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## About Fudge



Fudge is a roleplaying game written by Steffan O'Sullivan, with extensive input from the Usenet community of rec.games.design and other online forums. The core rules of Fudge are available free on the Internet at <http://www.fudgerpg.com> and other sites. Fudge was designed to be customized, and may be used with any gaming genre. Fudge gamemasters and game designers are encouraged to modify Fudge to suit their needs, and to share their modifications and additions with the Fudge community. The Fudge game system is copyrighted ©2000, 2005 by Grey Ghost Press, Inc., and is available for use under the Open Game License. See the [fudgerpg.com](http://www.fudgerpg.com) website for more information.

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## Introduction

**Psi-punk** is a role-playing game set on Earth in the year 2096. Unlike many futuristic fantasy settings, **Psi-punk** isn't a space opera or even a traditional cyberpunk game – though we did take inspiration from both genres. Instead, **Psi-punk** strives to be something unique but still identifiable with other settings you may have experienced in the past, whether in books, movies, video games, or other role-playing games.

Here, you will enter a world where huge corporations control large aspects of the public's everyday lives and have even usurped

the role of governments in many instances. However, despite the control these corporations have over the lives of the average citizen, many people still resist their reign and attempt to fight them – either openly or covertly.

Meanwhile, powerful humans with psychic abilities, commonly referred to as “mentals,” “psychics,” “psi-freaks,” and “psi-punks” have become a formidable minority that leaves mundane citizens feeling powerless – a fact which the controlling corporations seek to exploit to their own ends.

In this harsh world of political intrigue, corporate espionage, and tough street life, you will take on any number of roles as a character who's just trying to make it in the world. Perhaps you're a psychic and a rebel, seeking to diminish the reign of a giant megacorporation or perhaps you're a corporate drone whose only goal in life is to make it through the day so he can work again tomorrow (admittedly, the latter doesn't sound as exciting.)

Whatever the case may be, you're about to enter a realm rife with possibilities and excitement, drama, action, intrigue and adventure. You're entering the world of **Psi-punk**, so buckle up – it's going to be a crazy ride.

## Inside This Book

Inside of this book you will find a ready-to-use role-playing game complete with a setting, rules for character creation and playing the game, and Game Master-specific pieces of advice for running a game of **Psi-punk**. Though this game uses Fudge™ mechanics, this stand-alone product is presented with everything you will need (short of dice and players) to get started with your adventures – no additional reference materials are required.

In **Chapter 1: The World of Psi-punk**, you will be given a brief overview of the setting, its history, and the events leading up to present day in the year 2096.

In **Chapter 2: Character Creation** you will be given all of the information and tools necessary for creating a character suitable for play in this setting. You will also be introduced to the Fudge “trait ladder” and how it applies to everything you do in the game.

**Chapter 3: Equipment** is a character-focused section geared toward gear. Everything a character will need to enter the harsh world of **Psi-punk**, from guns to armor, magic devices to cybernetics, is presented in one chapter for ease of reference.

In **Chapter 4: Playing the Game**, you will find the majority of the rules and guidelines that will help both players and Game Masters make the most of the system. An introduction to Fudge Dice is given before describing all of the crunchy game mechanics including skill use, combat resolution, getting wounded, and healing those wounds. The chapter is rounded off with a helpful example combat that will illustrate how the game mechanics work in practice.

**Chapter 5: Psionics and Magic** is an in-depth look at one of the defining aspects of **Psi-punk**. Presented therein is all of the information you will need to add psionics (and magic) to your game.

**Chapters 6 and 7 (Hacking and When Worlds Diverge, respectively)** provide some additional insight into the rules and the game’s setting. Many of the presented rules are optional but can be utilized to add some flair to any campaign – by using these more complex skill systems and multiple planes of existence, you will experience much more of what the game has to offer.

**Chapter 8: Game Mastering** is a guide to help both new and experienced GMs run a game of **Psi-punk**. New GMs will find advice on planning and putting together a campaign. Details about NPCs, encounters, and loot are provided for the new and experienced GM alike.

Finally, we round off the book with **Brain.net**, an adventure set in the world of **psi-punk**.

Additional appendices are also presented which contain a useful character sheet, an example of how you can substitute regular six-sided dice for Fudge dice, and a random adventure generator.

## What is Fudge?

You have seen the text mention Fudge, but what is it? Fudge is actually an acronym that stands for **Freeform, Universal, Do-it-yourself Gaming Engine**. Written by Steffan O’Sullivan with extensive input from the rec.games.design Usenet community, it is now distributed by Grey Ghost Press, Inc. under the Open Gaming License.

