

GURPS

Fourth Edition

POWER-UPSTM 4

ENHANCEMENTS



Written by **JASON "PK" LEVINE**

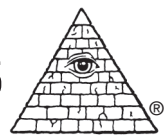
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*Why are you guys always
dissing me? I'm a superhero,
too, you know! I have powers.*

*– The Spleen,
in Mystery Men*

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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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INTRODUCTION

GURPS Fourth Edition brought enhancements and limitations into the core of the system. These simple modifiers allow gamers to customize, tweak, and empower their advantages in an *infinite* number of ways. The enhancements on pp. B102-109 add impressive new capacities to any ability; in some cases, they even become more important than the underlying advantage!

GURPS Power-Ups 4: Enhancements incorporates every new *general* enhancement published for *GURPS* as of fall 2011, including the large swath added by *GURPS Powers*. This does not include *special* enhancements – those specific to a particular advantage – only those which can be applied to a wide range of advantages. It also offers several *new* ones, ready to take the abilities in your game to the next level! Each of these new modifiers includes not only the basic information (description, cost, etc.) but a rating for how close an eye the GM will need to keep on it.

As well, *Enhancements* includes a great deal of guidelines, advice, and rulings – things that will make life easier for the GM and players. Meta-enhancements simplify and streamline ability creation, the in-depth discussion of Cosmic settles questions and encourages new variants, and detailed rules for modifying existing damage expand on those from *Powers* and

GURPS Supers. Finally, *every* existing enhancement is summarized in a convenient table, where the old ones are also rated as above, so the GM knows which ones mandate caution.

PUBLICATION HISTORY

GURPS Power-Ups 4: Enhancements is a new tome, but it includes modifiers first published in *GURPS Powers*, *GURPS Psionic Powers*, and *GURPS Supers*; “Auras of Power” from *Pyramid* #3/19: *Tools of the Trade – Clerics*; and the meta-enhancements from *Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jason “PK” Levine is the Assistant *GURPS* Line Editor, a position in which he does his best to enhance his favorite RPG. From his rural abode hidden deep in the farmlands of northwestern Georgia, he plays a wide variety of board, card, and roleplaying games with his friends and family. He started off as an unmodified advantage, but over the past few decades has added Wife (+100%), In-Laws (+50%), Teenage Minion (+75%), and an assortment of animals that sadly count only as a Nuisance Effect.



Additional Material: David Pulver, Sean Punch, William H. Stoddard, and Antoni Ten Monrós

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COSMIC LEVELS

There are three established levels of Cosmic, each with several preexisting examples. This doesn't mean the GM can't add more! Use the guidelines below to determine what the cost of a new Cosmic enhancement should be.

All "flavors" of Cosmic can be found below, with the exception of Cosmic as a *power modifier*. Power modifiers are beyond the scope of this book; see **Powers** for details.

See p. 12 for an explanation of the ☉ symbol.

Adding Utility (+50%)

The lowest level of Cosmic is generally used for *either* removing an inherent restriction *or* countering a higher level of Cosmic. These improvements are limited in scope and should still feel "fair." For example, this level of Cosmic could allow an Innate Attack to emanate from any point on the user's body (e.g., eyes, hands, shoulder – making it impossible for enemies to negate its use by binding his hands, blindfolding him, and so on), but could not make the attack hit automatically or bypass defenses.

Avoiding drawbacks ☉☉☉

Your ability is not subject to some type of built-in restriction. For example, you could buy Cosmic for Snatcher to avoid the "cannot get items that use different natural laws" drawback, or for Serendipity to avoid the "coincidences must be plausible" limitation. (In the latter case, you would still need Wishing to *dictate* a coincidence.) Don't write this down as Cosmic, Avoiding drawbacks; list the actual reason it's being purchased – e.g., Snatcher (Cosmic, Items need not obey local laws of physics). In some cases, it makes sense to buy this multiple times, to avoid unrelated restrictions on an ability; see *Cosmic in Action: Enhanced Move* (p. 9) for an example.

