

# **UNTOLD AEONS**

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## ROLLING DICE

A standard dice roll in Untold Aeons has two "pools" of dice: the skill pool and the difficulty pool. For each pool you roll a number of d6 dice equal to your skill level, or difficulty level respectively. You don't simply add up the values of these dice, but instead you count successes and failures. If you rolled more successes than failures you succeed, otherwise you fail. Successes and failures are counted as follows:

| Roll | Skill Dice  | Difficulty Dice |
|------|-------------|-----------------|
| 6    | 2 Successes | 2 Failures      |
| 5    | 1 Success   | 1 Failure       |
| 4    | 1 Success   | 1 Failure       |
| 3    |             |                 |
| 2    |             |                 |
| 1    | 1 Advantage | 1 Drawback      |

In addition to this, whenever you roll a 1 on a skill dice you generate an *Advantage*, and when you roll a 1 on a difficulty dice you generate a *Drawback*. These cancel each other out. These don't affect whether you succeed or fail, but they add additional effects to your roll.

*Idea: When appropriate, let players roll their skill but without the difficulty dice, and the Narrator rolls the difficulty dice behind the screen. This way the players have some idea of how well they did but are never quite sure.*

### **BONUSES & PENALTIES**

Any situational bonuses simply add extra dice to the "skill pool". Similarly, situational penalties add extra dice to the "difficulty pool".

# CHARACTER CREATION

## CHARACTERISTICS

There are 4 main characteristics that define your character, which all range from 1 to 5. Each of them represents an aspect of your character. Sometimes they can be used like regular skills (*e.g. an Intellect roll could be used to solve a puzzle*), but they're mostly used to influence other mechanics.

To create your character you must distribute 12 points between the 4 characteristics, with a minimum of 1 and maximum of 5 for each characteristic.

### **Agility**

Your character's physical nimbleness, speed and general athletic capability. It is mostly used for dodging / diving for cover in combat, athletic feats, and your speed in chases.

### **Toughness**

Your character's physical strength, endurance, and health. It determines your Wound limit and Soak, generally making you capable of taking more hits in a fight.

### **Willpower**

Your character's mental fortitude, discipline, drive and ability to withstand stress. It determines your Stress limit, and is used to resist the effects of stress and retain your composure.

### **Intellect**

Your character's intelligence, education, and ability to learn and process information. Characters with a higher Intellect will have higher initial skills. Intellect also determines your character's general knowledge and can be used as a skill.

## DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

After deciding on your Characteristics you should calculate your derived attributes:

**Stress Limit** ( $10 + Willpower$ )

Characters with a higher Stress limit are able to withstand more stress before succumbing to it.

**Wound Limit** ( $10 + Toughness$ )

This represents how much physical damage you can take before you become incapacitated.

## BACKGROUNDS

**Todo:** *Talk about backgrounds and maybe list some example ones. (With a reference to more later in the book?)*

## STARTING SKILLS

After distributing points between your primary stats and picking a background you can get started with developing your skills. This is done by spending Experience to improve your skills. During character creation you can spend 20 Experience on your background skills, and  $10 + 4 \times Intellect$  on personal interest skills.

When assigning Experience to background skills you *do not* have to pay the Experience cost for learning new professional skills that are part of your background (and they are assumed to start at rank 1), however, for personal interest skills you do have to learn any new skills as normal.

## IMPROVING SKILLS

To improve a skill – or learn a new skill – you need to spend Experience. Experience is typically awarded by the Narrator at the end of every session

(or plot arc).

Improving a skill costs Experience equal to the *current* rank in that skill. For example: if your Persuasion skill is currently rank 3, then it would cost 3 Experience to increase it to rank 4.

Learning new professional skills is also possible, as long as you have a "source" to learn from. This could be a teacher (including other players), a book, or any other source of knowledge. Once you have a source to learn from you must spend 2 Experience to gain your first rank in your new skill. You'll have to spend additional Experience to increase it beyond that.

## MOTIVATIONS

**Todo:** *Talk about character Motivations and guide the player to picking starting motivations.*

## SKILLS

**Todo:** *Describe the difference between Standard and Professional skills here*

### STANDARD SKILLS

Standard skills are skills that every character possesses (at least at a basic level), and have a starting value of 1. Professional skills are skills that must be learned either in character creation or during play, therefore these have a starting value of 0.

| General       | Social       | Combat   |
|---------------|--------------|----------|
| Driving       | Charm        | Brawl    |
| First Aid     | Deception    | Firearms |
| Investigation | Insight      |          |
| Perception    | Intimidation |          |
| Stealth       | Persuasion   |          |
| Streetwise    |              |          |
| Survival      |              |          |

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

**Todo:** *Some fluff and a list of skills here*

## — CHAPTER 4 —

# KARMA POINTS

*(I.E. STORY / FATE POINTS)*

There are two pools, the Narrator and player pool. The Narrator starts with one karma point, and the players pool starts with 1 point for each player. When a point is used it moves to the other pool. E.g. a player uses a karma point it moves to the Narrator's pool. This means that using a karma point can give you benefits, but will likely come back to bite you at some point in the future.

