Story of Adventure

A Table-Top Role-Playing Game

J.H. Freedman

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Challenges

Passing challenges are the core to every game, let alone role playing games.
In S.O.A., you will almost always want acquire numbers as high as possible to pass these challenges. You will have plenty tools to help you in this goal: dice rolls, attribute effects & modifiers, and skills/techniques.

6.1 The Total

Challenges are vast and varied in the world of S.O.A. ,but regardless of whether you're fighting a mobster demi-god, sweaving around asteroid-belt ring worms, or painting a fence your outcome is ruled by *The Total*. This all-deciding number is result of all possible rolls, modifiers, and any other ancillary variables that have some influence in the situation at hand. Regardless of who you are, or think you are, how high or low *The Total* is will determine if you pass or fail.

6.2 Success, Pass, & Fail

An important semantic to define is *Succeed* vs *Pass*:

- Success ⫶ *The Total* meets one instance of the requirements of the Challenge.

- Pass : The Challenge itself is completed and the result is positive.

- Fail : The total does *not* meet the requirements of the challenge and the result is neutral or negative.

Most of the challenges you will encounter require only one success to pass. However some challenges will require multiple successes or will result in a binary succeed/fail instead of counting the degree.

——— A Note to the GM ———
Not every fail needs to result in disaster. Neutral results can also occur when you try to do something and fail.

6.2.1   Degree of Success and Failure (DSF)

In all cases that do not result in a tie (i.e. most of them) you will succeed or fail by an amount refered to as its *Degree*.

$$HigherTotal - LowerTotal = Degree$$

Degrees can be used intuitively to interpret specific results from a binary pass or fail state, and can also be used as a variable to be used in further calculations (e.g. Damage[1]).

6.2.2   In Case of a Tie

A tie is only spoken of through whispers. A realm of sheer impossibility in which neither success nor failure can exist. The brief moment that it breaches the mortal plane is enough to send ripples throughout the galaxy, shifting environments and worldviews alike. It is a curiously benevolent impossibility, as all those who witnessed a tie found themselves receiving 1 Cool Token[2].

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[1]Damage Calculation, pg. 19
[2]Cool Tokens, pg. 20

6.3 Character vs Obstacle

These are the most common kinds in TTRPGs. They are generally non-combat related and can range from climbing a fence to painting a fence to breaking a fence.
These are *Obstacle Challenges* and are tied to your Attributes.[3] These typically involve you rolling over a determined threshold decided by the GM. They may be treated as either a binary pass or fail or be treated with degrees of success or failure.

6.3.1 Determined Threshold

When the GM requests that you complete an Obstacle Challenge they usually have a number in mind that must be met or surpassed. This is the *Determined Threshold*– sometimes just refered as the *Threshold*. The higher the number, the more difficult the challenge is. Other variations can include a Determined Threshold of Successes in which you must succeed a number of times to pass.

...... New Players! ....
The GM may or may not tell you what exactly this threshold is.
....

_____ A Note to the GM _____
Sharing this information may create tangable tension, but hiding it should be flat out scary. Pick your moments well.

6.4 Character vs Character

6.4.1 Damage Calculation

Damage is calculated by the DSF[4] from the given challenge. Once calculated, it will then be distributed to Health and Energy as necessary. Players will generally be able to

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[3]Character Attributes, pg. 29
[4]Degree of Success and Failure (DSF), pg. 18

distribute their damage between Health and Energy as they see fit, however some situations may force all of the damage onto one or the other without compromise.[5]

——— A Note to the GM ———————————————
Direct Damage can create contexts in which the result will go directly to Health but I recommend those to be few and far between. Pick your moments. Make your players shudder.

6.5   Cool Tokens

Cool Tokens are a special mechanic to encourage sub-optimal play for the sake of gauranteeing successes later. This is to create creative play that puts the player at an explicit disadvantage. It is given by the GM when he feels like it will make the story better.
It may build character; it may be narratively interesting; it may be a character flaw; it may be a failed roll during high tension; etc.
Spending a cool token must be done and announced *before* you roll for your challenge. This is so the GM can hand you a *second* d100. For the result of your challenge; you may choose to use either of the dice or both. Usually you will chose to use both, but there are contexts in which you will prefer only one number (e.g. ESP).

