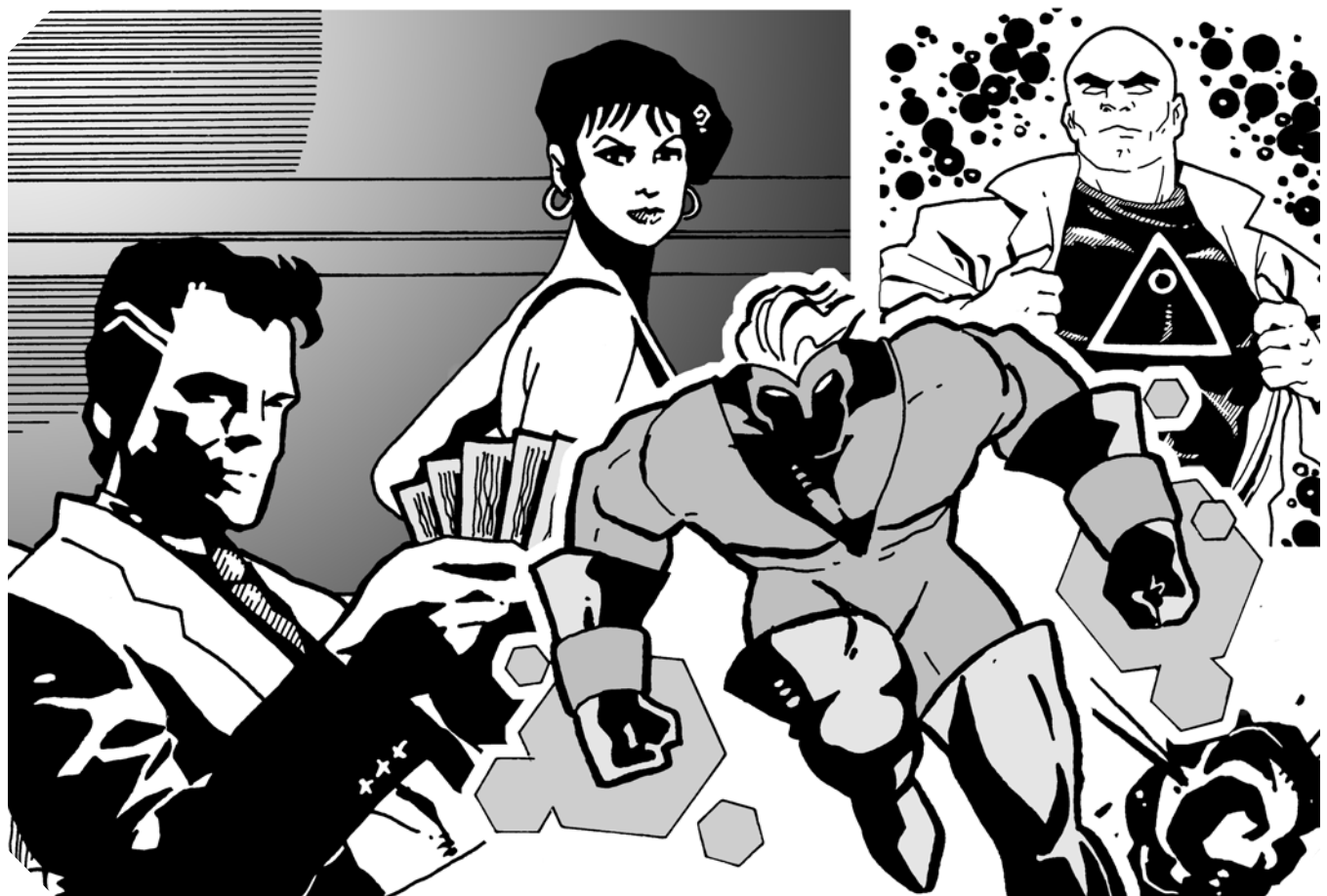


**GURPS**

Fourth Edition

# **POWER-UPS**<sup>TM</sup> **PERKS**



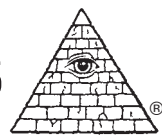
Written by SEAN PUNCH  
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**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

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# INTRODUCTION

There's nothing quite like getting a bunch of bite-sized goodies for next to nothing – and perks fit the bill! As the *Basic Set* explains, a perk is a minor advantage that costs only 1 point. Perks are penny candy for your PC.

Despite being small and inexpensive, perks are big on flavor. Just a few can make an ordinary character concept extraordinary. This is to a great extent because perks are open to interpretation and rarely raise game-balance concerns, which encourages players and GMs alike to cast aside rules and consider *personality*.

*GURPS Power-Ups 2: Perks* is simply a big list of perks that tries to hold true to all of these principles: flavor, flexibility, and variety. Everything here has been checked for game balance. The GM must still exercise judgment, but we've made every effort to keep things sensible.

Have fun!

