of wounded friendlies will live. The Gamemaster needs a solid grasp of the surroundings and an instinctive understanding of the effects of actions are. He must go flat out: if the player hesitates so does the character. If a rules issue slows the game down, it is ignored.

Playing CODE/X

World of CODE/X is our world in every way, except that there are remote locations and hard-to-reach pockets of mystery and horror. With information and help from Code/X, characters can move between these pockets and the mundane world. It does not really matter what the pockets are and why they came to be. The important thing is that they and the mundane world do not mix and while the characters will learn there are monsters and other strange things in this world, they stay in the pocket and thus remain secret, preserving the setting and not forcing any changes upon the mundane world. Thus, it is possible to play a host of completely normal scenarios using CODE/X rules and setting. The decision to focus on these pockets is arbitrary.

Gameplay is meant to be episodic, divided into scenarios with a distinct beginning, duration and an end. Most gamemasters will probably not play the downtime between scenarios at all, or it will be brief intro at the start of the scenario to get people in the mood. Single scenarion will probably last for 1-3 sessions. Then survivors are rewarded with money and an experience point and the gamemaster prepares for the next scenario. Episodic play makes it possible to have long gaps between sessions and the scenarios can be get short enough to complete in a single session, making this type of gaming well-suited for busy adults and young parents. While CODE/X has been designed with video-game style survival horror encounters in mind, the skill list has been intentionally expanded beyond that and the same episodic play style works well for all sorts of topics:

Video game: each scenario is a game level

Law enforcement: each scenario is a case

War adventures: each scenario is an SF mission

Rescue specialists: each scenario is a disaster

Sopranos etc; each scenario is a TV-episode

There is nothing wrong with running prolonged, continuous CODE/X campaigns. It is just not what we had in mind.

About the official setting:

The core setting of CODE/X as explained in this book presents five distinct lines of adventure and monsters, named and identified by five Nazi/Axis scientists who studied them. They represent the main lines of survival horror topics and monster origins as presented in games and movies. Although part of the same setting, they do not really meet, and the gamemaster may focus on one particular line, or switch between lines without having to worry about them affecting each other. All have monsters, horrors and cliches.

CODE/X: Black Files

History of science stretches back for thousands of years and has its bright and dark moments. The excesses of Nazi and Axis scientists before and during the Second World War must be one of the darkest. Even today there is controversy whether or not medical science and biology should use the information gained with experiments on live human subjects. There is no doubt that whatever is known of those experiments today is just the tip of the iceberg. But while Nazis tend to be blamed for most, similar experiments were afoot all over civilized world since the late 19th century. Racial biology and eugenics were especially prevalent in the United States, while German scientists and scholars sought to apply the theory of "survival of the fittest" to arts, history and culture. Even physics and mathematics were politicized. Einstein's theory of relativity was rejected at first because he was a Jew and thus suspected of "trying to undermine the science of the western races".

Later, Adolf Hitler would arrange a campaign called "one hundred scientists against Einstein" to discredit him and his theories. Einstein is said to have replied: "They sent a hundred scientists against me. But it would take only one to prove me wrong". Still, this did not deter Germans or other Axis powers from doing valuable scientific research. Unlike in rest of the world, the Axis states supported both practical and ideological projects, and made available resources unavailable elsewhere: namely a fresh supply of human test subjects and a void of ethics in which to abuse them. Much of the research was for military and industrial purposes, culminating with the invention of V-rockets, XXI submarines and jet fighters. Medical experiments were conducted for improving publich health but also to add the performance of frontline troops and study the effects of race and heritage (name genes). Finally there were purely ideological and cultural studies, often with harebrained goals like trying to prove that Japanese were Aryan or that the world had at some point being ruled by a master race from which Germanic peoples descended.

Little of this work survived the war and even less was made public. Axis scientists had achieved astonishing results and Cold War powers wanted those secrets for themselves. Experiments were continued in secret, in remote locations and on people that would not be missed. The criminal heritage of Nazis and Axis scientists lived on, claiming more and more victims. Conducted in utter secrecy, these "Black File Experiments" were only whispered about even within the administrations practising them. Nobody knew the full picture and anybody deemed a liability would soon vanish or fall victim to a deadly accident. While government experiments petered out towards the end of the Cold War, some experiments were picked up by private contractors and even individuals. Black Files research is alive and well even today.

Black Files #1: Mahler Experiment

Professor Franz Mahler was a German biologist and proto-geneticist. He experimented with hybrid species and regressive genetics with the ultimate goal of creating easily controlled slave races and supersoldiers for Nazi Germany. Captured by Russians, he was later allowed to continue his work in Siberia. He is believed to have died in 1962.

