

# Influence Use Guild

The Influence background mechanically expresses the series of social connections, business transactions, and personal favors that make up a vampire's influence in the mortal world. Utilizing this kind of pull is not the same thing as having direct control. Rather, vampires use a great deal of subtle manipulation, changing patterns of behavior and affecting the nuances of the mortal world rather than beating on it with the hammer of their will. A creature with eternal life has plenty of time to turn small changes into significant control. A vampire who tries to force her will on society in an obvious manner will be discovered – and likely destroyed – by vampire hunters in righteous defense of mortals.

## Influence Categories

There are two broad categories of influences: Elite and Underworld. Each influence category is a unique background that must be purchased separately (from levels 1 to 5).

- **The Elite:** You have influence over the upper crust: those who are wealthy, hold legitimate power, own corporations, or control noteworthy institutions. These individuals live in a world of wealth and affluence.
- **The Underworld:** You have influence over those who work outside of the law: working class people looking the other way, and those who live on the street, rule gangs and drug cartels, run networks of thieves, or control intricate cultural bureaucracy. These individuals live in a world of rumors, whispers, and lies.

## Influence Specializations

For every dot of influence that a character possesses, you must choose one category in which to specialize. These specializations help to define the nature of your character's social network: the types of people who owe her favors and where she wields her subtle control

## PICK AN ACTION

*NOTE: If your influence specialization matches the action particularly well you may perform an influence action one level higher than*

### **TARGETED ACTIONS**

Attack  
Defend  
Block  
Boost  
Indirect Influence Attack

### **ELITE GENERAL ACTIONS**

Level 1: A Friend in Need  
Level 2: Gossip & Insider Trading  
Level 3: Bureaucratic Errors  
Level 4: Smooth Over  
Level 5: No Party Crashers  
Level 6: Everything has a Price

### **UNDERWORLD GENERAL ACTIONS**

Level 1: Free Travel  
Level 2: Word on the Street  
Level 3: Illegal Favors  
Level 4: Airing Dirty Laundry  
Level 5: Lockdown  
Level 6: Pulling Strings

## DESCRIBE YOUR ACTION

- 1) List number of actions spent (Excess actions first serve to defeat a block, then to cover up the action(s))
- 2) Specialization used for this action (Required for all influence actions regardless of type)
- 3) Describe the action in 1 or 2 short sentences.

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## TARGETED ACTIONS

### **ATTACK**

You may spend influence actions to potentially reduce someone's influence level and corresponding influence actions for two games.

Same category (elite:elite, or underworld:underworld) : 2 actions per

Different category: 3 actions per

### **DEFEND**

Each defend action you spend reduces a potential influence loss by 1 level.

### **BLOCK**

Each action spent on a block removes 1 action from each attempt to use influence to perform the specified activity using one influence category.

You cannot block targeted influence actions (attack, defend, block, or boost).

### **BOOST**

To boost an influence, you must spend a number of influence actions equal to the level possessed by the receiving character.

For example, to boost a receiving character's influence from level 5 to level 6, one or more donating characters must provide a total of 5 influence actions.

To then boost that same character's influence from level 6 to level 7, one or more donating characters must provide a total of 6 more influence actions.

### **INDIRECT INFLUENCE ATTACK**

Scene run by ST's. ST's may reduce targets DT actions by 1 per 2 influences spent.

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## ELITE INFLUENCE

### **Level 1: A Friend in Need**

Borrow something worth up to \$1000 per level of Elite influence.

### **Level 2: Gossip & Insider Trading**

Learn what Elite influence actions occurred in the last 3mo that touch on your own influence specializations. You do not get the identity of the person who did the influence action but can affect them with influence actions.)

### **Level 3: Bureaucratic Errors**

You can alter government paperwork, “modify” incident reports, detain a mortal on trumped-up charges, cause a major police effort to investigate a locale or individual, gain a legal (registered) weapon, acquire falsified identification or other paperwork, or otherwise use the system to your advantage.

### **Level 4: Smooth Over**

By spending 1 influence action, you can smooth over inconvenient or embarrassing problems, making them disappear. Witnesses get paid off, news stories get squashed, alibis materialize, and Masquerade breaches simply disappear

### **Level 5: No Party Crashers**

You can secure an area the size of a manor house or small office building. For one 24-hour period, you control all security protocols, the amount (or lack) of police response to the area, and general access within a half-mile radius of the site.

*Counts as a level 5 Block action.*

### **Level 6: Everything Has a Price**

Pulling strings, buying integrity, sabotaging innocent lives for a small advantage — those are just the breaks, kid. The world is divided into “haves” and “have-nots,” and you can guess which one I am... You can spend 1 influence action to manipulate the mortal world, acquiring a major favor that isn’t necessarily legal. Through your control over the wealthy and the powerful, you can arrange things like jail breaks, acquire a large amount of illegal drugs, plant a false news article (with evidence and witnesses to back it up), gain an illegal weapon (no serial number), or cause someone trouble on a personal scale.

### **Level 7: Private Collection**

Arranging a “private showing” of the world’s most coveted and protected items is no easy task. Fortunately, you know the right people to manipulate, and they’re more than willing to do as you say.

