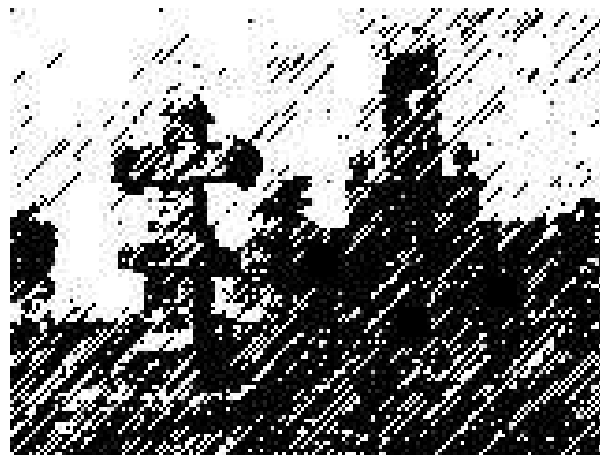



**Vampires in Alternate
Realities: A Modular Rule
Supplement**
v0.1b



By Carter Butts



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Short Description: A modular rule supplement for treating vampires under the *Alternate Realities* system; inherits all properties of the Primary Reality Guide except as noted otherwise.

NOTE: This is a beta level document, and as such is likely to contain errors and omissions.





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Introduction

Originally born from Victorian reworkings (some might say mutilations) of ancient, primarily eastern European legends, vampires have been stalking our fiction for over a century and a half. More recently, breakthrough role-playing games like White Wolf's *Vampire: The Masquerade*TM and Anne Rice's Vampire novels have spurred renewed interest in these enigmatic creatures; in role-playing, particularly, the figure of the vampire has become increasingly important.

So what are players to do who seek to integrate vampires into their *Alternate Realities* game worlds? How can AR's generic rule system be applied to the walking dead? How can their unique skills and dark powers be expressed in terms of AR mechanics? The answers, dear reader, are found within this document – read on!

As indicated in the title and citation statement, this document is a *Modular Rule Supplement*. This means that it consists of a set of fairly general rules which may be used by GMs and Reality Designers in a variety of game worlds. The *Vampires MRS* is designed to utilize existing AR mechanics as much as possible, and to be in and of itself flexible and open to change. Users of this document are encouraged to add their own touches when integrating vampires with their particular game worlds; and, indeed, it is fully expected that modification will be made when using this MRS to construct a Reality Guide. For this reason, relatively little attention is here given to questions of the nature and origins of the vampire, of the Dark Essence which permits it to walk among the living, or of the mechanisms which sustain and power it. These things depend on the nature of the reality in which the vampire is being used, and are up to the GM or Reality Designer to specify. What this rule supplement *can* do, however, is provide a basic framework for the depiction of vampires in *Alternate Realities*, along with the basic skills and powers which make them such interesting characters. With the MRS as base, many directions of development are possible; this document merely provides a place from which to start.

Another note, in this vein, concerns questions of character creation and levels of complexity. While this document regularly refers to attributes at all four levels of complexity, GMs and Reality Designers should recall that substitutions to lower levels are always possible (and should not cause extensive difficulties). More information on this topic may be found in the *Primary Reality Guide*. Character creation, and the like, are also described there, and more information is typically given along with specific reality guides. Essentially, vampires can be treated as any other AR characters...they simply possess special strengths and weaknesses which bear additional attention. Of course, GMs and Reality Designers can also make vampires as alien and unusual a form of unlife as they desire: the possibilities are deliberately left open.



New Attributes/Attribute Modifications

Level 0

None

Level 1

Psycho-Social

ID

All vampires are assumed to have blood thirst as an ID motivation: when given the opportunity, they must roll to resist feeding (subject to Blood Strength modifiers, naturally). On the other hand, the usual human motivators of sex, food, and the like do not generally apply to vampires...although some vampires are indeed motivated by these things. Note that it is possible to create a vampiric character who does not thirst for blood, but that such a character is dysfunctional and unlikely to survive for long. Without blood thirst, many vampires would have extreme difficulty in motivating themselves to feed (particularly given superego constraints, and the fairly common phobia of human blood (ID)) and would quickly perish...indeed, some would never realize the nature of their transformation!

