

Gather your friends around the table, bust out your collection of dice, and prepare yourself for an amazing adventure filled with magic, monsters, myths, and memories. **Affinity and Aptitude** is a fantasy tabletop roleplaying game that focuses on improvisation and characters. It is a high-fantasy game, meaning that there is bountiful magic present in the world. Players take the role of adventures, each with differing levels of abilities and specialties, attempting to navigate and negotiate with their Game Master, or GM. While the players have control over their characters, the GM is in charge of providing everything outside of them. From the environment and the weather to the other characters in the story, the GM works to provide a holistic and narrative experience for the players.

Each range of abilities in this game, represented by **Affinity** scores, correlates to different real world value. These scores are meant to mirror all of the possible characteristics that represent how people interact with the world. For instance, someone who is very charismatic and usually gets their way would have a high **Affinity** score for *Haggling*. On the other hand, someone who is more sneaky and tricky would be seen having a high *Evasiveness* score. These scores are supposed to be all-encompassing, with some degree of leniency, but if the GM feels like there needs to be more or less, they may change the rules to reflect their idea of the game system.

For the purposes of examples within this document, text appearing in the following structure will be used. The characters and situations in the example will carry over between the boxes:

Example:

Wendy, Jodi, Lucas, and Sarah are each playing Turf, Ringe, Rex, and Jean-Pierre, respectively. The GM is Jasper, who has sent the characters on a quest to rid the local area of a goblin horde. Turf, Ringe, Rex, and Jean-Pierre have found the goblins and have been pursuing the Goblin King for a while.





Quick Start Guide:

- Send out the **Character Questionnaires** (p. 10) to all potential players. Give them a timeline to return them, usually about 2 - 4 days after sending them out.

As a GM, you will need about 24 hours to get characters ready before the first session, referred to as *Session 0* (p. 2). Do not worry about story preparation too much, *Session 0* will be a lot of introductions.

- After receiving the completed **Character Questionnaires**, create a **Character Sheet** (p. 10) for each player by filling out the information needed on each **Character Sheet**.

Affinities (p. 3) are how proficient the character is within the subject area. This number is how many dice are rolled when the **Affinity** is in question.

Aptitudes (p. 6) are how much raw potential a character has accumulated within the subject area. This number is how much influence the character has in **Bumping** (p. 6) their results or **Improving** (p. 6) their **Affinities**.

Keep in mind this distribution when deciding on **Affinity** distributions:

In addition to the base **Affinities** of each character, you can give characters *Specialties* in an **Affinity**. These give a character additional dice when rolling within the *Specialty* within the **Affinity**

- At *Session 0*, give each **Character Sheet** to their respective player. Give them some time to look it over while you explain the format and the meaning of the numbers in each section. Players may have questions and requests; use your discretion to appease them.

Game balance is not as important as having each **Affinity** appropriately represented for each character. As long as the focus is on the characters, then a high number could make the game more fun.

- After everyone is satisfied with their characters, have them introduce themselves, as their character, to the rest of the table. You can have this introduction be in-game or meta, depending on how you want your campaign to begin.
- You are off! You can schedule your first session, or start right there. To see how *Gameplay* should proceed, see the *Gameplay* section (p. 7).

Set Up:

Jasper wants to have *Session 0* of his campaign on Friday night, when all his friends are available. So, he sends out the **Character Questionnaire** on Monday and asks everyone to have it done by Thursday at noon. This gives him plenty of time to create each person's character before they all meet for the first session.



Affinity scores measure the character's knowledge of and ability to perform within an area of study or expertise. The **Affinities** are broken down into 4 categories: *Martial*, *Mental*, *Magic*, and *Currencies*, and are also listed on the **Reference Sheet** (p. 10). When attempting any **Affinity** roll that could pertain to multiple **Affinities**, simply roll with your highest applicable **Affinity**. **Affinity** is the number of dice the player rolls.

These scores are not mutually exclusive and there is no limit to the scores individually or all together. Each score should be justified through character's prior experience or training. Additionally, *Specialties* can add a certain edge to an **Affinity**. They are simply a bonus to that **Affinity** as long as it is within the confines of the skill. For examples, see the **Example Character Creation** (p. 10).

