



CHAPTER 5

EXTERNAL TRAITS

External Traits answer four world-facing questions:

05

01

Resources: What can the character sustainably obtain?

02

Reputation: Who recognizes the identity, and what do they believe?

03

Authority: Where may the character legally act or gain access?

04

Relationships: Who may help, and what will that help require?

1. Purpose

Resources, reputation, legal standing, relationships, and institutional access matter constantly in superhero stories. They determine whether a character can obtain equipment, enter a laboratory, call in expertise, influence a frightened crowd, survive a public scandal, or operate without arrest.

They are not internal powers and must not behave like them.

A character does not become wealthy because the player spent Karma, force a community to admire them by purchasing Popularity, erase a warrant through advancement, or buy another person's loyalty as though that person were equipment.

External Traits describe what the world currently permits, believes, provides, and demands.

External Traits may rise, fall, disappear, divide by audience, or become inaccessible through events. Those changes are consequences and opportunities, not the loss of purchased character advancement.

2. The External-Trait Rule

Karma and Story Points do not directly purchase permanent increases in:

- Resources;
- Popularity or recognition;
- Legal Status;
- Contacts or relationship loyalty;
- credentials or institutional authority;
- Holdings; or
- team and sponsor access.

Karma may still be spent on a relevant FEAT during play. A character may spend Karma on a business negotiation, public statement, legal argument, requisition attempt, or request to a Contact. That expenditure influences the immediate attempt; it does not purchase the external result independently of events.

Story Points may be awarded for meaningful developments involving External Traits. They are not spent to force wealth, affection, public approval, or legal clearance. The actual event is the proof and the cause.

2.1 Internal and External Change

Question	Internal advancement	External change
What changes?	What the character can personally do	What the world provides, believes, recognizes, or permits
Typical examples	Ability, Power, Talent	Resources, Popularity, Legal Status, Contact, Holding
Purchased with Karma?	Yes	No
May require Story Points?	Yes	Story Points may be awarded, not spent
Can ordinary events reduce it?	Normally only through explicit injury or loss rules	Yes
Does restoration require repurchase?	Normally no	No; the world must change again

2.2 No External-Trait Shield

Calling something an External Trait does not make it arbitrary. The Judge identifies the event, institution, audience, obligation, or relationship causing every material change. A trait does not rise or fall merely because the Judge wants a reward or punishment.

External changes must follow what people knew, what institutions could do, and what assets actually existed.

3. External-Trait Record

Record External Traits in separate blocks rather than compressing them into one score.

Block	Required information
Personal Resources	Rank, source, obligations, current Stress, and access conditions
Reserves	One-time funds, saleable assets, windfalls, or committed financing
Holdings	Ownership, access, functions, upkeep, condition, and exposure
Popularity	Identity, audience, Recognition, Standing, and current beliefs
Legal Status	Identity, jurisdiction, status tags, enforcement intensity, and active orders
Contacts	Person or liaison, scope, Reach, relationship level, values, limits, and obligations
Team or Sponsor	Controlling organization, Resource rank, permitted uses, approval, and accountability

Two traits that happen to share a rank remain separate. Excellent personal Resources do not grant Excellent authority, and Excellent institutional Reach does not mean the Contact is personally loyal.

4. Resources

Resources measure sustainable discretionary access to money, credit, ordinary goods, services, and financing on the campaign's normal timescale.

Resources are not:

- annual income;
- total net worth;
- the replacement value of every owned asset;
- a pile of cash carried by the character;
- permission to buy restricted items;
- proof that an item is available; or
- ownership of a sponsor's property.

4.1 Resource Sources

Every Resource rank names the source that sustains it.

Examples include:

- employment or professional income;
- a business or investment portfolio;
- a trust, inheritance, pension, or settlement;
- criminal income or concealed caches;
- family support;
- military, government, corporate, or academic backing;
- royalties, patents, licensing, or creative work;
- a royal treasury, state budget, or planetary economy; or
- repeated sale of an extraordinary commodity.

If the source changes, the Resource record changes even when the numerical rank remains the same.

4.2 Personal Resource Benchmarks

The following descriptions are campaign benchmarks, not moral or occupational judgments.