Level 2

Physical

Fatigue

Although vampires are subject to Fatigue, they are much less threatened by it than are mortals. For this reason, a vampire can neither be incapacitated nor scrapped via the accumulation of fatigue; otherwise, the attribute is treated as per the rules given in the PRG.

Psycho-Social

Stress

As with Fatigue, Stress is less of a concern for the undead. Vampires cannot be incapacitated, nor scrapped, by Stress accumulation, though they are otherwise subject to its effects as given in the PRG.

Supplemental

Physical

Allergy: Sunlight

Vampires are particularly vulnerable to sunlight: exposure to it, in fact, can cause "death" in even the most powerful of these undead. As per the PRG, the vampire's allergy to sunlight causes it to act as a poison with an attack ORN equal to the allergy attribute and a STR given as follows:

Light Intensity	STR
Dawn/Sunset	1
Deep Shadow	5
Partial Shade	25
Full Sun	125

Sunlight allergies are resisted by STA, as per a normal poison. The base time unit for the sunlight's effect is a 10-second interval; hence, a vampire who is exposed to full sun for ten seconds will take at least twenty minutes to fight off its effects! (See the PRG for more information on resisting poison.) Sunlight allergy produces stress,

fatigue, and HIT damage, as well as loss of Blood Strength, and can be fatal from any of the above.

Sunlight allergy is not trainable, and does not change due to aging or decay. Allergy ratings for most vampires are in the 50-150 range (they are always positive), and cannot usually be changed after “birth”; some exceptions may exist, however.

Blood Strength

A vampire's power is derived from its blood consumption; Blood Strength provides a measure of its current status on this dimension. While Blood Strength is a standard AR attribute, it faces certain practical constraints: if made to exceed $DRF(\text{Dark Essence}) * 10,000$ it will immediately drop to $DRF(\text{Dark Essence}) * 10,000$; if it drops below $DRF(\text{END}) * DRF(\text{Dark Essence}) * (-10,000)$, the vampire is incapacitated; and if it drops below $DRF(\text{Dark Essence}) * (-10,000)$ the vampire is scrapped. Blood Strength can be altered in a number of ways (including blood consumption), and its effects are discussed in greater detail below.

Blood strength is not trainable, nor does it follow normal aging or decay rules (though see below). There is no comparable human attribute to Blood Strength.

Dark Essence


Throughout the fictional vampire tradition, vampires have been said to vary greatly in their overall power. In AR, Dark Essence describes this most basic aspect of the vampire's being. While Dark Essence is generally not tested directly, it serves to modify a variety of other attributes and skills. Dark Essence, like most vampiric attributes, is subject neither to training, age, nor decay, and does not correspond to any human attribute.

Sire Power

When new vampires are created, their power (Dark Essence) is dependent on the Sire Power of the vampire from whom they drank their first blood. Sire Power grows over time in any vampire, but is lowered by the act of vampiric reproduction; how much so depends on a number of factors, primarily the amount of Dark Essence a sire wishes to give its offspring. Sire Power is considered to be trainable via blood consumption (consider to be attribute usage; practice, teacher, etc. are not applicable), but does not decay and is not subject to aging. It does not correspond to any human attribute.

Other Differences

Many of the differences between vampires and normal humans are fairly obvious: vampires no longer need to eat or breathe (save to speak), for instance, and are thus immune to death from such mundane sources as threats or starvation (blood deprivation aside). Vampires may, of course, be affected by poisons, but due to the fact that neither stress nor fatigue accumulation can slay a vampire most poisons and diseases represent only a temporary inconvenience. Some other differences, however, are more subtle: while vampires inherit their initial attributes from their previous, human existences, for instance, they are unable to train any attributes above the ∞ level (skills) with the exception of ID, EGO, SEG, IDT, Supplemental psycho-social attributes, and those attributes indicated as being trainable above. By default, vampires are assumed to be largely “frozen” at the time of their siring; after this point their knowledge, skills, and personalities may change, but their bodies (and basic brain structures) are generally fixed. Exceptions, of course, do exist. By using Blood Skills, for instance,



vampires may radically alter almost any attribute for a short period of time, and other, darker methods may exist of working permanent changes on the vampiric form. In general, however, the flesh is a thing of the living, and its development ceases with the mortal death which gives rise to the new life of the vampire itself.