Defensive ☉

Your defense or countermeasure is proof against Cosmic effects. See the final bullet point under the introduction to *Cosmic* (p. 6) for details. This is most commonly used to counter Cosmic, Irresistible attack (below), but a single application covers *all* Cosmic offense.

Example: Chris has Corrosion Attack 2d (Cosmic, Irresistible attack, +300%; Cosmic, Lingering effect, DR does not heal, +100%). When he hits someone, they take *full* damage regardless of DR, their DR is reduced by 1 for every 5 points of damage, *and* natural DR does not heal normally from this attack! (Normally, DR heals at the same rate as HP; in this case, the DR will need Cosmic treatment to recover.) However, Chris attacks Ben, who has DR 10 (Cosmic, Defensive, +50%). His DR blocks up to 10 points of damage from Chris' attack (countering the "irresistible attack" aspect) *and* if damaged, it heals normally (countering the "lingering effect" aspect as well). It is still reduced by 1 for every 5 points of basic damage, however, as that's part of how corrosion damage works, not a Cosmic effect.

No Rule of 16 ☉☉☉

Your supernatural ability ignores the Rule of 16 (p. B349). When rolling a Quick Contest against a subject, you may

always use your full (modified) skill. If you are highly skilled, this may make resistance nearly impossible! The subject may always *try* to resist, even if his effective resistance is less than 3 (due to penalties from high levels of Affliction, previous attacks, etc.). In such a case, only a roll of 3-4 succeeds; treat this as success by 0, *not* as automatic resistance! If your margin of success is 1 or better, you still overcome his resistance.

Cosmic Active Defenses

Cosmic, Defensive (above), is most commonly applied to passive protection (e.g., DR), negating the effects of Cosmic, Irresistible attack (p. 8). However, this suggests that characters should be able to add Cosmic, Defensive, to their *active defenses* as well, to counter Cosmic, No active defense (p. 8). This is possible, using the cost of Enhanced Defenses (p. B51) as a guideline, and treating all defenses as being bought up from the base of 3.

Dodge: Round Basic Speed down to the nearest whole number, then multiply it by 7.5 and round *up*, to find the point cost.

Parry, One Skill: Halve the skill and round down, then multiply it by 2.5 and round *up*, to find the point cost. For untrained, unarmed attacks, use DX as your skill level.

Parry, All: Halve DX and round down, then multiply it by 5 to find the point cost.

Block: Halve Shield skill and round down, then multiply it by 2.5 and round *up*, to find the point cost.

A Cosmic active defense can be used even when the rules state that such a defense isn't possible against a particular type of attack – not just to stop Cosmic attacks! Thus, Cosmic Dodge lets you attempt to dodge a surprise attack, Cosmic Parry (Rapier) makes it possible to parry a flail, Cosmic Block allows you to try blocking a bullet, and so on. This never applies to Maledictions, area-effect attacks, etc. – only to attacks for which the active defense would normally be appropriate, were it not for a rule or circumstance disallowing it in *this* particular situation.

These rules should not be generalized to other forms of Cosmic (or other enhancements). In particular, Cosmic, No die roll required, is strictly forbidden!

If you enhance an active defense, you *must* also enhance any levels of Enhanced Defenses you add to that defense.

Privileged attack ☉☉

Your attack or activation roll, and the subject's defense or resistance roll (if any), cannot be rerolled by anyone else's non-Cosmic meta-game abilities – unless you want it to be. This includes advantages like Destiny, Luck, and Super Luck, and spells like Bless, Lesser Wish, and Wish. As well, no one can buy success or use player guidance (p. B347), non-Cosmic Serendipity, or similar tricks to interfere with or mitigate the use of your ability. This does not affect your target's ability to defend or resist – it just prevents anyone from using meta-gaming abilities to dictate or retroactively alter the result.