Although his methods were scientific, First Wave (1945) of Mahler Experiment from 1938 to 1945 was inspired more by myths about werewolves and berserkers turning into bears in battle. Using breeding, grafting living tissue from one species to another and stimulating bestial features with drugs and chemicals, Prof.. Mahler did succeed in creating a wide assortment of ferocious mutants the Germans dubbed "beastmen".

However, they were difficult to control and there was enormous variation in their intelligence and ability to grasp complex concepts. Most of the research was conducted at Thalerwald Concentration Camp in Bayern but there were secret test installations at least in Carpathians (Romania), Pyrenees (Spain) and Swedish Lappland. Thalerwald was liberated by Soviet forces in 1945 but the fate and exact location of other installations remains a mystery.

Second Wave (1951-1970) was at first conducted by Soviets scientists under the personal direction of Prof.. Mahler. After his death in 1962 a number of his aides defected and by 1970 Western powers, or at least United States, had caught up with the Soviets in the Second Wave research. Second Wave was similar to First Wave, except for the introduction of genetic engineering and shifting the focus on creating new features rather than transferring animal features to humanoid subjects.

Soviet Union wanted labourers and soldiers who could survive post-nuclear war conditions, and it wanted ferocious predators that could be dropped behind US lines to wreak havoc. This "macrobiological weapons research" also came the main focus of US research efforts and using them against Viet Cong in Vietnam was seriously contemplated. End of Vietnam War very nearly ended the US Mahler Experiment, while priorities in Soviet Union changed in the favour of conventional and nuclear weapons development as part of the Arms Race.

Third Wave (1985-1993) was low-key but diverse. Advances in genetic engineering lead to a resurgence of Mahler Experiment projects in the US and Western nations, not by the military but by private companies, especially pharmaceuticals. Objectives varied from producing superhuman organ transplants to retrogenetics where species could be made to return to earlier evolutionary versions.

Macrobioweapon research evolved into a study of organisms that could live in space or the depths of the oceans. There was some interest in Mahler Experiment by rogue states seeking new forms of weapons of mass destruction, but the scientific complexity and costs involved made NBC weapons more attractive.

In Soviet Union, state-sponsored Mahler experiments had all but ended. Individual members of the Soviet oligarchy continued their private support for these projects. Their goals varied from hopes of medical advances that would extend their own life-span from to create their own private armies of monsters in case there would be serious disruptions in the Soviet bloc. There were a number of terrible accidents and the fate of these projects after the fall of Soviet Union is unknown.

Fourth Wave (2002-) followed the WTC strike in New York on September 11th 2001. It marked the resurgence of macrobioweapon research. Third Wave was already faltering when the expected biotech boom did not occur, so many of those projects were closed down or simply sold military industries. There was some buzz among the intelligence community as well as because of the prospect of terrorists acquiring Mahler Experiment materials from former Soviet bloc countries.

For its goals, Fourth Wave is similar to the end of the Second Wave. For United States, the temptation of using macrobioweapons against Taleban fighters in Afghanistan and West Pakistan must be very tempting. Advances in genetical engineering, ability to build up on Third Wave knowledge and bionic technology are creating very different kinds of creatures. Much of this research is done by military technology industries allied to Pentagon or Beijing.

Actual genetic engineering and component manufacturing can be done in the factories of the heartland without the personnel ever knowing the applications of their work. Actual experimentation is conducted in top-secret underground or undersea facilities in Gobi Desert, Aleutians and Antarctic. Remote and harsh locations reduce the danger of "macrobiological contamination" (meaning: test subjects getting away).

Black Files #2: Bohndorf Effect

Dr. Elsa Bohndorf was a German medical doctor and psychiatrist. Friend of Dr. Joseph Mengele, dr. Bohndorf studied the human psyche under extreme duress and was fascinated by the idea of enhancing cognitive powers with chemicals. Dismissed and ridiculed by the scientific establishment of her time, she nevertheless received funding and support from Heinrich Himmler, the head of SS. Dr. Bohndorf is officially believed to have died in the battle of Berlin in 1945 but some suspect Dr. Mengele took her with him into Paraguay, where she might survive to this day.

Little is known of the First Wave (1935-1945) research into Bohndorf Effect. Surviving fragments from research journals suggest that patients experienced heightened sensory awareness, flashes of accurate precognition, tele-empathy and uncontrolled psychokinesis. Allied interrogators also learned that Frau Bohndorf was studying the possibility of mind without a body, and built machines to replicate or preserve fluctuations electromagnetic fields inside the brain. Of these items, only something Allied documents refer to as “mind control ring” has survived.