Vampire-Specific Mechanics

Blood Strength and the Vampire

Feeding

When a vampire feeds, it consumes the blood of a (usually living) host, weakening the host but strengthening the vampire itself. In AR, this process takes the form of Fatigue damage to the host, and increased Blood Strength to the vampire on a 1:1 basis (one point of Fatigue per point of Blood Strength). The rate at which blood may be drained from a target depends on the attacker's Vampiric Feeding skill (discussed below); the maximum amount which can be drained is equal to the target's scrapping threshold.

The primary exception to the above rule concerns vampires who feed on other vampires. When a vampire is the target of a feeding attempt, its Blood Strength is drained (rather than Fatigue being added). (Obviously, no more points can be removed than the target's scrapping level.) Note that the drinking of another vampire's blood can alter one's Dark Essence rating...this is discussed below.

Blood Power

A vampire may spend Blood Strength to gain a one-time bonus to any skill or attribute test on a one for one basis. This is essentially similar to Effort, save in that blood is expended rather than Stress or Fatigue being gained.

ID and Blood Strength

A vampire's hungers are driven, like the vampire itself, by the need for blood. Because of this, a vampire's ID should be treated as ID-(Blood Strength/10) for all tests or contests. Obviously, this means that a vampire's ability to resist its blood thirst will erode as it loses Blood Strength; more subtly, however, all of a vampire's appetites will become accentuated in this condition as well. As the vampire slides towards oblivion, it becomes more and more frantically animalistic, desperately scrounging for anything which bears the slightest resemblance to the object of its thirst (the sight of a formerly powerful vampire desperately sucking at a ketchup bottle is sad to behold) much as human crack addicts will compulsively pick and examine at anything remotely resembling cocaine. On the other hand, a well-fed vampire will see a weakened ID on all dimensions...such characters may act aloof, unconcerned, and generally distant. Only as their hunger grows will they again begin to stalk the night, unable to resist their primal need.

Blood Consumption

As mortals consume the energy found in food, so do vampires, via their Dark Essence, consume the energy found in mammalian blood. Some of this consumption occurs via the use of Blood Power, or blood-strength based skills; the rest is accounted for simply by maintaining a state of undeath. The average vampire, with a 7500 Blood Strength margin between maximum capacity and torpor, can go approximately six nights between feedings (uncomfortably), while the strongest can survive for almost sixteen! Of course, regular feeding is important in order to keep the ID in check, and to avoid the risk of involuntary torpor...for this reason, GMs should pay careful attention to character Blood Strength ratings.

(To become a table: blood consumption by activity level)

Torpor/Dormancy	0.0001/Hour	0.0012/Night	1/Year
Strict Bed-Rest	1/Hour	12/Night	

Normal Activity	100/Hour	1200/Night	
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Blood Strength and Damage

While the vampire is resistant to damage in many respects, there is one aspect in which it is particularly vulnerable: its Blood Strength. Whenever a vampire is damaged, the number of HITS taken are subtracted from its current Blood Strength, due to the disruptive effect of blood loss on its dark essence. This loss of Blood Strength occurs in conjunction with any Stress or Fatigue gain which may also occur, and does not prevent these other forms of damage.

Torpor and Death

As has been noted, vampires require blood to survive. As their Blood Strength weakens, they come closer and closer to the incapacitated state known as torpor. While in torpor, a vampire is unconscious and unable to act except for automatic biting at any living matter placed within its jaws; this may cause them to be resuscitated, eventually, due to being crawled upon by some unfortunate scavenger. In any event, a vampire will enter torpor when its Blood Strength falls below $DRF(ENR)*DRF(Dark\ Essence)*(-10,000)$; similarly, it will die (it will be scrapped) if its Blood Strength is less than $DRF(Dark\ Essence)*(-10,000)$. For some vampires, these thresholds are exceedingly close together: such individuals are capable of pushing themselves right up to the very limit before collapsing. Others may have much wider margins between incapacitation and being scrapped. While the former still have an advantage overall, the latter have a way of "going to ground" for long periods of time, only to rise again after centuries of dreaming....

