

he automatically loses it (in place of the delayed action—you only get one action per pass).

Trig has his gun out, ready to shoot the ghoul that's trying to claw his buddy Ripper's face off. Trig doesn't want to risk shooting Ripper though, so he delays his action, hoping the two will separate enough for him to get a shot in. Trig's Initiative Score is 12. By the end of that Initiative Pass, Trig still hasn't gotten his opportunity, so he delays until the next pass. Trig normally wouldn't act in this pass, but since he delayed he can. When Ripper finally shoves the ghoul away on his action, Trig immediately intervenes and takes his shot, pumping two bullets into the ghoul's braincase.

TIMED ITEMS AND INITIATIVE

Some items, such as grenades, explosive devices, timed traps, and so on are timed as to exactly when they will explode. In most situations, these items will detonate on the character's (current) Initiative Score during the next Initiative Pass. If there are no more Combat Turns, the item will detonate as the game-master sees fit.

If an item has a timer set by a player character, that character can decide when it goes off, but he must declare this when the item is activated. As a default, it's best to have such items go off on the character's Initiative Score during a predetermined pass or at the beginning or end of a Combat Turn.

Note that timed items always go last in the case of tied Initiative Scores.

Natasha tosses a grenade at a pursuing police car during the first pass of a Combat Turn. Her Initiative Score is 4. The grenade will detonate on the Initiative Score of 4 during the second Initiative Pass.

THE ACTION PHASE

When a character's Action Phase arrives, he must decide what he's going to do. The character has many options to choose from: fire a gun, cast a spell, activate a computer program, and so on. Each of these is classified as one of three types of actions a character can take: Free, Simple, and Complex. A character can take either two Simple Actions or one Complex Action during his Action Phase. In addition, each character may take one Free Action at any point in the Initiative Pass (either during his own Action Phase or at any later time).

Note that the various actions possible in the Matrix or while rigging are detailed in *The Wireless World* section (see p. 205), while magical actions are detailed in *The Awakened World* (p. 163). A complete list of actions can be found at the back of the book.

When it's your turn to act, you must declare the actions that you will perform during the Action Phase. You may take Free, Simple, and Complex Actions in any order during your Action Phase.

The descriptions that follow list many of the Free, Simple, and Complex Actions a character might take during combat in

Shadowrun. Gamemasters must determine on the fly whether other actions that a character wants to take would count as Free, Simple, or Complex, based on those noted and the effort the action would take.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions are relatively simple, nearly automatic actions that require little or no effort to accomplish. Examples are saying a word, dropping an object, dropping prone, or walking.

A character may take a Free Action during his own Action Phase or at some later point in the Initiative Pass. A character may not take a Free Action prior to his first Action Phase in the Initiative Pass.

Free Actions generally require no Success Test, though special circumstances may warrant one.

Call a Shot

A character may "call a shot" (aim for a vulnerable portion of a target) with this Free Action. See *Called Shots*, p. 149. This action must be immediately followed by a Take Aim, Fire Weapon, Throw Weapon, or Melee Unarmed Attack.

Change Linked Device Mode

A character may use a Free Action to activate, deactivate, or switch the mode on any device that he is linked to either by a direct neural interface or by wireless link. This includes activating cyberware, changing a smartgun's firing mode, deactivating thermographic vision, switching a commlink to hidden mode, turning a device's wireless functionality off, and so on. Note that some devices may require longer to interact act with, as noted in individual gear descriptions.

Drop Object

A character may drop a held object as a Free Action. If he is holding objects in both hands, he may drop both objects as a single Free Action.

Drop Prone

A character may kneel or drop prone at any time, as long as he is not surprised (see *Surprise*, p. 155). A character who is surprised may not drop prone.

Eject Smartgun Clip

A character linked to and holding a ready smartgun may use a simple cybernetic command to eject the weapon's clip. It still takes a Simple Action to insert a new, fresh clip. See *Smartgun System*, p. 311.

Gesture

A character may execute one gesture as a Free Action. (However ludicrous this may sound, it pertains primarily to the use of gestures as silent communication in combat situations.)

Intercept

A character may spend an available Free Action to intercept an opponent who attempts to move past him or break out of melee combat (see *Interception*, p. 151).