For a general guideline follow the following ranges. 1 - 4: Beginner, the character has not had much exposure to this subject area or is not practiced in it. 5- 8: Trained, the character has worked on this subject area and knows its ins and outs well. 9 - 12: Advanced, this has been a large focus in the character's life and they have achieved significant abilities within the subject area. 13+: Mastery, this character is a master of the subject area and has surpassed most of their peers.

Martial Affinities represent how good your character is within a certain few physical traits. Since this category needs to cover a wide range of abilities, the lines can be stretched to suit your needs, either as the GM or the players.


- *Weapon Training* demonstrates how skilled the character is with simple or military grade weapons. Whether these be spears, swords, axes, or even pitchforks, you can make sure that you know the pointy end from the safe end.
- *Martial Arts* demonstrates your knowledge of how bodies work, both to use yours to the highest extent, but also to know how to exploit others.
- *Resistance* demonstrates the characters ability to get back up after a heavy hit and push on when the whole world is weighing them down. Your sturdiness and resilience will serve you well when all others fail.
- *Evasiveness* demonstrates your ability to be where you are needed as well as avoid enemies, both physically and mentally. Sometimes, the best way to defeat your enemies, is to never let them know you are there.

Martial:

Wendy's character, Turf, is a courier who aspires to be a professional bodybuilder. Because he spends so much time working out, his *Martial Arts* score is a 4, representing all the work he has done. On the other hand, Turf's large frame does not lend itself to hiding well, so his *Evasiveness* would be a 1, since he has never practiced it.

Mental Affinities exist entirely within the mind of the character and sometimes the player as well. Fighting a battle of wits, spotting a secret door, discovering a puzzle, or crafting new spells or abilities all require a certain level of mental capacity. When trying to figure out if any of these **Affinities** apply to the current situation, try to frame the thoughts of the character within any of the following categories.

- *Acuity* demonstrates how sharp the perception of the character is through using all of their senses. Spotting the broken twig, hearing voices deeper into the cave, and knowing just when the chandelier will fall are all examples of *Acuity*.
- *Prowess* demonstrates your character's ability to learn things and pick up tricks quickly. This **Affinity** measures the sharpness of your mental capacity and can be used to do quick calculations or decipher meaning from passages. Do the math; save the world.
- *Determination* demonstrates your mental fortitude and self-control. When well trained, this **Affinity** creates an unrelenting force that strives to accomplish its goals no matter what. Keep calm and carry on.
- *Haggling* demonstrates the character's ability to get what they want out of a situation. Whether bargaining for a wheel of cheese or negotiating for someone's life, haggling is invaluable and sometimes the difference between life and death.

Mental:

Lucas's character, Rex, is a spy pretending to be a noble in order to gain blackmail against the local politicians. He is quite knowledgeable in general, especially about politics. Therefore, Rex has a 3 in *Prowess*, as well as an additional +3 in *Politics* as a *Specialty*. When Rex rolls for *Politics* as a *Prowess* roll, he gets $3 + 3 = 6$ dice.

Magic is everywhere. It is how the winds howl, the waves crash, the fires burn, and the stones roll. Anyone anywhere can tap into the magical energies around them to influence the world, but some are better than others. Your character's ability to harness and manipulate the forces of nature are represented in the six **Affinities** of *Magic*: *Water*, *Earth*, *Fire*, *Air*, *Light*, and *Dark*. When combining different magic **Affinities**, your GM may ask for either only your higher **Affinity** or both **Affinities** to be rolled. In general, *Magic* is wild and uncontrollable. However, through tenacity, determination, and much practice, one can master certain aspects of *Magic*:

- *Water* concerns itself with the manipulation and flow of most fluids. Ice, rain, and blood all fit under the purview of *Water*. Practitioners of *Water* know when to yield to force, and when to stand firm.



- *Earth* concerns itself with the manipulation of the very earth itself. Sand, lava, and stone all fit under the purview of *Earth*. Practitioners of *Earth* are formidable individually and unstoppable together.
- *Fire* concerns itself with the manipulation of flames. Smoke, heat, lava, and lightning all fit under the purview of *Fire*. Practitioners of *Fire* understand that passion drives all living things.
- *Air* concerns itself with the manipulation and flow of gases. Smoke, lightning, dust, and fog all fit under the purview of *Air*. Practitioners of *Air* know that the easiest way past an obstacle is rarely through it.
- *Light* concerns itself with the enhancement of natural energies. Healing, nature, and enhancements all fit under the purview of *Light*. Practitioners of *Light* understand that all creatures are perfect in their own right.
- *Dark* concerns itself with the manipulations of natural energies. Blood, transformation, and shadow all fit under the purview of *Dark*. Practitioners of *Dark* know that there is more to this world than can be seen or felt.

