



Primordial Waters

a game by
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1 Introduction

Primordial waters is a generic, light, and abstract role playing rule set with a focus on keeping the game balanced while maintaining and even promoting creative story telling. It leans towards a cinematic play style.

1.1 Goals

- Rules light
- Flexible
- World agnostic
- Consistent probability distribution
- Easy preparation
- Little bookkeeping

1.2 Inspirations

This game did not come from nothing. Many other games had an impact on its creation. Some of the most impactful ones are the following.:

This game's systems for aspects and movement were heavily inspired from the Fate Core system. Karma was originally inspired by Fate Core's Fate Points, but EZD6 had the better name for the concept. The distribution of attributes into categories was inspired by the AERA RPG. The fate die to create unexpected events was inspired by the One Page Solo RPG Engine. The optional rule "Only Players Roll" is taken from the Cypher System. The alternative turn order was taken from Tides of Ambition.

1.3 How to use the game

First rule of Gaming: Have fun. If the rules hinder you from having fun then screw the rules.

Second rule of Gaming: When in doubt use common sense. The rules will never be perfect. If something is illogical when using the rules or if no rule exists for the situation then feel free to find your own.

Third rule of Gaming: Use the aspects value as a guideline and be creative with what it could mean. Does a flame wall having a value of 4 mean that it has a difficulty of 4 to jump over it or does it attack anyone jumping over with 4 dice? Do what fits your story.

1.4 Conventions

1.5 What dice to roll

We use a pool of d_02 to roll, although optional rules for alternative dice mechanics exist and are recommended once you get the hang of things. Since it is hard to find dice with the sides 0, 1, and 2 I recommend 2 alternatives.

Option 1: Use a $d6$.

- 1 or 2 get interpreted as a 0
- 3 or 4 get interpreted as a 1
- 5 or 6 get interpreted as a 2

Option 2: Use Fate dice. Fate dice have 3 different kinds of sides. +, – and nothing. Just count the number of lines. This means a + becomes a 2, a – becomes a 1 and an empty side becomes a 0.

Sometimes it makes no sense to roll dice, but we want a constant value. Then we can take the average. This means instead of rolling dice we just take the dice pool as if it were the result of a roll. This is fair since it is also the average result of a roll.

2 Rules

2.1 Attributes

Quick Reference:

There are the 8 attributes Strength, Dexterity, Will, Intellect, Empathy, Charisma, Gear, and Finances. Each attribute gets a whole number value.

Attributes describe a characters potential. The higher the value the greater things a character can achieve. There are the following 8 Attributes belonging to the 4 categories.

Category	Attribute	Description
Physical	Strength	strength and hardiness
	Dexterity	agility, speed, precision
Mental	Will	perseverance, attention
	Intellect	intelligence, knowledge
Social	Empathy	understanding people
	Charisma	interacting with people
Resources	Gear	Gear you have prepared
	Finances	Money and investments

The attributes value is the basis for the dice pool one has available for checks.

2.2 Aspects

Quick Reference:

Aspects have a descriptive name and a whole number value calles its aspect points (AP).

- Create: Make a check. The resulting AP are the AP of the new aspect.
- Use: Add the AP of the aspect to the check. Any AP can only be used once per round.
- Multiple Targets: To create an aspect that effects an area or multiple targets half the AP.
- Duration: By default an aspect can be used once. To make it apply every round until the duration is over half the AP.
- Acting: Aspects can perform actions on their own. For this use the AP as the dice pool.

- **Remove:** To remove an aspect you need to make a check. Reduce the AP of the aspect by the AP of the check.
- **Resistance:** Aspects can resist being removed. To reduce the AP of the check for removal by 1 for each resistance point. A point of resistance costs 1 AP.

Aspects are a combination of a descriptors and a value. When invoked the aspects value is added or subtracted from the dice pool for checks. An aspect is always bound to something. Be it a player, a NPC, an object or even a zone. Be creative with aspects. Try to bind their effects to the value and they should stay balanced enough.

