

Shadowrun Terms:

Activesofts - see Skillsofts.

Adept - an Awakened person that focuses their magical ability inwards. Good examples would be any of the heroes in those cheesy (but still good) martial arts movies where they can kill with a touch, jump high, move inhumanly fast, shatter walls, etc. They can purchase Astral Perception as a power (it's not cheap either), but are not given it automatically. They do not have access to either Sorcery or Conjuring, although another variation, the Magician Adept does.

Amerindian - not a Shadowrun-specific term, but one that you are likely to see in Shadowrun. It is a simple truncation of the term "American Indian" and generally refers to the ethnicity of someone who is a member or descendant of the "aboriginal peoples of the western hemisphere except usually the Eskimos; especially: an American Indian of North America and especially the U.S." [Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary]

Anchoring - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to place spells in objects that are activated by triggers. This is how one would create potions, magical bombs, some varieties of protective talismans, etc.

Ares Predator - the most popular model of Heavy Pistol. Its big and scary and has a 15 round clip, making it a good primary weapon, but a little too bulky for a backup weapon.

Armourer - as in real life, an Armourer in Shadowrun handles and works on guns. They can build, repair, and customize them. Essentially, the analogue of a mechanic for guns. In SR, many shadowrunners depend on guns for their livelihood, so Armourers are often valuable contacts.

Adept - an Awakened person with a more focused magical ability. They have access to either Sorcery or Conjuring. The former is called a Sorcerer, the latter is called a Conjurer. They also have Astral Perception, but not Astral Projection.

Astral Perception - this is the ability to look into the Astral Plane while residing in the physical world. The advantage to this is that you can perceive Magicians in Astral Space that are using Astral Projection, active spells on people and/or things, living versus non-living things, Spirits hiding in Astral Space, and the auras of living creatures (see Auras). The less natural or living a thing is, the harder it is to see. A radio would look like a black box. In general, while perceiving astrally, all tasks based in the physical world are more difficult to do, e.g. driving a car, shooting a gun, etc. While perceiving, you can be attacked from both physical and Astral threats, so it can be dangerous (see Dual Natured).

Astral Projection - this can only be done by a Magician (a special type of spirit with a special power can also grant this ability temporarily for anyone). It involves leaving one's physical body to travel about Astral Space. While away, your body is completely vulnerable and you receive no sensory input from it. This can only be done for a handful of hours at a time. If the Magician can not get back to it's body in time, it dies. A Magician can Manifest in this state.

Astral Signature - this is the trace left behind from the use of Sorcery. It can be seen by skilled application of Astral Perception, to include a Magician using Astral Projection.

Astral Space/Plane - a mirror plane. This is essentially where more magic stuff exists. Spirits appear here when summoned, objects in the physical plane are perceived as having more or less life, more or less magical ability (see Astral Perception). A Magician can travel in this place via Astral Projection. Generally, something exclusively in Astral Space can not affect something in the physical world. When one uses Astral Projection or Perception, they are considered Astrally Active. Spirits must manifest to affect things in the physical world beyond their summoner, and this makes them Dual-natured.

Astrally Active - A being that is actively using Astral Perception, Astral Projection, and/or Dual Natured. Such a person is visible in Astral Space and vulnerable to attacks from it as well as other nasty things, like Possessing.

Auras - the appearance of a living creature in Astral Space, seen by Astral Perception or during Astral Projection. With experience, one can tell if a person is magical, what emotions they are feeling, their health, toxins in their system, how much cyberware is in their body, and more. Also, Auras have a distinct appearance. See also Magical Signature.

Awakened - describes anyone in the Shadowrun world that can use magic in any form.

Background Count - this is akin to a "bad" Aura for an area. Many things can cause this, such as abuse of the land, abuse/killing of people, great misery, etc. It makes Magical tasks more difficult and makes the area less pleasant for the Astrally active.

Better Than Life Chip(s) - These are addictive varieties of Simsense chips that are sold illegally and are essentially yet another drug trade. Even worse than a drug in that you don't just experience euphoria, you do so in your own private Utopia. Slang terms: beetles, playback, zombie chips, mindbenders, and trancers.

Black Ice - See IC.

Body - This attribute reflects a character's fitness, immune system, healing ability, and/or physical mass. A low value can reflect someone that is skinny, sickly, or frail. A high value can reflect someone that never gets sick, exercises regularly, and/or just a big solid badass. Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Bone Lacing - A piece of Cyberware that consists of lacing the recipient's bones with a material that strengthens it, such as plastic, aluminium, ceramic, and titanium. This makes you tougher and your punches and kicks hit harder. Of course, some varieties will set off a metal detector, which can be annoying.

Boosted Reflexes - A type of Cyberware that consists of electrochemical treatments that enhance the patient's reflexes. While not quite as wiz as Wired Reflexes, they can definitely put you a "cut" above the pack. The advantage is that they cost less money and Essence; however, the big disadvantage is that they can never be upgraded or removed and the user can never use Wired Reflexes or a Vehicle Control Rig.

