

GURPS

Fourth Edition

PSYCHONIC POWERS



BY JASON LEVINE

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

THE POWER OF THE MIND

If you want psychic powers but don't feel like using *GURPS Powers* to build them, you're in luck! *GURPS Psionic Powers* does all the work for you, crafting advantages and modifiers into ready-to-go abilities for espers, telepaths, and other psis. This one-stop shop for mental mastery includes:



- Notes on how existing advantages and modifiers behave when used to build psi abilities, plus many entirely *new* modifiers.
- Stats and descriptions for over 100 psi abilities, from classics like Clairvoyance and Levitation to weirdness like Mold Flesh and Netrunning – many offered in levels, making it easy to fine-tune individual power.
- More than 70 new perks for psis.
- Optional rules for psionic *skills* and *techniques*, allowing psis to get tricky with individual abilities or feats without being broadly talented.
- Ten complete psionic power groups: Anti-Psi, Astral Projection, Ergokinesis, ESP, Probability Alteration, Psychic Healing, Psychic Vampirism, Psychokinesis, Telepathy, and Teleportation.
- Rules for *using* psi, including detection, extra effort, and linking minds into a “gestalt.”
- Options, variants, and advice on custom abilities and powers.

You can use these elements individually or wholesale, confident that they're entirely compatible with the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition* and *GURPS Powers*.

GURPS Psionic Powers requires the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*.
GURPS Powers is recommended but not required.

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INTRODUCTION

Psi is incredibly versatile. Given free rein, players can customize appropriate advantages into an unlimited number of potential abilities. *GURPS Powers* gives GMs dozens of pre-designed psionic powers to choose from and the tools they need to create more.

But sometimes it's nice to not have to go to the trouble.

GURPS Psionic Powers serves two purposes. First, it is a worked example, both as a showcase for what one can accomplish with *GURPS Powers* and as a time-saver for beleaguered GMs and overwhelmed players. The pregenerated abilities can be used as-is, with no knowledge of power-building necessary, and they have been arranged into levels whenever appropriate. If you want a telepath who can read distant minds and influence nearby ones, you can simply buy *Telereceive 5* and *Suggestion 3*.

In addition, this book presents psi as a unified system. All of the psi-related special options and rules from *GURPS Powers* (see p. 177), along with a few new ones, have been merged into a single framework in which every psionic ability is a combination of power and skill. Readers who don't care for this system can skip Chapter 1 and simply ignore any references to "Psionic Skills" and "Psi Techniques"; further chapters are not dependent upon this framework.

USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

While each chapter builds upon the subsequent one, readers may wish to start off by skipping to Chapter 3 and looking

at one or two sample abilities. These worked examples will help put the rules in Chapter 1 into perspective.

GURPS Psionic Powers requires the *GURPS Basic Set* to use. In addition, *GURPS Powers* is highly recommended, as this book uses several of its traits and modifiers. However, each ability contains a complete description of what it does, so readers can use this supplement with just the *Basic Set* for everything except dissecting the way certain abilities are built.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

This is the first edition of *GURPS Psionic Powers*. However, many of the powers and abilities found in Chapter 3 are updated from or inspired by the *GURPS Third Edition* book *GURPS Psionics*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason Levine, better known to most as "Reverend Pee Kitty," has been a gamer for most of his life and a die-hard *GURPS* fan since the release of *Third Edition*. He enjoys making music, collecting Transformers, and praying to "Bob" for eternal salvation through alien intervention. His previous work includes co-authoring the *GURPS Creatures of the Night* series and writing *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies*. He maintains a *GURPS* fan-site at www.mygurps.com.

About GURPS

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

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Shared Consequences

If the ability being used has a FP cost (including any cost for getting tricky, pp. 7-11), it may be shared among the entire gestalt as they see fit. However, critical failure affects every member of the group as though they'd rolled one personally!

The results of the roll are treated normally. If the roll fails, note that the rules for repeated attempts (p. 6) apply, whether the psis try again as a gestalt or split apart and try again separately.