Rank	Sustainable access in a modern Earth campaign
Shift 0	No independent discretionary access; completely dependent or cut off
Feeble 1	Precarious day-to-day access and very limited discretionary spending
Poor 3	Strained household or irregular low-income access
Typical 5	Stable ordinary income and credit with meaningful limits
Good 8	Affluent professional, successful small business, or strong family backing
Excellent 16	Wealthy individual, major executive, or well-funded department
Remarkable 26	Multimillionaire, large enterprise, major foundation, or municipal-scale pool

Rank	Sustainable access in a modern Earth campaign
Incredible 36	Major corporation, large city, or powerful national program
Amazing 46	Multinational corporation, major national agency, or small sovereign state
Monstrous 63	Great-power state, global megacorporation, or comparable treasury
Unearthly 88	Global-superpower, interplanetary, or civilization-scale access
Shift X 126	Planetary or extraordinary cosmic economy

Class ranks describe setting-scale economies and are not personal Resource ranks in ordinary play.

4.3 2026 Cost Benchmarks

Cost ranks measure the immediate economic burden of one purchase, contract, project stage, or service. These broad dollar equivalents are only anchors for a modern United States campaign. Use local purchasing power, scarcity, and campaign genre elsewhere.

Cost rank	Approximate 2026 burden
Feeble 1	Up to \$100
Poor 3	Up to \$500
Typical 5	Up to \$2,500
Good 8	Up to \$10,000
Excellent 16	Up to \$50,000
Remarkable 26	Up to \$250,000
Incredible 36	Up to \$1,000,000
Amazing 46	Up to \$10,000,000
Monstrous 63	Up to \$100,000,000
Unearthly 88	Up to \$1,000,000,000
Shift X 126	Up to \$10,000,000,000

A purchase may receive a higher Cost rank because of urgency, secrecy, scarcity, custom fabrication, hazardous delivery, illegality, or required expertise. It may receive a lower immediate Cost rank through legitimate financing while creating an ongoing obligation.

4.4 Resource FEATs

First determine whether the item or service is actually available through the character's market, location, authority, and time. If it is available, compare Cost rank with the character's current effective Resource rank.

Cost relative to Resources	Required result	Stress after success
Two or more ranks lower	Automatic if ordinary and available	0
One rank lower	Green	0
Equal rank	Green	1
One rank higher	Yellow	2
Two ranks higher	Red	3
Three or more ranks higher	Personal Resources alone cannot fund it	-

A failed FEAT means the character cannot secure the purchase on the proposed terms and timescale. It may indicate denial, insufficient liquidity, an unacceptable loan, a failed supplier, unavailable inventory, or another source-appropriate obstacle.

Failure does not normally reduce Resources. A nonrefundable deposit, fraudulent seller, consumed component, or other risk established before the roll may still create a loss.

4.5 Resource Stress

Resource Stress represents depleted liquidity, exhausted credit, budget pressure, debt service, or temporarily committed funds.

Each point of Stress reduces the effective Resource rank by -1CS. Stress does not change the character's underlying Resource source unless events make the loss permanent.

One point of Stress normally clears after one Issue in which the underlying income or backing remains intact. The Judge may require a longer period for debt, frozen assets, project overruns, or a disrupted source. Selling assets, obtaining new financing, completing a contract, or receiving support may clear Stress through play.

Routine expenses are abstracted. Repeated purchases below the rank may be combined into one larger Cost when their total is clearly no longer routine.

Resources reduced to Shift 0 by Stress cannot support further discretionary purchases until at least one point clears or a Reserve is used.

4.6 Reserves and Windfalls

A Reserve is a specific one-time pool rather than a permanent Resource increase. Record its amount as a Cost rank and describe its form.

Examples include:

- recovered cash;
- a bounty or prize;
- the sale of a vehicle, patent, artwork, or property;
- a grant committed to one project;
- emergency financing;
- a criminal cache;
- a gemstone, precious metal stock, or alien commodity; or
- a sponsor's one-time allocation.

A Reserve may pay one purchase of equal or lower Cost or serve as a contribution to a larger project. A sufficiently liquid Reserve may instead be consumed to clear Resource Stress, comparing the Reserve with the underlying Resource rank before Stress:

Reserve relative to underlying Resources	Stress cleared
One rank lower	1
Equal rank	2
One or more ranks higher	3

Once used, the Reserve is gone. A smaller Reserve may still contribute to a negotiated repayment or recovery plan, but it does not automatically clear a full Stress point.

An illiquid, illegal, traceable, unstable, or difficult-to-value asset cannot become a Reserve until the character finds a buyer, establishes title or secrecy, accepts the offered terms, and survives the consequences.

4.7 Financing and Obligations

Legitimate financing may reduce the immediate Cost rank by one or two ranks. Record the lender, collateral, repayment, duration, and consequence of default.

Financing does not erase cost. It converts immediate burden into an ongoing obligation that may:

- impose Resource Stress;
- reduce the effective rank while payments continue;
- place a Holding at risk;
- require employment or service;
- grant a sponsor oversight; or
- create Legal Status consequences after default or fraud.