Centering - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to essentially focus their mind/body to accomplish something more easily. Magicians can use it to make resisting drain and the use of Magical skills easier. Adepts can use it to perform actions more easily, eventually including such skills as shooting guns and driving cars. A "Zen archery" type of effect, this skill does require some extra technique that is used as a medium for concentration. Good examples are Zen meditation, chanting ancient languages and/or mantras, some musical skill, etc.

Certified credstick - a certified credstick is essentially the same thing as cash, a lot more durable, and a lot easier to carry when you need to toss around thousands of nuyen. It is a more primitive credstick that contains cred, but does not require ID. Don't lose it.

Charisma - This attribute reflects a character's self-image, ego, appearance, and presence, but no one of those attributes alone can grant a high Charisma. A low value can reflect selfish, whiny, annoying, and/or socially oblivious person. A high value can reflect a strong presence, bearing, affability, sincere altruism, and/or a good sense of humour. Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Chipjack - A piece of Cyberware that consists of a specialized Datajack port in the user's head that allows her to access chips such as Skillssofts.

Chummer [slang] - buddy, pal, chum. Often used in a dual fashion. It can be friendly or sarcastic much like the words buddy, pal, and chum.

Cleansing - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to remove penalties due to Background Count. This can not be used against really bad, long term stuff, like the residual spiritual/magical background of a death camp.

Company Men/Women [slang] - basically the slick, black ops people that work for corporations. In operation, they only really differ from Shadowrunners in that they work for one specific company.

Comparison - Elementals vs. Nature Spirits - Elementals can only be conjured by a Hermetic Mage; Nature Spirits can only be conjured by a Shaman. Elementals are much harder to summon initially, requiring hours of time, thousands of nuyen, and a large summoning circle; whereas Nature Spirits can be summoned at any time. Elementals last until their services are used; Nature Spirits last until sunset or sunrise, whichever comes first. A Mage can have a number of Elementals under his control simultaneously; a Shaman can only have one Nature Spirit under his control at a given time. Elementals are constrained to be within a few hundred meters of the Mage; Nature Spirits are constrained to their domain, which can be very restrictive or very liberating, depending on the situation. Elementals can aid Mages with casting and researching spells, as well as sustaining spells for them; Nature Spirits can not. In practice, Nature Spirits offer more versatility because one does not need to decide ahead of time what to summon; Elementals have to be chosen ahead of time, but that also means no tiring conjuration in the middle of combat. Six of one, half dozen of another. I think they are equally useful, pick the type of magic that suits your character concept.

Concealment - a Nature Spirit power, the Spirit makes it harder for the recipients to be seen.

Conjurer - A type of Adept. They choose Conjuring and forfeit Sorcery. They must still choose the Hermetic Tradition or the Shamanic Tradition for their magic.

Conjuring - the summoning and banishing of Spirits. Once summoned, a Spirit can do services for you. This must be done via the Hermetic Tradition or the Shamanic Tradition. A Shaman summons Nature Spirits whereas a Hermetic Mage, or simply Mage, summons Elementals.

Cred [slang] - money. Short for credit or credstick; take your pick.

Credstick - "...pen-sized tubes that serve as simultaneous ID and credit card." [238, SR3] It also functions as an ATM card, but credit is the usual way of paying for things. Cash is still a viable commodity in the shadow community, where traceable transactions are a dangerous habit, however, a certified credstick is essentially the same thing, a lot more durable, and a lot easier to carry when you need to toss around thousands of nuyen.

Cyber cafe - something akin to a coffee shop or teahouse with high-speed data terminals at each table. The food is generally snack-like food and the drinks are typically highly caffeinated, for the truly "wired" experience.

Cybereye - A piece of Cyberware that consists of cybernetic replacement of an eye, usually both. A cybereye has 20/20 vision and whatever colour the user wishes. There's a lot more beyond that. The eye(s) can be fitted with a recorder, magnification, Low-Light Vision/Imaging, Thermographic Vision/Imaging, flare compensation (reduces effect of blinding light), and other nifty features. One useful feature is a display link that allows you to see data accessed through a chip; or an image link which allows you see not only data but images as well, ideal for a bounty hunter or team leader.

Cyberlimb - A piece of Cyberware that consists of a limb replaced by a cybernetic limb. Such limbs can be equipped with great strength, built-in devices, and/or a Smartlink. A Cyberlimb tends to hit a little harder and take damage better than meat, so Cyberlimbs increase hand-to-hand damage delivered and can reduce the amount suffered.

Cyberspace - another reference to the environment of the Matrix.