Magic:



Sarah's character, Jean-Pierre, is a noble accompanying the group as an emissary in order to ensure the goblins are routed. Jean-Pierre was taught *Wind Magic* as a means to defend himself, but he never moved beyond the basic lessons, preferring to master those instead. He has a 3 in *Wind* due to him stopping his own lessons.

Fame and *Fortune* are the two predominant *Currencies* that are used. These appear above the other **Affinities** as they operate slightly differently as they are meant to be spent, bartered, and earned through the course of the game. The score of these **Affinities** may fluctuate severely throughout the course of the game.

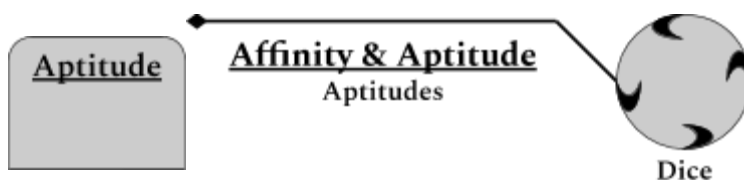
- *Fame* is how widely known a character is, ranging from small farming villages to the high courts of imperial cities. This is a resource that can be bartered with and used to negotiate situations of identity.
- *Fortune* represents how well off a character is materialistically. In order to avoid haggling and negotiating for individual coins, this affinity is meant to show what sort of lifestyle each character can afford. This affinity is meant to fluctuate with the character's spending and earning habits.

Currencies:



Since no one in the party is particularly wealthy or well-known, their **Affinities** for both *Fame* and *Fortune* are both either 1 or 2 depending on the party member. Jean-Pierre, as a noble, has better connections than the rest of them, so he has a 3 in *Fame* from his family's reputation and a 4 in *Fortune* due to his connections to wealth.





Aptitude represents your ability to manipulate chance in your favor. This can be a general ability as represented by **Generic Aptitude**, but can also be specific to any **Affinity**, represented by each **Specific Aptitude**. **Specific Aptitudes** can only be used to **Bump** rolls or **Improve** the **Affinity** that it applies to, but counts as two points for each **Specific Aptitude** spent. In essence, **Aptitude** shows the raw potential a character holds either through new learning experiences, acquiring materials, or training that has not solidified into complete knowledge yet.

When thinking about **Bumping** rolls, consider the character remembering their training or a time where they failed and learning from that. Alternatively, it could be seen as consuming materials that are critical to the success of a spell or remembering something that the character read that is pertinent to the situation.

Improving is where the temporary bonus is made permanent through both spending time and effort to become better, faster, stronger, wiser, etc. When the characters have enough time to rest and contemplate their actions, known as *Downtime*, they have a chance to **Improve**. The GM should ask the characters what they are doing to solidify new knowledge into their current skill set. If the answer is reasonable, players spend either **Generic Aptitude** or the appropriate **Specific Aptitude** (which counts as double) equal to the **Affinity** in question plus one. Then increase the **Affinity** by one.

Aptitude:

Jodi's character, Ringe, while never having practiced magic, grew up in an elven forest surrounded by elven mages. Ringe may only have 2 in both *Wind* and *Water Magic*, but she has 4 **Aptitude** for both *Wind Aptitude* and *Water Aptitude*. This represents the potential knowledge she may have from growing up among the mages.

Improving:

The players decide their characters need to rest, so they pause in their pursuit of the Goblin King. Jodi and Lucas want to use this rest to **Improve** their characters, so they decide to have Ringe and Rex spar using a few of the weapons they have with them. Since they have chosen to continue being active instead of resting, they will not recover as much *Health*, but they will increase other characteristics of their characters.

After sparring sufficiently, Jodi spends 2 of Ringe's *Weapon Training Aptitude* to raise Ringe's *Weapon Training* from 3 to 4. Likewise, Lucas spends 1 of Rex's *Weapon Training* and 1 **Generic Aptitude** to go from 2 to 3.



