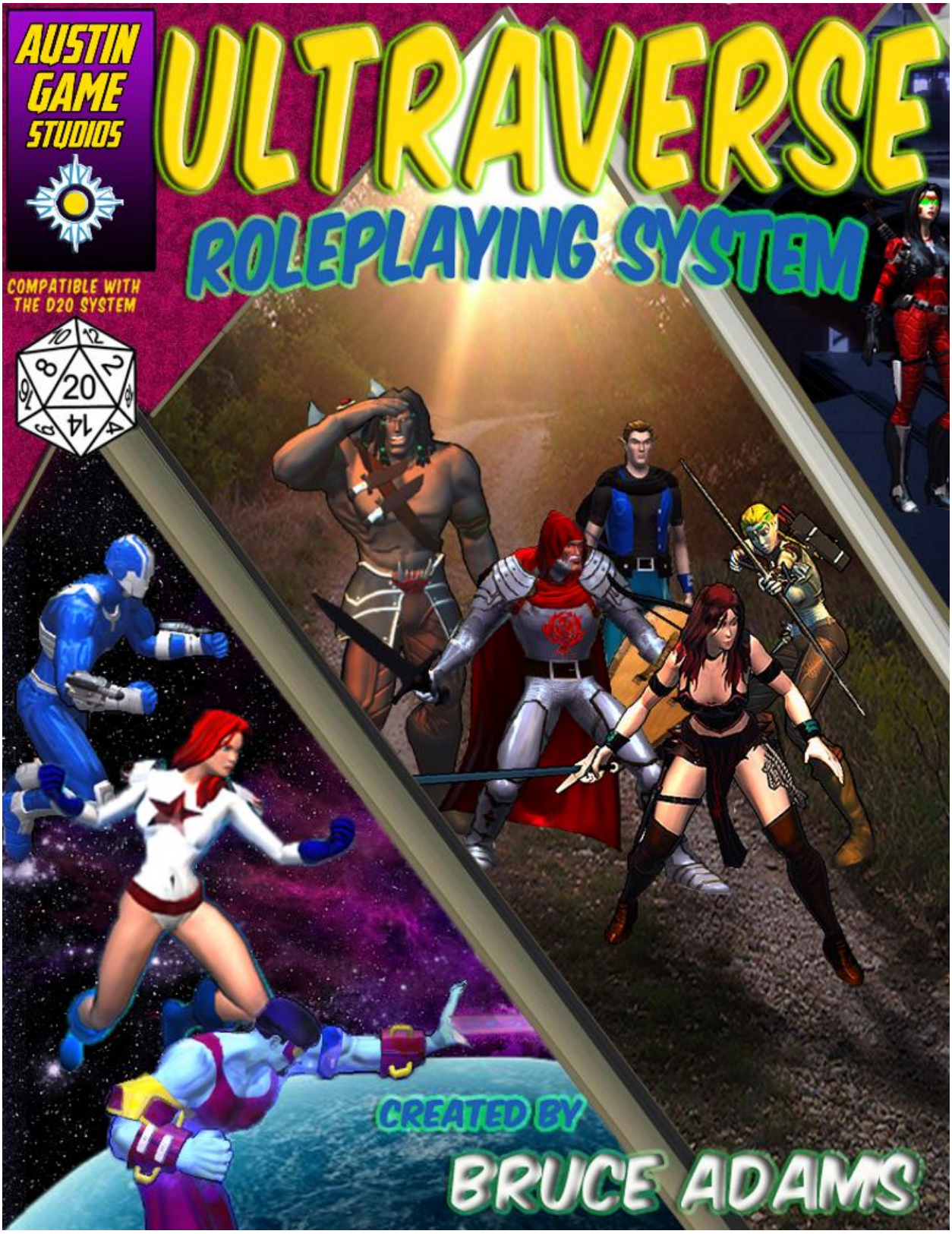

AUSTIN GAME STUDIOS
ULTRAVERSE
ROLEPLAYING SYSTEM
COMPATIBLE WITH THE D20 SYSTEM
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BRUCE ADAMS

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Created by Bruce Adams

Dedicated to my Family
My wife Barbara and sons
Zachary and Samuel

INTRODUCTION

Ultraverse is a fast-paced system designed to create superheroic, fantasy, science fiction and countless other types of adventures for players. Each player assumes their own role as a character in each campaign that the Gamemaster (GM) creates. Ultraverse is designed to emulate the fictional powers and abilities found in the pages of four-color comic books, the sword and sorcery powers and settings of fantasy novels and movies as well as the high-tech weapons and abilities of science fiction books and movies. Polyhedral dice such as d20, d12, d10, d8, d6 and d4 are required for play in Ultraverse. Hexagonal or Square maps are useful but not required for playing. I am proud to have created Ultraverse and hope the readers have fun gaming!

