



## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Pokémon Tabletop United, a pen and paper roleplaying game where players play the role of trainers in the world of Pokémon. It is best played with a group of 2-4 players creating Player Characters, or PCs, to act as their avatars in a game world created by their Game Master, or GM. We're going to presume if you've found us that you're probably familiar with most tabletop roleplaying terminology or have at your disposal someone who can quickly explain the basics to you!

Pokémon Tabletop United is designed to handle a variety of different ideas for Pokémon tabletop RPG campaigns. You can use the system for a traditional game where the players take the role of young Trainers receiving their first Pokémon from a Professor as they prepare to leave town for the first time and conquer the Pokémon League. Or you could play a campaign about Pokémon in Space or a Wild West frontier exploration game.

This book will provide you with all the core rules you need to play, but it is also packaged with sourcebooks that help you put together less traditional Pokémon campaigns. As you might have guessed already, Trainers play a much more active role in Pokémon Tabletop United than they do in the video games, from giving orders and dictating battle strategy on the fly to actually fighting alongside their Pokémon.

Don't let that last bit scare you though! If you're wanting to play a lighthearted game where Trainers always cheer on their Pokémon from the sidelines and Team Rocket goes home after they get beaten in a Pokémon battle, that's totally doable!

The options for making Trainers in Pokémon Tabletop United are largely sorted into Classes, much like many other roleplaying games. It's easy to pick and choose what to allow in a particular campaign to get the type of game you want. That said, all of the Classes presented in this core document are representative of concepts that have appeared in some mainline Pokémon media, whether it be the anime, the manga, or the video games.

Even if you're skeptical of Trainers taking a more active role in their adventures with their Pokémon, we recommend giving it a shot. You can skip ahead to Chapter 3 of this book and skim through the descriptions of the Trainer Classes to get a feel for what kind of game system this is.

We've striven to make a system where most Pokémon are useful in Pokémon Tabletop United. The game balance and what works is quite different from the video games, and you'll find a lot of new strategies that are made possible with the rules in Pokémon Tabletop United. We encourage you to try new things and innovate!

## WHAT DO I NEED TO PLAY?

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Pokémon Tabletop United runs the gamut of tabletop roleplaying game dice. You'll use a number of d6s for most common Skill checks, d20s for accuracy rolls in combat, and a variety of other dice for rolling damage in combat, from d4s to d12s.

This system provides rules for combat on a grid, though it isn't necessary to play the game. Distances can be abstracted, but the option is there if you prefer gaming with a mat and minis.

Make sure you have the Pokédex PDF document as well. It should be packaged along with this book in the .zip file you downloaded. On the off chance you managed to find this book as a standalone PDF, simply check the forums listed in the contacts section on the credits page or ask around in the listed IRC channel.

## PTU AND PTA?

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As you may or may not be aware, Pokémon Tabletop United is a parallel successor or “sister system” to Pokémon Tabletop Adventures. For those of you familiar with PTA, you'll find that many character options in PTU are similar. However, the games differ a lot in structure and mechanics.

Trainers and Pokémon share the same set of Combat Stats in Pokémon Tabletop United, which means they're able to benefit from Combat Stages and be affected by Moves and Abilities that affect them or that rely upon manipulating Stat values.

Unlike PTA, there is no Attribute system in PTU. Everything is done via Skills.

The Base Class/Advanced Class structure is gone, making the “cross-classing” options from PTA the norm rather than a special exception and allowing more flexibility in building Trainers.

And finally, the biggest change in PTU is that there's a Skill system which smoothes out interactions between Trainers and Pokémon and makes it easier to adjudicate common adventuring tasks and create characters with developed specializations and interests.

## WHAT'S IN THE BOOK?

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**Chapter 2: Character Creation** walks you through how to make a character in Pokémon Tabletop United.

**Chapter 3: Skill, Edges, and Features** details some of the basic components of a Trainer character.

**Chapter 4: Trainer Classes** provides you with your Class options – the bulk of your character building. In addition, there's a list of common Pokémon character archetypes and how to build them in this system.