——— A Note to the GM ———————————————
It is recommended for the maximum Cool Token cap to be 1 per player, but this is just a suggestion and ultimately left up to you to decide in your campaign.

...... New Players! ....
"Cool" is subjective, but this does not excuse stupidity. Never assume the GM will give you Cool Tokens. Roleplay appropriately and see what happens.
....

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[5]Damage Types and Diversion, pg. 21

Chapter 7

Health and Energy

7.1 Health

Health is a crucial metric that represents tangable, lasting damage to a character's body. Too much Health damage could result in a *permanent wound.* Your *Maximum Health* is equal to your total spent AP[1].

...... New Players! ....
Keep your guard up! Although most damage can get absorbed by energy, some situations may utilize *Direct Damage* which can force all of the incoming damage to Health!
....

7.1.1 Damage Types and Diversion

Damage can be delivered in two forms:

- Normal Damage : Threatening, but mitigatable. Normal damage is able to be shielded by Energy reserves, and can be allocated between Health and Energy as *the receiver* sees fit.

- Direct Damage : Terrifying, and very much life-threatening. This type bypasses all defenses and is delivered exclusively to Health.

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[1]Attribute Enhancement and AP, pg. 29

7.1.2   Permanent Wounds

Permanent Wounds are lasting injuries or conditions that will be with your character throughout their campaign(s).

7.1.3   Death

If a character's Health falls to or below 0, the character is dead. The good news is that death doesn't have to be permanent! This may be an opportunity for your friends to go on an adventure to revive you while you train in the afterlife. However, if the player desires, they may instead create a new character to be recruited by the adventuring party. Just know that it is a *choice* and not a neccessity.

7.2   Energy

Energy is a critical resource within S.O.A. with a variety of uses from executing Techniques[2] to mitigating critical injury. Managing how and when to use your Energy is vital to survival. Your *Maximum Energy* is equal to double your *Maximum Health*.

7.2.1   Technique Resources

To use a Technique[3], an Energy cost must be paid. The starting cost is 10 EN and with each level of Advancement[4], the cost increases by 5 EN.

7.2.2   Overexertion

When a character's Energy falls to to 0, the character is overexerting themself. All instances that would normally go to Energy instead go to Health. You may choose to pass out at any time when overexerting yourself– even if there are challenges you are currently participating in.

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[2]Techniques, pg. 36
[3]Techniques, pg. 36
[4]Advancement, pg. 39

7.2.3 Passing Out

When you pass out, you may not act in any way until rested or healed.

...... New Players! ....
It is *universally* frowned upon to attack a passed out opponent, and only the most evil character would spitefully do such an act.
....

Chapter 8

Encounters

The structure of how events take place are usually unimportant but are still expected to occur frequently. Hierarchy is occurs as follows:

1. **Encounter**
   This encapsulates the entire situation. *Encounters* proceed over a predetermined or indefinite number of engagements known as *Rounds*. An encounter ends when:

   - The predetermined Round countdown reaches 0
   - Only one team is able to take Turns

2. **Rounds**
   These encapsulate *every* character's Turn. After every character has had their Turn, a new *Round* begins.

3. **Turns**
   These encapsulate the *selected* character's Actions. In most instances each character takes one *Turn* per Round

4. **Actions**
   These are how characters actually do things. In most instances each character will take two *Actions* per Turn. Character Actions are grouped as follows:

   - Standard : A basic Action (e.g. movement) that can be repeated.

- Unique : A difficult Action that cannot be repeated multiple times per Turn.

- Double : A tiring Action that consumes that character's entire Turn.

Part IV

Character Creation

Chapter 9

Character Attributes

9.1 Attributes

Your character's actions and abilities are built around 5 Attribute categories: Power, Knowledge, Endurance, Speed, and Foresight. Each Attribute gives a purely bonus-based benefit, which means that it's fine, and expected, for your character to have 0's in some of their Attribute categories. Thematically a 0 just means that your character will be average in that area; you will still be able to make all of your necessary rolls– you just won't get any bonuses!

9.1.1 Attribute Enhancement and AP

Throughout your campaign(s) your Attributes will be able to be enhanced by spending Attribute Points (AP). Each point spent will increase the Attribute directly by the same amount. New characters will start with 50 AP to allocate how they wish. Afterwards they'll be earned at the end of a session, or by some other alternate means.