Dark Essence and Sire Power

As has been noted, a vampire's overall strength is given by its Dark Essence. This Dark Essence is fixed at the vampire's inception, and does not change during the remainder of its existence (except for vampires who feed on others' blood – see below); a new vampire's Dark Essence is always equal to: $DRF(Sire's\ SP)*(Sire's\ DE)$.

Siring New Vampires

Sire Power reflects a vampire's current ability to produce progeny. Such potential children must consist of mammals (preferably human) who have been slain via vampiric feeding. By feeding some of its own blood to its offspring, the siring vampire may infuse its new child with Dark Essence (as given above), in addition to as many points of Blood Strength as it is willing and/or able to transfer. While some recovery is necessary for the newly undead (the Fatigue accumulated from blood loss must still be dissipated normally), they are otherwise immediately prepared for their new life.

The siring process affects the sire as well as the child. In particular, the new parent is weakened not only from loss of Blood Strength, but also from the transfer of Dark essence; this causes a lasting drop in its Sire Power attribute. After creating a new vampire, a sire's Sire Power is decreased by $DRF(Child's\ DE)*100$. This loss can only be made up by the natural increase of Sire Power over time.

Increasing Dark Essence via Feeding on Vampiric Blood

Ordinarily, a vampire's Dark Essence does not change over time. In the special case in which one vampire consumes the blood of another, however, its Dark Essence may be increased; unfortunately, this process requires the slaying of the target. If a vampire completely drains another's blood – that is, reduces its Blood Strength to $DRF(Dark$

Essence)*(-10,000) through feeding – then its Dark Essence increases (if lower) to match that of the (now deceased target). In the event that multiple vampires slay a target in this fashion, the effect is correspondingly reduced: each assailant's Dark Essence becomes ((Target's DE)-(Attacker's DE))/(# Assailants).

Blood Skills

In addition to their longevity, invulnerability or resistance to conventional attacks, and their ever-present thirst for blood, vampires differ from living creatures in their ability to use their Dark Essence, in conjunction with fresh blood, to attain a variety of supernatural powers. These mysterious powers are collectively referred to as “Blood Skills”: all of them represent different uses of the vampire's undead nature to warp reality as we know it.

Using Blood Skills

Generally, Blood Skills operate much like conventional skills or abilities; the catch, however, is that these powers are dependent upon the vampire's Blood Strength. The specific interdependencies, of course, are listed with the skills themselves, but typically Blood Skills will require the expenditure of Blood Strength as a necessary component of their enactment. This, of course, means that vampires who are low on Blood Strength for whatever reason will have a more difficult time using their abilities, and that excessive use of Blood Skills will demand that the vampire in question hunt regularly for fresh blood. Such is the nature of the undead existence...

Learning Blood Skills

By default, any vampire may attempt to learn any Blood Skill, just as it might learn any other skill; this may be constrained in particular Reality Guides, however, and in any event there are more mundane restrictions which generally prevent any vampire from mastering all applications of Dark Essence. First and foremost, there is the simple question of discovery: unless a vampire is somehow made aware of a potential Blood Skill, he or she cannot train or use it! Likewise, learning of a Blood Skill will be slow going unless a vampire has access (at least initially) to texts on the subject (very, very unlikely) or other vampires who have already developed the Blood Skill in question. Although isolated vampires may gradually discover and develop their powers over the centuries, this is clearly a very slow, tortuous, even dangerous process; those vampires fortunate enough to be sired by an elder who takes an interest in their dark education obviously possess a clear advantage.


Sample Blood Skills

The following are all sample Blood Skills, which GMs and Reality Designers may wish to utilize in their own game realities. While together these powers readily duplicate the abilities of vampires in modern fiction, some or all of these skills may be inappropriate for certain settings; similarly, there may be special restrictions or new abilities which follow from the nature of particular Reality Guides. For this reason, the skills listed here should be seen as guidelines, and may be overridden if needed.

