

SAVAGE WUXIA

Wire-Fu Powers for the Savage Worlds roleplaying game



-by HawaiianBrian

Most martial arts in the Savage Worlds roleplaying system can be represented with higher a Fighting Trait die, or by taking the edges from Clint Black's *Modern Martial Arts* supplement. Gamemasters wishing to introduce something more fantastic -- "Wuxia" or "wire-fu" martial arts -- need something that reflects the abilities displayed in movies such as *House of Flying Daggers* or *Once Upon a Time in China*. Wuxia as shown in the movies is rapid-fire, without time spent casting spells, and is powerful, though obviously not available to just *anybody*.

Wuxia is far more powerful than regular martial arts, so GMs should think carefully about game balance before they incorporate it into their games.

Characters and Wuxia

Wuxia masters are no mere martial artists -- they have mastered a way that imbues normal martial training with mysticism. How they learned this is up to the GM. Perhaps they studied the secrets of the forbidden Wudan text, were chosen by the gods, or were born with the blood of dragons. Whatever the source, they have learned magical abilities that allow them to control their bodies and break laws of physics

Characters interested in becoming Wuxia masters must first take the Unarmed Warrior Edge from Clint Black's *Modern Martial Arts* (or a similar Edge, like Martial Artist from *Deadlands*, as per GM's discretion). Those using Wuxia can probably find use for the other Edges listed in *Modern Martial Arts*.

Once they have Unarmed Warrior, they can take the Arcane Background: Wuxia and begin purchasing Powers. Very few of the Powers presented in the Savage Worlds core rules translate well into Wuxia, so those that can be taken are listed later in this article. Among them are also Powers which originally appeared in the Fantasy Worldbuilder's Toolkit. Some Powers have had duration and cost changed to better fit the Wuxia genre, but for detailed descriptions please see the *Savage Worlds Explorer's Edition* handbook.

Many Wuxia masters also study the arts of sorcery, and have the Magic Arcane Background, incorporating spellcasting into their regimen.

Gamemasters may instead wish to use some of the techniques as Edges, instead of Powers. In this case, each should require the Unarmed Warrior Edge, Fighting and Spirit of d8, and have the same minimum Rank as indicated on the list. Some techniques might have a drawback, such as the user becoming Shaken.

Arcane Background (Wuxia)

Requirements: Novice, Unarmed Warrior, Spirit d8+

Arcane Skill: Special (None)

Starting Power Points: 20

Starting Powers: 2

Characters with this Edge select Techniques from the list below, not directly from the Power section of the Savage Worlds rulebook. Wuxia works similar to the Super Powers Arcane Background, in that each power is also its own skill. Thus, a character who chooses the Smite power also acquires a *Smite* skill with which to use it. Each begins at d4 and can be increased like any other skill.

Like Super Powers, Wuxia Powers have no linked attribute, but since Wuxia requires great inner strength, it is important for practitioners of the art to have a high Spirit attribute. Some Powers have reduced range (touch or self) and duration, so have a lesser Power Point cost to use the Power.

To use a Wuxia technique, the master must roll the skill associated with that technique. If the roll is successful, the spell points are used and the technique goes into effect for whatever duration is specified. If the roll is a failure, the character's action is spent, but she does not lose Power Points, and unlike other Arcane Backgrounds, there are no critical failures when using Wuxia -- it either succeeds or doesn't.

The Techniques

Wuxia Powers are generally called "techniques" instead, in part because they function differently than regular Powers. Some of the techniques below are versions of Powers from the rulebook with minor changes to reflect their combat utility. Others are completely new and may only be used by those who have studied and mastered Wuxia. These are not *spells*. They are *techniques*, and so differ somewhat from traditional Powers.

Nowhere is this more apparent than with the "reaction techniques": Bracing, Catch and Throw, Ghost, Prescient Defense, and Roll With the Punch. These allow a hero to activate the Power instantly during an opponent's turn, as a free action. They are very powerful, but they burn Power Points fast and their effects are one-action use only.



The list below shows which techniques are available for characters at each Rank, and lists the Power Point cost as well as the duration. New techniques that don't use core rules Powers are marked with a bullet (•). A brief description is also provided, which is especially useful for Powers that appear in the Savage Worlds rulebook, so that the specific trapping is clear. New Powers are given longer descriptions farther below. Gamemasters and players are encouraged to come up with other, more setting-specific names for the techniques; for instance, Death Touch could be called the "Five-Point Palm Exploding Heart technique," Wall Walking called "Air Stance," and Catch and Throw the "Hundred Stars Defense."

Novice Techniques

Armor (2): With an effort of will, your skin becomes tough as iron. Duration 3 (1/r).

Deflection (2): Incoming attacks are deflected with your hands, a weapon, or by performing acrobatic spins. Duration 3 (1/r).

Entangle (2): By using a scarf, cord or other similar object, you can entangle opponents. The burst option for Entangle is not available. Duration Varies.

•Roll with the Punch (1): Reaction technique. Instead of taking raise damage, you may opt to be knocked back instead. Duration Instant.