4.8 Permanent Resource Change

A permanent Resource increase requires a durable new source capable of sustaining the higher rank. A successful business venture, promotion, inheritance, restored company, patent portfolio, political office, or long-term sponsor may qualify.

A windfall alone does not.

The Judge changes the rank when the new source becomes real. No Karma or Story Points are spent. The event may earn Karma or a Story Point when it represents a meaningful achievement, sacrifice, or story development.

A permanent loss follows the same logic. Bankruptcy, seizure, divorce, collapse of a company, expulsion from an institution, destruction of an income-producing Holding, or exposure of criminal assets may lower the rank. This is not Karma punishment and does not reduce Abilities, Powers, Talents, or completed advancement.

5. Availability, Markets, and Legality

Resources answer whether a character can meet the economic burden. They do not answer whether the desired thing can be obtained.

5.1 Availability Classes

Availability	Meaning
Common	Ordinary commercial or professional channel can supply it
Controlled	Requires a license, credential, prescription, contract, or institutional approval
Restricted	Limited to government, military, corporate, criminal, mystical, alien, or other specialized access
Unique	A specific artifact, prototype, person, location, or irreplaceable item; ordinary purchase is impossible

Availability may require a Talent, Contact, credential, legal authority, travel, research, or story objective before any Resource FEAT is permitted.

5.2 Market Channels

Record the channel used for an unusual purchase.

Channel	Typical consequences
Open market	Normal consumer protection, records, taxes, and delivery limits
Professional or institutional	Credentials, approved purpose, audit, ownership restrictions, and recall authority
Government requisition	Mission need, paperwork, command approval, tracking, and accountability
Black market	Fraud, malfunction, traceability, theft, criminal obligation, and Legal Status exposure
Mystical or alien exchange	Unfamiliar value, binding terms, cultural law, hidden cost, and limited replacement

An illegal channel is not automatically cheaper. It often increases Cost because secrecy, danger, scarcity, and unreliable enforcement are part of the price.

5.3 Restricted and Unique Equipment

Passing a Resource FEAT does not create a battlesuit, cosmic artifact, experimental drug, classified weapon, or mystical relic that has no seller.

Unique equipment must be found, built, entrusted, stolen, recovered, inherited, or otherwise acquired through the story. If it grants a character-defining extraordinary capability, record it as an Equipment-Based or Integrated Power rather than an ordinary purchase.

6. Holdings

A Holding is a persistent external asset important enough to record separately from Resources.

Examples include a home, headquarters, laboratory, clinic, business, vehicle, aircraft, ship, warehouse, farm, mystical sanctum, orbital station, or hidden base.

6.1 Holding Record

Field	Record
Holding	Name and description
Ownership	Who legally or practically owns it
Access	Who can enter, operate, or authorize its use
Functions	Facilities, systems, services, and their ranks
Upkeep	Resource rank or specific support required
Condition	Operational, stressed, damaged, compromised, seized, or destroyed
Exposure	Public, concealed, classified, secret, mobile, extradimensional, or otherwise protected
Obligations	Mortgage, lease, employees, sponsor, jurisdiction, oath, or maintenance

6.2 Holdings and Resources

Owning a Holding does not add its purchase price to personal Resources. A company may sustain Resources; a headquarters may consume them; a home may do neither during ordinary play.

If upkeep is at least two ranks below the applicable Resource pool, it is routine. Upkeep one rank below requires a periodic Green FEAT when the story places pressure on the budget. Upkeep equal to the pool creates one Resource Stress per campaign interval unless offset by income or support.

The Judge defines that interval consistently for the campaign, normally one month of game time or one major project cycle.

6.3 Damage, Seizure, and Replacement

Damage affects the Holding's functions and condition rather than automatically lowering personal Resources. Repair requires access, time, materials, expertise, and an appropriate Resource FEAT.

Seizure or loss removes access. It may also reduce Resources when the Holding was the source of income or collateral.

A Holding destroyed through play is not restored by spending Karma. Recovery, insurance, rebuilding, legal action, replacement, or relocation occurs through the world.

7. Popularity by Audience

There is no single universal Popularity score.

Every Popularity entry belongs to:

- 1 a particular identity;
- 2 a particular audience; and
- 3 the information that audience currently believes.

A character may be admired by one community, distrusted by another, unknown to a third, and hated by a fourth without contradiction.