## WHAT PERKS ARE INCLUDED?

*Power-Ups 2: Perks* incorporates *every* perk published for *GURPS* as of spring 2008, including all the combat perks from *GURPS Martial Arts*, making it the “one-stop perk source.” But it isn't just recycled material! It expands on the old perks, makes them more generic, and mixes them 50/50 with *brand-new* ones.

The future holds more perks, of course, and perhaps further collections of perks. Until then, if you want a perk that isn't here, use what *is* here as your guide. Swapping the rule, skill, or die roll that a perk modifies for another object of the same general type will usually yield a perk that – with minor tweaks – is balanced and sensible.

## HOW WERE THEY NAMED?

Some perk names are utilitarian, others are whimsical, and still others have roots in the distant history of *GURPS*. The names mostly *don't matter* as long as the players and GM know the rules that accompany each name. If you prefer functional perk names – or fanciful ones – then change the ones that don't fit. And if a particular player really wants to rename a perk for *his* PC, more power to him – he's getting into the spirit of things!

## HOW ARE THEY SORTED?

Most people don't especially like huge lists, so the perks (more than

160 of them!) are sorted by *type*. If you prefer alphabetical order, see the index (p. 22).

## HOW MANY SHOULD I ALLOW?

The GM decides how many perks PCs can have. Perks are minor traits, so it *probably* won't break anything to set *no* limit. Like quirks, however, perks are characterization aids above all, and a character with scads of them risks coming across as scattered. As well, while the individual perks are reasonably balanced, it's impossible to check every possible combination – and unlimited access means greater odds of some unanticipated super-combo.

A suggested limit, then, is one perk per 25 starting character points, excluding racial perks. This lets the typical 150-point starting PC purchase up to six perks, which seems about right next to five quirks. As always, the GM has the final say.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the *GURPS* Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every *GURPS* product since. During the *GURPS Third Edition* era, he compiled both *GURPS Compendium* volumes, developed *GURPS Lite*, wrote *GURPS Wizards* and *GURPS Undead*, and edited or revised over 20 other titles. With David Pulver, he produced the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*, in 2004. His latest creations include *GURPS Powers* (with Phil Masters), *GURPS Martial Arts* (with Peter Dell'Orto), and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1-4*. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.



## Power Perks

Individuals with superhuman powers can use perks to represent their powers' most trivial abilities. Perks defined as part of a power are subject to the power's limitations but get the benefit of the power's Talent on any rolls required to use them. For inspiration, here's a modest selection of perks for a few powers from **GURPS Powers**:

**Air:** Accessory (Vacuum Cleaner), Air Jet, Perfume, and Pressure-Tolerant Lungs.

**Animal Control:** Call of the Wild, Feathers, Fur, Good with (Animal), Limited Camouflage, Pet, and Scales.

**Body Alteration:** Compact Frame, Extreme Sexual Dimorphism, Hands-Free, Iron Body Parts, Limited Camouflage, Long Fingers/Thumbs, Natural Pockets, No Visible Damage, Striking Surface, and almost any Appearance perk – any of them Switchable.

**Body Control:** Acceleration Tolerance, Chi Resistance, Controllable Disadvantage (physical), Cotton Stomach, Focused Fury, Iron Body Parts, Parthenogenesis, Reproductive Control, Rinse, Sanitized Metabolism, and Special Exercises.

**Death:** Brotherhood (Zombies or similar undead), Carrier, Covenant of Rest, Dramatic Death, Immunity to (Specific Disease or Specific Poison), and Rest in Pieces.

**Healing:** Medical Accessory perks like First Aid Kit, Hypo, Medical Gear, and Surgical Instruments.

**Illusion:** Illumination, Limited Camouflage, Perfume, and Appearance perks, possibly made Switchable.

**Life:** Covenant of Rest, Parthenogenesis, Reproductive Control, and Rest in Pieces.

**Light:** Illumination, Periscope, and Robust Vision.

**Magic:** Almost any supernatural perk pertaining to magic.

**Sound/Vibration:** Accent, Accessory (Stereo System or Ultrasound Scanner), Extended Hearing, Penetrating Voice, and Robust Hearing.

**Telepathy:** Brotherhood, Controllable Disadvantage (mental), Good with (Social Group), and Influence Shticks.

In this case, Accessory perks don't represent physical gadgets but the ability to emulate their effects.

In addition, any power that can generate webs or vines might have Climbing Line and Swinging. The Rule of 17 perk fits powers with many resisted abilities. Sartorial Immunity suits powers that generate force fields capable of protecting against fuss and muss. And supers often justify Clothing Shticks and Supersuit via powers.

### Immunity to (Specific Hazard)†

As a *realistic* trait, this means you're totally immune to an extremely rare or specific metabolic hazard that DR wouldn't affect; e.g., Immunity to Gas Narcosis.

As a *fantasy* trait, you – or your race – are immune to the damaging environmental hazards of one specific locale or narrow type. The operative words here are “specific” and “narrow”! Not “Immunity to Fire” or “Immunity to Corrosives,” or even “Immunity to Lava” or “Immunity to Acid,” but things like “Immunity to Mount Doom” (if you're adapted to one specific volcano) or “Immunity to Swamp Acid” (if your world's fantasy acid swamps don't harm you).