Fudge was designed to be an open-ended and rules-light gaming engine that Game Masters can tweak and alter to their heart’s content. It is ideal for experienced GMs, since the core rules are a collection of options that encourage a GM to pick, choose and modify as-necessary for his game, but it is overall a rules-light experience for the players. Core mechanics are freely distributed as a System Reference Document (SRD) and can be downloaded from <http://www.fudgeprg.com>, among other places.

Finally, Fudge is intended to be genreless. As a freeform gaming engine, it is designed to accommodate any setting – with the appropriate alterations to help define its mechanics and give it a more narrow purpose.

With that being said, **Psi-punk** is *based on* the Fudge engine, but uses a wide variety of modifications, additions, and omissions of the core rules to better suit our vision of a cyberpunk-style setting and gaming experience. In the spirit of Fudge we still encourage GMs to make modifications to our system as necessary, but our intention is to present to GMs and players a single, cohesive set of rules that are ready to pick-up-and-play, whereas the Fudge core rules require a bit of forethought and cherry-picking before they can be successfully employed.

# Common Game Terms

Following is a list of common terms you will find throughout this book. Don't worry if they don't make complete sense yet; we will be discussing them in detail in later chapters.

**Game Master (GM):** Most commonly referred to as simply the "GM," the Game Master is the person responsible for crafting adventures and adjudicating rules. Each group of players needs only one GM at a time. GMing a game can be both a challenging and rewarding experience, as it is up to the GM to ensure that all players (including herself) are having a good time.

**Player:** Any real person playing the game (other than the GM, who "runs" the game). Players are the people behind the characters. It is recommended, though not required, that a group have at least three players.

**Player Character (PC):** usually referred to as simply "character." Characters are in-game personas developed and brought to life by players. Generally, each player will control a single character and control his/her actions during play.

**Team:** All of the player characters in a group are collectively referred to as a team. Teams can be comprised of two or more player characters, and occasionally they include some friendly non-player characters as well.

**Non-Player Character (NPC):** NPCs are characters that are controlled by the GM, not the players. These can include anyone (or anything) from random thugs and henchmen to shopkeepers, villains (or other antagonists), monsters, and any other conceivable being that the player characters interact with throughout the course of a game session.

**Game Session (Session):** Any amount of time set aside for players and GMs to come together and play a game. A typical game session lasts anywhere from 2 to 6 hours, but some groups opt to play for more (or less) time.

**Campaign:** An ongoing story arc comprised of multiple game sessions.

**Mission:** A scenario developed by the GM that involves the characters. Missions can be anything the group desires, from pulling off a simple heist to overthrowing a fascist regime. The possibilities are literally endless and limited only by the imaginations of those involved.

**Scene:** An abstract block of time that involves the players doing just about anything. A scene can be a chase, a firefight, an intense debate, or even just a round of pints at the local pub. Anything can happen during a scene, but in general a scene represents a smaller block of time than a mission. Missions are usually comprised of several different scenes.

**Character Sheet:** A convenient place to keep track of your character's statistics. A sample character sheet is provided in the Appendix.

**Check:** In most cases, when a player rolls dice to determine the outcome of an action, he is said to be making a check (i.e., he is checking to see if his action was successful). This book commonly references "skill checks" (tests relating to a character's skills) and "attribute checks" (checks relating to either a primary or secondary attribute).

**Check Result:** The sum of a dice roll and an appropriate skill or attribute; literally, the result of a check.

**Difficulty Level (Difficulty):** The target you need to meet or exceed to be successful at a check. In some cases the GM will set this difficulty, in other cases it will be set by an opponent's check.

**Degree of Success:** The amount by which you exceed (or miss) the difficulty of a check. Degree of Success = Your Check Result – Difficulty

**Natural Roll:** The result of a dice roll before any allowed re-rolls are taken.

**Initial Result:** The result of a check before it is matched with the difficulty to determine a degree of success.



**Re-roll:** Rolling a certain number of dice again before observing the check result. Common uses of re-rolls are with Skill Specializations (re-roll 1dF) and via Luck Points (re-roll 1 dice + a number of additional dice equal to the skill's Linked Attribute). Other Gifts and Faults, including equipment Gifts and Faults, may also allow characters to re-roll dice.

**Power Rating (PR):** All magic devices have a Power Rating. This is the bonus added to any check made to activate that device. It replaces the Attribute a character using a similar psionic ability would use.

## Character Creation Terms

**Trait:** Anything that describes a character. A trait can be an attribute, skill, inherited Gift, Fault, psionic power, or any other feature that describes a character. The GM is the ultimate authority on what is an attribute and what is a Skill, Gift, etc.