Note: All skills are listed in standard Alternate Realities skill format, with skill difficulty followed by prerequisites. Prerequisite attributes connected by “+” signs are to be averaged with each other to determine the prerequisite in question. See the Primary Reality Guide for further details.

Mental

Dark Recall(H, DE+MEM)





Vampires have tremendously long “lives”; the most powerful, intelligent, and fortunate of these creatures may survive for many centuries, if not for millennia, before facing final death. Given the incredible spans covered by vampiric lives, then, how can it be that an elder does not eventually forget all that has happened to him or her? Truly, this is a concern – and an extremely ancient vampire will have forgotten far more than any dozen humans ever see in all their lives put together – but the nature of Dark Essence provides a means of obviating this difficulty. Not only can vampires utilize their Dark Essence to greatly increase their powers of recall (see below), but they can also draw directly on their inner darkness to regain secrets which have been otherwise lost to the ravages of time. This power, called, Dark Recall, permits the vampire to remember any fact, skill, or experience known to him or her since his or her mortal death...provided, of course, that he or she remembers that such knowledge is there to be retrieved. Such perusal of the past, of course, does not come cheaply: because it demands the flare of Dark Essence which animates the vampire’s body to examine its own history, the skill of Dark Recall can be practiced only with the expenditure of Blood Strength. The amount of Blood Strength to be expended depends upon how long ago the knowledge to be recalled was originally acquired. In particular, one Blood Strength point is consumed per year before the present time; thus, recent events can be brought to the fore with minimal difficulty, while those of previous centuries require a significant effort to attain. Note, too, that the difficulty of retrieval (in terms of probability of success) is not affected by the passage of time: this is the fundamental tradeoff that the vampire makes, gaining uniform access to ancient memories at cost of increasing blood consumption.

As indicated above, Dark Recall can be used to retrieve memories of facts, events, or even skills. The former two items, once retrieved, are retained normally, and though they will eventually be forgotten once again, they need not be specially maintained. Skills are a different matter, however: because skills in fact consist of an entire network of interrelated memories (many of which are often tacit, and are not cognitively available), it is far more difficult to retain them after they initially resurface. As a result of this fact, a standard Dark Recall test must be made every time a recalled skill is used; failure signifies that some important memory set has eroded, and the skill is lost (or returned to its pre-Dark Recall level) until the ability is invoked (and paid for) once again. GMs may elect, when utilizing Dark Recall for either skills or knowledge, to allow the vampire’s Success Margin to dictate the degree to which events are accurately recalled and previous levels of skill expertise are attained. In this event, it is suggested that the same margin be used to determine how rapidly recovered skills are lost.

Sanguine Knowledge(VH, DE+INT-10)

The draining of lifeblood from another living thing is a powerful, visceral process, but it has important mental connections as well. In particular, the blood consumed by vampires forges a strong, albeit temporary, link between the two entities in question. This link can be used, along with a vampire’s Dark Essence, to temporarily acquire knowledge held previously by the blood’s “owner”; exploiting this fact is the domain of Sanguine Knowledge.






A vampire with Sanguine Knowledge may bend his or her Dark Essence to acquire skills, tacit knowledge, and the like from one or his or her victims. Each skill, area of knowledge, etc. to be acquired requires a separate Sanguine Knowledge test, and requires that some of the vampire's Blood Strength be consumed in the process. The amount of Blood Strength needed depends on the amount of time since the subject whose knowledge is being utilized was last fed upon by the vampire; the cost is ten points of Blood Strength per hour which has elapsed.

