SimpleTop

What is SimpleTop?

It's a Tabletop Roleplaying Game that is easy to play and easy to customize for newcomers and seasoned roleplayers!

How do I play with it?

Start by gathering a group of friends to play with! One or more of the friends acts as the GameMaster(s) (or GM). Anyone who isn't a GM or a curious onlooker is a player.

GMs narrate the events of a story and the outcomes of player actions. They also generally handle the behaviors of the story's antagonists.

Players help build this story out by acting as characters within the story, interacting with the world and other players.

Your group of friends decides what kind of characters to play, how to act, and how to safely roleplay with each other.

What kind of setting is it for?

SimpleTop is designed with customization in mind!

You can play any kind of game in any kind of setting at any kind of power level.

What about magic?

With customization in mind, SimpleTop has no explicit rules about magic!

This means that you can have the same abilities as other players but describe them as magical spells that you cast.

Your group can also create your own rules for magic if you want.

What do I need to play?

If you have this rulebook, you don't need anything else to start playing! Having at least some 6-sided dice, pencils, and paper will make it much easier, though.

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Character Creation

Starting Items

- Main Weapon(s)
- 1 Fast Potion and 1 Potion (see *Sample Items*)
- Other Items discussed with your GameMaster (GM)

> ### *Example*
> *Weapon: Longsword that glows with an eternal fire.*
>
> *Other: Shield (this does **not** affect Health or damage).*
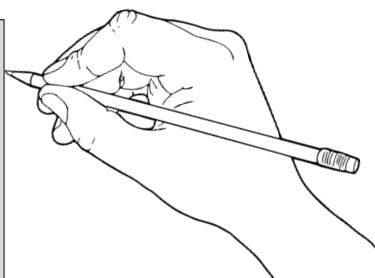
Dice

- Xd6 means X number of 6-sided dice
- If you don't have dice, use a site like rolladie.net

Rounding

- Round up (1.5 counts as 2)

Stats

- Players have 10 max Health and 4 Stat Points (SP) per Level
- Put SP into Stats Blocks from top to bottom
- To unlock all Actions & *Abilities* inside a Stat Block, put 1 SP in that Block
- To put SP in a Block, there must be 6 SP in the Block above it
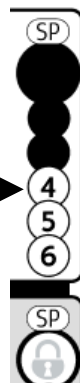
Actions & Abilities

- <u>Actions</u> are underlined
    - o Things you can do in Combat
- *Abilities* are italicized
    - o Passive Buffs that are always active
- Unlocked by putting a Stat Point in a new Stat Block

Strength: How powerful you are, or how easily you surpass your mental barriers.

In combat, this increases Health and damage.

Skill: How in touch you are with your inner power.

In combat, this provides a variety of Actions.

Support: How in touch you are with who, or what, is *around* you.

In combat, this heals and blocks damage.

Scharisma: How personable or persuasive you are.

In combat, this changes dice rolls and can heal.

Combat

Phases

- Combat generally starts with the Enemy Phase
  - o GM describes enemy behavior
  - o Specific <u>Actions</u> can be used by Players
- Players and Allies act during the Player Phase

Health

- Players have 10 max Health per level
- If you reach 0 Health, you can't contribute to the current fight or be healed
  - o This does not *have* to mean death
  - o **Phoenix** and **Revival** can bring you back into the fight!

Healing Out of Combat

- Your GM tells you how much to heal after combat ends, if at all

Actions & Action Points

- <u>Actions</u> are underlined
- Spend Action Points (AP) to do <u>Actions</u>
- All players have 5 max AP
- AP is restored at the start of the Enemy Phase
- <u>Actions</u> cannot go through hard Zone boundaries but have no explicit range (so **Attack** can shoot over long distances, if you want it to!)
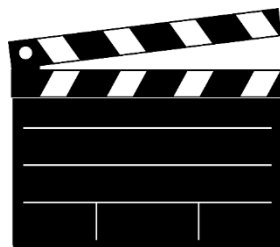
Movement

- Move freely in your Zone (the Zone you're currently in)
- Spend 1 AP to move to a touching, accessible Zone
- Zone size & placement are defined by GM
- Inaccessible Zone boundaries block Actions and Movement

Using Items

- Items are Fast, Normal, Slow, or Special

- Spend 1 AP to use a Fast Item
- Spend 2 AP to use a Normal Item
- Spend 3 AP to use a Slow Item
- Spend 4 or more AP to use a Special Item

- AP Cost and Item Effects specified in Item Description

Roleplaying in Combat

- To do something that isn't listed as an Action, like pulling a lever or grappling an enemy, Roleplay it!
- Spend 1 AP to Roleplay in Combat
- Roll 1d6 and add the highest, unlocked Roleplay Bonus for the Stat you're rolling

Roleplaying

Roleplay Bonus

- Tell GM you want to do something
    - You can ask to do something with a specific Stat
- If requested, roll a d6
- Add the highest, unlocked Roleplay Bonus from the requested Stat
- If you roll at least the Goal, you and your GM work together to roleplay the outcome

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Example

Player: "I'd like to grab the treasure without triggering the trap."