Whenever someone uses a Karma point to get a bonus or re-roll a check they should also describe what's actually happening that would change the outcome of the roll. For example: a player using a karma point to re-roll an Investigation check could say, "...".

### **PLAYER USES:**

- Reroll dice (sorta like pushing)
- deus ex machina: "good thing I brought that shovel!"  
(used at the Narrator's discretion)
- +2 on any roll
- +2 difficulty to an NPC's roll
- Trigger a critical hit in combat. (more details on page 14)

### **NARRATOR USES:**

- Trigger a hallucination/phobia/mania/...
- +2 on an NPC's roll
- +2 difficulty to a player's roll
- I need more here :p



## STRESS & SANITY

Instead of a Sanity number, characters just have permanent side effects (manias, phobias, ...) when stress goes above the limit. These can then be roleplayed and can also change over time. (e.g. "recovering in a mental ward" as a way to getting rid of them)

### SANITY CHECKS

When something happens that could cause distress to a character the Narrator may ask for a "Sanity Check" to see how they react. Sanity checks always use the character's Willpower, and the difficulty of the check will be set based on the severity of the cause. Any Advantages or Drawbacks rolled will result in a short term effect.

| Effects          |  |
|------------------|--|
| <b>Success</b>   | Gain Stress equal to the difficulty  |
| <b>Failure</b>   | Gain Stress equal to the difficulty plus number of failures ( <i>before</i> cancelling them out) |
| <b>Advantage</b> | Adrenaline rush, fearless, bonus on next san check,<br>...                                       |
| <b>Drawback</b>  | Scream in terror, involuntary action in combat,<br>freeze, ...                                   |

If your stress goes above your limit you must make an Willpower roll with 1 difficulty dice for each point you are above your limit. If you succeed nothing happens, though you must roll again if you gain more stress, but if you fail you become Shaken.

If your Stress goes above *twice* limit make an Willpower save or go temporarily insane / fall unconscious. This follows the same pattern as the save for becoming Shaken. So the difficulty is how far you're above your limit (twice the limit in this case), and failing the save makes it happen while succeeding postpones it a bit.

## **SHAKEN**

*The goal should be to give the players an "oh no..." feeling when they become shaken.*

When you initially become Shaken you suffer from a temporary bout of madness. You are free to roleplay this however you like. Additionally, the Narrator can also use Karma points to trigger phobias, manias, delusions, ... for Shaken characters.

While shaken the effects of any Advantages or Drawbacks you roll on a Sanity check become amplified. Drawbacks might cause you to flee in terror, become catatonic or even gain a phobia or mania. On the other hand, if you roll an Advantage on a Sanity check with a difficulty *higher* than your relevant Hardened level your Hardened level increases by one.

## **ADAPTING TO HORROR**

Hardened levels represent how used your character is to seeing different kinds of horrors. There's 3 categories: *Violence*, *Helplessness*, and *Unnatural*. These levels act like the mental equivalent of armor, reducing the stress "damage" you take by your hardened level in the relevant category.

Being hardened also affects and changes the personality of the character, becoming more cold and uncaring for example.

## **RECOVERING STRESS**

Once a day you make an unopposed Willpower check. If your stress is below your limit you lose 1 stress for every success. If it is above your limit you lose

stress equal to half the number of successes (rounded down). You always recover at least 1 Stress.

## GOALS FOR SANITY MECHANICS

- Mental Trauma instead of a "Sanity" stat
- Harden over time (i.e. stress "armor")
- Temporary Positive Effects (Adrenaline rush, ...)
- Temporary Negative Effects (Flee, ...)
- Stress gain from Sanity checks
- Shaken when  $\geq$  Stress Limit
- Go insane / faint when  $\geq 2 \times$  Stress Limit
- Give players more agency in the outcome of sanity checks? (like Trail of Cthulhu)

## COMBAT

**Goal for combat:** Every roll should be meaningful, not just endless "roll to hit, roll for damage, repeat"

### WOUNDS

The health / wounds system is very analogous to the stress system.

If your total damage taken is more than your limit you must make a Toughness roll with 1 difficulty dice for each point you are above your limit. If you succeed nothing happens, though you must roll again if you take more damage, if you fail you are Severely Injured.

If your total damage taken goes above *twice* your limit you must make a Toughness save or die. (same mechanic as above) You must also make another save every time you take additional damage (including the damage from being Severely Injured).

The Narrator is also always allowed to ask for stress rolls when significant injuries are suffered. This is done at the discretion of the Narrator

#### **SEVERELY INJURED**

You have likely suffered a permanent injury and are currently incapacitated (be it passed out or simply unable to fight / act) Additionally, you take one damage every minute (or round?) until you receive medical care

### NATURAL HEALING

Once a day you make an unopposed Toughness check. If your injuries are below your limit you heal one wound for every success. If they are above your limit you heal a number of wounds equal to half the number of successes (rounded down). You always heal at least 1 Wound.