Cyberware - machines, weapons, devices, armour, and other components surgically implanted in a person; a grafting of man and machine. Some of examples are Bone Lacing, Boosted Reflexes, Chipjack, Cyberware, Cyberlimb, Datajack, Dermal plating, Hand Blade, Hand Razors, Muscle Replacement, Retinal Modification, Simrigs, Smartlinks, Skillwires, Spurs, Vehicle Control Rig, and Wired Reflexes. A living being can only tolerate so much invasion of their body by Cyberware and this is reflected in an Essence cost for each component. Higher grades exist that cost more money but cost less Essence, allowing a Street Samurai to more Cyberware into his body; such higher grade gear is also desirable by the Awakened, as the loss of Essence takes a toll on their ability with Magic.

Datajack - A piece of Cyberware that consists of a port in the user's head that allows her to interface cybernetically with appropriately equipped gear. A Decker usually wears his Datajack in his temple, whereas a Rigger usually wears her jack behind and below her ear.

Datasofts - see Skillsofts.

Decker [slang] - hackers pale in comparison. The Decker jacks the computer directly into his head and enters cyberspace to get the data he needs. These people navigate a whole separate sub reality created by computers called the Matrix. They are valuable for getting past security; altering, stealing, removing, or creating data; and simple research.

Dermal Plating - A piece of Cyberware that consists of sub-dermal plates and fibres grafted to the recipient's skin. They help protect a character from damage. They are not subtle, but they are effective.

Divining - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to use Divination. It requires Divining skill as well as a skill for a method of divining, e.g. astrology, dowsing, etc. Basically, a Psychic friend that actually can see cool stuff, as opposed to the charlatans of the real world. In Shadowrun, the charlatan has the skill for the divining method, but lacks the Divining skill and the Divining metamagical ability, although they probably would still charge \$5 per minute to tell people what they want to hear.

DocWagon - A character can purchase a contract with this company, which gives them 24-hour monitoring and medical emergency services on call. The customer wears a bracelet that monitors their vitals and when something bad happens, to include the bracelet being traumatically removed or a panic button activated, DocWagon responds with a team within minutes. For a real life company, see Applied Digital Solutions' web page about their Digital Angel™ patent.

Dragon - Shadowrun dragons are remarkably powerful beings that can readily assume human form.

Drek [slang] - crap, shite, as in "We're in a load of drek now."

Drones - unmanned vehicles, generally remote controlled by a rigger or automated with simple commands. Usually, they are used for reconnaissance, security, and combat. Without big guns, they can be very deadly to face.

Dual Natured - something that exists in the Astral Plane and the physical world simultaneously. This makes them vulnerable to attack from both planes, as they are always Astrally Active. Some creatures are naturally dual natured and anyone that is using Astral Perception is essentially temporarily dual natured.

Dwarf/Dwarves - one of the Metahuman races of the Shadowrun universe. They are shorter but very broad, having a little more strength, physical toughness, and determination than the average human. They also possess Thermographic Vision and a special resistance to disease and poisons. Dwarves tend to see less race hatred directed their way. They look very human except for their size. They are shorter and thus less scary to humans, and a short person is nothing new.

Eco-terrorist/ Eco-guerrilla - A militant environmentalist. These people tend to take a more radical and often violent approach to environmental reform. They are usually like any other guerrilla or terrorist, but their political agenda is environmentalism.

Elementals - these are beings summoned from the Metaplanes. They are the embodiment of the element - earth, wind, air, water. They are summoned via the Hermetic Tradition using

Conjuring. The summoning process requires a large magical circle, thousands of nuyen of money, and hours of time. They have the ability to aid their master in the use of Hermetic Magic by aiding in the research, casting, and sustaining of such spells. The spell types they can affect are limited - fire for combat, earth for manipulation, air for detection, water for illusion. They are constrained to stay within a few hundred meters of their master. See also Comparison: Elementals vs. Nature Spirits.

Elf/Elves - One of the Metahuman races. Elves tend to receive less prejudice from humans, but consider that they are more charismatic on average and are not physically tougher or stronger, i.e., less threatening. Some Elves have formed sheltered communities. Elves are often vegetarians. Elves have a distinct, separate language - Sperethiel. Not all Elves speak it and some non-Elves do. Elves tend to have finer features and pointy ears. Some racial slurs for Elves are "pointy", "fuckface", and "Leafeater".

Essence - Essentially, the stuff of life. The invasion of the body by Cyberware reduces one's Essence. If a person loses all of their Essence, they simply stop living. Magic, being tuned to life, is more difficult to harness and control if the user has a low Essence. Attempts to use Magic to heal the body of one with a low Essence is also more difficult.

EX - EX explosive rounds. Highest quality explosive round available. These rounds have a little more punch, making them more effective against Spirits, vehicle, barriers, etc.

Field Spirit - a type of Nature Spirit, their domain worked fields to include agricultural areas and grassy regions of parks.