SPECIAL THANKS: I want to thank the play-testers of my rules for their help in making this game system a blast to play. Thanks to Brian Adams, Zachary Adams, Sam Adams, 'Manda Dee, Jeff Dee, TJ Stewart and Rory McClure for countless hours of fun in helping me create Ultraverse!

CHARACTER CREATION

Players create characters with Character Points in Ultraverse. The GM determines what the Base Character Points of a character are going to be. The more points the GM allows players to have, the more powerful the characters will be relative to 'average' NPCs. In Ultraverse, characters can add points to the Base Points with disadvantages called Complications. Complications have a negative impact on the life of the character during gameplay. Player characters will be built with differing amounts of points depending on what type of campaign the GM wants to create. Every player character will have a certain number of base points they start with, and then the player can add more points from Complications.

EXPERIENCE: Experience is used to increase the power of the players and non-player characters. It is rewarded at the end of each adventure the GM has created for the players. If the GM runs an adventure lasting two to four real hours, he should reward the players with two experience points. If the adventure is very long or the players did an outstanding job of roleplaying, then three points should be awarded to the players. On rare occasions, when all the players have role-played exceptionally well and solved all the major plot lines, the GM will award four experience points. The GM can also award Contacts and Reputation points to players in addition to experience.

RANDOM CHARACTER CREATION

Players can quickly start and create random characters by consulting Appendix: A Random Character Creation or by going to my website at https://austingamestudios.com/ and clicking on "Creator" to make a superhero or "NPC" for an ordinary non-player character.



Cover Art by Bruce Kevin Adams
Interior Art by Bruce Adams, Sam Adams and Zachary Adams

CAMPAIGNS

The Ultraverse Rules can be used to create any kind of campaign, but the most popular types are the Superheroic, Fantasy and Science Fiction genres. A GM should decide what type of campaign he is going to create and what the power level should be. There are four types of Superhero campaigns that a GM can choose to create: a Low, Normal, High or Cosmic point campaign. Each type of campaign has strengths and weaknesses.



LOW SUPERHERO CAMPAIGN

Characters in this type of Superheroic Campaign should have a base of 150 points with 50 points from Complications totaling 200. Players should average around 30 Hit Points and have Armor values from 5 to 10. Power Capacity for players should not exceed 40 and Adders should not exceed 25. Skills should max out at eight. This campaign is ideal for fighting low-powered henchmen and villains that have simple goals such as robbing banks, jewelry stores or similar goals. The strength of this type of campaign is that it is easier to create, with fewer details to keep track of. Fewer points for players and NPCs mean less overall work for the GM.

NORMAL SUPERHERO CAMPAIGN

The base points for a character in a Normal Superheroic Campaign should be 150 points with 100 points from Complications for a total of 250. Players should average around 50 Hit Points and have Armor values from 10 to 25. Power Capacity for players should not exceed 50 and Adders should not exceed 50 points. Power Combat and Hand to Hand Combat Rolls should not exceed twelve (12). This is the default type of campaign GMs should use for Ultraverse.

HIGH SUPERHERO CAMPAIGN

The base points for a character should be 250 with up to 100 points from Complications totaling 350. Players should average around 60 Hit Points and have Armor values from 20 to 40. Power Capacity for players should not exceed 70 and Adders should not exceed 70 points. This campaign type usually has star-spanning heroes and villains that can easily travel to other star systems or dimensions. The GM creates scenarios where the players are trying to save the galaxy or even all of existence from being annihilated.

COSMIC SUPERHERO CAMPAIGN

The base points for a character should be 400 with 100 points from Complications totaling 500. Players should average around 100 Hit Points and have Armor values from 40 to 60 and Defenses of up to 30. Power Capacity for players should not exceed 100 and Adders should max out at 100 points. This campaign type usually has adventures relating to ultra-powerful villains in other dimensions or galaxies. The GM creates scenarios where the players are trying to save the Multiverse from being destroyed. This is the hardest type of campaign for a GM to create and to manage.