**Chapter 5: Pokémon** is, of course, about the Pokémon. Everything you need to know to stat up your team is here, along with rules for common Pokémon activities like fishing, breeding, and searching for fossils.

**Chapter 6: Playing the Game** outlines the gameplay mechanics of Pokémon Tabletop United. You'll also find some player tips here to help you get going on the roleplaying side of things.

**Chapter 7: Combat** has all the rules you'll need for exciting Pokémon battles! There's also a combat demo to give you an example of what a battle should look like.

**Chapter 8: Pokémon Contests** gives rules for running these Pokémon performances and competitions known as Pokémon Contests. And of course, there's a demo showing how a Contest runs.

**Chapter 9: Gear and Items** lists the various items you'll run across while playing the game, from berries that you harvest in the wild to equipment for your character to the Poké Balls you need for capturing Pokémon.

**Chapter 10: Indices and Reference** is your one-stop resource for looking up how to use all those traits your Pokémon have, such as their Capabilities, Abilities and Moves. There's also a glossary of terms used in the system for easy reference.

**Chapter 11: Running the Game** is the GM's resource. It provides tips ranging from how to create a campaign world to making encounters and distributing EXP. A thorough encounter creation guide in this chapter will help ease new GMs into the task of putting together exciting and dynamic battles for their players.

## SUPPLEMENT BOOKS/MATERIAL

Hopefully, when you downloaded this document, it came with all the supplements we made for the system as well. If not, then as with the Pokédex, you can check out our forums or contact us through our IRC channel to get a copy of them.

First of all, you'll find character sheets in the .zip file for your use as well as standalone PDFs for some of the more useful charts in the book, such as the Pokémon Experience Chart and the Damage Base Chart.

Secondly, you'll see we've made a few supplement sourcebooks for running campaigns in varied genres. We consider PTU to be a versatile toolkit capable of running a variety of adventures in the default Pokémon setting. However, many players and GMs want to go beyond that, and that's what our supplements are for.

*The Blessed and the Damned* is a supplement dealing with Legendary Pokémon and their treatment as divine entities. Different Pokémon media each take different approaches to Legendary Pokémon, and while we prefer a more restrained and conservative approach for the core book, we also wanted to leave the option open for those who want to portray much more powerful and god-like Legendary Pokémon.

In addition to information on putting together a pantheon of Legendary Pokémon for a setting, the book contains rules for Trainers to be given blessings by Legendary Pokémon or to seek their power in other ways. These take the form of templates similar to Trainer Classes called the **Touched**, **Signers**, **Branded**, **Messiahs**, and **Usurpers**. Veterans of PTA who glance through PTU and wonder where all the Legendary-associated Trainer Classes went can find similar options in this supplement.

*Do Porygon Dream of Mareep?* is PTU's science fiction supplement, and it offers rules for many situations that don't come up in normal PTU play, such as dealing with the vacuum of space and varying gravity levels. While the core PTU rules generally don't do much to explore or question the origins of the advanced technology in the Pokémon Universe, such as Poké Balls and the storage system, this supplement gives ideas for establishing the nature of these technologies in a campaign setting.

Finally, there are new Trainer options for high tech campaigns. First, the Researcher Fields: **Engineer** commands Pokémon-like robots, **Upgrader** deals in cybernetic augmentations, **Jailbreaker** modifies Poké Balls. Second, the **Glitch Trainer** Class harnesses the reality warping power behind entities such as MissingNo.

*Game of Throhs* is a fantasy supplement that further explores the supernatural elements in Pokémon as well as the use of weapons and armor. While the Pokémon Universe has always included many supernatural elements even among humans, such as those with psychic powers or the ability to read others' Auras, the core book does not delve particularly deeply into these aspects of the universe. More detailed treatments of these topics can be found in this supplement instead.

This, of course, includes a number of Trainer Classes. Those who've seen older iterations of our system might note some omissions in this core release. The **Rune Master** dealing with the Unown are now in this supplement, and the old **Elementalist** has been split up into many Classes, each representing a single Type and the powers humans can gain related to that Type. Finally, commensurate with this supplement's more in-depth treatment of weapons and armor, there are four **Weapon Specialist** Classes and a **Berserker** too.