General Gameplay:

As a Player:

Your job is to manage your character as you best see fit. This may mean not making the optimal choices, or intentionally choosing the 'incorrect' path. You do not always need to make **Affinity** rolls; if you believe that your character could reasonably do something, then act on that without rolling.

Keep in mind that there may be many players who want to act at the same time. Give your GM the opportunity to go between players asking them what they would like to do.

During *Downtime*, you have a chance to **Improve** your character. You decide with the GM what sort of activities would justify increasing your **Affinity** of choice. Then follow the directions in **Improving** at the bottom of the **Aptitude** section.

As a GM:

Your job is to allow your players to explore their characters in relation to whatever plot you have unfolding. At times, it may be best to let them explore and be themselves. You will not be rolling unless you deem it absolutely necessary or you are assuming the role of a character within the game space.

Make sure to give each player an opportunity to express themselves every few minutes or so. You could establish an order around the table or just jump between people who have not acted in a while.

Allow the game to move back and forth between action/plot progression and *Downtime*. This will allow players to test their characters out and then improve them. Make sure to have them justify any **Improving**.

Gameplay and Game Flow:

After picking up the trail of the Goblin King again, the players find themselves finally finding the goblin horde they have been pursuing. As they have not been detected yet, they are still free to act. The players decide that assassinating the Goblin King would disincentive the horde enough to disperse it. They begin making their way to a high ledge.

At this point, the characters are at varying levels of missing *Health* as some rested while others were training. As Rex is attempting to scale the ledge, Lucas rolls 1 success against a 2-Cost *Martial Arts* roll causing the goblins to notice the characters moving the groups into combat.

Combat:

Combat or any other form of conflict resolution is a staple of many tabletop roleplaying games. For **Affinity and Aptitude**, combat begins when both sides of a conflict are able to respond to each others' actions. If the situation is more one sided than evenly matched, such as the players are hidden from their enemy, then staying in the general gameplay flow may be more rewarding.

As a Player:

At the start of a round, you have a choice between 3 decisions:

- *Make a Move*: You set yourself on a course of action that may require precision or multiple actions.
- *Play a Part*: You perform a simple task or single action that is not too extensive.
- *Wait Your Turn*: You observe your surroundings and wait to react to what is going on as it happens. Announce when you would like to react to anything currently occurring, but not after it has happened.

You cannot choose *Make a Move* two rounds in a row. For each of the turn types, you do your action, but the GM determines when it happens.

As a GM:

Ask each player what type of turn they would like to make during the round. Additionally, decide on what actions NPCs will be taking during the round; they follow the same rules as Players. Your job will be to take their actions and construct a short cinematic sequence of them all acting. After each action, give Players who are using *Wait Your Turn* an opportunity to react.

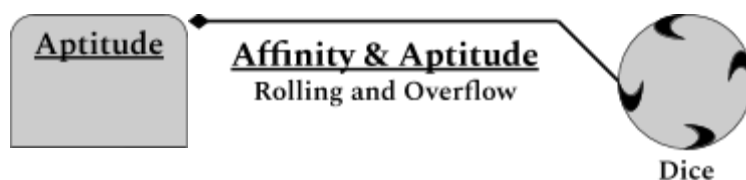
To calculate the results of **Affinity** rolls, announce a *Cost* and have the player controlling the character performing the action roll the **Affinity** of the action in question. If the goal of the action is to directly harm another character, the *Cost* should be the **Affinity** that the other character is using to fight or defend with.

Taking Turns and Making Moves:

At the top of a new turn, Lucas decided that Rex has taken too much damage and needs to hide, so he announces that Rex will *Play a Part* by hiding nearby. Meanwhile, Wendy, Jodi, and Sarah are formulating a plan to take out the Goblin King. Jodi will have Ringe climb to a higher ledge and shoot her bow at the Goblin King.

This action has multiple steps, so Jodi announces she will be *Making a Move* along with her plan. Wendy has Turf *Play a Part* by providing a boost to Ringe to get her to a higher ledge, but Sarah doesn't know what to do right now, so she decides Jean-Pierre will *Wait Your Turn*.