Fixer [slang] - Generic term for someone who can fix you up with what you need. That can be people, items, info, whatever. Some specialize, some dabble in everything.

Ford Americar - by far the most common car in use. It is the Model T of Shadowrun. If you want to be inconspicuous, this is the car of choice.

Frag/Fragger - Equivalent to Fuck / Fucker in the Shadowrun Universe. A more archaic use is to use in place of kill as a verb, as in "Frag him."

Geek - to kill, as in "Geek the Mage!"

Go gang - a vehicle-based gang, e.g. a biker gang.

Go ganger - a member of a go gang.

Hand Blade - A piece of Cyberware that consists of a blade that slides out of the side of the hand. These come in retractable or fixed varieties. More deadly than Hand Razors, but less deadly than Spurs.

Hand Razors - A piece of Cyberware that consists of blades attached to the back of the hand. These come in retractable or fixed varieties. Less deadly than a Hand Blade or Spurs.

Hearth Spirit - a type of Nature Spirit, their domain is structures in which people reside, this includes places of work that have people in them a good chunk of the day.

Hermetic Mage (or follower of the Hermetic Tradition, a.k.a. "Mage") - Usually this refers to a Magician that follows the "Hermetic Tradition." However, it can also refer to anyone with the ability to use Sorcery and Conjuring in the Hermetic Tradition. This tradition is the scientific/scholarly approach to magic. By careful study and research, magic is executed with formulae and rigorous theory. Mages are often viewed as the more clinical Magicians. They do not choose a Totem, and they Spirits they can summon are Elementals.

Hoop - butt, ass, rear, as in "Get your hoop shot off."

IC/Ice/Black Ice - Intrusion Countermeasures. Computer security consisting of smart programs designed to keep hackers out of systems. "Black Ice" generally refers to IC that can kill an intruder.

Ice - See IC.

Initiation/Initiate - in Shadowrun, this usually refers to an Awakened person gaining access to more powerful magic and Metamagical Techniques. Advancement is in grades, starting with Grade 1. Just being Initiated, as opposed to not, is cool, but IMO, Grade 4 is when an Initiate starts to really get cool.

Intelligence - This attribute reflects a character's perceptual, conceptual, analytical, and intellectual abilities. A low value can reflect an uneducated, oblivious, short sighted, and/or easily distracted person. A high value can reflect critical thinking, good problem solving, an excellent memory, an ability to multitask, and/or an ability to apply knowledge. Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Invoking - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. In a nutshell, it allows one to summon more powerful Spirits.

Knowsofts - see Skillsofts.

Leafeater [slang] - a racial slur for Elves, derived from their vegetarian stereotype.

Linguasofts - see Skillsofts.

Low-Light Vision/Imaging - an ability to see well in dim lighting as faint as starlight. Complete darkness is just as dark.

LTG - Local Telecommunications Grid, the phone system of the Shadowrun universe. An "LTG" usually refers to one's phone number.

Mafia - This classic organized crime element is still alive and kicking in the Shadowrun universe. They tend to be a lot more accepting of Metahumans than the Yakuza, but are not nearly as open as Seoulpa Rings. There is a family in Seattle that is quite religious and bigoted towards Metahumans as well as Awakened people, which tends to hamper their ability to succeed. Relative to other elements, they are a little rougher in their practices. The capo, or head of the Seattle families, is currently Maurice "The Butcher" Bigio.

Mage - see Hermetic Mage

Magic - [For the remarkably ignorant, this is still just a fictional game, if your looking for a "real" treatment of Magic, you have come to the wrong place.] Well, it's Magic, you see. Healing crippling wounds with a touch, flinging fireballs conjured seemingly from nowhere, calling Spirits to do your bidding, etc. There are forces beyond the comprehension of mankind that govern the world. In Shadowrun, this "Magic" ebbs and flows in a 5,000-year cycle. In Shadowrun, Magic is on the rise. Those that can harness Magic in any form and use it are called Awakened, as are those that simply exhibit magical abilities of any kind.

Magic Rating - A measure of a character's ability to channel and control the forces of Magic, primarily Spell casting and Conjuring.

Magical Signature - see Astral Signature.

Magician - generic term for an Awakened person that has full magical abilities - Sorcery, Conjuring, Astral Perception, and Astral Projection.

Sorcerer - essentially, an Adept that has also paid for the ability to use Sorcery and Conjuring.

Manifest - When an entity on the Astral Plane manifests in the physical world. A Magician using Astral Projection can do this, but simply appears as a shimmering form. He can not directly affect the physical world this way. Spirits must manifest to use there powers and/or attack things in the physical world; being Astral beings, they prefer not to do this.

Masking - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to disguise their Aura. One can hide their magical nature, Astral presence, etc. Only other Initiates can penetrate the veil of Masking.