### Immunity to (Specific Poison)†

You're totally immune to one *specific* poison – it simply has no effect on you.

### Limited Camouflage†

Your surface (fur, paint job, skin, etc.) blends in with a particular terrain or vegetation type, giving +2 to Camouflage and Stealth when posed *still* and *unclad* against a suitable backdrop. For instance, a gargoyle with Limited Camouflage (Stone) would get a bonus next to a rock face (and possibly +2 to Acting to “impersonate” statuary!), while a tiger with Limited Camouflage (Jungle) would be hard to see in his wilderness home.

### Long Fingers/Thumbs

You don't have Claws (p. B42), but your digits are long enough that when you target the eyes with a barehanded strike or eye gouge, you get the ×4 wounding modifier for the skull. If you have Talons or Long Talons, you don't need this perk.

### No Degeneration in Zero-G

Races that evolved in a gravity field suffer from a slow loss of bone density when they live in microgravity or zero gravity. Without special exercises or treatments, they must roll vs. HT every six months. Failure indicates a loss of one point of ST; critical failure gives Vulnerability (Crushing ×2) [-30]. This perk grants immunity to these rolls.

### No Visible Damage\*

*Prerequisite:* Unkillable.

Regardless of your injuries, you don't *look* wounded until you reach -10×HP. You can be crippled, but your limbs can't be amputated and your eyes can't be put out – crippling injury leaves them in place but nonfunctional.

### Parthenogenesis

*Prerequisite:* Female.

You can trigger pregnancy by inducing voluntary hormonal changes via biofeedback, or by taking a pill. The fetus is effectively your clone. This is a perk if you can also use sexual reproduction; it's 0-point feature if you can *only* reproduce this way.

### Perfume

Your body generates its own natural scent, which most people find pleasing. You have +1 on reaction rolls where a pleasant smell makes a difference.

### Periscope

You're able to bend or reflect light, either with a material object (making this perk an Accessory) or using a light-control power, so that you can see over obstacles and around corners. This requires continuous Aim maneuvers, and you can't see directly in front of you while doing so.

### Pressure-Tolerant Lungs†

Your lungs and other organs can handle a wider range of atmospheric pressures than an ordinary human's. Add either thin or dense atmospheres to the range of pressures you can breathe without penalty, and shift the penalties for thinner or denser atmospheres, respectively, by one class; see *Atmospheric Pressure* (p. B429).

### Special Exercises†‡

You pursue an exercise regimen that grants access to an attribute level or advantage that's usually cinematic or off-limits for your race. Each trait requires its own perk.

Examples:

*Attributes:* Special Exercises (DX), Special Exercises (IQ), and Special Exercises (HT) come in levels, with each level letting you exceed the racial norm in that score – 20, for a human – by one.

*Secondary Characteristics:* Special Exercises (Will) and Special Exercises (Per) work much the same way as higher attribute limits, but each level lets you exceed the norm by *two*. Each level of Special Exercises (Basic Speed) lets you increase Basic Speed by one beyond the normal two levels, while each level of Special Exercises (Basic Move) lets you increase Basic Move by one past the usual three levels. For HP and FP, take Special Exercises (HP can exceed FP by 100%) and (FP can exceed HT by 100%).

*Advantages:* Special Exercises (DR 1, Ablative), Special Exercises (DR 1, Tough Skin), Special Exercises (Arm ST 1), Special Exercises (Lifting ST 1), and Special Exercises (Striking ST 1) are typical. Each level extends the right to buy one level of the indicated advantage.

The GM should consider limiting humans to two or three levels of any Special Exercises that comes in levels, if he wants them to be remotely believable characters.

### Unique Technique†

You can use and improve a technique that's otherwise forbidden in the campaign. Most often, the GM will let you “buy off” a common skill penalty as a Hard technique in a setting where no technique for that exists. Each exemption requires its own perk.

This is Secret Knowledge (p. 20) for techniques, with the added facet that you can sometimes coin new techniques.

### Unusual Training†

With sufficient training, certain cinematic skills and techniques might work in reality. You've studied one of these. Unusual Training lets you buy a cinematic capability in a realistic campaign, or *without* a prerequisite advantage such as Gunslinger, Trained by a Master, or Weapon Master. Since what's “cinematic” is often not the feat but the ability to perform it unrestricted, the perk might specify a set of “believable” circumstances that must be true to use the skill or technique.

Examples:

*Unusual Training (Breaking Blow, Only vs. well-braced objects out of combat):* Lets you break boards.

*Unusual Training (Dual-Weapon Attack, Both attacks must target the same foe):* Lets you improve the Dual-Weapon Attack technique for use on one opponent. You still have the full -4 to attack *adjacent* adversaries simultaneously.

*Unusual Training (Musical Influence, Only on tame pets):* Lets you be a snake-charmer.

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