

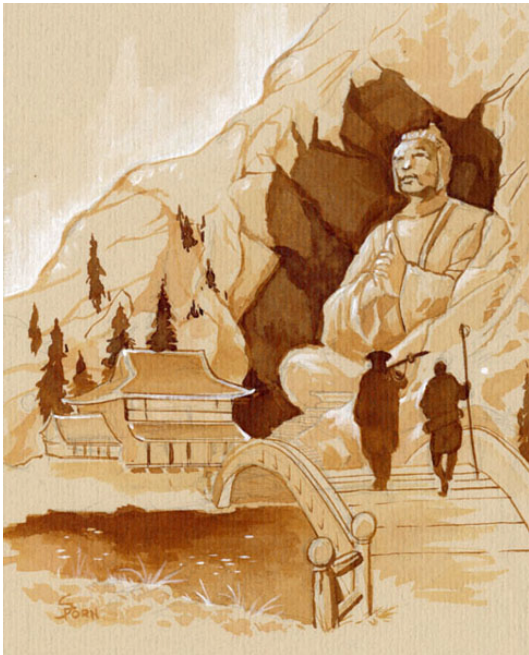
# Savage Wuxia!

## Genre Rules for Savage Worlds

Wuxia is a very broad genre of Chinese fiction focusing on the adventures of martial-arts heroes. Many modern kung-fu movies trace their origins to Wuxia. The heroes are usually independent, living as wanderers or rebels, following a code of honor to protect innocents from oppression. Most are martial-arts masters and some have quasi-mystical powers. Supernatural beings and evil sorcerers are present in many Wuxia stories. In short, these are the Eastern equivalent of swords & sorcery or the picaresque novel.

Traditional Wuxia focuses on common people of great skill, following the warrior's code to defend helpless innocents from evil overlords, crime bosses, vile sorcerers, and unnatural monsters. Often, a tangled soap-opera-like web of enemies, allies, and departed lovers envelops the hero, pulling him or her into adventure from multiple angles. A recurring theme in Wuxia is the conflict between love (or other personal relationships and goals) and duty (acting honorably and for the cause of good), so select Hindrances that play into these contradictory motivations.

The rules presented here provide a modern, cinematic kung-fu experience. They are meant to encourage energetic, mobile combat, and to balance unarmed and weapon styles.



### Example Character Concepts!

Gender roles are very egalitarian – it is not at all unusual for Wuxia heroes to be women – so most of the concepts below could apply to male or female characters equally.

**The Promising Student!** Trained for martial arts, this hero is out on his own in the world for the first time. Will his naivety turn to cynicism, or will he adhere to his master's teachings of bravery and compassion?

**The Innocent Mystic!** She is so pure of heart that the forest animals speak to her. Also, she can channel her qi into deadly blasts! Can she fight evil without being overcome by sorrow, or jaded by the world?

**The Wandering Monk!** He is a pleasant fellow who seeks only peace and enlightenment out on the road. Yet somehow he always finds himself in situations where he must teach ruffians a lesson. What is his true quest?

**The Big-City Scholar!** A student of writing, philosophy, history, and art, she is more comfortable in a debate than a fight. Yet her knowledge and skills help to unravel criminal plots and decipher lost lore. What has brought her to this world of adventure?

**The Clever Thief!** Robbing from the rich and giving to the poor, he favors speed and trickery over direct confrontation. Is he in it for the thrills, or driven by a deeper motivation?

**The Deadly Assassin!** Raised from birth for the sole purpose of silent killing, she knows how to disable foes through the use of poisons, pressure-points, and piercing weapons. She has turned from that life, but at what cost?

**The Boisterous Brute!** He may be rough and uncultured and prone to drinking to excess, but he is loyal to his friends! What trouble has this mountain of a man gotten into?

**The Strange Sorcerer!** Commanding the forces of nature and consorting with mysterious spirits has left a visible mark on the sorcerer, who must wear outlandish outfits and follow strange behavioral taboos. Will she fall into corruption and wickedness, like so many fellow practitioners?

**The Wizen Master!** He was once the most powerful kung-fu master in all the land. While his body has withered, his skill and qi have only increased! When his past comes back to haunt him, can he deal with it alone, or will he need the aid of a new generation of heroes?