GM: "Give me a Skill roll with a Goal of 4."

Player rolls 1d6 and gets a 3.
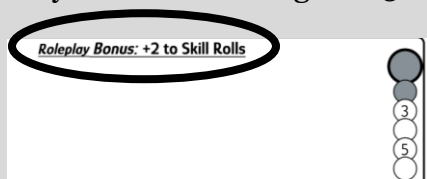
Player then adds their Roleplay Bonus of 2 for a total of 5.

GM: "The magical gem seems to float towards you, beckoning to you. How do you grab it?"

Player-Versus-Player Rolls

- Rolls that Players do against each other
- Ask for consent before doing these!

Competing Rolls

- 2 or more Characters try to do the same thing
- A Character tries to do something to another Character
- Both Characters roll
  - Non-Players don't get Roleplay Bonuses
  - Higher roll gets to do the thing
- Don't need to use the same Stat

Example

John: "I grab the treasure."

Cristy: "Wait, I want treasure, too! I try to swipe it from him! Is that okay John?"

John: "Lol, yeah, you're good, but I've got a firm grip on it."

GM: "Competing Rolls! John roll Strength, Cristy roll Skill."

John: Rolls a 5.

Cristy: Rolls a 4.

John gets the treasure.

Ties

- GM's Discretion
  - Nothing happens
  - Roll again
  - Custom Rule

Example

John: Rolls a 5

Cristy: Rolls a 5

GM: "Okay, I don't want to make you roll again, so I'll say John hangs onto it since he disarmed the trap blocking it."

John: "I'll split the cash we get for it though!"

Cristy: "Thanks John!"

Custom Rules (optional)

Creating a Custom Rule

- Make up your own rules, that's what this was made for!
- Discuss the custom rule with the group
- Write them where everyone can reference them

Sample Custom Rules

- Super 6
    - Roll 2d6 when Roleplaying
    - Rolling two 6s means something awesome happens!
    - 2.5% chance

- Resting
    - Players rest out of combat to heal
    - Roll 1d6 per hour of rest, then heal that much Health

- Death Rolls
    - Every Player Phase after you reach 0 Health, roll 1d6
    - Roll an even number: nothing happens
    - Roll an odd number: character dies

- Weighted Inventory
    - Players can carry 1 Item per Stat Point in Strength

- Permanent Wounds
    - Reaching 0 Health creates a permanent scar or dismemberment

<u>Custom Rules</u>

Help for the GM

Roleplaying

- Discuss situations your group is comfortable with
- Work with Players to tell a story, not against them
- Roleplay based on Player decisions
- Connect characters and story to Players through their motivations and personal objectives

Asking For Rolls

Not everything a Player does needs to be rolled. Ask Players to roll if they try to do something difficult or that they wouldn't normally be proficient in.

Suggested Goals

Very Easy: 3
Easy: 4
Kind of Hard: 5
Hard: 7
Extremely Hard: 9
Heroic: 10
Almost Impossible: 12

- Clarify Player Intentions
    - "So, you want to break open the door?"
- Create a Goal the player tries to meet or beat
- Ask them to roll based on a Stat you think is relevant, or one they request
    - "Give me a Strength roll."
- Player rolls 1d6 and adds the Stat's highest, unlocked Roleplay Bonus
- Player succeeds by rolling the Goal or higher
- Roleplay the outcome with the Player
    - "You did it! Describe what happens to the door."