OTHER GENRES

The Ultraverse Rules can be used to create almost any kind of campaign genre that can be imagined. These genres involve a story starring the player characters (the protagonists), who embark on journeys to accomplish a series of goals, usually culminating in an epic fight. During the adventures, action takes place such as fights and escapes with non-player characters. Action-Adventure is a Meta genre that includes many sub-genres such as Fantasy, Science Fiction, Spy Fiction, Horror, Post Apocalypse, Military Action and many other genres.

Fantasy This popular Genre encompasses a world where the use of magic and spells exist and medieval weaponry such as swords, bows and axes are commonplace. Modern technology beyond the bow, horse drawn carts and rudimentary devices such as pulleys and wheels does not exist.

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The classic novel The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien has been the basis for many role-playing games as well as computer video games. The genre includes High Fantasy. The base points for a character should be 100 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 125.

Low Fantasy
The genre includes Swords & Sorcery and is used to depict a more realistic style. The base points for a character should be 75 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 100. Robert E. Howard's Conan series of books is a classic example of Low Fantasy.

Horror This genre is usually set in the 'modern day' world. This genre is characterized by very 'realistic' characters facing horrific, terrifying supernatural events, and trying to survive. AMC's The Walking Dead, H.P. Lovecraft's Cthulhu mythos are but a few examples of the genre. The base points for a character should be 75 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 100 points.

Military Action This genre is usually set-in modern-day earth with the players creating characters that are either military personnel or mercenaries that work for organizations such as US Special Forces or a private global security corporation. Tom Clancy's Red Storm Rising or Robert Heinlein's Starship Troopers illustrate this genre. The base points for a character should be 100 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 125.

Science Fiction This genre is usually set in a technologically advanced setting of interstellar space travel and amazing advances in medicine, computers, communications and weaponry. In this genre players can create archetypes such as fighters, pilots, engineers, merchants, or scoundrels. If the GM allows it, mental powers such as Psionics can be taken by players. The base points for a character should be 100 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 125. Philip K Dick's Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep and HG Wells' The War of the Worlds are just a fraction of the substantial number of books and movies that are represented by this genre.



Spy Action The base points for a character should be 100 points with 50 points from Complications totaling 150 points. This genre is usually set in 'modern day' earth with the players creating characters that are spies that work for organizations such as the CIA or the KGB. Ian Fleming's James Bond series of novels and the movies based on the novels epitomize this genre.

Post Apocalypse The base points for a character should be 100 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 125. This genre is usually set in a 'modern world' setting after a major disaster or catastrophic event such as a nuclear war. The setting is often set in the near future and likely has at least some futuristic aspect that borrows from the science fiction genre. If the GM allows it, mental powers such as Psionics can be taken by players. There are many examples of Post Apocalypse in both novels and movies. I am Legion by Richard Matheson, Lucifer's Hammer by J. E. Pournelle and The Postman by David Brin are all novels depicting this genre.

Pulp Action The base points for a character should be 100 points with 25 points from Complications totaling 125. This genre is usually set in the past such as the 1920's through the 1950's periods of America or Europe. The characters are either private detectives, adventurers, gamblers, reporters or police officials that attempt to stop the unrelenting activities of the criminal underworld or nefarious NPCS. Indiana Jones portrays an archetypal character of this genre. Classics of Film Noir such as Casablanca, The Maltese Falcon and The Big Sleep epitomize this genre.

Other Sub-Genres There are countless other sub-genres, too many to list, which can be created with the Ultraverse Core Rules. The Steampunk genre could be created by using existing equipment and slightly altering them. What the allowed base points and Complications should be being up to each GM, but listed genres should act as guidelines.

COMBAT TIP: Remember to Dodge, Take Cover and Dive for Cover in combat! When facing a superior force of enemies, it is always best to seek cover first to determine the lay of the battlefield, how many opponents you may be up against and what the situation is. Dodging uses up one action point and one energy point but adds greatly to the defense of a character. When in doubt, Dodge! Also, using skills such as Tactics helps friendly combatants win any battlefield engagement. Against area effect attacks, be sure to Dive for Cover to escape the blast radius, especially for high Agility characters or those with the Acrobatics skill.



CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics represent the sum of the physical traits for player characters as well as non-player characters. The six characteristics used in Ultraverse are Strength, Agility, Dexterity, Intelligence, Psyche, and Constitution. Each characteristic or stat begins at zero and can be increased by spending Character Points.

STATISTICS CHART

Strength, Dexterity, Agility, Intelligence, Psyche and Constitution start at zero points each but can be increased by paying Character Points.

Strength (STR) measures the character's physical strength - how hard they can punch or kick and how much they can lift in kilograms. One half of a character's Strength is considered 'Casual Strength' and does not take Energy to use. Full Strength takes one Energy per Round or punch. An average adult male has a strength of 10 and an average adult female has an 8 strength. The character must use one energy point per round when continuing to lift objects weighing half or more of their Max Lift value off the ground. Continuing to lift maximum weight means the character can only move at a walking rate of 1 meter per Action Point. Characters can easily carry equipment or weapons with no penalties that are equal to or under the Light Load Maximum. Carrying more weight leads to the character losing Defense and Movement rate.

Dexterity (DEX) encompasses hand-eye coordination and manipulation of the character 's hands (claws, tentacles, pincers, etc.). Dexterity is the basis for the skill Power Combat, which enables characters to hit targets in combat with superpowers. Dexterity rolls are called for whenever there is a need to determine whether a character can perform a physical combat action like grabbing someone, hitting a target or piloting a vehicle.

Agility (AGI) encompasses flexibility, body movement and fine motor control over limbs making the character harder to hit in combat. Agility infers the ability Defense, which makes characters harder to hit as a target in combat. Agility rolls are called for whenever there is a need to stand on slippery surfaces such as ice or keep balance on a tilting or moving surface. There are endless reasons to make characters perform AGI rolls and if they fail, they should fall (consult the Falling Chart) or suffer some other penalty.

Intelligence (INT) measures intellectual quickness and awareness of the character. Use an INT Roll to notice something hidden or not obvious – this is called a Perception Roll and covers the five basic senses of Sight, Hearing, Smell, Touch and Taste. Enhanced Senses can augment the basic perceptions with powers such as Infrared Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing and various other improved senses. Furthermore, INT is used to construct temporary devices or gadgets. A character with enough time and materials, can construct simple hand-made devices. If the character has further skills such as sciences, the devices can be more complex. The character rolls the INT construction dice to determine the Total Power Points available for their temporary jury-rigged device.

Psyche (PSY) measures the willpower, mental and psychological makeup of a character as well as the ability to project a sense of ease, poise and self-assurance. Psyche is the basis for the skill Mental Combat, which enables characters to hit targets using mental powers. Morale rolls are based on Psyche and are required when the overall situation for NPCs is going badly. Only NPCs are required to make Morale rolls, never players. Taunting is also based on the Psyche statistic, with a high Psyche making an NPC far less likely to be taunted in any situation.

Constitution (CON) measures the physical toughness of a character. The higher the constitution, the more Hit Points, Stun Points and Energy Points the character will have. A higher constitution is also used to resist being staggered, poisoned, or diseased. A character with a high CON rarely gets sick. Characters recover Hit Points from Killing Damage every day under normal circumstances. Hit points can be recovered faster if the character is resting and being attended to by someone with the Healing power, or Medic skill.