Example: Debra (IQ 11, Telesend 4, Telesend-14), Paige (IQ 11, Telesend 2, Telesend-15), Scott (IQ 11, Telesend 2, Telesend-17), and Wesley (IQ 11, Telesend 1, Telesend-16) are desperately trying to warn an alien ship several light-years away that it's on a collision course with Earth. Unfortunately, none of them has a chance of reaching that far, so they form a gestalt. The four of them hold hands in a circle. Each then rolls against his best psi skill at a +2 bonus (for four members). Everyone succeeds, so they are now in a gestalt.

The group chooses Scott as the leader, since he has the best skill. His effective power level is that of the most powerful

member (Debra), plus a bonus from everyone else equal to half his level. That's $[4 + (2/2) + (2/2) + (1/2)]$, or seven levels. Since Telesend only has six levels, the "leftover" level lets Scott add a free +50% enhancement; he chooses Universal, so the aliens will understand him.

Scott's skill gets a bonus from the other contributors. Debra (who knows Telesend skill at IQ+3) adds half of +3, or +2. Paige (IQ+4) adds +2. Wesley (IQ+5) adds +3. With this +7 bonus, Scott's effective Telesend skill is 24. No one has met the aliens, but telemetry has pinned down its location precisely, so Scott can Telesend to them at -5 to skill. To be sure that the point comes across, Scott uses the Send Senses psi technique (-4 to skill) to include visuals as well. This costs 2 FP, which Paige and Wesley agree to cover by spending 1 FP each.

Scott now has to roll against an effective skill of 15 to reach the aliens. He has Telesend 6, effectively, with no range penalties, and if he succeeds, the aliens will understand his language (due to Universal) and receive images of Earth (due to Send Senses). Fortunately, he rolls a 12, the aliens get the message, and Earth is saved.

Mental Maneuvers

These two new, *optional* maneuvers are intended for campaigns that focus heavily on mental abilities. If the GM allows them, they join the existing maneuvers (p. B363), as actions that characters can choose to take on their turn.

All-Out Concentrate

You focus on one particular mental task, as for the Concentrate (p. B366) maneuver, but with more intensity. This gives you +1 to any rolls required to perform your ability, skill, spell, etc., at the cost of your active defenses.

When using an ability that requires multiple seconds of concentration, you may alternate between Concentrate and All-Out Concentrate maneuvers, but you only get the +1 bonus if you All-Out Concentrate for the entire time. If you are knocked down, injured, or otherwise distracted,

you must make a Will-2 roll (the usual Will-3, at +1 for this maneuver) to maintain your concentration.

Movement: Step.

Active Defense: None, as for All-Out Attack (p. B365).

All-Out Defense (Mental Defense)

This is another option available for All-Out Defense (p. B366), for use when you are under psychic attack (or think you will be this turn). You add +2 to any rolls to resist psionic or similar mental attacks. This includes abilities resisted by physical attributes (e.g., HT), so long as the GM agrees that increased concentration and focus would make a difference. This bonus persists until your next turn. Your active defenses are unchanged.

Movement: Step.

Active Defense: Any.

DETECTING PSI

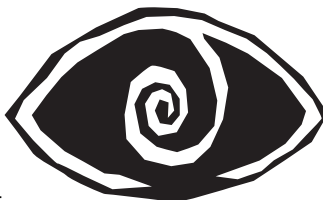
Not all psi is subtle. You can easily notice a screwdriver floating through the air or that something has set you on fire. However, the thought of "psi" usually brings to mind silent, hidden powers – and true to that, few of the abilities in this book are detectable to a casual observer. Not all observers are casual, of course . . .

NOTICING PSI USE

The target of a psionic ability may be able to realize what's going on – or at least that *something* is happening – even without any special gifts. In all cases below, a Per-

based Expert Skill (Psionics) roll can be substituted for the Per roll, if better.

There is never a roll required to notice an obvious physical effect (e.g., being teleported) or lost HP. Lost FP require a Per-2 roll to notice, at +1 for every 2 FP lost, as a bout of daytime weariness is not uncommon. Most other physical changes (e.g., the room's temperature rising) require a Per roll, with a modifier determined by the GM.