Smite (2): You focus on channeling your Chi or other energy into your strikes. Duration 3 (1/r).

•Wall Walking (3): You may move on walls or weak surfaces (like tree branches or even water) without needing to make Agility rolls. Duration 3 (1/r)

Seasoned Techniques

•Flying (3): You can "fly" by making fantastic leaps, but must touch down each round. Duration 3 (1/r)

•Prescient Defense (2): Reaction technique. You cancel one successful attack from your opponent, before damage is rolled. Duration Instant.

Quickness (4): Your moves blur and become lightning-fast. Duration 3 (2/r).

•Sticking (2): With a successful touch attack, you place your hand on your opponent, giving you a +4 to your Parry and attacks against him. Enemies can break this with opposed Agility. Duration 3 (1/r)

•Whirlwind (2): By making a spinning motion with your body or a weapon, you create a small whirlwind that knocks all in a Medium Burst Template around you prone. Duration 1 (1/r).

Veteran Techniques

•Earthquake (5): Using fists or a melee weapon, cause a shock wave to travel in a line from you. Every target in the line takes damage and falls prone with a failed Agility check. Duration Instant.

•Elemental Strike (2): You add +1d6 damage (+1 per raise) by infusing your melee or ranged attack with an element. Duration 3 (1/r).

•Mighty Blow (2): One attack knocks your opponent back a number of squares equal to half your Strength die (+1" per raise) and possibly also prone. If they

strike any object, they are Shaken. Duration 1 (1/r).

•Paralysis (2): With a touch attack, your enemy must make a Spirit roll or be paralyzed. Duration Special.

•Shatter (2): By focusing your energy, you can destroy an inanimate object. Duration Special.

Heroic Techniques

•Bracing (3): You become rooted to the spot and cannot be pushed, knocked back, or made prone, and you gain +6 Toughness. Duration 1 (1/r).

Burst (2): You can make a magical ranged attack just by swinging a melee weapon. Duration Instant.

•Catch and Throw (2): Reaction technique. You can catch a ranged weapon and throw it back instantly. Failure means the attack hit as usual. Duration Instant.

•Poison Touch (4): By making a touch attack, you cause a target to make a Vigor roll (Vigor -2 with a raise) or suffer an automatic wound. Duration 3 (1/r).

Legendary Techniques

•Combat Teleport (3): Teleport out of combat, up to a distance equal to your Spirit. Duration Instant.

•Death Touch (10): With a successful touch attack, target must make a Vigor roll or take one wound level each round until dead. Duration Instant.

•Ghost (5): Reaction technique. You become briefly intangible, negating one attack. Duration Instant.

New Techniques

Bracing

Rank: Heroic

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 1 (1/round)

Reaction technique. For the duration of this technique, you become practically unmovable when taking the Defend action. Incoming objects (such as a speeding car, etc.) can dislodge you only if they do enough damage to incapacitate you. rooted to the spot through sheer exertion of will or Chi power. You cannot be pushed, knocked back, or made prone. You gain +6 Toughness, or +8 with a raise.

Catch and Throw

Rank: Heroic

Power Points: 1

Range: Self

Duration: Instant

Reaction technique. You can catch an incoming missile and fling it back toward the same opponent. The difficulty to do so depends on the type of projectile: Rocks and sling stones require an Agility roll, while arrows require an Agility roll at -2, and bullets and other fired projectiles require Agility -4. A failure means the projectile hit, even if you have expended the Power Points. Throwing the projectile back is limited to short range (3/6/12) and does normal damage for thrown weapons.

Combat Teleport

Rank: Legendary

Power Points: 3

Range: Spirit

Duration: Instant

With this technique, you can disappear and reappear instantly up to your Spirit away. Doing so does not provide an attack against you from any enemies, even those with the First Strike Edge. Combining this technique with an attack still requires a multi-action penalty. You must be able to see your destination, or have been there before. You cannot "appear" in any solid object, including other living creatures; if the square you select has a solid object in it, the technique is simply canceled and you lose the Power Points.



Death Touch

Rank: Legendary

Power Points: 10

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

This technique is considered mere rumor by most, but those who proceed far in their schooling will discover it is quite real. With this terrible technique, the hero can merely touch her opponent and cause him to die.

You must make a successful touch attack. If you succeed, your opponent must make a Vigor roll or begin to lose 1 wound each round from internal bleeding. This continues until they die, are magically healed, or (GM's discretion) are given other medical attention. Even if the opponent succeeds in this roll, he still suffers 1 wound from the shock of it all.

Earthquake

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 3

Range: Spirit

Duration: Instant

By punching the ground, smiting it with a weapon, stomping, etc, you cause a focused shock wave to travel out from you in a 1" wide line. Anything in this line, living or inanimate, takes 2d6 damage. Living targets must also make an Agility roll or fall prone.

Elemental Strike

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

You can infuse your attacks with one elemental energy of your choice which must be selected when you first learn this technique, and cannot be changed. While active, you do an additional +1d6 damage (+1 per raise) with that element. Opponents with immunity to that element or Environmental Protection active take no damage from this attack, even with a raise.