STRENGTH CHART

STR VAL	STR Level	Strength Damage	Max Light Kg Load DEF: -0 MOVE: -0	Max Medium Kg Load DEF: -1 MOVE: -10%	Max Heavy Kg Load DEF: -3 MOVE: -30%	Max Lift Kilograms (Bench) 1m per AP	Kilograms: Push or Drag 1m per AP
0	0	0	1kg 1/2 move	2kg 1/3 move	3kg 1/4 move	4kg 1/5 move	5kg 1/6 move
2	0	1d2	3	16	24	32	48
4	1	1d4	4	22	30	43	65
6	1	1d6	6	30	45	57	86
8	2	1d8	8	38	60	75	113
10	2	1d10	10	50	75	100	150
12	2	1d10 + 1d2	13	66	98	131	197
14	3	1d10 + 1d4	17	87	131	174	261
16	3	1d10 + 1d6	23	115	172	229	344
18	4	1d10 + 1d8	30	152	227	303	455
20	4	2d10	40	200	300	400	600
25	5	2d10 + 1d4	80	400	600	800	1,200
30	6	3d10	160	800	1,200	1,600	2,400
35	7	3d10 + 1d4	320	1,600	2,400	3,200	4,800
40	8	4d10	640	3,200	4,800	6,400	9,600
45	9	4d10 + 1d4	1,280	6,400	9,600	12,800	19,200
50	10	5d10	2,560	12,800	19,200	25,600	38,400
55	11	5d10 + 1d4	5,120	25,600	38,400	51,200	76,800
60	12	6d10	10,240	51,200	76,800	102,400	153,600
65	13	6d10 + 1d4	20,480	102,400	153,600	204,800	307,200
70	14	7d10	40,960	204,800	307,200	409,600	614,400
75	15	7d10 + 1d4	81,920	409,600	614,400	819,200	1,228,800
80	16	8d10	163,840	819,200	1,228,800	1,638,400	2,457,600
85	17	8d10 + 1d4	327,680	1,638,400	2,457,600	3,276,800	4,915,200
90	18	9d10	655,360	3,276,800	4,915,200	6,553,600	9,830,400
95	19	9d10 + 1d4	1,310,720	6,553,600	9,830,400	13,107,200	19,660,800
100	20	10d10	2,621,440	13,107,200	19,660,800	26,214,400	39,321,600

SUPER STRENGTH

Twenty-five (25) or more points in Strength are 'Super' and inflicts 'Killing Damage'. Strength that is 24 or less inflicts 'Normal Damage'. Super Strength allows a character to lift and throw far heavier objects than normal strength does and cause knockback on targets. If a character is reduced to zero STR, they can only move at 1/2 movement carrying 1kg or less.

NORMAL HUMAN RANGE

If the GM is running a non-superheroic campaign and wants to add more realism, he can use Normal Human Range on Statistics. This limits characters to a 'soft cap' of twenty points (20) for each stat. After reaching 20, the character point cost is doubled. The absolute stat maximum for a character with the Problem: Normal Human Range is twenty-five points (25). In a superheroic campaign, this can be taken as a Problem worth 10 points. For example, a player could never have any stat over 25 even if they had the points to pay for it. This is a good rule to use for GM's that want to run a Fantasy, Science Fiction, Military, Horror or some other type of 'realistic' campaign.

Super Strength Unique Ability: Knockback

Super Strength (25+ STR) can send a target hurtling backwards to land prone. The target can take full damage (if hitting something solid) depending on the STR Level of the attacker and the Mass Level of the target. If the target does not hit a solid object and slides along the ground, targets only take ½ damage. Targets that make an AGI DC roll with the commensurate penalty can stay on their feet, and only take ½ damage from the knockback and move only ½ the distance they normally would have been knocked back. See the Knockback Chart on page 87 for more details.

Unique Ability: Extra Lifting

Additionally, a character with Super Strength can lift heavy objects and throw them at targets inflicting extra damage. Heavy objects are unwieldy and not suited for throwing resulting in a Roll Modifier of -1 when throwing them. Thrown objects take the same amount of hit points that the target takes, which could destroy the object completely. Objects which are very unwieldy, bulky or otherwise not suitable for throwing are at a -3 to hit. Objects that are 1 meter or larger are Area Effect attacks.

Resisting Knockback and Knockdown

Characters can use Super Strength or Flight to brace against knockback spending 1 AP and 1 energy to prepare, subtracting the level of super strength or flight in meters from the effect of the knockback. If reduced to zero, there is no KB. The character can only prepare from the front to resist knockback and any attacks that hit from behind cannot be resisted even with super strength. For example, Pulsar uses his Flight of 10m to reduce any Knockback by 10 meters, at the cost of 1 Energy point per round. Similarly, a swimming character could use swimming to 'brace' in the same manner to resist knockback.

Mass Bonus Damage:

A character that throws a heavy object gains a bonus to damage based on the mass of the object thrown. Use the chart below to determine the Mass Level of an object and the resulting damage the object imparts to the target. The minimum penalty for throwing such an object is -1 to hit, but this penalty could be up to -5. A character adds their own Strength Damage together with the Mass Bonus Damage to determine the total damage inflicted on the target.



End of Preview

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