- Strength represents power and will
- Skill represents proficiency and introspection
- Support represents extrospection and medicinal prowess
- Scharisma represents social aptitude and conspicuousness
- Mental or magical prowess could be represented by any

Inventory

- No explicit rules for inventory management
- Discuss a custom system or ignore it entirely
- Players will be creative with Items, don't be afraid to say no for the sake of the story

Magic

- No explicit rules for magic
- Players can describe Actions as spells, but for specific rules and effects, feel free to discuss a custom system

Encounters

Encounters help break up the pacing of gameplay and give players an obstacle to overcome

- Roleplay Encounters
  - Show players the consequences of their actions
  - Give players a creative problem to solve
- Combat Encounters
  - Teach/challenge players on game mechanics
  - Whittle down player resources

Combat

- Not required. You can have a fun game without combat!
- Exists in Phases
- Usually starts with Enemy Phase
  - Describe Enemy behavior, deal damage with rolls
- Player Phase: Players describe their Actions
  - Players can act at the same time
- If all players reach 0 Health, they lose that fight
  - Doesn't need to mean death
  - Maybe enemies steal loot or their plan works
- After Combat, it's normal to completely heal Players
  - Don't heal them for an extra challenge.
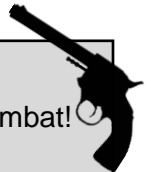
Zones

- You define Zones
    - Size and boundaries of each Zone
    - "Your Zone" refers to the Zone you're currently in
- Zones don't need to be equal size
- Soft boundaries separate accessible Zones
    - Represented by dashed (- - - - -) lines
- Hard boundaries block movement and Actions
    - Represented by solid (━━━) lines
- Zones can touch without being accessible to each other
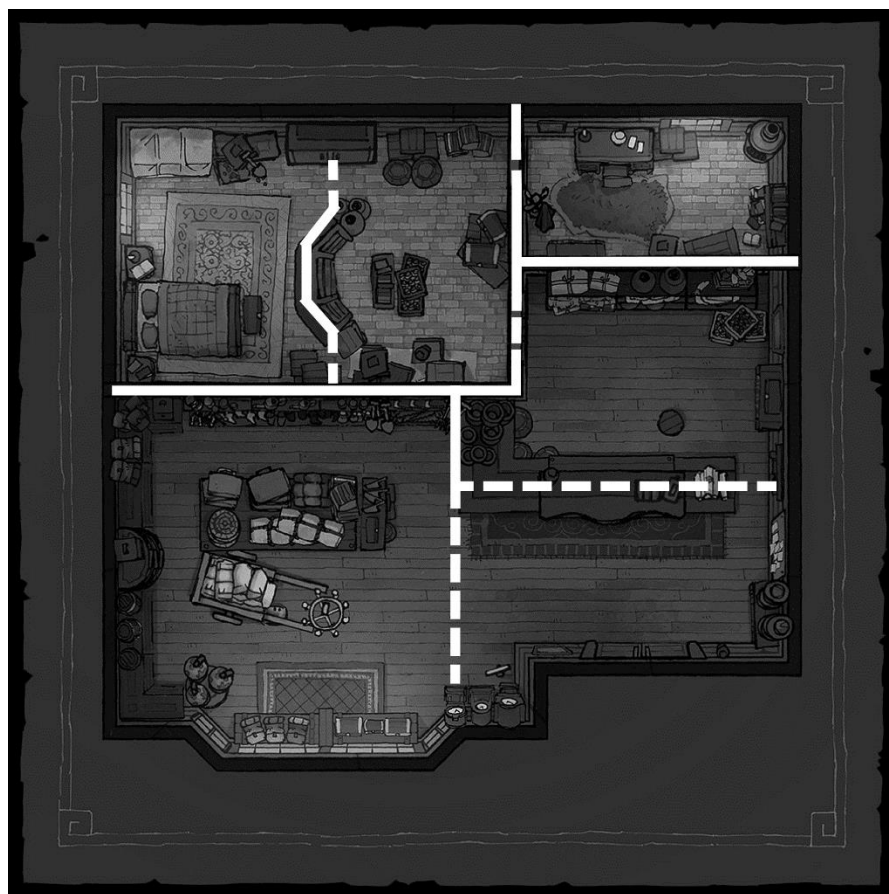
Cover (optional)

- If you want to add some extra tactical elements to your combat, you can add cover!
    - Represented by wiggly (~~~~~) lines
    - Affects damage from a direct line of sight that intersects the Cover
- During the Player Phase, Players can freely move to Cover in their Zone
    - During the Enemy Phases, they can spend 1AP to move into Cover in their Zone
    - Damage taken is reduced by their Level
- During the Enemy Phase, enemies can freely move to Cover in their Zone
    - Can't move during the Player Phase

- In this example, the Level 5 Player (🏋) is in Cover
    - When the shadow monster (🦅) attacks, the Player takes full damage
    - When goblin (🦋) attacks, the Player reduces the damage by 5 (their Level)

Creating Combat Encounters

Dice

Spend 1 or more dice to do an Enemy Action. Enemy Actions can be done by all enemies or just one. Roll the dice spent to determine the value of an Enemy Action.