It is worth noting that the type of knowledge which may be gained in this way is of a general, abstract, or procedural type: recall of specific memories, events, and the like are not possible. Much as certain amnesiacs can retain skills, areas of expertise, etc. without remembering anything about themselves, a vampire utilizing Sanguine Knowledge draws upon a subject's "background" knowledge without gaining access to specific, personal information. This, it should be pointed out, can make using Sanguine Knowledge somewhat tricky in practice. Though a vampire can use Sanguine Knowledge to utilize any skills possessed by a subject, for instance, Sanguine Knowledge will not tell the vampire which skills the subject possesses (or, in many cases, possessed). In many cases, therefore, vampires using this Blood Skill must either perform background research on their victim, utilize other skills (such as Sanguine Memories) to gain information about him or her, or simply make educated guesses. The latter can be expensive: as with most Dark Knowledge Blood Skills, Sanguine Knowledge requires the expenditure of Blood Strength to attempt...and if it happens that the vampire guesses poorly, he or she simply knows that he or she could not recover the information in question on that attempt (it is not obvious to the vampire whether further attempts would be successful).

As with Dark Recall, the information gleaned by Sanguine Knowledge slips away quickly. After a period equal to the vampire's Success Margin multiplied by 100 minutes, the vampire must make a Sanguine Knowledge test every time a recalled skill or area of knowledge is used. Failure indicates that an important set of memories have slipped away, and the subject's knowledge is lost until another successful invocation of the power is used to re-retrieve it.

Sanguine Memories(VH, DE+MEM)

As has been noted elsewhere, the blood of the living creates for the vampire a possible avenue through which he or she may gain information from his or her erstwhile victims. By utilizing Blood Strength and the power of Dark Essence, a vampire may retrieve such subjects' memories for his or her own inspection; this power is called, appropriately enough, that of Sanguine Memories. Like Sanguine Knowledge, the cost in Blood Strength of drawing memories from a subject is equal to ten points per hour after feeding, but unlike Sanguine Knowledge the information which can be gained is exclusively in the form of particular memories or events, personally experienced by the subject in question. These memories, pending a successful use of the skill, may be perused by further skill use (this does not require further expenditure of Blood Strength); the vampire does not have access to a "catalog" of experiences, but may attempt to search for memories with particular associations, regarding particular persons or events, etc.





Like Sanguine Knowledge, the memories attained through Sanguine Memories are fleeting. After a period equal to the vampire’s Success Margin multiplied by 100 minutes, the vampire must make a Sanguine Memories test every time he or she attempts to access a subject’s memories. Failure indicates that the vampire’s grip on the subject’s memories has weakened, and further inquiries into the subject’s knowledge are impossible until another successful invocation of the power occurs. Note, however, one critical exception: as with Dark Recall, that which is learned via Sanguine Memories is not lost when the power itself ebbs; this information has been acquired by the vampire, and will be forgotten normally. What is lost is the vampire’s ability to seek out new memories or experiences from the subject. Vampires using Sanguine Memories should thus be sure to explore their subjects’ stores of experience quickly, lest they miss out on an important piece of information!

Mental Attribute Enhancement(H, DE+INT)

Although vampires retain their mortal bodies, it is plainly the case that they are not so limited by them in death as they were in life. This is not a function of their mortal coils, obviously: it is the power of their Dark Essence, which enables vampires to, for brief periods, optimize and even expand upon their natural endowments. One such mode of optimization takes the form of Mental Attribute Enhancement; that is, temporarily increasing (or even rescaling) mental attributes by expending Blood Strength. In order to use Mental Attribute Enhancement, a vampire must decide which attribute he or she wishes to increase, and to what extent (note that fractions of a point carry the full point cost, hence the minimum cost to rescale a mental attribute is 100 Blood Strength points). The Blood Strength costs to attempt this power are given below:

Attribute Level	BS/Point (same scale)	BS/Point (scale x10)	BS/Point (scale x100)
Level 0	8	800	8000
Level 1	4	400	4000
Level 2	2	200	2000
Supplemental	1	100	1000

As is typical of Dark Essence powers requiring the use of Blood Strength, the cost in vampiric energy is required simply to fuel the flare of Dark Essence which permits the vampire to perform the Blood skill...thus, it is paid whether or not the test succeeds! If this indeed does occur, then the vampire immediately gains the appropriate attribute enhancement, an advantage which lasts for 100 seconds multiplied by the success margin of the skill test. Obviously, this is not a long period of time; still, it may be sufficient to enable the vampire to solve a critical problem. Otherwise, the vampire may attempt to extend the period of effect by making a new skill test (and expending the requisite Blood Strength) when the previous usage begins to wear off....