## INITIATIVE

There are 2 possible types of turns: Fast and Slow turns. In a Slow turn you can take an action *and* move, in a fast turn you can either take an action *or* move. At the start of a round everyone involved in the fight chooses if they want to take a Fast or Slow turn. If multiple combatants go at the same time they can choose the order in which they act. The side initiating the fight also goes first. So, the turn order is as follows:

1. Initiating side (*Fast*)
2. Defending side (*Fast*)
3. Initiating side (*Slow*)
4. Defending side (*Slow*)

## ATTACK ROLL

When being attacked, either: - **\*\*Dodge\*\***: Roll Dex to avoid, *\*but\** fall prone afterwards - Ties are in favour of the defender - Defender takes no damage if they win - **\*\*Defend\*\***: Roll Brawl to defend yourself - Ties are in favour of the defender - Defender takes no damage if they win - **\*\*Fight Back\*\***: Roll Brawl to fight back - Ties are in favour of the attacker - Defender takes no damage if they win *\*and\** land a hit of their own - If both combatants get 0 successes nothing happens

| Action            | Defender Skill | Outcome       |               |               |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|                   |                | Attacker Wins | Defender Wins | Tie           |
| <b>Dodge</b>      | Dex            | Attacker Hits | No Hit *      | No Hit        |
| <b>Defend</b>     | Brawl          | Attacker Hits | No Hit        | No Hit        |
| <b>Fight Back</b> | Brawl          | Attacker Hits | Defender Hits | Attacker Hits |

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\* The Defender also falls prone, regardless of whether they succeed or not.

## **CRITICAL HITS**

Critical hits double the amount of damage you deal from your successes (but not the base weapon damage). They can only be triggered by spending a Karma point.

## **FIREARMS**

Ranged Attack difficulty:

- Point blank: 1
- less than weapon range: 2
- less than 2x weapon range: 3
- etc...
- +1 difficulty when firing at moving target, partial cover, ...
- -1 difficulty when firing at ...

The combatant who's being shot at has the option to try diving away (only if they're aware they're being shot at). If they choose to do so the difficulty of the shot is increased by half the target's Agility (rounding \*up\*), however, the person diving for cover will be prone until they get up again (which takes an action).

### Weapon Trait: **Rapid Fire <N>**

When you use this weapon you may choose to rapidly fire many shots instead of just one. If you do this you take 1 penalty dice to your Firearms skill. Then, if your attack succeeds, you manage to hit a number of shots up to your MoS (Margin of Success), but never more than **N**. Each shot deals damage as usual (base damage + #S) If you roll advantages you can make a single hit into a critical hit for each advantage you rolled.

## RESOLVING ADVANTAGES / DRAWBACKS

(See Genesys p.104 for ideas)

Advantage: - 1: - +1 on next allied skill check - notice something useful - -1 to target enemy next skill check - 2: - extra maneuver - bypass cover/armor/... - 3: - ?

Drawback: - 1: - Suffer 1 stress - 2: - opponent gets free maneuver - +1 to all opponents when targeting this player until next turn - 3: - ?

## DAMAGE CALCULATION

Damage Dealt = Weapon Base Damage + Successes Rolled (*before* cancelling out)

Damage Taken = Damage Dealt - max(0, Toughness - Piercing)

If an attack succeeds *with Advantage* it's a critical hit, dealing double base damage (before reducing it by the Toughness) (Idea: what about double non-base damage? makes more sense sort of, but need to check the maths)

Melee weapons will often deal extra damage based on your Toughness, this is denoted by adding a "+" to the damage number, so a weapons dealing "1+" damage will have a base damage of 1 + your Toughness.

Unarmed attacks have a base damage of "0+", i.e. your Toughness without any bonuses

How to handle shotguns? No clue :p

## OPEN QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK

- What a bout a RQ-esque Passions mechanic?
- There isn't enough damage...
  - Maybe remove Toughness as armor?
    - \* Or use  $\lfloor \frac{Toughness}{2} \rfloor$  instead?
    - \* This would mess with the Piercing trait too
  - Or use  $5 + Toughness$  for wound limit? (could do this for stress too tbh)
  - Re-think crits / chances for extra high damage
    - \* It doesn't really make sense to have crits based on advantages, that sorta goes against the "two axes of success". It'd also mean that crit hits generally have lower damage, cause advantages and successes are inversely-correlated.
    - \* Maybe crits when your MoS > some number? Maybe as a weapon trait?
    - \* Or... Karma points for crits? This has potential! :p
- All Stress saves should be Willpower
  - This does mean we need more things to do with Intellect.
    - \* Magic / reading tomes is one option
    - \* Idea rolls; maybe make them more mechanically relevant
    - \* Honestly, just starting skills, idea rolls, and magic is *probably* enough...
- need more Karma uses (especially for the Keeper) and a reason to avoid hoarding them
- maybe also remove Knowledge in favour of Intellect
- Maybe let people roll for sanity with Mythos Knowledge instead of Willpower when it's appropriate



## PLAYTESTERS

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- Gabriel Reich
- Wayne (@Wayne Rossi#2400)
- ... and others!

# **RULES SUMMARY**