**Level (Trait Level):** Most traits are described by one of nine adjectives. These nine descriptive words represent the *levels* a trait may be at. Refer to **0.1: The Trait Ladder** (below) for examples.

**Trait Ladder:** A table which displays the *levels* available for attributes, skills, and other traits which use levels. See **The Trait Ladder** below for more details.

**Build Points:** Spent during character creation to increase Skill levels, buy additional Gifts, and otherwise “build” your character. Build Points, or “BP” for short, allow you to add traits to your character until the total number of available points is depleted.

**Attribute:** Any trait that *everyone* in the game world has in some degree. See **Attributes**, below, for a sample list of attributes. On the trait ladder, the average human will have an attribute at Fair.

**Skill:** Any trait that isn't an attribute, but can be improved through practice. The default level for an unlisted skill is usually Poor, though that can vary a little; see individual skill descriptions for details.

**Linked Attribute:** Each Skill has a Linked Attribute – a Secondary Attribute which the Skill is associated with. Linked Attributes increase as the Skill Level increases. Linked Attributes also help determine how many dice are re-rolled when spending **Luck Points**.

**Luck Points:** Meta-game traits which allow characters to bend the narrative in their favor.

**Gift:** Any trait that isn't an attribute or skill, but is something positive for the character. In general, if the trait doesn't easily fit the trait ladder, it's probably a Gift.

**Fault:** Any trait that limits a character's actions or earns him a bad reaction from other people.

**Psionic Power (Power):** Although technically Gifts, psionic powers are treated separately due to their special rules. See **Chapter 5: Psionics and Magic** for more info.

## The Trait Ladder

**Psi-punk** uses ordinary words to describe various traits. Nearly every trait in the game will reference this Trait Ladder in some way, so take time to become familiar with it.

**Table 0.1: Trait Ladder**

Astonishing	+7
Extraordinary	+6
Phenomenal	+5
Wonderful	+4
Superb	+3
Great	+2
Good	+1
Fair	0
Mediocre	-1
Poor	-2
Abysmal	-3

These terms can be modified to use any adjective you desire. For example, if you would prefer to use “Awesome” instead of “Superb”, feel free to do so; it's your game, and you should feel free to customize it. For clarity and simplicity, these are the words that will be used throughout this book.

# Chapter 1: The World of Psi-punk





# A Brief History

During World War II, the Nazis conducted mind control experiments in an attempt to discover new methods of programming human beings, focusing on creating the perfect soldier. Despite having lost the war, they made great inroads into the science of mental programming and mind control. Most of this knowledge was captured by the Allied forces, but very little was destroyed.

Two decades later during the Cold War, the Russians began their own research in to the paranormal and supernatural. Utilizing Nazi techniques that were discovered by Russian spies, the Reds succeeded in inducing psychological phenomenon in their test subjects. These subjects began to exhibit mental capabilities beyond that of simple brainwashing: telekinesis, clairvoyance, astralism, and dowsing are just some of the words used to describe abilities that were born out of these experiments.

For generations, various world governments struggled to contain these experiments under a veil of secrecy; the general public could not know that human beings were being experimented on, nor could other superpowers get their hands on the valuable psychic prototypes that were being engineered over time.

In the year 2017, the now infamous escape of one such psychic being, Nathan Hunter, from a government facility in America sparked an uprising that would change the face of the world. Hunter was a third generation psychic, skilled in both mind control and telekinesis. After springing himself from a testing facility in North Dakota, he managed to bring to light the 75-year-old “psychic conspiracy” which generated an enormous public outcry.

The public immediately began demanding the release of all test subjects, but the American government refused to admit guilt, let alone meet the demands of the people. Hunter became a public figurehead, partly in an attempt to ensure his own well-



being (knowing full well that any attempts on his life would only cause him to become a martyr), but also because he knew that there were at least 200 others being held in similar facilities throughout the country.

By 2019, Hunter had amassed a following large enough to forcibly enter the testing facility in North Dakota, only to find that it had been completely deserted and all evidence had been cleared from the area. This sparked an even larger underground anti-conspiracy movement that eventually led to revolts across the country. A year later, Hunter and a group of 30 armed civilians entered a similar facility that they had discovered in Colorado; they freed 50 men, women, and children who were being held there.

The break-out was not a peaceful one; over 100 government employees lost their lives in the raid along with a handful of psychics. Hunter and his men fled the country, seeking amnesty in South America. Word of the event spread quickly throughout the nation and eventually the world and the