Physical

Dark Restoration(VH, DE+END)



While wounded vampires do heal, as do their living counterparts, the powers of Dark Essence permit a more direct route to regeneration of lost or damaged tissues. By focusing his or her Dark Essence and expending Blood Strength, a wounded vampire can restore lost HITs (and even regrow severed members) via the Blood Skill of Dark Restoration. The cost of this rapid healing is one Blood Strength point per HIT to be restored; body parts which have been severed or scrapped must be regrown in their entirety, at a cost equal to their full HIT value. Unlike most Blood Skills, this cost need not be paid until after the skill test is made: as Dark Restoration permits a maximum of 1000 multiplied by the test's success margin to be healed per attempt, it is generally non-obvious how much healing may be accomplished with a single use. Later attempts are of course possible, but the skill of Dark Restoration requires a base of 200 action counts to perform. During Fast Action, this can become a serious issue...

In addition to the above effects, Dark Restoration has another powerful application: it can be used to recover from Stress and Fatigue. Just as with HITs, Blood Strength points may be applied on a one or one basis to reduce Stress and Fatigue via this Blood Skill. This healing is subject to the same limitations as are given above, and the three types of restoration may be applied during the same skill use so long as the total number of Blood Strength points utilized do not exceed the specified limit.

Preternatural Toughness(H, DE+END)

Even while vampires' unliving state frees them from many concerns of mortal death, there are many ways in which vampires may be destroyed. Awareness of this fact has lead some immortals to focus on the harnessing of Dark Essence to reinforce the natural defenses of the undead body; the Blood Skill associated with this power is that of Preternatural Toughness. Although limited in some ways, Preternatural Toughness can be a powerful asset to vampires who face physical threats of various sorts – a sufficiently common situation to warrant some consideration.

On a successful test of Preternatural Toughness, a vampire may feed Blood Strength to its Dark Essence in order to maintain a condition of increased resistance to damage. This resistance is expensive (10 points of Blood Strength per second, or 20 per standard fast action round), but confers a number of benefits. In particular, Preternatural Toughness *halves* all of the vampire's DEMs (Damage Effect Multipliers), thus effectively reducing damage dealt to him or her from all sources by half; at the same time, the Blood Skill's effect selectively tightens blood vessels and closes any open wounds, thus stopping all secondary bleeding during its duration. This effect will not prevent direct Blood Strength or Fatigue effects from injury, nor will it seal wounds, but it will prevent new and existing wounds from bleeding while in use. Preternatural Toughness may be maintained for as long as the practitioner desires (and can support), up to a duration of 100 seconds multiplied by the success margin of the skill test. At this time the effect ceases, unless a new test is made to regain the power.

Unholy Speed(H, DE+INI)

Vampiric Feeding(VE, DE+BOD)

By far and away, the most stereotypical activity of the vampire is that of feeding on mammalian (usually human) blood; while this is not terribly difficult, the seizing, holding, and draining of prey *does* involve some skill. Unlike many Blood Skills, then, Vampiric Feeding is one which is quickly mastered by most vampires (those who cannot do not tend to survive) through everyday use.

In order to feed on a victim, the vampire must (obviously) be close enough to make a bite attack. Unless the victim is willing (or unawares, and in *very* close proximity), this usually means that the vampire must first grapple his or her adversary in such a way that he or she can bite at a major blood source (large vein or artery). (Feeding elsewhere is possible, but should reduce blood flow *dramatically*.) Provided that the vampire is in position, he or she may make a Vampiric Feeding test in order to begin to drain the victim; failure indicates that the vampire has missed a major blood vessel, the victim managed to avoid being impaled, or some other, similar, gaffe.