...... New Players! ....
Since new characters start with 50 AP this also means their starting Health is 50 and their starting Energy is 100 so be careful!
....

9.1.2   BURST

When an Attribute reaches **100**, it triggers a BURST! This does a few things:

- Grants a permanent upgrade specific to the Attribute that triggered the BURST.

- Grants a new Technique tied to the Attribute.

- Reduces the Attribute back down to **10**.

...... New Players! ....

Despite the Attribute reduction, the upgrades from a BURST are substantial and I recommend triggering a BURST whenever possible. However! Moderation is important. Triggering too many at once could leave you in a tight spot so I also recommend keeping a few Attribute scores high until the others have recovered.

....

9.2   Attribute Usage

As mentioned, your character's Attributes are the core of everything that they do in Story of Adventure. Most, and possibly all, of your character's actions will involve forming a total using 1 or more Attribute. Each Attribute has its own method of being calculated as well as conditions for passing and failing[1].

Usage Notation

The notation for this section is as follows:

- d100 refers to a number from 1 – 100. This can be from either two ten-sided dice rolled to create a number with a range of 100, a random number generator, or however you decide to generate it.

- XXX refers to the Attribute 's process and everything that it entails.

- [XXX] refers to the value of the Attribute itself.

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[1]Success, Pass, & Fail, pg. 17

9.2.1 Knowledge [KNO]

$$d100 + [KNO]$$

For Knowledge checks you want your total to be *above* as high as possible. Roll a d100 and add [KNO] to the amount. If it's above the Threshold then you pass, and if not then you fail.

Any time you would ask, "Does my character know/notice..." you may execute a KNO. Additionally, [KNO] itself is added directly to your Skill checks.[2]

⋮ BURST ⋮ Allocate 100 Skill Points[3] into your existing Skill(s) however you please.

9.2.2 Power [POW]

$$d100_1 + d100_2 + 2([POW])$$

For Power checks you want to try to roll the biggest, and we mean *BIGGEST*, total possible. Roll 2 d100s and add [POW] to each result. In pass or fail situations, if it is above the Threshold then you succeed.

A POW may be utilized for most *Double* actions

⋮ BURST ⋮ Permanently increase the POW multiplier by 1 (e.g. $2 \rightarrow 3$).

9.2.3 Endurance [END]

$$(d100 \pm [END]) \ast \text{ turns until pass or fail}$$

For Endurance checks your rolls will add to a running total that proceeds towards specific *thresholds*.

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[2]Skills, pg. 35
[3]Skills, pg. 35

Every turn of an END check begins with a d100 roll, but it proceeds differently depending on if you're *storing* or *spending* an amount:

- If the amount is to be *stored* to your total for the next turn(s), add [END] to the roll and the result to the total. The desired effect occurs *when* the *storing* threhsold is reached.

- If the amount is to be *spent* from your total from the previous turn(s), subtract [END] from the roll and the result from the total. The desired effect occurs *until* the *spending* threshold is reached.

———————————————————

Any time your action would take multiple turns, you may run an END. Depending on context, an END may either be a *Unique* action or a *Double* action.

: BURST : Permanently increase the *turn* multiplier by 1. This means you roll an additional action for *storing* and skip an additional action for *spending*.

...... New Players! ....
Generally speaking, storing to your total will produce positive effects in later turns so you'll want to try to build this as quickly as possible. Conversely, spending from your total will generally block undesirable effects so you'll want to keep this as low as possible.
....

9.2.4   Speed [SPD]

$$\text{total } (d100 + [SPD]) \text{ until pass or fail}$$

For Speed checks you'll roll for successes against an ever-building Threshold until you reach the target *number of successes* or you *fail*.
Roll a d100 and add [SPD]. If the result is above the Threshold then you succeed. If you succeed, start a running total with the result, add 10 to the target threshold, and repeat the

process until either condition is met. With every subsequent success you'll add the result to the running total and add 10 to the threshold.

Any time your action encompasses multiple smaller actions, you may execute a SPD.

⁚ BURST ⁚ Permanently gain an additional free reroll upon SPD failures.