From early on, Bohndorf Effect aroused more interest in Japan than in Germany, probably because the Japanese scientists were more open to the whole idea of “Chi” and the powers of mind. While Japan’s subsequent defeat in the war ended state-sponsored research, certain Japanese companies have been doing this kind of research right from the First Wave and are now way ahead of any competition.

Second Wave (1945-1960) was undertaken by Soviet Union immediately after the War but was badly mismanaged and vulnerable to political upheavals. The original research project fragmented into small, local efforts supported by different parts and even individuals in the Soviety hierarchy. These teams took over orphanages, asylums and hospitals for the terminally ill, turning them into laboratories were victims were subjected to powerful medication and extreme physical and mental duress. It became a sort of pseudescientific cult among the Soviet scientists.

Most teams failed to get any results but some did. In addition to First Wave results, they succeeded in making two patients switch consciousness and possessing electrical machinery. KGB used Bohndorf mind control techniques to turn captured spies into double agents and there were clandestine field tests of mind-affect weaponry.

Third Wave (1955-1970) was the first time Bohndorf Effect was researched in the West. Dismissed as fantasy by authorities, the research was limited to private sector, ranging from individual teams of researchers to corporate black ops. Since research into Bohndorf Effect does not require extensive industrial base, many corporations set up their research shops in Third World countries.

While Soviets had focused on technology, in west the focus was in psychology, parapsychology and replicating the chemicals used in First Wave. Results were both varied and poorly understood, ranging from poltergeists to patients being able to communicate with the dead (if the symptoms were interpreted correctly). This is when the first accidents began to occur. Patients would escape the laboratories by possessing someone in the staff. Drugged mediums created deadly astral projections and the minds of test subjects would suddenly merge, collapsing into a powerful group mind or a mental vortex that dragged also the staff into it, driving them insane.

Third Wave petered out in the early seventies. Lack of commercially applicable results and the fading interest into “new age” sciences reduced interest and funding, until by 1975 all Third Wave projects effectively mothballed. Lack of continuity also plagued the Soviet effort. Retiring researchers were never replaced and after 1960 the asylum laboratories were closed and test subjects either dispersed into ordinary mental institutions, or murdered. Japanese research continues but everywhere else the chemicals and notes for Bohndorf Effect reappear for a while, only to vanish again with the first incident or accident. The number of test subjects affected by these experiments and their current fate is unknown.

Black Files #3: Eisendorf Theory

Before the war, professor Ralf Ruderik Eisendorf was one of the top scientists in the archeological and scientific search for proof on Germanic superiority. Prof. Eisen was a long-time member of Thule Society from which Third Reich and in particular SS drew its occult influences from, but he was considered something of a crackpot even by his colleagues at the time. Nevertheless, with ample support from Nazi government and personal support from Heinrich Himmler, prof. Eisen lead a series of daring expeditions into Andes, Central Asia and the Antarctic, bringing back observations and artifacts which even today baffle scientists.

Everything changed in early 1939, only months before the outbreak of war. Prof. Eisendorf vanished and his notes and collections were destroyed by the SS, suggesting a breach between him and Heinrich Himmler. Some of his notes and findings were salvaged by his former aides and resurface from time to time.

Existence of Eisendorf Theory is well established but the exact content is unclear. The research project he worked on was part of a Nazi attempt to prove the existence of an Aryan superculture which had ruled the world in the distant past. Research into "Aryan" biology (later genetics) continued well into the war years, but archeology was largely abandoned. After the war, Allied seized some of the Eisendorf artifacts but they were buried in war archives and stockpiles for decades. Only recently some lone entrepreneurs, occult movements and powerful individuals have acquired either some artifacts or notes and sought to continue Eisendorf's study. Much of this work goes on secret, hidden even from the prying eyes of Code/X.

From what can be gathered from notes is that Eisendorf did manage to prove to his superiors that there had been a pre-glacial, or perhaps even a pre-human superculture on Earth in the distant past, but when hid findings failed to prove it was Aryan, it became an embarrasment to Himmler and the SS research institutions. There are some indications that this ancient culture could have been superior in technology even to modern-day civilisation and that whatever cataclysm destroyed it also triggered the successive Ice Ages which have continued cyclically ever since. Apparently some sites have been preserved in remote locations and surviving Eisendorf notes can yield clues to those locations. However, Code/X usually ignores such expeditions no crimes against Humanity are involved.

There is one exception. From time to time expeditions into Eisendorf Theory sites fail to return.