## Savage Wuxia!

### Character Creation!

Because of their skill larger-than life nature, PCs start at Seasoned rank with 20 XP. And Wuxia heroes don't worry about counting money; starting PCs can have whatever mundane equipment they want, as long as no *individual* item costs more than their starting funds (\$500, unless you have the Rich Edge or similar).

### Gear!

Use the medieval weapons and armor in the core rules to equip Wuxia heroes, but rename some of them to fit the setting (so a short sword becomes a tai chi sword or butterfly sword, etc.). For more exotic weapons, use the stats for an existing weapon, possibly with a few modifications. See the sidebar for examples.

### Skills!

While there are some good ghost-story kung fu movies out there, supernatural horror isn't a very frequent staple of the genre, so **Guts** skill is not used. Whenever a Guts check is called for, just roll Spirit instead.

An important new skill is available:

**Discipline (Spirit):** Anyone can learn to fight, but true martial arts mastery requires dedication, long study, and discipline. If you have at least a d4 in Discipline you can calculate your unarmed attack damage as Str+Discipline. (Unlike weapon damage, you roll your full Discipline die, even if it is greater than your Strength die.) If you have at least a d6 in Discipline, then when you are not wearing any armor, you can calculate your Toughness as ½ your Vigor + ½ your Discipline.

*Characters using Discipline are still subject to the Unarmed Defender rule, unless they are holding some sort of weapon or shield with which to defend themselves. They can make unarmed attacks with any part of the body (kicks, head-butts, elbows, etc.), and these attacks are not subject to a penalty like an off-hand attack. But, you can't make multiple attacks this way unless you have a special Edge like Frenzy or Sweep. Two-weapon fighting and the Two-Fisted Edge only apply to attacks with both arms; your actual off-hand still carries an off-hand penalty, and if you can't make an unarmed attack with a hand that is holding a weapon. Discipline does apply to grappling damage.*

### Exotic Arms and Armor!

**Chain Whip:** flail (Str+d4, Reach 2, 2 hands)  
**Claw:** dagger (can't be thrown or disarmed)  
**Greatclub:** greatsword (Str+d12, Parry -2)  
**Hook Sword:** long sword (-1 damage, Parry +1)  
**Kama (sickle):** axe  
**Kusari-Gama (sickle and chain):** flail  
**Lamellar Armor:** plate armor  
**Man-Catcher (staff with crescent blade):** spear (+1 damage but no Parry +1)  
**Meteor Hammer (ball and chain):** flail (Str+d8, Parry -1, 2 hands)  
**Nunchaku:** flail  
**Sai:** dagger (can't be thrown; foes are at -2 Strength to resist your Disarm attempts)  
**Scale Armor:** mail hauberk  
**Three-Section Staff:** flail (Reach 1, 2 hands)  
**Throwing Stars:** dagger (thrown only)  
**War Fan:** rapier

### Arcane Powers!

**Arcane Background (Magic)** works as normal. Sorcerers are often creepy or unusual, with strange restrictions as a result of pacts made with spirits. Examples are "must wear an onion on a necklace at all times" or "can't speak while in direct sunlight" or "must bathe twice a day" or "can't touch dogs." Hindrances like Phobia, Quirk, and Vow can represent these restrictions. Depending on the setting, **Arcane Background (Miracles)** may also be appropriate for priests and shamans and similar characters.

A new arcane background is available to represent martial arts masters who develop mystical powers:

#### ARCANE BACKGROUND (QI MASTERY)

**Arcane Skill:** Focus (Spirit)

**Starting Power Points:** 10

**Starting Powers:** *detect/conceal arcana*, plus 2 others

You can channel your life energy, or qi, through your body to create amazing effects. Qi blasts and qi healing are common, as are powers that improve your own abilities (such as increasing your speed, armor, or damage). The trappings are usually subtle, such as a glowing white light or sudden wind.

**Disharmony:** If you roll a 1 on your Focus die, regardless of your Wild Die, your body can't handle the massive outpouring of raw qi energy, and you become Shaken.



## Savage Wuxia!

### Wire Fu!

Many Wuxia heroes can leap incredible distances, run up walls, and dash along rooftops while doing battle. All these forms of movement are called Wire-Fu and use the same mechanic. Only Wild Cards and certain Extras (GM's discretion) can use Wire-Fu.

