

## **Sneaking: Examples for handicaps and bonuses**

Sneaking means to approach someone silently and unseen. The following pages describe three different situations in which stealth is of the essence and that vary widely. The bonuses and handicaps listed there can be viewed as a guide.

### **The situations in a short overview:**

Situation 1: A group of NCR Rangers wants to attack a slaver outpost under cover of darkness and they sneak up carefully. The slavers however have heard of the planned attack and are very alert.

Situation 2: A group of raiders approaches a freshly erected farm. The raiders are hungry and impatient because they haven't murdered or raped anyone in 4 days. Still, they are careful enough to sneak up to the farm.

Situation 3: A warehouse in the Hub gets visited by a burglar. It contains a few guards that he must pass by, but those are older folks that earn their living in their sunset years with light work. The thief's target is the safe in the warehouse manager's office. But he must not be noticed, since the guards would certainly sound an alarm. Since he was hired for industrial espionage, he can't knock out one of the guards either. It must look as if nothing has happened.

### **The most important factors when sneaking:**

The most important factors when sneaking are the alertness of those being sneaked upon, light and shadow, clothing and camouflage, movement and possible technical utilities, like small mirrors with which to look around a corner without having to move the whole head around.

Important is the question of how dark it is. Is there a full moon? Or is the sky completely covered? Do those being sneaked upon have spot lights? Are those fixed to illuminate certain points or do they move?

Fixed spot lights illuminate a certain area, but also cast shadows that remain constant. While that problem does not exist with swiveling spot lights, the sneakers can time their movement in such a way, that they move in the shadows.

Furthermore, spot lights ruin the night vision of any person that looks in their direction or in the direction of the bright light. As pertains visibility, a lot depends on the clothing. A reflecting, polished metal armor isn't very useful for sneaking. Dark cloth pullovers and pants are more useful. A ghillie suit can shroud the human contours and the soft soles of tennis shoes can do a lot to lessen the sound of stamping feet.

The manner of movement is also of extreme importance. Slow movements are harder to perceive than fast movement.

Technical equipment can help to observe the sneaked upon. For example a small mirror on a stick – or night vision gear, directional microphones, whatever.

Diversions, starting with the diversionary attack to the back side, so that most guards at the front move to the back, can handicap perception tests on the guards remaining in the back.

### Situation 1: The nightly sneak attack on alert enemies

First of all, the question is who has to test on what. In this case the stat tested on, is the sneaking skill of each Ranger, starting with the moment they enter sighting or hearing range of the slavers. When they are still a ways off, the tests can receive bonuses, especially since the night is very dark. If a Ranger fails his test, all slavers in the vicinity are tested on perception. If the Ranger only fails because he stepped on a dry twig in the dense forest, the test of the slavers can be handicapped, since the noise could also be an animal. If the Ranger fails the test with a noise that is certainly not animalistic in origin (a stumble and silent cursing, for example, or a soft, mechanical sound from his equipment) the test on perception can receive a bonus.

The Rangers' uniform is in colors that fit the floor and environment, even if it's not quite camouflage, which could result in a small bonus.

Modifications due to movement depend heavily on the type of movement, and if that movement is done in line of sight or not. Firm and heavy military boots are easily heard, but treading carefully while walking slowly can negate that. Crawling is better when in line of sight of a slaver, but approaching a slaver's back with a combat knife in the hand, is certainly better done crouched or upright.

### Situation 2: Sneaking up in the broad daylight to delay being noticed

Sneaking in the middle of the day and on an empty field, is pretty impossible. Then again, pretty much no field is really empty and in this case, the farmer family is probably not expecting an attack by raiders, so handicaps due to alertness can be dispensed with.

Light is everywhere, and Raiders prefer gaudy, often colorful clothing.

The real sticking point is therefore movement and the previous observation from afar. The raiders could try to crawl up to the farm house by using an irrigation ditch, or to sneak through a field of man high mutated corn plants or run from each slight drop and raise in the floor to the next behind the farmers' back.

### Situation 3: The break in without a trace

The thief's big question with this break in, is, of course, if the guard's are worth anything. In the scenario's description we assume bad guards. On the other hands, they are guards, which could mean a unhandicapped or even lightly bonused perception test.

If the warehouse is illuminated, it will also have a lot of shadows. Depending on the wares in the warehouse, that might even mean lots of shadows and good hiding places. Piles of boxes, taller than a man, produce shadows. Smaller piles might be climbed quickly, in case a guard passes by. Clothing that would meld into the shadows would be helpful, but in this case, shoes with a very soft tread might be the best way to go.

The thief will experience special difficulties in the end, when he tries to break open the safe without making undue noises, when trying to steal the documents.