Finally, each of these supplements includes plenty of fluff, lore, and even sample settings to help GMs put together campaigns in their respective genres.

If this seems a tad overwhelming, don't worry! None of the supplements are necessary to enjoy this game. GMs who wish to stay true to the source material can confidently use the core book only, and those who wish to try something new can look in the supplements.

You'll occasionally see boxes like this where we'll clarify rules and give examples and pointers. Please stop by <http://forums.Pokemontabletop.com/index/> and go to the Pokémon Tabletop United section to give us feedback. This is a hobbyist-made game, and we're always looking to improve. So feel free to share your experiences and opinions.

The next section is a quick primer on the Pokémon universe for those new to the franchise. If you're a Pokémon veteran already, then you should read on to **Chapter 2: Character Creation**. Making a character is the best way to begin learning the game system. Enjoy!

## WHAT IS POKÉMON?

Welcome to the world of Pokémon! Pokémon is a popular franchise spanning many video games, an anime series, and several manga series. The central concept of the franchise is the existence of fantastical monsters called Pokémon. All wildlife takes the form of Pokémon, which can be anything from animals with elemental powers, animated plants, inorganic objects, or even ghosts and spirits.

Each Pokémon embodies one or two elemental Types, which range from traditional elements such as Fire and Water to more esoteric ones such as Ghost and Psychic or even animal types like Dragon and Bug. These Types have weaknesses to certain other types and are strong against others. These strengths and weaknesses are an important part of the Pokémon world.

Additionally, most Pokémon can Evolve. This refers not to the slow process of change over generations but a quick metamorphosis in which a Pokémon turns into energy and changes into a new form. Evolution can be triggered by many methods, ranging from simply gaining experience in battle to using Elemental Stones or other rare items.

### Pokémon Trainers

People known as Pokémon Trainers capture Pokémon in small spherical devices called Poké Balls that can turn them into energy and store them in stasis. Many Trainers simply collect Pokémon, whether as a hobby or for research, but the most popular use of Pokémon is to battle them for sport.

This might sound horribly similar to underground dog fighting, but that couldn't be further from the truth in Pokémon. It's an established principle of the setting in the Pokémon universe that Pokémon almost universally enjoy battling and have evolved to be skillful fighters.

Trainers develop strong bonds of friendship with the Pokémon they raise to fight for them, and Pokémon battling is a widely televised sport around which much of the world's economy revolves.

Many technologies are at least partially replaced by Pokémon. Electric Types may be used to power generators, Pokémon are often ridden in lieu of using vehicles, and even tasks like construction are made easier with the aid of Pokémon.

### The Pokémon League

Pokémon battling is governed by an organization known as the Pokémon League which sets regulations for Trainers. Beginning Trainers usually receive their first Pokémon at a young age from a Pokémon Professor, a researcher who's been put in charge of getting new Trainers started. They also often are given a device called a Pokédex which is like a smartphone with a digital encyclopedia on all the known Pokémon species.

Trainers often battle each other for fun or for small wagers as they journey, catching new Pokémon in the wilds and training their team as they go. Rivalries are an important part of the Pokémon franchise; childhood friends or siblings may battle each other many times over the course of their Pokémon adventures, testing each other and improving together.

Many institutions exist to support and encourage Trainers as they travel. Pokémon Centers are medical facilities that offer free treatment to Trainers' injured Pokémon, and most shops in town carry a variety of Trainer-centric items, from the all-important Poké Balls to medicines and vitamins for Pokémon or advanced machines that can teach them new battle moves.

Trainers who seek out non-violent ways to train and show off their Pokémon often compete in Pokémon Contests, which are performance acts much like dance or musical competitions for people.

The Pokémon League sets up a structure of Pokémon Gyms in the cities of a region or country which act as benchmarks for Pokémon Trainers. These Gyms are run by Gym Leaders who usually specialize in a single Pokémon Type, making it important for Trainers to learn the strengths and weaknesses of each Type in order to improve and grow. Trainers who defeat a Gym Leader earn their Gym Badge.