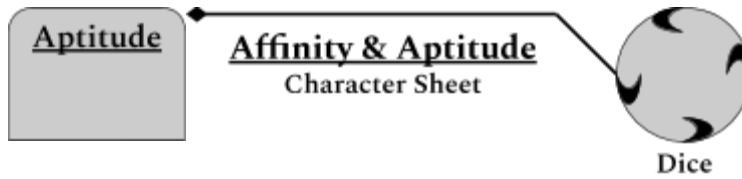
Calculating Overflow:

- The character sets themselves to a course of action in which the story is dependent on how well they can perform it. The GM provides the player with the difficulty of completing the task, represented by *Cost*.
A guideline of *Costs* is available on the **Reference Sheet**.
Not every action will have a *Cost*. When deciding if an action should have a *Cost*, the GM should consider whether there are any serious consequences or repercussions that could occur as a result of the action not going well.
- The Player controlling the character gathers a number of d6's equal to the number of the most appropriate **Affinity** plus any applicable *Specialties* (p. 3).
- Any die showing the 4, 5, or 6 side is counted as a success towards the roll.
- The Player may then spend **Aptitude** to **Bump** their dice. To do this, the Player may spend any number of **Generic Aptitude** to increase the numerical values on any number of individual dice by one per **Aptitude** spent. Additionally, the Player can spend **Specific Aptitude**, with each one spent being worth two points.
- After the Player is satisfied with their result, the character gains one **Specific Aptitude** if all of their dice are successes or if all of their dice are failures. Otherwise, the character gains one **Generic Aptitude**. **PLAYERS DO NOT GAIN APTITUDE IF THEY BUMPED ANY DICE.**
- Count the number of successes and subtract the *Cost* if applicable. This remaining number is referred to as *Overflow*, whether positive or negative.
The player in control picks from the *Overflow Table* on the **Reference Sheet**, subtracting bonuses or adding penalties from their *Overflow* until they are satisfied and *Overflow* reaches 0. Alternatively, players and GMs can negotiate other effects as well as ways to spend and gain *Overflow*.

A Single Move:

Now that everyone has decided on their course of action, Jasper figures that Rex taking cover is relatively quick and easy, so Jasper asks Lucas to make a 1-*Cost Evasiveness* roll since there is rubble nearby to hide behind. Lucas rolls 3d6 since Rex has a 3 for their *Evasiveness Affinity*.

The dice come up as a 2, 4, and 5. Lucas decides not to **Bump** any dice and take the 2 successes. Since the dice were neither all successes or failures, Rex gains one **Generic Aptitude**. One success is subtracted because of the *Cost* and Lucas spends his *Overflow* on increasing the degree of the effect (taking better cover) to indirectly reduce incoming damage.



Character Sheet:

Players should have a certain set of *Equipment*, items that increase a Player's ability to perform. Each piece of *Equipment* should be described in the following ways: where it is equipped (hands, body, legs, etc.), what benefit it lends (+2 *Weapon Training*, etc.), and how many times it can be used (immediate, consumable, etc.). While that piece of *Equipment* is in use, it grants its benefit to the user. For weapons, they should additionally have a base damage rating, the amount of damage they deal when hitting the target before *Overflow* is applied.

Health is the measure of how long a character can continue acting without consequence. It is a numerical value whose maximum is calculated by the sum of a character's **Affinities** of *Resilience* plus *Martial Arts* plus *Determination*. The character's current *Health* value decreases when they take damage. While this number is above zero, the character can act without significant fear of permanent harm. When this number reaches zero or less, the Player controlling the character has two options: *Keep Fighting* in which further damage has permanent consequences to the character depending on the GM's discretion, OR *Lay Low* in which the player chooses some way to opt out of the current situation, either by leaving, falling unconscious, etc., in order to avoid attention from potential damage sources.

The following links are the **Character Sheet**, the **Character Questionnaire**, and the **Reference Sheet**, respectively:

[Character Sheet Link.](#)

[Character Questionnaire Link.](#)

[Reference Sheet Link](#)

For examples of character building, the following link is an example of a character built using the **Character Questionnaire** completed by the player and the **Character Sheet** filled out by the GM.