7.1 Popularity Record

Field	Record
Identity	Civilian identity, heroic identity, team identity, alias, title, or exposed connection
Audience	General public, neighborhood, victims, police, mutants, military, criminals, mystics, nation, species, or another defined group
Recognition	How likely members are to know the identity and reputation
Standing	Audience attitude from -100 to +100
Beliefs	What the audience thinks the character did, represents, or intends
Evidence	Events, media, witnesses, propaganda, records, or personal experience supporting those beliefs

7.2 Recognition

Recognition measures reach, not approval.

Recognition rank	Typical scope
Shift 0	Unknown outside direct personal encounters
Feeble 1	Niche circle, workplace, or small subculture
Poor 3	Neighborhood, small town, or local professional community
Typical 5	City, large institution, or substantial subculture
Good 8	Regional or major professional recognition
Excellent 16	National recognition
Remarkable 26	International recognition
Incredible 36	Global and iconic recognition
Amazing 46+	Historic, planetary, interplanetary, or cosmic recognition

When recognition is uncertain, make a Recognition FEAT:

- Green: the observer recognizes the name, symbol, or face;
- Yellow: the observer knows the broad reputation and major public events; and
- Red: the observer knows detailed, obscure, or conflicting information.

Recent direct coverage, professional relevance, personal experience, disguise, mistaken identity, or obscurity may shift the FEAT.

7.3 Standing

Standing measures the audience's prevailing attitude. It modifies relevant social FEATs after recognition; it does not replace the character's Ability or Talent.

Standing	Audience attitude	Social shift
-100 to -75	Condemned	-3CS
-74 to -50	Hostile	-2CS
-49 to -20	Distrusted	-1CS
-19 to +19	Mixed, divided, indifferent, or neutral	0CS
+20 to +49	Favorable	+1CS
+50 to +74	Admired	+2CS
+75 to +100	Revered	+3CS

Standing shifts apply only when reputation is relevant to the request. Admiration does not grant authority, specialized knowledge, money, or control over someone whose values forbid the action.

7.4 Popularity Changes

Use the established significance ladder for a publicly attributable event.

Public significance	Standing change
Meaningful	5
Serious	10
Major	20
Extraordinary	30
Campaign-defining	50

Apply the change positively or negatively to each audience according to that audience's values and beliefs. The same event may create opposite changes.

Adjust the amount when:

- attribution is uncertain;
- evidence is weak, fabricated, suppressed, or later disproved;

- the audience was barely affected;
- the act confirms an established pattern;
- trusted messengers interpret the event; or
- the audience possesses direct experience that outweighs public reporting.

Standing is capped at -100 and +100. Repeated trivial publicity cannot be accumulated into reverence or universal hatred.

Recognition grows when coverage reaches a broader audience. It may fall slowly through obscurity, deliberate concealment, identity change, institutional suppression, or the passage of time. Historic recognition may never disappear completely.

7.5 Secret Identities and Teams

A civilian identity, heroic identity, and team identity use separate entries. An audience does not transfer Standing between them until it learns or believes they are connected.

Exposure may merge some audiences while leaving others unconvinced. False accusations may attach the wrong actions to the wrong identity.

A team member's conduct changes team Standing only when the audience attributes the act to the team, believes the team authorized or tolerated it, or judges the response as institutionally meaningful.

7.6 Fear Is Not Popularity

Fear does not create positive or negative Popularity benefits.

A feared character may gain a situational advantage through Intimidation, leverage, demonstrated capacity, or current threat. That advantage ends when the fear is absent, resisted, or outweighed.

Negative Standing creates suspicion, avoidance, refusal, denunciation, or hostility. It does not automatically make people obey.

8. Legal Status by Jurisdiction

Legal Status records what a particular authority currently recognizes, permits, alleges, or enforces. It is neither Karma nor Popularity.

A character may be publicly admired and legally wanted, publicly hated and legally cleared, immune in one jurisdiction, licensed in another, and treated as an enemy combatant somewhere else.

8.1 Legal-Status Record

Field	Record
Identity	The identity to which the status attaches
Jurisdiction	City, state, nation, planet, dimension, organization, or treaty system
Status tags	Clear, licensed, authorized, restricted, protected, suspect, wanted, charged, convicted, fugitive, immune, outlawed, or another precise condition
Basis	Statute, warrant, charge, judgment, treaty, order, contract, or institutional rule
Enforcement	Current intensity and responsible authority
Active terms	Bail, probation, injunction, registration, immunity, pardon, extradition, surveillance, or operating limits
Known evidence	What the authority can presently prove or reasonably allege

8.2 Enforcement Intensity

Enforcement rank measures effort and reach, not moral seriousness.

