### Skills

Whereas attributes represent raw talent, skills represent training in specialized tasks. If a character wants to dive out of the way of an oncoming boulder, then an agility test is appropriate. However, if a character wants to be a professional gymnast, then that requires a skill. Similarly, a character with a high charisma tends to deal well with others and can handle himself in a number of social situations. However, giving a speech requires writing ability, an understanding of the intended audience as well as the ability to speak extemporaneously. Charisma helps, but it is not the only factor. Thus, oratory is a skill.

Each template has a number of skills associated with it. In addition, characters can purchase extra skills with their buy points. When a new skill is obtained, the player should record the skill name, the attributes associated with that skill, their base level with the skill, the number of checks they have in the skill (none to start) as well as the number of checks required to raise the skill.

#### Skill Resolution

When the character’s come up against a lock that needs to be picked, an irritable cobrat merchant or a deep, cold pool with a glinting gem at the bottom, this is a test of their skills called a task. Every task in the game is assigned a difficulty level (DL) by the GM.

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| **Task Description** | **DL** |
| Yawn! People do this all the time. It is relatively easy even for the untrained. | 3 or less |
| Simple. Done everyday by those trained in a skill. Not simple for the untrained, but possible. | 5 |
| Pretty Easy. A standard day-to-day task for those trained in the skill. Still a careless mistake can be made. | 7 |
| Moderate. This task is somewhat tricky and takes concentration and training to perform with any degree of success. Still, it is a standard task and a trained individual will have been taught how to go about doing it. | 9-11 |
| Pretty Tough. Causes trouble for a trained person. Almost impossible for anyone who does not have specific training in the skill. | 14 |
| Hard. A trained person will fail in this task most of the time unless he has help, special equipment, lots of time to prepare, etc. This task is out of the normal range of the skill training. | 18 |
| Nasty. An insane task that only masters in the skill will be able to manage. | 24 |
| Impossible? Someone with god-like capabilities in the skill might be able to pull it off more often than not, but will still fail a significant portion of the time. | 30+ |

After a DL is determined, the character rolls a d12 and adds his skill level and the GM rolls a d12 and adds the DL. If the character equals or exceeds the GM’s score, the task is successful. If the GM’s score is higher, then the task has failed.

##### Opposed Rolls

Opposed rolls occur when a character is attempting a skill in direct conflict with another character’s statistic or skill. When a character uses the stealth skill, he is pitting his stealth against the listener’s PER. Persuasion acts against someone’s WIL or INT. A character that is searching a boat for a concealed compartment can use his concealment skill against the compartment builder’s concealment skill. In this situation, the DL of the skill test is the relevant stat, or skill level of the passive character. The skill user must perform a task with this DL to succeed.

**Example of Opposed Rolls**: A PC with a stealth skill level of 12 tries to sneak past a guard with a PER of 10. Both the stealthy PC and the guard roll a d12 and add their relevant score. The PC rolls an 8 and adds his stealth level of 12 for a total of 20. The guard rolls a 9 and adds his PER of 10 for a total of 19. The PC makes it without being heard.

On a tie, the active character – the one who is taking the initiative (as opposed to reacting to a situation) – wins.

##### Assisting a Skill Test

When two or more characters work at the same task, they may get a bonus to the skill roll. To do this, both characters must have the skill in question, or a closely related skill (GM’s discretion). The character with the higher skill level is called the actor and the character with the lower skill is called the assistant.

To assist in a skill test, the DL of the task must not be more than 10 levels above the assistant’s skill level. If it is the task is outside of the assistant’s understanding and he will be of no help. In addition, if the DL of the task is 4 or more points lower than the actor’s skill, then he doesn’t really need the help and no assist is possible. The exception to this rule is a character with Craft: Instructor. Characters with this craft skill are adept at teaching others. Thus, they can have an assistant (student) even if the DL of the task is 4 or more points lower than their skill level.

In an assist, the assistant rolls a skill roll vs. the DL of the task –5. Then consult the following table.

