

**GURPS**

Fourth Edition

# LOW-TECH™

## INSTANT ARMOR™



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*An e23 Sourcebook for GURPS®*

**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

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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

Some past *GURPS* publications included comprehensive tables that split up armor by body part, like those on pp. B283-284. For space reasons, however, *GURPS Low-Tech* features just the *Armor Table* (*Low-Tech*, pp. 110-111), which lists only torso protection. In place of dedicated tables for limb armor, headgear, etc., that book offers the *Armor Locations Table* (*Low-Tech*, p. 100), which enables players to start with torso armor and calculate the cost and weight of protection for *any* hit location.

This can get tiresome when equipping a character, though! For example, the *Armor Table* lists a light mail vest, protecting the torso, as \$500, 12 lbs. One must then use the *Armor Locations Table* to determine that long sleeves for all of both arms have 50% of this cost and weight (\$250, 6 lbs), that armor for all of both legs uses 100% of the torso figures (\$500, 12 lbs.), and that light mail covering both hands or both feet has 10% of the torso values (\$50, 1.2 lbs.). *GURPS Low-Tech: Instant Armor* tabulates *final* stats for such pieces of armor, eliminating calculations and reducing the number of lookups.

## PUBLICATION HISTORY

*GURPS Low-Tech: Instant Armor* summarizes armor statistics from pp. 100-113 of *GURPS Low-Tech* and reiterates some of the rules for armor found there.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

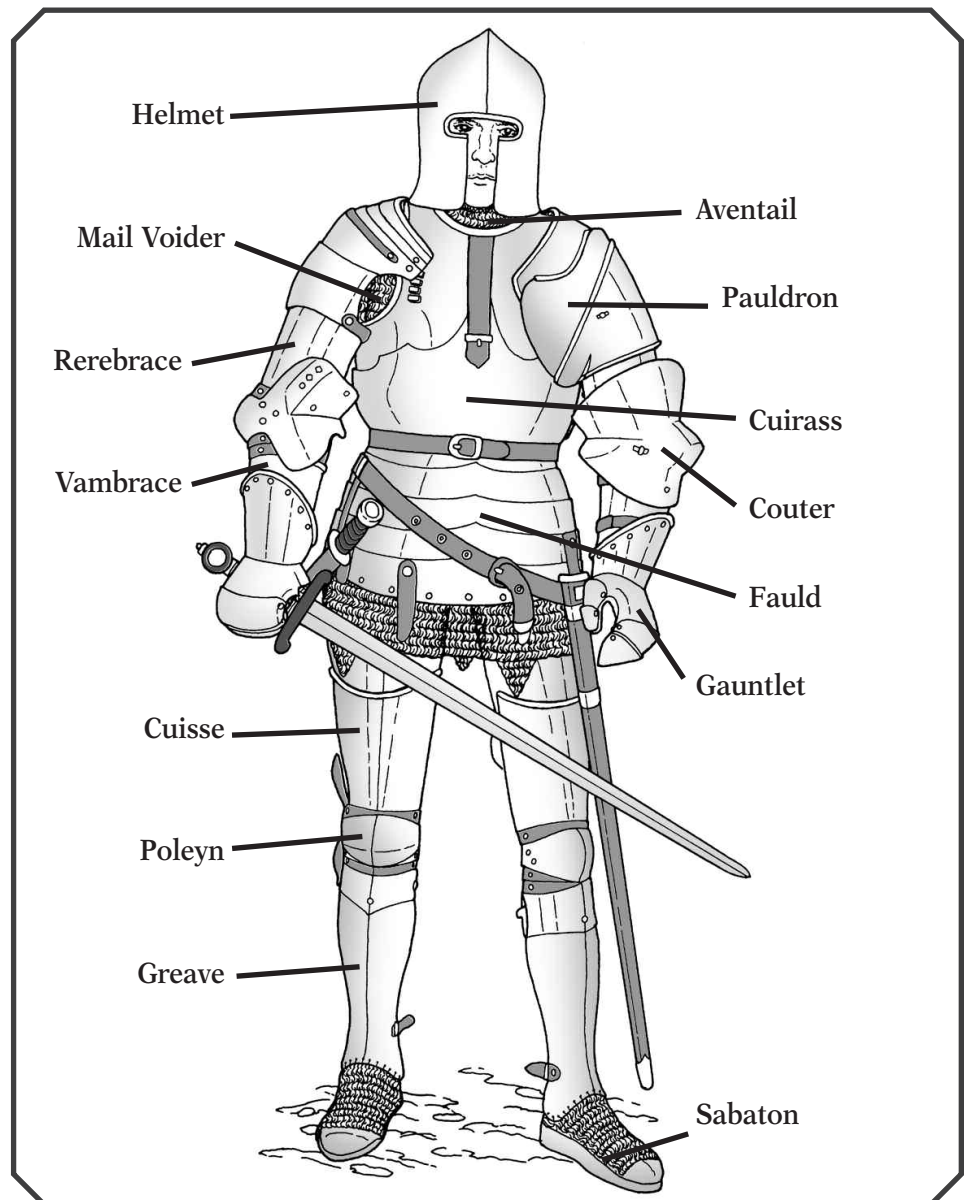
Dan Howard started roleplaying in 1984 with *Middle Earth Role Playing*, and quickly moved on to *Rolemaster*. He switched to *GURPS* shortly after its first edition; it has been his favorite system ever since. He started contributing to *Pyramid* magazine in 1998, and soon began playtesting *GURPS* publications. His first project was as co-author for *GURPS Low-Tech*.