NEW ENHANCEMENTS

While the enhancements below were created for psionic abilities, GMs can apply them to normal (“wild”) advantages as well.

Decreased Immunity

+50%/level or +20%.

Some advantages offer a form of “immunity” to those who successfully resist, making it either impossible or just more difficult to use your ability on them again. Each level of this enhancement shifts this immunity down one level on the chart below. It does not affect the rules for repeated attempts (p. 6). Note that some levels have two equally limiting effects; you must choose which alternative applies when buying this enhancement.

Level	Effect
4	Permanently immune
3	Immune for one day <i>or</i> Permanent, cumulative -2 penalty
2	Immune for one hour <i>or</i> Cumulative -2 penalty lasting one day
1	Cumulative -2 penalty lasting one hour
0	No effect

Example: Mind Reading normally has a cumulative -2 penalty lasting one hour (level 1) for those who resist, while subjects gain immunity for a day (level 3) on a critical failure. A psi could buy Mind Reading (Decreased Immunity 1, +50%) to completely remove the penalty for a subject resisting. This would also let him decide (in advance, when buying this ability) whether a critical failure granted immunity for an hour *or* a cumulative -2 penalty lasting one day.

Switching between two alternatives on the same level is a +20% enhancement. Note it as “Decreased Immunity 0” along with the new effects chosen.

Use *Increased Immunity* (p. 21) to move up on the chart.

Mr. Furious: “That’s it? That’s his power? He’s mysterious?”

The Blue Raja: “Well, terribly mysterious.”

The Shoveller: “Plus he can, like, cut guns in half with his mind.”

– *Mystery Men*

Fixed Duration

+0%.

This enhancement turns a duration that depends on margin of success or failure (e.g., for Affliction) into a fixed time. Figure the duration as though the margin of success or failure was 3; for most abilities, this means three minutes. This can be modified further with Extended Duration or Reduced Duration (p. 21).

NEW LIMITATIONS

The note under *New Enhancements* (above) also applies here.

Increased Immunity

-10%/level

Each level of this limitation shifts your immunity effects up by one level, making it more difficult for you to act on subjects who resist your ability. This can be taken on any ability that is resisted with a Quick Contest (like a Malediction). See *Decreased Immunity* (above) for details.

Reduced Duration

Variable

Your ability lasts for a shorter time than it should. Note that this limitation cannot be applied to advantages with a “maintained” duration, such as Mind Control (though Mind Control with the Independent enhancement would qualify).

Multiple	Modifier	Multiple	Modifier
1/2 duration	-5%	1/20 duration	-25%
1/3 duration	-10%	1/30 duration	-30%
1/6 duration	-15%	1/60 duration	-35%
1/10 duration	-20%		

This table can be extended from the progression shown, but the *minimum* duration for an ability cannot be taken below one second. For example, Affliction (Disadvantage) has a variable duration that lasts a minimum of one minute, and is thus eligible for no more than Reduced Duration, 1/60, while unmodified Affliction has a minimum duration of one second, and could not take any level of Reduced Duration.

Weaponized

Variable

This limitation can only be applied to an ability that normally works like a ranged Malediction. In other words, it must use a Quick Contest instead of an attack roll *and* it must be unaffected by DR. Suitable advantages include Mind Control and Mind Reading. Mind Probe, Neutralize, and Possession with the *Ranged enhancement* would be valid as well.

This limitation turns the advantage into a normal, visible, ranged attack. The GM must decide which attack skill it will use – usually a specialty of Innate Attack. The attack uses Size and Speed/Range modifiers (p. B550) and can be dodged. If it hits, the target resists by making an unopposed roll against the appropriate attribute (e.g., Will for Neutralize). If the resistance roll fails, determine the effects as usual, using the subject’s margin of failure instead of the psi’s margin of victory.