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| **Roll** | **Effect** |
| Succeeds by 4+ | +2 to actor’s skill test. Assistant is eligible for a skill check even if the test fails. |
| Succeeds by 0-3 | +1 to actor’s skill test. Assistant is eligible for a skill check even if the test fails. |
| Fails by 1-3 | No effect. Assistant gets a check, but only if the actor succeeds in the task. |
| Fails by 4-7 | -1 to skill test and the assistant gets no skill check. |
| Fails by 8+ | -2 to skill test, the assistant gets no skill check. In addition, if the skill test fails, the assistant may have blundered so badly so as to cause a critical failure. |

**Example of a Skill Assist**: Ilpader Modlin is researching a theological tome, trying to find some reference to a holy relic called The Cloak of the Martyr. The GM has determined that the DL for this skill test is 19. Modlin has a theology skill of 17. He is aided by a junior priest named Callous. Callous has a theology skill of 12.

Callous may help Modlin research the relic. Callous rolls a skill test against DL 14 (19-5). He rolls a 10 and the GM rolls a 6. Callous succeeds by 2. Thus, Callous is successful in aiding his superior. Modlin will have a +1 to his skill roll and Callous will get a skill check regardless of the success of Modlin’s roll.

##### Secondary Skills

In many situations, the PCs will have knowledge skills, crafts that help flesh out the character and their background. These skills can also come in handy by giving bonuses to other skill rolls. If the PC has a knowledge skill, or a craft that the GM rules is relevant to the situation, then he will award a +1 to +3 bonus to the skill check. The award is based on the skill level in the “secondary” skill and the skill’s relevance to the test.

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| **Secondary Skill Level** | **Bonus** |
| 1-14 | +1 |
| 15-19 | +2 |
| 20-25 | +3 |
| 26+ | +4 |

Example of Secondary Skills: Vorlund is using his streetwise skill to gain access to the black market in Boston. He has streetwise of 13. However, he lived in Boston for some time and in that time, hung out in the seedier sections of the city. He has knowledge of Boston underworld at a level of 10. The GM rules that this is relevant and so his streetwise is 14 for the purposes of this test.

##### Skill Tests and Attribute Tests

There may be cases in which the GM rules that a specific action can be completed by passing either a skill test or an attribute test. For instance, a character jumping over a pit trap might be permitted to use his agility attribute or his acrobatics skill to make the test. In cases like this, the GM must determine the type of test faced by the character.

###### Attribute Tests

An attribute test is a test that even an unskilled person can perform. Specialized training, might help, but is absolutely unnecessary. Forcing a door or jumping over a waist-high obstacle is an example of a task that can be completed by anyone with enough strength or agility.

When confronted by an attribute test, a character can use his skills to overcome it if he has skills that the GM rules are relevant to the task. For instance, acrobatics could be used instead of agility to jump over an obstacle. The escape skill can substitute for strength when a character is attempting to wriggle out of an opponent’s grasp.

When a character substitutes a skill in an attribute test, he gets a +5 to his roll to simulate the fact that his training gives him an advantage. In addition, a character substituting a skill in an attribute test can benefit from having secondary skills and assistance.

**Example of Substituting a Skill During an Attribute Test:** Remo the Burglar is fleeing the local authorities and the chase has led them to the rooftops over the Slums District. Remo is leaping from rooftop to rooftop, when he comes to a particularly large gap.

The GM indicates that Remo will need to make an AGI roll vs. a DL of 14 or fall to the streets below. Remo’s AGI score is 15, but his acrobatics skill is 12 and the GM rules that acrobatics can be substituted in this case. Since a substituted skill gets a +5 bonus, Remo opts to use his skill, bringing his effective skill level to 17 for purposes of this test.

###### Skill-Preferred Tests

Tests in which specialized training is important, but not critical are called skill-preferred tests. In these types of tests, the character will use a skill, but can substitute an attribute or another skill specified by the GM at a -5 penalty to the roll.

**Example of Substituting an Attribute During a Skill-Preferred Test:** Remo has successfully evaded the town guard, but now finds himself at the home of a wealthy merchant, trying to get past a particularly troublesome puzzle lock. The GM indicates that the lock can be disabled with the lockpick skill, or with an INT test.

Unfortunately for Remo, he does not have the lockpick skill and his INT is only an 11. He can try to use his wits to disable the puzzle, but must do so at an effective level of 6.

###### Skill-Required Tests

A skill-required test requires the indicated skill and can thus only be attempted by someone trained in the skill, or by using the default skill level (see below).