Matrix - the term used to refer to the sub reality of cyberspace in the Shadowrun universe. In simple terms, it's like a 3-D icon-based interface with computers. The important thing is that you can get hurt trying to hack something if you are not a Decker, although routine stuff rarely holds any danger.

Meatbod / Meatbody [slang] - A Decker in the Matrix referring to his real body outside the Matrix.

Metahuman / Meta [slang] - includes humans as well as the races that re-appeared with the return of magic: Dwarves, Trolls, Elves, Orks. There are other variants, but they are non-standard, feel free to buy the books and read about them, there are too many of them to worry about and some of them are just silly.

Metamagical Techniques/Metamagic - the special magical skills learned by Initiates. They include such abilities as Anchoring, Centering, Cleansing, Divining, Invoking, Masking, Possessing, Quickening, Reflecting, and Shielding. An initiate is generally more dangerous than a non-initiate.

Metaplane - Magical place where Elementals and other astral entities come from and where nifty magical abilities come from after Initiation. Hermetic Mages perform journey there in Astral Space for various reasons.

Mr. Johnson [slang] \Ms. Johnson [slang] - someone that hires shadowrunners, usually on behalf of corporations. They have a reputation in general of not having the shadowrunners' best interests in mind. The names they give are often pseudonyms.

Muscle Replacement - A piece of Cyberware that consists of

Nature Spirits - these are the Spirits that are summoned via the Shamanic Tradition using Conjuring. They are the very stuff that make up their domain, the magical and life energy inherent in the domain from which they are conjured. They can be summoned with one complex action at any time, provided the Shaman is in their domain, e.g. wooded area for Forest spirits. The services they provide are dependent on the type of Spirit, but typically they can manifest in the physical world, aid or hinder others' movement, confuse enemies, protect, search, cause accidents to happen, and others. They are restricted to their domains, and a Shaman can only have one Spirit under his command at any time. He can summon a Nature Spirit, give it a command and then switch to a new domain and summon another Nature Spirit. The abandoned Nature Spirit can not be further commanded, but it will carry out its orders. See also Comparison: Elementals vs. Nature Spirits.

Neh? [slang] - You know?

Non-Player Character (a.k.a. "NPC") - This term is not exclusive to Shadowrun, it is a general gaming term. It refers to the characters run by gamemaster, as opposed to the characters run by the players, which are called Player Characters, or PCs. NPCs are the sidekicks, villains, innocent bystanders, contacts, etc. They are the people that populate the world the players adventure in. How NPCs are handled can often make or break the enjoyment of a game.

Null sheen [slang] - No sweat, no problem.

Nuyen - The standardized currency of the Shadowrun universe.

Omae [slang] - Buddy, friend, homeboy, "man."

Ork / Orks - Another Metahuman race, Orks tend to be a little bigger than humans, but some can still pass for one. They are stronger and tougher, but a little less appealing and a tiny bit less mentally agile than a human. They also possess Low-Light Vision. They experience more race hatred than some Metahumans because they are quite common, less attractive, and humans generally perceive them as physically threatening. The fact that they often have tusks and a generally non-human look to their faces does not help. As a result of this, Orks are generally at the forefront of Metahuman rights movements. Racial slurs for Orks include "Tusker", "Baldrick", or "Trog".

Paydata [slang] - Information, usually in the form of computer files and/or chips that are especially valuable and/or the object of a mission.

Player Character (a.k.a. "PC") - This term is not exclusive to Shadowrun, it is a general gaming term. It refers to the characters run by the players in the game. All other characters are run by the gamemaster and called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs.

Possessing - An ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows a Magician that is

using Astral Projection to take over the body of another Astrally Active being.

Predator [slang] - Nickname for the Ares Predator.

Quickening - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to to make a spell permanent without a need for a spell focus.

Quickness - This attribute reflects a character's reflexes, energy level, running speed, coordination, agility, and flexibility. A low value can reflect a lack of athletic activity, poor balance, and/or some mild physical condition that restricts physical activity. A high value can reflect manual dexterity, agility, grace, awareness of your body and position, and/or good balance (and no, typing a lot will not give you a high Quickness, go play soccer you slob!). Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Reflecting - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It allows one to reflect a spell back upon the caster.

Reflex Trigger - A piece of Cyberware that allows you to mentally switch Wired Reflexes on and off and is advisable to preserve your sanity; living at fast forward 24-7 can wear a person down.

Retinal Modification - A piece of Cyberware that consists of modifying the patient's retina to provide the same enhancements available in a cybereye. This does not require the replacement of the natural eye, but can quickly become more costly in money and Essence if multiple options are taken.

Rigger [slang] - Pilots/drivers that have had a Vehicle Control Rig implanted in them. Riggers can run rings around normal folks and can accomplish astounding feats with a vehicle. A Rigger also needs a Datajack to connect to their vehicle.

Sammy [slang] - Abbreviated slang for a Street Samurai.

