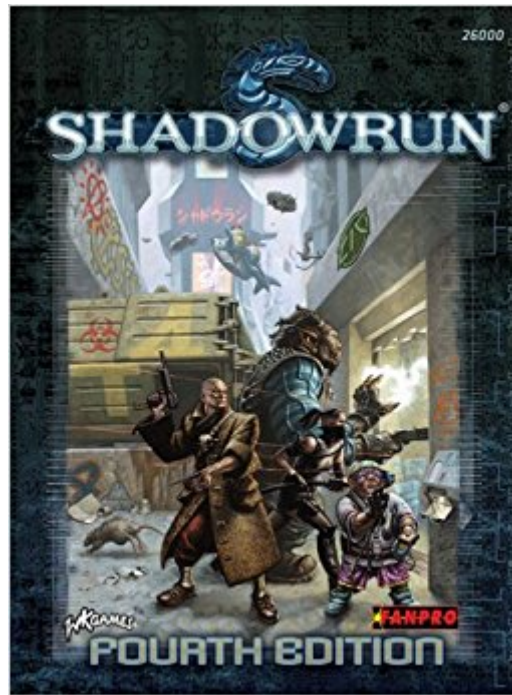


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Shadowrun, Fourth Edition



Synopsis

The Shadows Have Evolved The year is 2070. The world is not only Awakened -- it's wired. Cyber and bioware implants make your meat body better-than-flesh, while the wireless Matrix enhances your perceptions with hyper-real senses. Deals are made in steel and lead more often than gold or nuyen; success and failure live only a razor's edge apart. Creatures of myth and legend walk the streets, while the arcane skills of spellslingers are in high demand. Above it all, monolithic megacorps bleed the world dry, sabotaging each other in covert cutthroat competition as they go to war over the bottom line

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been involved with Shadowrun since 1990 and am considered something of an expert as well as a semi-obsessive collector of all things Shadowrun. Here are my two cents. The

flavor/style/background of this product ties in directly with the past editions of shadowrun.

However, the rules have been fundamentally reworked. **RULE CHANGES** (Technical Information):

The element of chance has been increased dramatically due to the fact that all target numbers are set at 5+ (on a d6 die). Modifiers are subsequently incorporated by adding/taking away dice for the test. Tests utilize not only skill ratings (in dice) but attribute ratings (in dice) rolled together for tests.

Damage is now a standard number of "condition boxes" which changes according to opposed test results. Skills and attributes now have absolute maximums. Most individual differences in the past editions of the game (Shaman vs. Mage conjuring abilities, Bioware Body index vs Cyberware Essence, Hacker (Decker) vs. Rigger, etc...) have been made equivalent and simplified). The Matrix rules have finally been made at least semi-playable (after years of laughable attempts) These were

most of the significant changes made in this edition. MY OPINION: I have mixed feelings about this new edition. The new matrix / augmented reality rules improved this unplayable ruleset quite a bit (although they force most characters to utilize the computer interface whether they like it or not). After playtesting the new combat system, I was a bit dissappointed. The increased element of chance and +/- die modifier system produces combat with uncertain results. (i.e. Gamemaster difficulty in scaling encounters) Character generation is more enjoyable due to the ability to heavily customize characters.

I'd like to mention a few downsides and upsides not covered in other reviews. I've had the book for a couple months now, and own Street Magic as well -- I'm eagerly awaiting other supplements! The stories and examples are well-written, both to give important information to the reader and just as fiction. The book paints a good picture. A gamebook that you can read over and over (while finding out what you need to know) is a big plus. Yes, the die-rolling system in this book is much like White Wolf's latest series. I hate what White Wolf did with it; it's bare, unevocative and unrealistic. I cringed when I saw it in Shadowrun 4th Ed., but after two months of use, I can say that Shadowrun's is enjoyable. It's easier to adjust, easier to figure odds. Modifiers listed in the book all make sense. And the system is definitely an improvement over 3rd edition. I haven't had any trouble with using the die-rolling system in combat. I think removal of the "pools" from previous editions is less realistic overall, but not drastically so, and anyway we're talking about a world with dragons, AIs, and biotech that can't feed the planet but can turn people into killing machines. =) The index is well-written. I have a degree in library science -- I'm a finder of information professionally -- and I'm more than a little partial to a rulebook that actually helps me look up rules. Also, the book is well-made physically -- unlike, say, GURPS 4th edition it won't disintegrate in your hands. There's not much of a gameworld update -- everything having gone wireless is pretty much the limit of what this book describes. That's fine by me, since that one thing was (to my mind) a major lack in previous editions.

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