Rank	Typical enforcement
Shift 0	No active enforcement
Feeble 1	Administrative flag, inactive complaint, or occasional inquiry
Poor 3	Local interest or limited investigation

Rank	Typical enforcement
Typical 5	Active local investigation or ordinary warrant
Good 8	Statewide, multiagency, or specialized pursuit
Excellent 16	National pursuit or major task force
Remarkable 26	International, planetary, or dedicated superhuman pursuit
Incredible 36	Global, interplanetary, or extraordinary covert pursuit
Amazing 46+	Great-power, dimensional, or civilization-scale enforcement

Enforcement uses the actual Abilities, Talents, Resources, Contacts, sensors, laws, and operational limits of the pursuing institutions. A high rank does not make every officer omniscient.

8.3 Changing Legal Status

Legal Status changes through legal or political events, including:

- investigation and identification;
- issuance or withdrawal of a warrant;
- arrest, surrender, bail, charging, or trial;
- acquittal, dismissal, conviction, appeal, or sentence;
- pardon, immunity, amnesty, diplomatic protection, or treaty;
- licensing, registration, suspension, or revocation;
- evidence exposure, corruption, jurisdictional conflict, or regime change; and
- covert agreements or official deniability.

No Karma or Story Points are spent to obtain a legal result. Characters may spend Karma on the relevant investigation, advocacy, negotiation, infiltration, or courtroom FEATs.

Legal clearance does not compel public approval. Public support does not cancel an active law.

8.4 Codes and Lethal Force

A legally justified act may violate a character's Code. An illegal act may remain consistent with that Code. Resolve Karma, Popularity, and Legal Status separately.

The same lethal incident may therefore produce:

- zero Karma loss because it was justified under the character's Lethal Standard;
- increased Standing among threatened residents;
- decreased Standing among another audience; and
- an arrest, investigation, or prosecution under the governing law.

9. Contacts and Relationships

A Contact is a person, named liaison, or defined group connection willing and able to provide information, access, assistance, or opportunity within a particular scope.

A Contact is never a Power, possession, obedient servant, universal source of favors, or substitute for the Contact's own judgment.

9.1 Background Relationships and Mechanical Contacts

Characters may record ordinary family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and acquaintances freely as background relationships.

A relationship becomes a mechanical Contact when the record identifies:

- what the person can provide;
- why the relationship makes help plausible;
- the person's Reach and limits; and
- what the Contact expects or risks.

Every starting character should record at least one meaningful personal Relationship and one functional Contact. Origins, institutions, equipment dependencies, patrons, creators, tribes, schools, or teams may establish additional required Contacts.

Starting Contacts cost no Karma or Story Points.

9.2 Contact Record

Field	Record
Contact	Name, role, and organization if any
Scope	Information, service, access, authority, equipment, shelter, introduction, or other defined help
Reach	The scale at which the Contact can act
Relationship	Current willingness and trust
Values	What the Contact serves, protects, or refuses
Limits	Authority, jurisdiction, risk, time, secrecy, availability, or resources
Obligations	Specific favors, debts, promises, employment, or reciprocal duties

9.3 Reach

Reach measures capacity within the Contact's scope.

Reach rank	Typical scale
Feeble 1	Household, personal knowledge, or one immediate workplace
Poor 3	Neighborhood, small organization, or local specialist
Typical 5	City, substantial institution, or established profession
Good 8	Regional network or important organizational role
Excellent 16	National organization, major corporation, or senior authority
Remarkable 26	International network, sovereign institution, or major superhuman organization
Incredible 36	Global, planetary, or great-power reach
Amazing 46+	Interplanetary, dimensional, divine, or cosmic reach

Reach is not loyalty. A Bonded local friend and a Familiar world leader answer very different requests.

9.4 Relationship Levels

Level	Meaning	Request shift
Hostile	Actively opposed; no longer a Contact	-3CS or worse
Broken	Trust has failed; restoration requires a major development	-2CS
Strained	Relationship remains but resentment, fear, or conflict interferes	-1CS
Familiar	Knows the character and may help when interests align	0CS
Reliable	Provides routine help within role and values	+1CS
Trusted	Accepts meaningful inconvenience or moderate risk	+2CS
Bonded	Profound mutual commitment; serious risk may be considered	+3CS

Bonded does not mean mindless. No relationship level forces a Contact to violate a defining value, abandon dependents, commit suicide, or perform an impossible act.

9.5 Contact Requests

Resolve a request in order:

- 1 Is it inside the Contact's Scope and Reach?
- 2 Does the Contact possess the authority, access, time, and Resources?
- 3 Does the request conflict with the Contact's values or obligations?
- 4 What risk, cost, secrecy, or inconvenience does it create?
- 5 Does the relationship make the answer automatic, uncertain, or impossible?