Sarariman [slang] - strangely enough, it comes from "Salary Man", pronounced with a bad Japanese accent. Yet, it has become parlance in the Shadowrun universe and moved from funny to mundane and ubiquitous. Basically another word for "wage slave."

Seoulpa Rings - Another flavour of organized crime in the world of Seattle in the Shadowrun universe. These tend to be smaller, independent units that fill in the cracks. Usually they have smaller, close-knit "families".

Shadowrun / Shadowrunning [slang] - the name of the game, literally. Generally, you are "running" the shadows, doing or undoing dirty work for various entities. Typically these activities are quasi-legal at best. BTW, the game is made by FASA.

Shaman (or follower of the Shamanic Tradition) - Usually this refers to a Magician that follows the "Shamanic Tradition." However, it can also refer to anyone with the ability to use Sorcery and Conjuring in the Shamanic Tradition. This tradition is the more mystical, spiritual approach to magic. Through chanting and ritual, magic is executed. A Shaman is generally perceived as more emotional and their magic comes from within. They must choose a Totem, which

generally defines their magic. The Spirits they can summon are Nature Spirits.

Shielding - an ability that is gained by someone after Initiation. It provides much more effective spell defence.

Simdeck - A piece of equipment that allows you to play back a Simsense chip.

Simrigs - A piece of Cyberware that consists of the interface and equipment necessary to record your sensory input to a chip for use in a Simdeck. This is how you get the chips for a Simsense experience.

Simsense - Short for "simulated sensorium." This is seen in many sci-fi offerings, e.g. the holodeck in Star Trek, the devices in TekWar, and the main focus of the movie Strange Days. Basically, you hook yourself up to a system that provides your brain with impulses that supplant your senses with a full sensory experience recorded by someone else equipped with a Simrig. There is a dark side to this (big surprise) that comes in the form of "Better Than Life" chips or BTL.

Skillsofts - Skills on chips. A user needs a Chipjack or Datajack to access these. The most sophisticated, Activesofts, allow a user to chip an Active Skill; social and magical Active Skills are not included, the nuances required for these skills defy programming. The next most sophisticated, Knowsofts, provide the user with the abilities of a Knowledge Skill, essentially a degree on a chip; a sub-classification of Knowsofts is Linguasofts, which confer on the user the ability to speak a language. Finally, the most simple are Datasofts, which simply contain data to that the user can access. Realize that a chipped skill will never be quite as good as an equal level of natural skill, and others may notice something odd about your use of the skill.

Skillwires - A piece of Cyberware that consists of neural modifications that allow the user to "chip" in a skill. A Chipjack is needed to allow insertion of the skill chips, known as

Smartlink - One of the most popular pieces of Cyberware, this system works in concert with electronics in an appropriately equipped weapon to provide a targeting sight on your retina. So if your eye and your gun are both looking at the target, you can shoot it. It is like the next evolution in laser sights and is a serious advantage in firefights.

SMG - abbreviation for Sub-machinegun.

Sorcerer - A type of Adept. They choose Sorcery and forfeit Conjuring. They must still choose the Hermetic Tradition or the Shamanic Tradition for their magic.

Sorcery (a.k.a. "Spell casting") - The skill of casting a spell which is generally the use of magic to cause a specific result. Spells have a lot of different effects to include, healing, killing, creating fire, seeing beyond walls, hiding, protection, slinging lightning bolts, flying, and a whole host of others. This must be done via the Hermetic Tradition or the Shamanic Tradition. A Shaman will often have an advantage or disadvantage with casting a certain class of spells due to their Totem.

Spell Casting - see Sorcery.

Spell Defence - using one's Spell Pool to defend against spells.

Spell Pool - a dice pool that spell casters possess. It is determined by the average of Intelligence, Willpower, and Magic Rating. It can be used to assist in Sorcery or Spell Defence.

Spirits - a generic catch-all term for the Astral entities that can be summoned by a properly skilled Awakened character. A follower of the Shamanic Tradition summons Nature Spirits; a follower of the Hermetic Tradition summons Elementals. Strong spirits (Force 5 and above) are tough to fight with normal weapons, and it seems that PCs almost never face a measly Force 4 or lower <smirk>. The best bet is damaging spells and/or magical weapons, to include the Adept ability Killing Hands.

Spurs - A piece of Cyberware that consists of either a narrow blade along a long bone or three shorter blades attached to the back of the hand. These come in retractable or fixed varieties. More deadly than Hand Razors or a Hand Blade.

Street Samurai - a.k.a. Sammy [slang]. The cybered warriors of the streets. They are usually augmented to be faster, stronger, tougher, and equipped with various sensory enhancements. The signature enhancement they all seem to share is the Smartlink. Sammies tend to be less subtle, but they usually get their job done, and their job is usually to take people out or stop people from taking someone else out. Everyone breathes easier with a sammy on their team.