Upon earning a certain number of Gym Badges, usually eight, a Trainer qualifies to take on the Pokémon League Tournament, which is an annual event that pits all qualified Trainers against each other for pride and glory.

The winner, or sometimes the top few participants, win the right to challenge the Elite 4, a set of truly masterful Pokémon Trainers who embody the best the Pokémon League has to show. The champion of this tournament wins a lot of fame and recognition, not just within the Pokémon League but within society as a whole.



## Post-League Challenges

Where do champions of a region's Pokémon League or other top-ranking Trainers go after they've reached their peak in their home region?

Many of them simply take on the Pokémon League challenge in other regions, traveling all around the world in pursuit of new experiences, exotic new Pokémon to capture, and stronger Trainers to battle against.

Alternatively, some regions have parks called Battle Frontiers specifically to cater to these elite Trainers. Oftentimes, Battle Frontiers are privately sponsored rather than part of the Pokémon League, though they are usually recognized by the League regardless. In practice, they are similar to a cluster of Pokémon Gyms, though the challenges within are much more challenging and often more involved than battles against Gym Leaders.

Frontier Brains are the equivalent of Gym Leaders in the facilities in a Battle Frontier. While Gym Leaders and even Elite 4 members often align themselves with a particular Type of Pokémon, even if only for the purpose of their challenge, the Frontier Brains tend to use much more varied teams that require more complex strategies to take on. Not only that, but they also tend to have multiple tiers of challenges and reward successful challengers with medals, prints, symbols, or other Badge equivalents that come in Silver and Gold varieties depending on the tier of the challenge completed.

Highly accomplished Trainers may move away from competitive battling entirely and dedicate their lives to other endeavors, or at least take a break. Some will seek out Legendary Pokémon, incredibly rare species of Pokémon that appear in mythological tales. Others will commit themselves to Pokémon research or competing in Contests. It is also not uncommon for Trainers to never challenge the League and dedicate their lives to these activities from the start of their journeys.

## Law and Order in the Pokémon World

Just as many technologies and institutions are built around Pokémon, much criminal activity centers around the creatures as well. Poaching, outright theft, and abuse of Pokémon are common crimes in the Pokémon universe and are the focus of law enforcement.

Traditionally, in the Pokémon franchise, each major region in the Pokémon universe houses a large criminal organization that names itself as a Team.

Team Rocket is simply a criminal syndicate seeking to steal and exploit Pokémon for money and power, and their modus operandi is to infiltrate the Pokémon League itself and plant high ranking executives as Gym Leaders or members of the Elite 4. Team Magma and Team Aqua on the other hand are ideologically oriented criminal organizations that seek out the power of Legendary Pokémon to expand the land or oceans of the world respectively.

Criminal Teams tend to be flashy and have iconic uniforms in the Pokémon world, and they are the center of organized crime. Fighting against them are the International Police or Pokémon Rangers associated with a given region. While the former fight organized crime, the latter focus on Pokémon poaching, crimes in the wilderness, and other activities more suited to being dealt with by a local force. Pokémon Rangers also have the task of patrolling the wilderness for Trainers who have run into trouble during their travels and lending a helping hand. They must be familiar with the wilds in their jurisdiction and be on good terms with local Pokémon populations.

## Supernatural Elements in Pokémon

Pokémon themselves are magical creatures, of course, but there are certain supernatural elements in the Pokémon world that warrant a specific note.

Psionic powers are the most common of supernatural powers that can be associated with Trainers and not just Pokémon. They range from telepathy to telekinesis and are usually inborn traits.

Aura is the spiritual energy in all living things in the Pokémon franchise. Particular Pokémon and Trainers can perceive or manipulate Aura, which lets them peer into the emotions of others or perform supernatural feats. It can be considered similar to the concept of Chi and is closely associated with the Fighting Type.

Ghost Type Pokémon are not given much of an explanation in the main franchise, and we don't take a stance on their nature in PTU either. Simply put, they may be impressions left by the memories of the departed, the literal souls of the dead, or simply creatures closely associated with death. It's up to the GM.

Finally, the Pokémon world is filled with ancient ruins that may house relics of civilizations past, Legendary Pokémon, or magical artifacts with fantastical effects.