Pending a successful test, the vampire may begin draining blood (inflicting fatigue and gaining Blood Strength) at a rate of success margin multiplied by 1000 points per standard act (25 action counts). If he or she desires, the vampire may abort feeding at any time (perhaps to find a better position, i.e., a higher success margin) pending a successful contest of EGO versus ID (taking Blood Strength into account!). Because the process of feeding is highly pleasurable both to the vampire and to the victim, the victim will rarely struggle while being drained (an ID contest would be required, at the very least)...of course, once feeding has stopped, a still-living (or unliving) victim may come to his or her senses...

It should be here reiterated that a vampire cannot drain more Blood Strength from a victim than would be needed to take him or her over his or her current scrapping threshold. Also, GMs should take into account the various side issues which accompany feeding. For young vampires, in particular, these may include a fear of human blood, moral or ethical qualms about draining (and perhaps killing) victims, difficulty in seducing/surprising/grappling victims, etc. Although such obstacles are generally considered trivial by more experienced (and powerful) vampires, these are important facts of vampiric life, and should not be overlooked by the players, or by the GM.

Physical Attribute Enhancement(H, DE+BOD)

Just as vampires may improve their mental faculties by expending Blood Strength, so to may they greatly empower their unliving bodies via the use of their Dark Essence. Physical Attribute Enhancement, the Blood Skill which corresponds to this practice, is identical to Mental Attribute Enhancement, save that it applies to physical attributes. Note that non-standard attributes, such as Damage Transference Multipliers and macros, may not usually be modified via Physical Attribute Enhancement; GMs are advised to use their discretion in this matter.

Psycho-Social

Fading(VH, DE+(-PRS))

Misrepresentation(VH, DE+PRS)

Manipulation(H, DE+WIL)

Influence(H, DE+CMD)

Personality Reading(VH, DE+EMP)

Terrify(E, DE+PRS)

Psycho-Social Attribute Enhancement(H, DE+WIL)

Just as vampires may improve their mental faculties via the Blood Skill of Mental Attribute Enhancement and their physical abilities via Physical Attribute Enhancement, it is also possible (via Psycho-Social Attribute Enhancement) for vampires to expand on their psycho-social abilities. As might be expected, this Blood Skill is largely identical to the Mental and Physical Attribute Enhancement skills, save in that it applies exclusively to psycho-social attributes. While its use is generally straightforward, a few points do bear clarification. First of all, there are times when a vampire might wish to decrease, rather than increase, certain psycho-social attributes (a high PRS attribute, for instance, could be dangerous for a vampire on the run); in such cases, the same Blood Strength costs pertain as would for increases of similar magnitude. For sake of clarity, then, the Blood Strength costs (per use, and per point of change) are as follows:

Attribute Level	BS/Point (scale x0.01)	BS/Point (scale x0.1)	BS/Point (same scale)	BS/Point (scale x10)	BS/Point (scale x100)
Level 0	8000	800	8	800	8000
Level 1	4000	400	4	400	4000
Level 2	2000	200	2	200	2000
Supplemental	1000	100	1	100	1000

These change costs can be applied to the other skills as well, although it is unlikely that many vampires would encounter situations which call for weakening their other attributes....

The second important issue which applies to Psycho-Social Attribute Enhancement is that, like Physical Attribute Enhancement, it cannot affect attributes such as Status or Wealth which are heavily dependent upon the character's position in the social structure; or, at least, not by default. GMs may wish to waive this rule for more surreal realities, in which vampires may actually be able to warp the social space around them to create wealth or status from the whole cloth!

Perceptual

Blood Sense(M, DE+PRC)

Dark Sight(H, DE+SIT)

Sense Dark Essence(M, DE+PRC)

Perceptual Attribute Enhancement(H, DE+PRC)

Just as vampires may improve their other abilities by expending Blood Strength, so to may they enhance their sensory capabilities. Perceptual Attribute Enhancement, the Blood Skill which corresponds to this practice, is identical to the other Attribute Enhancement skills, save in that it applies to perceptual attributes. Note that this attribute enhancement does not confer new senses (such as a "sixth sense" of impending danger), nor does it permit existing senses to operate in new ways (such as permitting normal vision in near-total darkness): it simply permits



the sharpening of existing senses to exaggerated, even superhuman levels. This, however, is quite powerful enough when used properly....