Strength - This attribute reflects a character's raw muscle power as well as their ability to apply their strength. A low value can reflect low self-esteem, insecurity, and/or a desire to be a follower. A high value can reflect self-confidence, a "never say die" attitude, and/or the resolve to make command decisions. Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Talismonger - someone that deals in magical goods, such as simple chinks and paints, summoning materials, medicine lodge materials, foci, fetishes, etc.

Thermographic Vision/Imaging- basically imaging by temperature. This type of vision allows one to see in terms of heat. Mechanically, it's very handy for fights in dark rooms. Conceptually, it's pretty cool for getting more information, e.g. the engine of that mysterious car outside is still warm.

Thrill gang [slang] - they are in a gang and do things for the thrill of it. Generally, the more worrisome of the gang types as their motives and thus actions were not so predictable. I personally like to use the bunch from Clockwork Orange as an example.

Totem - A follower of the Shamanic Tradition of magic must choose a Totem. The Totem is like a god to some, a companion to others, and in some people's eyes a psychological construct by which the Shaman defines his magic. Regardless of the reality of the Totem, they come in various forms. There are Animal Totems like Wolf, Nature Totems like Moon, Mythic Totems like Phoenix, Idol Totems like Sky Father, and Loa like Legba. Generally, they give advantages and disadvantages consistent with a certain framework, e.g. a Wolf Shaman is better at Combat and Detection spells, has a pack mentality, but can go berserk in combat, lashing out at friend and foe alike.

Triad - The predominantly Chinese entry into organized crime. They are very traditional.

Tribal [slang]- a member of the Native American tribes of the Shadowrun world, e.g. Salish-Shidhe, Cascade Crow, Makah, etc. They generally have a more traditional Amerindian cultural outlook, and tend to dress in distinctively Amerindian clothing. Some tribes only allow Amerindians, some are more open.

Trid / Trideo - from 3D or tridimensional, the TV of the Shadowrun universe. Trid(s) can also refer to a show(s) on the trid.

Troll/Trolls - the biggest, scariest-looking variety of Metahuman. Trolls are much stronger and tougher than humans, and possess Thermographic Vision. They also have bony deposits that give them the benefits of one level of Dermal Plating. Trolls are physically and mentally slower than other Metahumans and not nearly as charismatic; of course, some of that latter problem may be just plain old fear of Trolls. They are a full three meters tall and generally have horns and or tusks. A Racial slur for Trolls is Trog, short for Troglodyte, the underground-dwelling beast men that killed and ate the peace loving humans called Eloi (sp?) in H.G. Wells' Time Machine. Trolls are rare (1-2 % of the population usually) and most people are happy about that. Most people fear a Troll and that quickly leads to hatred; of course, Trolls are just so fraggin BIG, people usually just try not to see them. Luckily for the Trolls, Orks are smart and politically active, so they take a lot of heat off of Trolls.

Tusker - a racial slur for Orks.

Vehicle Control Rig - A piece of Cyberware that consists of implants and neural modifications that allow you to interface with a vehicle via a Datajack. The ultimate mesh of vehicle and pilot. Using a Vehicle Control Rig, you can feel the vehicle respond as though it were an extension of your own body. If you have such a rig, you are called a Rigger.

Willpower - This attribute reflects a character's sheer force of will. A low value can reflect low self-esteem, insecurity, and/or a desire to be a follower. A high value can reflect self-confidence, a "never say die" attitude, and/or the resolve to make command decisions. Also see What The Numbers Mean on my Shadowreality page.

Wired Reflexes - A piece of Cyberware that in which the nervous system has been enhanced with surgical implants and replacements to provide the patient with superhuman reaction speeds. There are three levels of this. At all levels, a Reflex Trigger is advisable to preserve the user's sanity; living at fast forward 24-7 can wear a person down.

Yak/Yaks [slang] - short for Yakuza.

Yakuza - Basically, the Japanese Mafia. They tend to be polite, traditional, formal, and quite racist. Only humans of Japanese descent are likely to ascend very high in their ranks, and if it's a man, that's even better. Metahumans are tolerated at the very best. In the game, the Seattle Yakuza are just a different type of mafia thugs that hide behind honour, duty, etc. The oyabun, or boss, of the Seattle Yakuza is Hanzo Shotozumi. He has declared his region Shotzumi-rengo, independent of the good ol' boys back in Japan. This has created enemies for him among the Yakuza.

I have actually heard that in real life, in Japan, there have actually been times that the Yakuza have acted in a very community-oriented way, on behalf of the community. However, I don't

mean to glorify crime; crime is bad. Organized crime invariably takes more than it gives. 'nuff said.

Slang Terms

Beetles [slang] - Refers to Better Than Life chips.

Black Ice [slang] - see IC.

BTL [slang] - Refers to Better Than Life chips.