Dan has an arts degree in history and classical studies. He holds a second dan black belt in

Oh Do Kwan Tae Kwon Do, and has competed internationally. Other interests include historical armor reconstruction, renewable energy, and permaculture gardening. He currently lives in Maitland, Australia, with his wife and three children.

## VISUAL GLOSSARY

This diagram is labeled with common terms for various parts of a suit of armor, some of which are used in this work; the whole suit is called a *harness*. This image may prove helpful when visualizing your character's armor. It also illustrates how mail is used to cover body parts that are difficult to articulate with plate.



# CHAPTER ONE

# ARMOR TABLES

These tables let you outfit a character *quickly* by selecting armor by hit location and writing down its stats. Each notes the relevant percentage of the cost and weight of torso armor below the title – along with the result on 3d (or 1d, for sub-locations) to use when rolling for hit location, where applicable. Notation and abbreviations are as defined on p. B282 and expanded for the *Armor Table* (*GURPS Low-Tech*, pp. 110-111). In brief:

*TL*: The tech level at which the item is commonly available. Per p. 108 of *Low-Tech*, some *small* pieces of light and medium iron plate are TL2 or TL3, not TL4.

*Description*: The item's name.

*DR*: The amount of Damage Resistance the item gives. This varies with damage type for some armor (check the notes). A "\*" indicates flexible armor that's susceptible to blunt trauma (p. B379).

*Cost*: The item's price, in \$.

*Weight*: The item's weight, in pounds.

*Don*: The time required to put on the armor, in seconds.

*Holdout*: The modifier explained in *Holdout* (p. 17).

*Notes*: Any special features or restrictions; see *Armor Tables Notes* (above).

For completeness, these tables include *light leather* (*Low-Tech*, p. 104), which *Low-Tech* omitted from the *Armor Table* because it's styled as clothing, not worn as armor. It's priced as clothing based on the cost of living (p. B265) for Status 0: \$600.

Not every armor type is offered for every location. Some types are only suitable for certain body parts. For example, the heaviest types suit only the torso, while greathelms were customarily made only from plate.

## Armor Tables Notes

- [1] Combustible. See *Making Things Burn* (p. B433); treat as *resistant*.
- [2] +1 DR vs. *cutting*.
- [3] -1 DR vs. *impaling*.
- [4] Semi-ablative. Loses 1 DR per 10 points of basic damage it resists (see p. B47).
- [5] -1 DR vs. *crushing*.
- [6] -2 DR vs. *crushing*.
- [7] Gives -1 DX, except for Lance skill.
- [8] Required for suit of plate. *Light mail* protects armpits and inside elbows.
- [9] Enclosed *mittens* and *gloves* protect vs. cold, heat, contact poison, etc., but give Bad Grip 1 (p. B123). (*Gauntlets* lack this note – they're open-palmed, negating both the benefit and the drawback.)
- [10] Gives Ham-Fisted 2 (p. B138).
- [11] Gives Ham-Fisted 1 (p. B138).
- [12] Gives +1 to Stealth.
- [13] Erases -2 in Stealth penalties when walking on snow.
- [14] DR applies to *underside* only.
- [15] Lets wearer ignore -2 to attacks and -1 to defenses for bad terrain.

## BODY ARMOR

*Chest* (pp. 5-6) and *Abdomen* (p. 6) are subsets of *Torso* (below), while *Groin* (p. 7) is a subset of *Abdomen*.