9.2.5   Foresight [ESP]

guess within $\pm[ESP]$ against the opposing roll

For Foresight checks you're guessing what the opposing roll will be with a buffer of $\pm\frac{1}{2}$ your [ESP].
Before an opposing roll, you may conduct ESP. You succeed if the roll is within the range of $(guess - \frac{1}{2}[ESP])$ and $(guess + \frac{1}{2}[ESP])$.

Any time your character attempts to predict or react to external stimuli, you may execute a ESP.

⁚ BURST ⁚ Pick an additional number to guess for each level of ESP BURST.

Chapter 10

Abilities: Skills and Techniques

Abitites are extra modifiers for your Attributes during various situations. Generally they will work by replacing $[XXX]$ with $([XXX] + [Ability])$ in the usage formula. There are 3 categories for abilities: Skills, Techniques, and AWESOME/AWFUL.

10.1   Skills

Skills represent your general knowledge of all things, and provide bonus(es) specifically to your KNO challenges. Their bonus is directly equal to the amount of Skill Points (SP) allocated to them. They affect the formula as so:

$$d100 + ([KNO] + [Skill])$$

As an example, if your character has a [KNO] of 20 and a Knitting Skill of 37; then in a Knitting challenge, you will add your d100 roll to **57** instead of 20 to calculate the result.

...... New Players! ....
Skills are used to perform a variety of quick tasks and can flesh out your character's past, present, and future. Before using Techniques, make sure you understand Skills first.
....

10.2   Techniques

Techniques are advanced maneuvers representing specific uses of Attributes during challenges. Unlike Skills these are not automatic boosts and cost Energy to use; starting at 10 EN and increasing by 5 EN per Advancement (Adv).

Initially the calculations will proceed much like Skills with the formula changing to $([technique] + [attribute])$ in the place of $[attribute]$, however as they are upgraded with Adv they can receive new effects.

...... New Players! ....
Typically Techniques will generally be used in character vs character challenges, but they can be used wherever applicable– even in obstacle challenges!
....

10.3   AWESOME/AWFUL

AWESOME/AWFUL (A/A) abilities represent a character's fringe expertise- the areas that they are the best and the worst in. AWESOME abilites create an additional ability with a value of *+50*, where AWFUL abilities will create an additional ability with the value of *-50*. Additionally, due to the increased risk, when an AWFUL ability is rolled the player will earn 1 Cool Token.[1].

...... New Players! ....
There may be situations in which your Skill or Technique is a negative number. This acts the same as when it is a positive number but you subtract instead of add. You are, afterall, adding a negative number.
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[1]Cool Tokens, pg. 20

_____ A Note to the GM _____

This may seem like a free bonus, but to make your
campaign(s)[2] more interesting I recommend you, or even the
player, try to put the character in AWESOME/AWFUL
situations.

Chapter 11

Character Development

Characters will always be developing as they're used and can undergo lasting changes at the end of, or even sometimes during, a session.

11.1 Advancement

The GM may give players the opportunity to advance one Attribute and/or ability

11.1.1 Earning Attribute Points

When given the opportunity, you can pick an Attribute you used during this session and roll a d10. The Attribute is increased by a number of AP equal to the number rolled.

11.1.2 Ability Advancement

When given the opportunity, you may choose to either advance an existing ability or add a new one.

11.2 Injuries & Enhancements

You will experience physical, mental, and spiritual changes on your journey. I recommend keeping track of these over the campaign.

11.3 Possessions

You will acquire a lot of artifacts, equipment, and trinkets over your journey. (author's note: right now it's all one area. I'm considering segmenting based on playtesting)(editor's note: we may need to reorganize a bit at some point yes)

11.4 Persons, Places, & Things of Interest

Part V

Advanced Mechanics (Experimental)

Chapter 12

Temporary Battle Damage

The locations are specific and the impact of losing health temporarily limits a character's abilities.

- Head
    - Always damage ESP.
- Body
    - Always damages END
- Arms
    - Typically damages POW
    - May also damage SPD
- Legs
    - Typically damages SPD
    - May also damage POW and/or END

This battle damage may be recovered over time. This is the same way you woud normally recover health but it would go to specific parts of the body instead of to the normal health pool.

Chapter 13

Reactive Maximum Energy

Recalculates at the *beginning* of each turn. This way, plans aren't disrupted mid-turn.

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