Capo - The head of the Mafia in a given city/region. The current capo of Seattle is Maurice "the Butcher" Bigio.

Caporegime - The people that work directly with/for the Capo.

Chummer [slang] - buddy, pal, chum. See above.

Company Men/Women [slang] - basically the slick, black ops people that work for corporations. In operation, they only really differ from Shadowrunners in that they work for one specific company.

Cred [slang] - money. Short for credit or credstick; take your pick.

Cyber cafe [slang] - akin to a coffee shop with computers and datalines.

Cyberspace [slang] - another reference to the environment of the Matrix.

Decker [slang] - the hackers of Shadowrun; read all about it.

DocWagon [slang] - This is not actually slang, it's the company name of DocWagon.

Drek [slang] - crap, shite, as in "We're in a load of drek now."

Eco-terrorist/ Eco-guerrilla [slang] - A militant environmentalist. These people tend to take a more radical and often violent approach to environmental reform. They are usually like any other guerrilla or terrorist, but their political agenda is environmentalism.

Fixer [slang] - Generic term for someone who can fix you up with what you need. That can be people, items, info, whatever. Some specialize, some dabble in everything. See above.

Frag/Fragger [slang] - the "F-word" of the Shadowrun Universe. A more archaic use is to use in place of kill as a verb, as in "Frag him."

Geek [slang] - to kill, as in "Geek the Mage!"

Go gang [slang] - a vehicle-based gang, e.g. a biker gang.

Go ganger [slang] - a member of a go gang.

Hoop [slang] - butt, ass, rear, as in "Get your hoop shot off."

IC/Ice/Black Ice [slang] - Intrusion Countermeasures. Computer security consisting of smart programs designed to keep hackers out of systems. "Black Ice" generally refers to IC that can kill an intruder. See [IC](#).

Ice [slang] - See [IC](#).

Leafeater [slang] - a racial slur for [Elves](#), derived from their vegetarian stereotype.

LTG - Local Telecommunications Grid, the phone system of the Shadowrun universe. An "LTG" usually refers to one's phone number. More [above](#).

Mafia - The traditional organized crime that originated with Italian families, a.k.a. the "mob". Read more [above](#).

Matrix [slang] - The computerised reality of data management in Shadowrun; read about it [above](#).

Meatbod / Meatbody [slang] - A Decker in the Matrix referring to his real body outside the Matrix.

Metahuman/Meta [slang] - Used collectively to include all races, also used to refer to non-humans, mostly determined by context; read about it [above](#).

Mindbenders [slang] - Refers to [Better Than Life](#) chips.

Mob - The traditional organized crime that originated with Italian families, a.k.a. the "mafia". Read more [above](#).

Mr. Johnson [slang] \ **Ms. Johnson** [slang] - someone that hires shadowrunners, usually on behalf of corporations. They have a reputation in general of not having the shadowrunners' best interests in mind. The names they give are often pseudonyms.

Neh? [slang] - You know?

Null sheen [slang] - No sweat, no problem.

Omae [slang] - Buddy, friend, homeboy, "man."

Oyabun - The bosses of the [Yakuza](#).

Paydata [slang] - Information, usually in the form of computer files and/or chips that are especially valuable and/or the object of a mission. Read more [above](#).

Playback [slang] - Refers to [Better Than Life](#) chips.

Predator [slang] - Nickname for the [Ares Predator](#).

Rigger [slang] - Pilots/drivers that have had a [Vehicle Control Rig](#) implanted in them. Riggers can run rings around normal folks and can accomplish astounding feats with a vehicle. A Rigger also needs a [Datajack](#) to connect to their vehicle. Read more [above](#).

Sammy [slang] - Abbreviated slang for a Street Samurai.

Sarariman [slang] - strangely enough, it comes from "Salary Man", pronounced with a bad Japanese accent. Yet, it has become parlance in the Shadowrun universe and moved from funny to mundane and ubiquitous. Basically another word for "wage slave."

Shadowrun/Shadowrunning [slang] - the name of the game, literally. Generally, you are "running" the shadows, doing or undoing dirty work for various entities. Typically these activities are quasi-legal at best. BTW, the game is made by FASA.

Soldatos [slang] - The title for a soldier in the Mafia.

Talismonger [slang] - read the description above.

Thrill gang [slang] - Gangers motivated by thrills. Read more above.

Trancers [slang] - Refers to Better Than Life chips.

Tribal [slang]- Slang term for an Amerindian. Not necessarily a slur, depends on context. Read more above.

Trid [slang] - Short for "Trideo"; read more above.

Trog [slang] - a racial slur for Trolls.

Tusker [slang] - a racial slur for Orks.

Wakagashira [slang] - an Oyabun's second-in-command.

Yakuza / Yak / Yaks [slang] - Basically, the Japanese Mafia. Read more above.

Zombie chips [slang] - Refers to Better Than Life chips.