Weaponized is worth a base -50% if the subject’s DR has no effect, or -80% if his DR adds to his resistance roll, as for an Affliction (p. B35). If the subject has a fixed penalty to his resistance roll, this reduces the limitation by +10% for every -1, to a maximum of -5. For example, a Neutralize ray that ignored DR and gave the subject a Will-3 roll to resist would be a net -20% limitation.

Note: This modifier is intended for turning psionic abilities into psychotronic devices, such as Neutralization Grenades and Mind Control Rays.

PSYCHOKINESIS

Abilities that convert mental energy into physical energy belong to the Psychokinesis (sometimes abbreviated “PK”) power. Telekinesis, or moving objects with one’s mind, is by far the best-known PK ability – reflected below in the split between *Telekinesis* abilities and *Other Abilities* – but the others have all made their way into popular fiction at one point or another. There is no nickname for psychokinetic psis in general, though telekinetics are “tekes” and pyrokinetics are “pyros.”

Psychokinetic abilities can be used against each other, when it makes sense. Don’t resolve this as a Quick Contest of skills – just subtract the power of the defender (if he makes his skill roll) from that of the attacker. For example, a teke with TK Grab 8 being affected by TK Crush 12 could use his TK to weaken the force acting on his organs, reducing the effects to those of TK Crush 4. Similarly, if Brian (Pyrokinesis 6) is being burned by a psi with Pyrokinesis 4, he couldn’t do anything about it, but his friend Karaly (Cryokinesis 6) could completely negate the attack by cooling Brian off as his enemy tries to heat him up.

Power Modifier: Every ability in this power has the limitation Psychokinesis, -10%. This reflects that it is part of this power, and that it uses the rules under *How Psi Works* (pp. 6-11).

TELEKINESIS

Telekinesis, the ability to move objects with one’s mind, is a *very* common psi ability in fiction. It is also one believed to exist by many parapsychologists – though the line between TK and Micro-PK (*Probability Alteration*, pp. 43-46) is fuzzy. In some settings, this category may be wrapped into a single ability; see *Unified TK* (p. 54) for more.

TK Bullet

5 points/level

Skill: TK Bullet (IQ/Hard).

You can pick up nearby small rocks and fling them at bullet-like speeds, all in a single, practiced action. This ability only works if there are small objects nearby, about the size and shape of a pebble. Take an Attack maneuver and make a skill roll, with all normal modifiers for a ranged attack. Note that this is *not* a silent attack – the pebble breaks the sound barrier as it flies.

Damage is 1d-1 pi per level of TK Bullet; you can do less damage if you wish. Other stats are Acc 3, Range 500/2,000, RoF 1, Rcl 1.

GMs may wish to set a maximum power level for this advantage. Alternatively, the rules for *Arms Control* (**GURPS Powers**, p. 138) can be applied.

Statistics: Piercing Attack 1d-1 (Based on IQ, +20%; Environmental, Pebbles or equivalent, -10%; Increased 1/2D $\times 50$, +20%, Increased Max $\times 20$, +15%; Psychokinesis, -10%; Variable, +5%) [5/level].

Flat Edge

Hard

Default: TK Bullet-2; cannot exceed TK Bullet.

You purposely hit your target with the flat edge of the pebble, for a larger wound channel. The attack does pi+ damage instead of pi. Cannot be combined with Sharp Edge.

Rapid Fire

Hard

Default: TK Bullet-7; cannot exceed TK Bullet.

You throw a handful of pebbles instead of one – your attack has RoF 7 (adding +1 to effective skill).

Sharp Edge

Hard

Default: TK Bullet-5; cannot exceed TK Bullet.

You angle the pebble so the thinnest edge hits first, for superior armor penetration. The attack gets an armor divisor of (2). Cannot be combined with Flat Edge.

Innate Attacks and Partial Dice

In **GURPS**, the value of an Innate Attack that causes partial dice of damage (see p. B62 for details) is calculated as follows.

1. Figure out how many effective levels of the Innate Attack are being bought (e.g., a 3d-2 attack equates to buying 2.4 levels).
2. Multiply the per-level cost of the Innate Attack by the effective number of levels.
3. Round the cost up to the nearest point.
4. Apply the net value of all modifiers.
5. Round the cost up (again) to the nearest point.