Flying

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

This technique allows you to make great leaps, such that you appear to be flying. You may travel up to your Pace (or double, as a running action) horizontally, and up to your Strength vertically, but must "touch down" on a surface at the end of each round. If there is nowhere to touch down, you fall. This spell can eliminate falling damage, if cast in time.

Ghost

Rank: Legendary

Power Points: 5

Range: Self

Duration: Instant

Reaction technique. This legendary technique allows you to momentarily become incorporeal, long enough for one attack to pass through you, negating that attack, even if damage has already been calculated. Some powerful magical weapons may still be able to damage you (GM's discretion).

Mighty Blow

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 1 (1/round)

Each successful hit you land on an opponent also sends that opponent flying backward a number of squares equal to half your Strength die, plus 1" for every raise. This can also be used in conjunction with the Sweep and Improved Sweep Edges to apply the same knockback roll to several opponents. Flying opponents (or light ones, GM's call) are thrown back a double your Strength die. If the opponent strikes any solid object during this movement, he becomes Shaken. The total damage of your attack is used to determine if the opponent breaks through any object he encounters. Whether or not the target takes damage, he must roll an Agility check or end prone.

Paralysis

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 2

Range: Touch

Duration: Special

You can paralyze an opponent so that their muscles lock up and they "freeze" in place. With a successful

touch attack, you make an opposed Paralysis roll against the target's Spirit. If the target fails, she is completely paralyzed and cannot act, move, or speak, though she retains consciousness. Each following round, the paralyzed victim may make another Spirit roll to break free; this roll is at -2 if you beat the opponent with a raise on the initial Spirit contest.

Poison Touch

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 4

Range: Touch

Duration: 3 (1/round)

With a successful touch attack, the target must make a Vigor check (at -2 with a raise) or lose 1 wound automatically. This might specifically be a nerve point pinch, a touch that ruptures internal organs, etc.

Prescient Defense

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: Instant

Reaction technique. With lightning reflexes, you stop an attack that otherwise would have hurt you. You must determine that you are going to use this technique before the damage for the attack is rolled. For that attack only, you gain +4 to your Parry. If the attack still hits, resolve damage as normal, but it will still effectively eliminate a raise on the attack.

Roll with the Punch

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 1

Range: Self

Duration: Instant

Reaction technique. If your opponent rolls a raise on his attack roll, you may opt to take the extra damage as knockback, being thrown backward 1d4". You still take normal damage. If you strike a solid object, you become Shaken and might break through it (see Mighty Blow). You must make an Agility roll or end prone.

Shatter

Rank: Veteran

Power Points: 2



Range: Self

Duration: 1 minute

You can focus your energy to deal a shattering blow to an enemy's weapon, armor, or an inanimate object. Make a normal attack at -2. If the attack hits, apply damage to the object. This technique allows damage from raises and Aces, contrary to the standard rules (Core Rulebook, page 65). Most metal has a Toughness of 10 and wood has a Toughness of 8. Any damage will shatter the object and render it useless. A roll of a 1 on both the skill die and Wild Die results in damage applied to the wielder's weapon instead.

Once you have successfully destroyed one object, this technique is considered spent and must be "re-cast" to use again. Note that it only works against inanimate objects, and cannot be used to attack an opponent's unarmed hand (or foot).

Sticking

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

I hope you enjoy this Netbook. It is distributed freely for use, as long as the contents are not altered. This game references the Savage Worlds system, available from Pinnacle Entertainment Group at www.peginc.com. Savage Worlds and all associated logos and trademarks are copyrights of Pinnacle Entertainment Group. Used with permission. Pinnacle makes no representation or warranty as to the quality, viability, or suitability for purpose of this product.

Artwork by Storm Cook, used under Creative Common License

This document is copyright 2009 by Brian Reeves. Version 3, July 27, 2009.

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

By placing your hand on an opponent, you can sense subtle body motions which allow you to predict their next move, gaining +4 Parry against that opponent as long as contact is maintained. Requires a successful touch attack first. The opponent can attempt to shake you off with an opposed Agility check.

Wall Walking

Rank: Novice

Power Points: 3

Range: Self

Duration: 3 (1/round)

This technique effectively reduces your body weight, allowing you to walk on weak surfaces, like branches of trees, your opponent's spear, or even the surface of water, all without having to make any Agility rolls while the technique is in effect. You can move up to your Pace, and even run, on vertical surfaces, without having to make any Agility rolls to do so, but you must end your turn on a vertical surface. It does not allow you to climb on ceilings or hang upside-down – the surface must be no more than 90 degrees.

When combined with Flying, a Wuxia master can seem to skate through treetops, touching down momentarily on thin branches before leaping for her next target, or even skim across the surface of a lake.

Whirlwind

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 1 (1/r)

With a weapon, your hands, your spinning body, or some other spinning source, you create a small whirlwind that is powerful enough to bowl over your enemies. Anyone in a Medium Burst Template centered on you must make a Strength roll vs. your Whirlwind roll or immediately fall prone. They are also Shaken if they roll a 1 on this check.