A routine, low-risk request inside Scope is automatic from a Reliable, Trusted, or Bonded Contact.

For an uncertain request, make an appropriate social FEAT using the character's Ability and Talent, modified by Relationship and risk.

Burden on Contact	Additional shift
Ordinary inconvenience	0CS
Meaningful cost, secrecy, or professional risk	-1CS
Serious legal, physical, financial, or personal risk	-2CS
Severe danger or defining sacrifice	-3CS

Success may still include a condition, delay, limited help, reciprocal obligation, or safer alternative. The Contact performs any technical task with their own Abilities and Talents.

9.6 Favors and Obligations

Favors are specific, not fungible points. Record what was promised, by whom, and under what understanding.

Calling in a favor does not expand the Contact's Reach or remove their values. A favor may secure attention, priority, introduction, shelter, information, or reasonable risk. It cannot make an impossible request possible.

Repeatedly demanding help without reciprocity may make a Relationship Strained. Honoring commitments, protecting the Contact, accepting cost, and providing meaningful help may improve it.

9.7 Gaining, Improving, and Losing Contacts

Contacts and Relationships change through events rather than Karma purchases.

A new Contact requires a credible connection and a reason for future cooperation. Improving a Relationship requires demonstrated trust, shared experience, reciprocity, protection, sacrifice, or sustained responsibility.

A Relationship normally changes no more than one level in one Issue. Exceptional rescue, betrayal, revelation, coercion, or sacrifice may move it farther when the fiction clearly demands it.

Neglect does not automatically erase every friendship. It matters when the relationship included an active responsibility, urgent need, or repeated unanswered obligation.

Death, retirement, relocation, institutional transfer, memory loss, betrayal, or changed values may remove access. No Karma or Story Point refund occurs because none was spent to purchase the person.

9.8 Organizational Contacts

An organization is normally represented by a named liaison. The liaison's role defines which portions of the organization are accessible.

Being Trusted by one scientist at S.H.I.E.L.D. does not grant authority over every agent, database, weapon, or budget. Broader access requires credentials, command authority, multiple Contacts, a formal team relationship, or an institutional Sponsor record.

10. Teams, Sponsors, and Institutional Resources

Team and institutional assets belong to the organization unless an agreement says otherwise.

10.1 Institutional Record

Field	Record
Institution	Team, agency, corporation, school, nation, cult, order, or patron
Resource rank	Budget available for approved purposes
Mission scope	Purposes for which support exists
Authority	Who may approve, requisition, or redirect support
Holdings	Bases, vehicles, laboratories, archives, systems, and equipment
Restrictions	Law, secrecy, ownership, command, treaty, ethics, or audit
Accountability	Reports, tracking, recall, repayment, oversight, or political consequence

10.2 Requisitioning Support

An approved routine request within mission scope uses the institution's Resource rank and may be automatic.

An uncertain request may require:

- a Contact request to the proper liaison;
- an applicable Contact Relationship or audience Standing modifier;
- a Leadership, Administration, Law, Negotiation, or other Talent FEAT;
- proof of mission need;
- acceptance of tracking or oversight; or
- a Resource FEAT by the institution.

Denial may mean the institution refuses, lacks current capacity, disputes jurisdiction, demands accountability, or reserves the asset for another priority.

10.3 Pooling Resources

Personal Resource ranks are not added together.

For a joint project:

- 1 Choose the Resource pool actually controlling the purchase.
- 2 Convert other contributions into specific Reserves, Holdings, labor, facilities, or financing.
- 3 Resolve the remaining Cost against the controlling pool.

Five Typical characters do not automatically possess Remarkable Resources. They may still fund a larger project by accumulating Reserves, accepting debt, contributing equipment, and obtaining institutional support.

10.4 Team Ownership

A team Holding, vehicle, headquarters, or Resource pool does not become the personal property of each member. Departure, suspension, schism, dissolution, or sponsor withdrawal changes access according to ownership and agreement.

Unauthorized use may create team conflict, Legal Status consequences, Resource Stress, or loss of institutional trust without directly causing Karma loss unless it also violates the character's Code.

11. Credentials, Authority, and Access

Credentials are external facts such as a medical license, law-enforcement commission, security clearance, bar admission, press credential, professional certification, diplomatic status, academic appointment, or command position.

Credentials:

- permit particular actions or access;
- apply only within defined jurisdictions and institutions;
- may require a Talent but are not themselves Talents;
- may be suspended, revoked, forged, expired, or unrecognized;
- do not guarantee cooperation; and
- do not replace Resources or Contacts.

A forged credential may create temporary access after a successful FEAT. It does not create legitimate authority and may worsen Legal Status when discovered.