- You get 1d6 per Player Level
  - 1 Level 5 Player means you have 5d6
  - 3 Level 2 Players means you have 6d6
- Once a die is rolled, you can't roll it again until the next Enemy Phase
- Enemy Actions vary based on what you think they do, for example:
  - All enemies move between accessible Zones
  - One enemy heals another
  - Multiple enemies attack a Player
  - An enemy tries to grapple a player, triggering a Competing Roll

Enemy Health

- Enemies share a pool of Health, distributed freely
- In Normal Combat, this pool is 12 per Player per level
  - 2 Level 5 Players means this pool is 120

Difficulty

- Easy Combat (about 1-2 rounds of combat)
  - Enemy Health = 10 per Player Level
  - -1 to all your rolls
- Normal Combat (about 2-3 rounds of combat)
  - Enemy Health = 12 per Player Level
  - Don't change your rolls
- Hard Combat (about 3-4 rounds of combat)
  - Enemy Health = 15 per Player Level
  - +1 to all your rolls
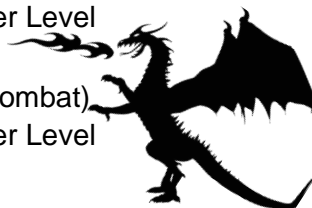
Sample Roll Descriptions

Dice

- **Move:** Roll Xd6. Enemies can move between that many Zones this Phase. If you roll a 2, one enemy can move 2 Zones, or two enemies can move 1 Zone.
- **Grapple**: Trigger a Competing Roll, rolling 1d6. If you win, the target can't Move during the next Phase.
- **Acid Arrow**: Deal Xd6 damage to a Player.
- **Drain**: Roll Xd6. Deal some of the total as damage to a Player and heal the rest.
- **Fireball**: Distribute Xd6 damage amongst multiple targets in a Zone.
- **Ice Breath**: Cover Xd6 Zones with Ice. Icy Zones cost 2AP to Move through.

Enemy Health Pool

Creating a Story

Key Moments

When creating a story, think about three key points in the story: Setup, Development, and Climax

- Setup
    - Teach Players the background of the story
    - Introduce characters and objectives
    - Hook Players into the story with an attention-grabbing event

- Development
    - Develop character arcs
    - Raise the stakes of the story
    - Antagonist and/or Players progress towards their objective(s)

- Climax
    - All development merges into an epic moment
    - Returning characters
    - Display Player skills and character traits
    - After Climax, show the results of the story

- These can be used for a single quest, too!

Preparation
- Fun stories revolve around Player decisions
- Keep basic notes on key moments in story
    - Change these notes based on Player choices
- Keep notes on Characters' motivations and objectives

Other Story Structures

Other methods can be used to tell stories, too.

You can even tell smaller stories within a larger story!

Maybe a character arc uses Freytag's Pyramid during the Hook of a Hero's Journey.

Hero's Journey

- Focus on character development and trials
- Meet heroes > Hook > Heroes refuse adventure > Heroes meet a guide > Begin adventure > Development > Approach Climax > Climax > Reward from Climax > Aftermath > True Climax > Results of story

Kishōtenketsu

- Good for mysteries with a strong twist
- No antagonists or conflict needed
- Setup > Development (avoid major changes) > Twist/Reveal > Aftermath of Reveal

Freytag's Pyramid

- Stories about drama or tragedy
- Setup > Rise (things seem to be improving) > Climax > Fall (things head towards tragedy) > Catastrophe

Fichtean Curve

- Episodic adventures or individual quest story
- Approach Crisis > Crisis (repeat as much as desired) > Climax > Results of story

Sample Characters

Steve

- **Who**: A manly man(horse) who cuts lumber for fun
    - Eats 5 dozen eggs every morning
    - Easily scared by small insects
- **What**: Half-horse, half-man that wears two pairs of jeans (one for his rear legs and one for his front legs)
    - Wears a thick, red flannel with rolled up sleeves
    - Smiles bright enough to light up the woods at night
- **Where**: He lives alone in a cottage in the woods
    - He was outcast by the nearby town for how hideous he looked with braces in his youth
- **When**: He is in his prime…age, at least
    - Fully grown, but very immature and childish
- **Why**: He ran from his cottage, asking for help because a giant spider was scaring him (it seems like he's a big baby and is exaggerating the spider's size, but it is indeed a giant spider)
- **How**: He frequently gallops, as if in slow motion

D.A.D. – Deadly Autonomous Drone

- **Who**: A humanoid, sentient robot armed with numerous deadly weapons inside its torso