[Character Creation Example Link](#)

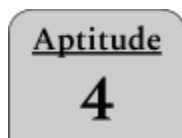




Example Turn (continuing from previous examples): After resolving Lucas's action, Jasper now decides to move through Wendy's and Jodi's actions. Before Jodi has a chance to climb the ledge, Wendy has Turf helping, so Jasper asks Turf to make a *Martial Arts* roll. Using Turf's 5 *Martial Arts*, Wendy's dice show a 1, 3, 3, 5, and 6. Wendy spends one of Turf's *Martial Arts* **Aptitude** to **Bump** both 3's to both be 4's.

Before Bump :		After Bump :	
Successes	Failures	Successes	Failures

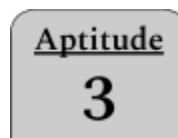
Martial Arts



Spent to **Bump**



Martial Arts



Since Turf had dice **Bumped**, he does not gain any **Aptitude**. Because this action was to help Ringe climb, Turf's four successes all go towards Ringe's *Martial Arts* roll to climb the ledge. Jasper decides that it is now time to resolve Jodi's turn since it was immediately impacted.

Jasper has Jodi roll Ringe's *Martial Arts* to climb the ledge keeping in mind that it is a 4-Cost action with four added successes from Wendy's turn. Jodi rolls 2d6 for Ringe's *Martial Arts* and gets a 1 and a 2; unfortunate. However, since all her dice were failures, Jodi increases Ringe's *Martial Arts* **Specific Aptitude** by 1. Using Turf's help, Ringe has enough successes to climb the ledge.



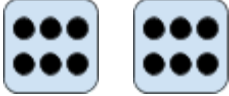
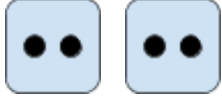


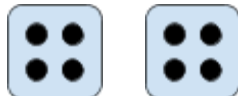
Jasper moves on to the next part of Jodi's turn, shooting at the Goblin King. Jasper asks Jodi to roll for her attack against the Goblin King at a *Cost* of 3. Ringe is using her longbow, which gives +1 **Weapon Training** and has 2 base damage. In total, Jodi rolls 5d6 from Ringe's 4 **Weapon Training** and the +1 from the longbow.

Jodi's dice turn up as 2, 2, 3, 6 and 6. Jodi spends one **Generic Aptitude** to **Bump** her 3 to a 4 and two *Weapon Training Aptitude* to increase both 2's to 4's. Since she chose to **Bump**, Ringe will not gain **Aptitude**. This gives Jodi 5 successes, and since the *Cost* is 3, she has 2 *Overflow* right now. Jodi wants Ringe's attack to deal the most damage possible to the Goblin King, so Jodi spends her 2 *Overflow* on +1 damage each, but she will also decide to spend another 2 *Overflow*, pushing her into negative, to deal another +2 damage. The base damage on Ringe's longbow, plus all the *Overflow* damage increases she has, give her a total of 6 damage on this attack, slaying the Goblin King instantly.

Calculating Cost:

Since the Goblin King is far away and hidden behind other goblins, Jasper assigns a *Cost* of 3 to attacking the target. This is calculated by the Goblin King's *Evasiveness* of 2 plus 1 for the distance and another 1 for the crowd. However, Jodi's advantage position reduces the *Cost* by 1 resulting in the *Cost* total being 3.

Before Bump:

Successes	Failures	Successes	Failures
			
			

After Bump:

Weapon Training

Generic

Aptitude
2

Aptitude
4

Spent to **Bump**



Weapon Training

Generic

Aptitude
1

Aptitude
2



Since Jodi pushed her character into negative *Overflow*, she must take penalties until Ringe's *Overflow* is zero. Jodi chooses to deal 2 damage to Ringe as some of the goblins begin pelting her with small rocks. Now Sarah decides that Jean-Pierre will act. Sarah rolls Jean-Pierre's 3 *Wind* dice and gets 1, 1, and 5 for one success. Jean-Pierre gains one **Generic Aptitude** and blocks one of the damage to Ringe.

At the end of the round, Jasper describes the actions that the goblins take. In this case, since the Goblin King was slain, the goblins scatter and begin to run off. The immediate danger is passed so gameplay can return to a more narrative flow.

Wait Your Turn:



Sarah has been waiting for a good moment to butt in. After seeing Jodi voluntarily take penalties in the form of damage, Sarah knows that Jean-Pierre would be willing to help out. Since his main combat **Affinity** is *Wind Magic*, Jodi decides he can protect Ringe from the rocks by knocking them out of the way.