By spending 1 influence action, you gain temporary access to a rare or unique item. For example, an artifact might disappear from a museum for a few days with no questions asked. If you lose, steal, or damage the object, your influence is reduced by 2 levels for the next four games or two months, whichever is longer. This action cannot be used to acquire items owned by player-characters, although it can be used to acquire items from important NPCs with the Storyteller’s permission.

### **Level 8: Pop Star Meltdown**

One minute, everything’s fine. The next, it’s like the whole world descended on this place, scratching at an itch and yelling for attention. It’s like a train wreck; they just can’t look away. Expending 1 influence action allows you to arrange for a city-wide incident. You can distract news agencies, focus philanthropic attention, or cause significant disruption. You might persuade an influential businessman to sell a popular

sports team, have the city planners construct an enormous statue, cause the police to go on strike, arrange for the health department to quarantine a large area, or any other such concentration of mortal attention.

### **Level 9: The Power Behind the Throne**

If you don’t do exactly as I say, the “pooled resources of the Brujah clan” won’t be enough to buy a doughnut in this town! Do you understand? By using 1 influence action, you arrange a situation with significant, long-term effects. You could choose the next mayor; cause nearly all of the city’s police to go off duty at the same time; prohibit fire departments or other emergency responders from answering a call; indelibly frame someone for a crime they didn’t commit; close down all major highways; have a rival’s home, haven, or office building demolished; or other such manipulation.

### **Level 10: Regional Influence**

Those with tremendous pull can shift culture and society on a wide scale, manipulating thousands of individuals through a chain of circumstance that begins and ends with their will. With this amount of influence, you can change the world in a significant and long-term manner. You can choose to have the results of your general influence actions applied to the entire region (typically a large state, a major territory, or small country). This ability has no effect on targeted actions.

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## UNDERWORLD INFLUENCE

### **Level 1: Free Travel**

You can spend 1 influence action to freely travel through any part of the city without being harassed by gangs or the criminal element. As a bonus, law enforcement will generally look the other way.

### **Level 2: Word on the Street**

Learn what Underworld influence actions occurred in the last 3mo that touch on your own influence specializations. You do not get the identity of the person who did the influence action but can affect them with influence actions.)

### **Level 3: Illegal Favors**

You can arrange things like jail breaks, acquire a large amount of illegal drugs, plant a false news article (with evidence and witnesses to back it up), gain an illegal weapon (no serial number), or cause someone trouble on a personal scale.

### **Level 4: Airing Dirty Laundry**

You arrange for a city-wide incident. You can distract news agencies, provoke civil rights marches, and cause significant disruption. You might persuade a major mafia leader or gang head to start a war against rivals; cause a series of unexplained arsons; convince corrupt officials to shut down area-wide utilities; re-appropriate vaccinations, donated blood, or other medical supplies from the needy; assassinate a Stock NPC (rated 4 or less); or any other sort of shady affairs.

### **Level 5: Lockdown**

You can secure an area the size of a manor house or small office building. For one 24-hour period, you control all security protocols, the amount (or lack) of police response to the area, and general access within a half-mile radius of the site.

*Counts as a level 5 Block action*

### **Level 6: Pulling Strings**

Through a combination of cunning manipulation and suave business acumen, you can gain expensive favors and moderate benefits. You've heard the expression "friends in low places," right? Well...you're that friend.

With the expenditure of 1 influence action, you manipulate the system, acquiring expensive (and mostly legal) favors. You can make sure money flows in the right direction, sway a city council vote, target a major police effort to investigate a locale or individual, gain a legal (registered) weapon, arrange raves and major urban events and festivals, or otherwise use the system to your advantage.

### **Level 7: Look the Other Way**

Survival in the city means knowing when to stay the hell out of things that aren't your business. You've got people trained not to ask questions and not to volunteer information when the authorities come sniffing at their doors.

By spending 1 influence actions you can smooth over inconvenient or embarrassing problems, making them disappear. Witnesses get paid off, news stories get squashed, alibis materialize, and Masquerade breaches simply disappear.

### **Level 8: Want. Take. Have.**

There's always a hole in security systems: a person willing to take a bribe or look the other way. You know the right palms to grease and the right blackmail to use to open doors. It's not hard for you to get what you want, even at someone else's expense. By spending 1 influence action, you gain access to a rare or unique item. For example, an artifact might disappear from a museum for a few days with no questions asked. You may lose, steal, or damage the object, with no detriment to your influence — although such misappropriations may gain the unwanted attention of authorities. This action cannot

be used to acquire items owned by player-characters, although it can be used to acquire items from important NPCs with the Storyteller's permission.

### **Level 9: An Offer You Can't Refuse**

Look, pally, this situation goes a whole lot deeper than you can imagine. You got a nice unlife, great childer, plenty of rank and status. Are you sure you want to cock all that up by messing with me? By using 1 influence action, you arrange a situation with significant, long-term effects. You could make prostitution or gambling legal in your state (or repeal such a law), discredit religious leaders with scandal, create widespread riots, indelibly frame someone for a crime they didn't commit, move jobs or corporate headquarters overseas, fix the outcome of major collegiate-level athletic events, or other such manipulation.

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