CHAPTER TWO

NEW

ENHANCEMENTS

The GM should take at least a cursory look at *every* enhancement-laden ability; see *GM Oversight* (p. 4) for more on this and pp. 22-24 for a list of new and old general enhancements. To help the GM understand which *specific* enhancements warrant a closer inspection, each enhancement in this chapter and on the list is marked with a number of ☉ symbols. Read these as follows:

- ☉: Unlikely to cause any problems.
- ☉☉: May cause minor problems, or noticeable ones when combined with other enhancements.
- ☉☉☉: May cause significant problems all on its own.
- ☉☉☉☉: May break the game!

A + after the ☉ symbols means that the listed rating applies to the *lowest* level of the enhancement, but higher levels have a greater potential for abuse.

GENERAL ENHANCEMENTS

These modifiers may be applied to any advantage, as long as the combination makes sense. As always, the GM is the final arbiter of which enhancements fit a given ability.

Affects Insubstantial, Selective ☉

+30%

When using your advantage, you may choose to have it affect *just* insubstantial targets, *just* substantial targets, or *all* targets.

Affects Others ☉☉

+50% per person

You can extend your advantage's benefits to others. If you can affect a limited number of willing subjects by touching them, *Affects Others* costs +50% per person. This isn't an attack – it has no effect on unwilling recipients. You must take a separate Ready maneuver to make contact with each companion, who must be within reach. This bestows the effects of the advantage, not the ability to use it. You turn it "off" and "on," set its level, and so on, and your decisions apply equally to you and all subjects.

Your ability only affects others while they're touching you. They can end its effects at any time by breaking contact with you. To affect those who are merely nearby, add *Area Effect* – in which case a Ready maneuver lets you affect any number of people up to your limit, if they're in your area.

The above version of *Affects Others* is for movement abilities (e.g., *Flight* and *Permeation*) and physical transformations (e.g., *Growth* and *Shrinking*). It's a good way to keep the PCs together on adventures that would leave behind those who can't fly, shrink, etc. The GM may allow *Affects Others* on other traits when it serves this purpose.

If you apply *Force Field* (p. 14) to one of the defenses listed for that enhancement, you may add *Affects Others* for a flat +50%, provided you also take at least one level of *Area Effect*. Together, these three modifiers let you extend your advantage's protection to everyone inside your area. This force field works against attacks and hazards crossing it from the outside. Threats inside the force field bypass its protection.

If based on *Damage Resistance*, the force field impedes movement, too. Foes who wish to cross it must force their way in. Those who try this as a free action (allowed once per turn) roll thrust damage. Those who use *Attack*, *Move and Attack*, or *All-Out Attack* to blast their way in roll their attack's usual damage. If damage exceeds DR, they make an opening large enough to step through. This closes at the end of their turn, and doesn't weaken the force field.

The GM shouldn't allow either form of *Affects Others* on advantages that let the user do something, such as *Healing*, *Innate Attack*, and *Mind Control*. To grant forbidden traits or affect unwilling subjects, buy *Affliction* with a suitable Advantage enhancement.

Affects Substantial, Selective

☉☉☉☉

+50%

When using your advantage, you may choose to have it affect *just* insubstantial targets, *just* substantial targets, or *all* targets.

Based on (Different Attribute), Own Roll ☉

+20%

This enhancement is available for any ability that requires the user to roll against his *own* DX, IQ, HT, Will, or Per to use. It shifts the roll from the usual attribute or secondary characteristic to a different one. (Note that ST is deliberately excluded; you cannot shift a roll to or from ST.)

This does *not* affect the target's resistance roll, if any! Use the standard *Based on (Different Attribute)* (p. B102) for that.

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It's the Kaioken attack. It's like a massive upsurge of energy. Everything is heightened: power, speed; even hearing and vision improve dramatically. You sort of become a super-self. But it can only be sustained for a short time, so you have to get the job done quickly.

*– Goku, in **Dragon Ball Z** #1.29*