12. Powers and External Traits

Powers may affect the events that change External Traits, but they do not bypass these rules merely by existing.

12.1 Created Wealth

Matter Creation, Elemental Creation, duplication, transmutation, prediction, or another Power may produce valuable material or information. It becomes spendable only after addressing:

- stability and duration;
- authenticity and appraisal;
- ownership and legal title;
- buyers and market capacity;
- taxation and reporting;
- secrecy and security;
- effects on scarcity and price; and
- institutional or criminal attention.

The result may become a Reserve or establish a durable Resource source through play. It does not automatically add the Power rank to Resources.

12.2 Mental and Emotional Influence

Mind Control, Emotion Control, illusion, impersonation, or similar effects may compel or deceive temporarily. They do not create genuine Popularity, trust, consent, legal authority, or a Contact relationship.

Discovery may damage Standing, Legal Status, and Relationships according to the affected audiences and people.

12.3 Information and Prediction

Telepathy, precognition, detection, and data access may provide leverage or evidence. They do not guarantee admissibility, public belief, market execution, or institutional permission.

12.4 Signature Equipment

Equipment recorded as a Power follows the Power Advancement rules. Ordinary gear, services, consumables, and Holdings use Resources and Availability.

13. Starting External Traits

Starting External Traits must be reconciled with the character's established life. Random results create prompts and pressures, not bonuses left disconnected from the concept.

13.1 Complete Starting Sequence

External Traits are generated after Abilities, Powers, and Talents. Complete every step even when the character begins unknown, unaffiliated, or without independent income.

- 1 Roll or assign Personal Resources, then name the source and any obligations.
- 2 Roll or assign civilian Recognition for the character's established identity and audience.
- 3 Roll or assign civilian Standing, then explain the event, profession, reputation, prejudice, or public belief that created it.
- 4 Create separate Recognition and Standing entries for every heroic, villainous, team, professional, or institutional identity already known to an audience.
- 5 Record Legal Status for every identity and jurisdiction that materially affects play.
- 6 Record at least one meaningful personal Relationship and one functional Contact.
- 7 Record Holdings, credentials, team access, sponsor support, and required institutional relationships.
- 8 Reconcile every result with the character's Origin, Power Source, Acquisition, Talents, equipment, and history.

An unexplained result is unfinished, not invalid. The numbers establish the pressure; the completed background explains why it exists.

13.2 Random Starting Profile

Roll once on each table when generating a fully random character. A player who is authoring the character may select results that follow the same benchmarks and supply a credible source.

Starting Personal Resources

d100	Rank
01-05	Shift 0
06-10	Feeble 1
11-25	Poor 3
26-40	Typical 5
41-55	Good 8
56-70	Excellent 16
71-82	Remarkable 26
83-91	Incredible 36
92-96	Amazing 46
97-99	Monstrous 63
100	Unearthly 88

Apply Physical Form, Origin, or campaign adjustments after the roll. When an adjustment establishes a minimum, retain the higher legal result. No Resources result creates a sponsor, organization, kingdom, company, or criminal enterprise by itself; name the actual source.

Starting Civilian Recognition

d100	Rank
01-05	Shift 0
06-10	Feeble 1
11-15	Poor 3
16-25	Typical 5
26-50	Good 8
51-75	Excellent 16
76-88	Remarkable 26
89-96	Incredible 36
97-99	Amazing 46
100	Monstrous 63

The roll applies to one defined civilian, professional, inherited, or public identity. Name the audience. A private identity may interpret a higher result as professional, institutional, local, cultural, or notorious recognition rather than universal celebrity.

Starting Civilian Standing

d100	Result
01-05	Condemned -75
06-10	Hostile -50
11-25	Distrusted -20
26-60	Neutral 0
61-85	Favorable +20
86-95	Admired +50
96-100	Revered +75

Standing applies only among the audience attached to the Recognition entry. The result does not establish truth: a character may be admired for a lie, distrusted while correct, or condemned through propaganda. Explain what the audience currently believes and what evidence supports that belief.

A brand-new heroic identity normally begins at Shift 0 Recognition and Neutral 0 Standing. Roll separately only when the heroic identity already possesses a public history before play.

13.3 Starting Resources

Typical 5 is the default for an independent adult with stable ordinary income in a modern Earth campaign.

Use Poor or Feeble for dependence, instability, displacement, severe debt, or exclusion. Use Good for affluent professional or successful-business access. Excellent or higher requires a clearly established wealthy, executive, institutional, royal, criminal, or extraordinary economic source.

Starting Resource obligations and ownership are recorded immediately. A high rank never appears without knowing what sustains it.