The write-ups in this book intentionally skip step 3. The reason is simplicity: As a psi buys multiple levels of an ability, the cost per level will average to the values given here. While certain builds may vary from the official costs by a point or two, the values would actually vary by a far greater amount if we did round up both times!

Example: Each level of TK Bullet is built on Piercing Attack 1d-1, which equates to 0.7 levels of Piercing Attack. At 5 points/level, that’s 3.5 points, which should round to 4. The net +40% of modifiers makes this 5.6 points, which rounds to a final cost of 6 points/level. Therefore, it may seem that TK Bullet is underpriced by 1 point. However, a teke with TK Bullet 8 (Piercing Attack 8d-8) should pay ($5 \times 5.6 = 28$) points, plus +40% in modifiers, for a total of 40 points. This shows that 5 points/level is the most accurate value for TK Bullet – if priced at 6 points/level, that teke would have paid 48 points for a 40-point ability!

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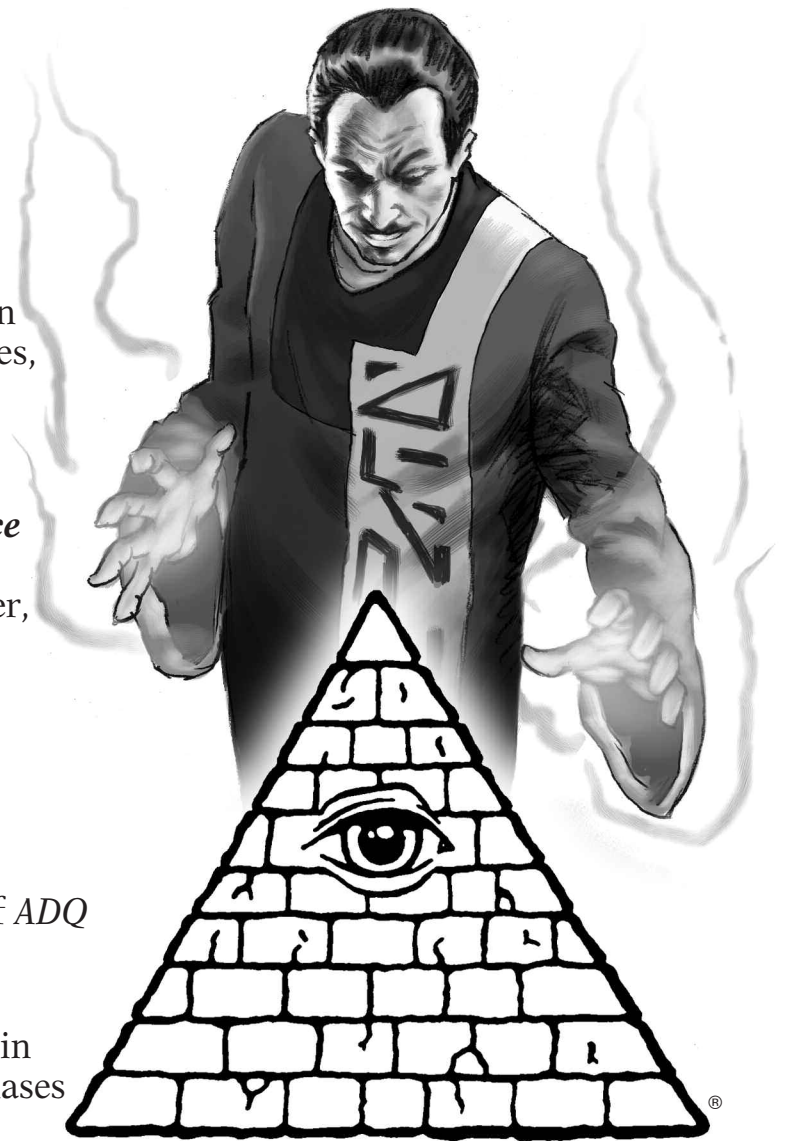
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