As a free action, you travel  $\frac{1}{2}$  your Pace, in place of your normal movement. You travel in any direction, along any surface, ignore difficult terrain and can even move through the air! If you wish to move further, you must make a Wire-Fu check (you can decide after you've started moving).

If the Wire-Fu check is successful, you may move your full Pace, +2" per raise, and enemies do not get a free attack against you for withdrawing from close combat this round. If you fail the check, you are limited to moving  $\frac{1}{2}$  your Pace, and if you withdraw from close combat you suffer free attacks, as usual.

If you do go further than  $\frac{1}{2}$  your Pace, you get -2 to all attacks, but all ranged attacks against you suffer a -2 Cover penalty until your next action (this does not stack with other Cover).

The type of check is based upon the type of movement:

**Balance!** You run along a narrow wall or hop along bamboo posts. (Agility)

**Lighter than Air!** You glide gracefully through the air, although you can't hover in place. (Agility or Spirit, whichever is *lower*).

**Mighty Leap!** You jump with all your might. (Strength)

**Scramble!** You clamber up a wall, over a difficult rooftop, or along a mountain ridge. This is the only way to traverse a vertical surface for more than one round. (Climbing)

**Swim!** You dive and slip through the cool water. (Swimming)

**Tumble!** You backflip and cartwheel your way through crowded city streets or swing through tree branches. (Agility)



## Combat Maneuvers!

**Grapple!** If you use both hands, you can grab someone and make a Grapple check against them immediately, with a multi-action penalty.

If you succeed on a Grapple check against someone you've grappled, instead of damaging them, you can affect them like a Toss (use the results of the Grapple check in place of the opposed Strength check for the Toss).

**Improvised Weapons!** Objects used as weapons have the following stats.

*Small:* Str+d4; throw range 3/6/12.

*Large:* Str+d6; Reach 1, 2 hands.

If you roll a 1 on your Fighting die (regardless of the Wild die), the weapon breaks.

You can use a Large object to Sweep (just like the Edge), but you then count as an Unarmed Defender until your next action.

**Test of Wills!** You can make a Test of Wills against multiple Extras, at -2. The Extras roll a single resistance die (the best of the group) plus a Wild Die. If you succeed, your +2 bonus applies against all of them, but must be used all at once.

Instead of causing a Shaken result, your Test of Wills can direct enemy behavior on their next action. An Intimidated character must flee from you or take the Defend action, and a Taunted character must attack you with a Wild Attack. If the victim "disobeys" they suffer -2 Parry until their next action. This can be used against PCs as well!

**Toss!** This is a Fighting attack that deals no damage. Instead, make an opposed Strength check against your opponent (at +2 if you got a raise on the Fighting check).

On a success, you toss them up to 1" away, +1" per raise. If you move with them (pushing or pulling) the distance increases to ½ your Pace, +1" per raise, but this counts against your movement for the round.

If the victim strikes a solid object, they take damage equal to your Strength. If they strike another character, that character must pass an Agility or Strength check or be moved also.

**Trick!** You can make a Trick check against multiple Extras, provided that either they are all adjacent to you, or all adjacent to each other. This imposes a -2 penalty on your Trick roll, and each enemy gets their own opposed roll to resist.

In addition, when you successfully Trick a target, you may cause them to either fall prone or move 1" in a particular direction.

**Withdraw!** There's no free attack against someone who withdraws from close combat by making a successful Wire-Fu check.



## Legalese!

Savage Wuxia! © 2010 William J. Scott III. Play tested by Ted Briggs, Rachel Boyce, Mark Langsdorf, Derick Miller, and Joel Schlichtemeier. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 United States License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA. All artwork is by Storm A. Cook (<http://www.stormart.com/>) and is © 2002 Hero Games (<http://www.herogames.com/>) and is used by permission. This game references the Savage Worlds game system, available from Pinnacle Entertainment Group at [www.peginc.com](http://www.peginc.com). Savage Worlds and all associated logos and trademarks are copyrights of Pinnacle Entertainment Group. Used with permission. Pinnacle makes no representation or warranty as to the quality, viability, or suitability for purpose of this product. Remember, every time you infringe a copyright, a ninja dies. Please, think of the ninjas.