13.4 Starting Popularity

An ordinary private identity begins Unrecognized or at Feeble Recognition with neutral Standing among the general public.

A new heroic identity normally begins at Shift 0 or Feeble Recognition and neutral Standing. A public profession, celebrity background, inherited title, notorious origin, visible nonhuman form, or established organization may create additional audience entries.

No physical form receives an automatic universal moral judgment. Prejudice, admiration, fear, fascination, or cultural symbolism belongs to the audiences that actually hold those beliefs.

13.5 Starting Legal Status

Record citizenship, residency, licenses, employment authority, registration, known warrants, immunity, and jurisdictional restrictions that materially affect play.

A secret heroic identity normally begins legally unclassified until conduct, identification, law, or public policy creates a status.

13.6 Starting Contacts

Record at least:

- one meaningful personal Relationship; and
- one functional Contact tied to background, profession, Origin, Power Source, institution, or recurring responsibility.

A required creator, maintainer, patron, tribe, teacher, laboratory, sponsor, or organization is recorded even when this produces additional Contacts.

14. Worked Examples

14.1 Punisher After a Rescue

Punisher helps rescue a hostage and kills five established violent offenders under an approved Punitive Vigilante Code.

- Karma: The incident causes no automatic loss merely because lethal force occurred. Protection and resolution may earn Karma.
- Threatened residents and victims: Standing may rise by 10 or 20 if they believe his conduct protected them.
- General public: Standing may remain divided or shift according to evidence and existing beliefs.
- Police and prosecutors: Legal Status may worsen through an investigation, warrant, or charges even if some officers privately approve.
- Criminal organizations: Recognition may rise and Standing may become more hostile. Their fear is resolved through leverage and Intimidation, not as beneficial negative Popularity.

No single score is capable of representing all five outcomes honestly.

14.2 Tony Stark's Three Resource Pools

Tony Stark records:

- Personal Resources: wealth he may use personally;
- Stark corporate Resources: a larger institutional pool restricted by ownership, governance, law, contracts, and corporate purpose; and
- Avengers Resources: team assets controlled under the team's charter and sponsorship.

His personal rank does not automatically equal every corporate account, and an Avenger does not personally own every Stark or team asset.

An Iron Man armor recorded as signature Equipment-Based Power follows Power Advancement. A production vehicle, ordinary laboratory consumables, and hired contractors use Resource and Holding rules.

14.3 Daredevil's Divided Identity

Matt Murdock may possess:

- legal credentials and professional Contacts as an attorney;
- favorable or hostile Standing among different legal communities;
- a separate Daredevil Popularity record in Hell's Kitchen;
- a vigilante Legal Status attached to Daredevil; and
- no legal connection between the identities until evidence establishes it.

Exposure does not merely copy one score onto the other. Each audience reacts to the revelation according to what it believes the connection means.

14.4 The Government Battlesuit

A hero has sufficient personal Resources to meet the listed Cost of a government battlesuit. The suit remains Restricted and unavailable through ordinary purchase.

The hero must obtain government authorization, a sponsor, a qualifying Contact, a black-market channel, theft, or another story path. Government issue creates tracking, ownership, mission, maintenance, and recall conditions. Black-market acquisition creates fraud, malfunction, criminal obligation, and Legal Status risks.

The Resource rank answers only one question: whether the economic burden can be met.

14.5 A Contact Asked Too Much

A hero has a Trusted police detective Contact with Typical Reach. The detective routinely shares legally releasable information. The hero asks the detective to steal sealed evidence from a federal task force.

The request exceeds local Reach, risks career and imprisonment, and may violate the detective's values. Trusted +2CS does not make the act automatic. The severe legal and personal risk applies -3CS, and the Judge may rule that the request is impossible unless circumstances or values change.

Refusal does not prove the Contact was fake. It proves the Contact remains a person.

14.6 Redoubt's Divided Reputation

Rachel Kerr's random External Trait rolls produced Good 8 Resources, Good 8 civilian Recognition, and Distrusted -20 civilian Standing.

The results became one coherent history. Rachel earns comfortable professional income as a technical and science writer. Her work is widely known, but her insistence that electrical anomalies and astronomical events predicted a dimensional breach damaged her reputation. She was correct; the audience did not know that when play began.

Redoubt is a separate identity and begins at Shift 0 Recognition and Neutral 0 Standing. Neither score transfers until an audience connects her to Rachel. Her Shift X Barrier and Monstrous Psyche change nothing automatically: saving a city may build Redoubt's reputation, while revealing her identity may vindicate Rachel, intensify suspicion, divide audiences, or create new Legal Status questions.