### Torso

100%; locations 9-11

| TL | Description           | DR | Cost  | Weight | Don | Holdout | Notes |
|----|-----------------------|----|-------|--------|-----|---------|-------|
| 0  | Cane                  | 1  | \$35  | 12     | 30  | -4      | [1]   |
| 0  | Cloth, Padded         | 1* | \$50  | 6      | 15  | 0       |       |
| 0  | Horn                  | 3  | \$250 | 25     | 30  | -4      |       |
| 0  | Layered Cloth, Light  | 2* | \$150 | 12     | 20  | 0       |       |
| 0  | Layered Cloth, Medium | 3  | \$350 | 20     | 30  | -2      |       |
| 0  | Layered Cloth, Heavy  | 4  | \$600 | 28     | 30  | -4      |       |
| 0  | Leather, Light        | 0* | \$180 | 3.3    | 30  | 0       | [2]   |
| 0  | Leather, Medium       | 2* | \$100 | 12     | 30  | -2      | [3]   |
| 0  | Leather, Heavy        | 3  | \$200 | 20     | 30  | -4      | [3]   |

# CHAPTER TWO

# OPTIONAL ARMOR RULES

**GURPS Low-Tech** allows for even more customization than Chapter 1 suggests! It outlines different materials from which armor can be made and describes several ways to alter armor

that modify its performance. A few accessories and odd pieces of armor fall outside even *this* system . . .

## Holdout

Some types of armor are easy to conceal; either they look like regular clothing or they can be hidden by wearing a tunic or a jacket over them. Typically, only a tactile search can detect such protection. Other, bulkier types are easily spotted even when worn under a large poncho or cloak.

The rules for concealing armor on p. 102 of **GURPS Low-Tech** give a generic Holdout penalty equal to DR for rigid armor or DR/3 for flexible armor. Bonus DR from better materials (silk, leather of quality, hardened steel, etc.) *doesn't* count toward this penalty. However, some armor types, like straw (**Low-Tech**, p. 106), are exceptionally thick

or bulky, and especially difficult to conceal; others, like brigandine (**Low-Tech**, p. 108), are particularly well-suited to concealment. As well, armor worn on extremities is harder to hide than that worn elsewhere; apply an extra -1 to Holdout for hand, foot, neck, or head armor. The tables in Chapter 1 suggest Holdout modifiers that take such factors into account.

In all cases, Holdout penalties apply when the armor is worn, not just carried. Expert tailoring can eliminate up to -1 in penalties, while masterful tailoring can remove up to -2; see *Expert Tailoring* (**Low-Tech**, p. 110). Conversely, cheap armor gives an extra -1.

## SPECIAL MATERIALS TABLE

Armor was most commonly made from cloth, leather, and/or iron, but **GURPS Low-Tech** offers other options, which are summarized here.

*TL:* The tech level at which the material appears.

*Description:* The material's name.

*Applicability:* Types of armor that can be made from the material.

*Cost:* The cost modification for using the material – either a “cost factor” (CF) or a flat addition.

*Effect:* Material's modifications to DR, weight, durability, etc.

*Page:* Location of the relevant text in **Low-Tech**.

| <i>TL</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Applicability</i>        | <i>Cost</i> | <i>Effect</i>                                   | <i>Page</i> |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|---|-------------|
| 0         | Bone               | Horn armor                  | -0.6 CF     | Ablative (p. B47)                               | 106         |
| 0         | Leather of Quality | Leather armor               | +4 CF       | +1 DR   | 105         |
| 0         | Rawhide            | Hardened leather armor*     | -0.6 CF     | 0.5× HP   | 104         |
| 1         | Bronze             | Metal armor*                | +3 CF       | –   | 108         |
| 1         | Copper             | Metal armor*                | No change   | -1 DR   | 108         |
| 1         | Feathers           | Textile clothing/armor†     | +\$2,000    | +1 DR vs. light missiles                        | 104         |
| 1         | Jade               | Heavy scale/lamellar armor  | +4 CF       | +2 reactions; 2× weight; semi-ablative (p. B47) | 106         |
| 1         | Jade, Gem-Quality  | Heavy scale/lamellar armor  | +9 CF       | +3 reactions; 2× weight; semi-ablative (p. B47) | 106         |
| 1         | Stone              | Heavy scale/lamellar armor  | -0.5 CF     | 2× weight; semi-ablative (p. B47)               | 106         |
| 2         | Paper              | Textile clothing/armor†     | -0.25 CF    | Combustible (p. B433)                           | 106         |
| 2         | Silk               | Textile clothing/armor†     | +19 CF      | +1 DR vs. <i>cutting</i> and <i>impaling</i>    | 104         |
| 4         | Steel, Duplex      | Plate/segmented plate armor | +8 CF       | +1 DR; -10% weight                              | 110         |
| 4         | Steel, Hardened    | Metal armor                 | +4 CF       | +1 DR   | 110         |

\* Armor of this type is available at the listed, earlier TL if made of this material.

† Layered cloth, padded cloth, etc.

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