Sushe

- **Who**: A dwarf that handles the town's request board
    - o Maintains a board filled with many documents
- **What**: 3.5 foot tall dwarf
    - o Dresses in fancy clothing
    - o Wears a monocle that frequently falls off
- **Where**: In town, frequently traveling back and forth between the request board and their home
- **When**: Young for a dwarf, only 50 years old!
- **Why**: Once dreamed of being an adventurer
    - o Got terrified by their first goblin and decided to work in town instead
- **How**: Always in a hurry, but eager to stop and inform whoever has a question

Marun McCullough

- **Who**: A fairy that runs a local ice cream shop

Ice Cream Flavors

Archer Almond	Barbarian Blueberry
Bard Bubblegum	Villain Vanilla
Clerical Cookie Dough	Druid Dark Chocolate
Fightin' Fudge	Monk Mint
Paladin Pecan	Ranger Rocky Road
Roguish Raspberry	Sorcerer Strawberry
Warlock Wild Surprise	Wizard Walnut

Sample Enemies

Goblin

A short, green creature with tall, pointy ears, gnarled teeth, and bright, yellow eyes.
They often attack in groups and try to surround their prey.

Movement: Goblins will try to surround their prey.

Actions: Claws, Biting, Makeshift Weapons.
They don't often utilize ranged combat.

Responses: When a goblin is attacked, they will block with whatever is nearby, including other goblins.

Goblin Boss

A slightly less short Goblin, this boss has proven to be much stronger than the other Goblins it lives with, ordering them around and holding a sense of authority over them.

Movement: Goblin Bosses will try to keep other goblins nearby to use as shields.

Actions: Hurl rocks/Goblins at a target. If there is more than 1 Goblin near the Goblin Boss, Goblin Boss will hurl them at a target.

Responses: When Goblin Boss is dealt damage, it will screech at the attacker or threaten/insult other Goblins.

Shadow Goblin

A goblin-like creature that is entirely black with dark, red eyes. They often attack in groups and will sink into a shadow on the ground once attacked.

Movement: Shadow Goblins try to get behind players or surround them.

Actions: Mostly claw attacks.
Spend any roll to get out of their shadow form.

Responses: Whenever a Shadow Goblin is dealt damage, they spend any roll to sink into a shadow on the ground. While in this form, they can move, but they *cannot receive or deal damage*. They *must* spend a roll to leave this shadow form.

Enchanted Armor

A magically enchanted suit of armor that moves without a body! It tries to ensnare victims in itself to absorb their life force. If the Armor is defeated, the trapped creature is freed.

Movement: Whenever this enemy takes damage, it faces whoever attacked it and moves to them.
Enchanted Armor cannot move while it has a character ensnared.

Actions: This enemy may attack with some kind of weapon that fits for the world it's in.

Ensnare: If the Enchanted Armor is in the Zone of a player who attacked it, it ensnares them.
If a player is ensnared, they can still damage the Enchanted Armor, but they cannot move away from it, help, or heal their allies.

Absorb: If this enemy has someone **ensnared**, it uses its rolls to damage the ensnared Character and heal itself.

Sample Items

(**1** AP)**Fast Potion**: Heal 1 Health per Level

(**2** AP)**Potion**: Heal 3 Health per Level.

(**3** AP)**Slow Shield**: Heal 4 Health per Level.
You can use this heal above your maximum Health, up to 10
Health above your maximum.

(**4** AP)**Turret**: Drop a turret in your Zone that has Health equal to
your level. When an enemy enters the turret's Zone, it deals
damage equal to your level to that enemy.

(**1** AP)**6-Pocket Grab-Bag**: Reach into one of the 6 pockets,
which each hold random Items. You can only use this Bag 6
times before it vanishes.
Roll 1d6 to determine which Item you get:
- 1: A handful of marbles
- 2: A handful of Bees
- 3: A rock the size of your palm
- 4: A kitten the size of your palm
- 5: A torch that stays lit for 12 hours and cannot be
  extinguished; its fire also does not harm any who touch it
- 6: A sentient, duck-sized robot that will do your bidding
  for 1 hour before exploding

(**3** AP)**Jug of Mysterious Liquids**: Twice a day, you can use
this Jug to create a gallon of one the following liquids:
- Acid, Alcohol, Mayonnaise, Water, Oil, Molasses
In combat, it creates enough of the liquid to coat the ground of
an entire Zone.

(**0** AP)**Communication Earpiece**: Allows the user to
communicate at a whisper through someone else's Earpiece if
that person is within range of this Earpiece.

<u>Custom Items</u>