Creating an Aspect An aspect can be created at any time by the GM. It can also be created by any player, NPC or even object. To create an aspect all but the GM need to make a check. The aspect points (AP) from this check can be used to create an aspect. Increasing or decreasing an aspects value by 1 costs 1 AP (aspect point). The description of the aspect can be decided freely.

Arthur the mage wants to inflame the grass around him to channel the enemies into a one on one battle with his Companions. The GM likes this idea and creates the aspect "Dry Grass 1" that Arthur can use. Arthur decides to cast his spell, succeeds with 3 AP, and creates the aspect "Wall of Fire 3". Now any enemy has to either go around the wall or get burned. If an enemy tries to jump through, they have to roll on it against the Fires 3 dice. If the fire succeeds they get burned.

Using Aspects Whenever it makes narrative sense an aspect can be used (also called invoked). When used an aspect adds its value to the number of points that can be used for a check. It is also possible to call out an aspect to be used to hinder a check. Then the value is subtracted from the points instead. An aspect can both be used for actions and reactions but never at the same time. If you use aspects in a contest make sure that aspects are not used more than once per round by a character or their points are distributed over different actions.

Area Aspects An aspect can affect a zone. This means it can be invoked for all in the zone. To create such an aspect costs double the AP (aspect points).

Exceptions may be made by the GM.

Multiple Targets If an aspect impacts multiple targets it costs double the AP (aspect points). Exceptions may be made by the GM.

Enduring Aspects An aspect can be over within a round or it can last longer. Normally aspects last at least a scene long. If your aspect should last longer it should cost double the AP (aspect points). If it should only last for a round the costs half. Exceptions may be made by the GM. In general it can be said, that an aspect lasts as long as it makes sense.

Acting Aspects Sometimes an aspect should perform actions on its own. Each round they can act like any other player or NPC. They use their value for their actions.

Poison Cloud 2: Each round it tries to use 2 dice to poison any inside. Since it impacts a zone it can do this for everyone inside the zone every round.

Resistant Aspects An aspect can have resistance to being removed. The resistance is subtracted from any attempt to removing this aspect. For each point of resistance costs 1. The effective resistance can never be more than the aspects value. Be creative when invoking a resistant aspect. For example armor could be implemented as an aspect with resistance.

A heavy door blocks the way. The GM creates the aspect Fortified Door 5[2]. This means the aspect has a value of 5 with a resistance of 2. The players try to break through with pure strength. On their first try they get 4 AP. 2 get absorbed by the doors resistance and the rest weakens the door. The doors aspect is now Fortified Door 3[2]. On their second try the players get 6 AP and break through. If the players had decided to pick the lock the GM may had ignored the resistance value.

Character Aspects Aspects can also be bound to a character and be bought with CP (character points). If an aspect is mostly negative in nature it may

give you CP instead. Character aspects can be invoked by the GM to make the character do something.

Damage Aspects are also used to represent damage a character or object has taken. If a character is unable to act in a scene because too many aspects hinder him, it is a good idea to narrate them out of the scene. It is also a good time to create a fitting negative character aspect representing this loss (like "lost an arm" or "fear of water" or "hateful of orcs").

2.3 Checks

Quick Reference:

Add points of attribute and aspects to get the dice pool. Roll one or multiple dice that are equivalent to the dice pool in value. The result of the roll are the aspect points (AP) of the check.

- **Difficulty:** Some aspects hinder a check. For them consider the AP to be negative instead.
- **Collaboration:** Add either the dice pool for the checks or the AP of all checks made together.
- **Risky:** Roll an additional *d6*. If it shows a 6 then use the result of the check to create a negative aspect instead.
- **Take Time:** Make multiple checks and add the AP.

Checks are rolled when the outcome of an action is not certain. Each check is bound to an attribute.

Add the points in the relevant attribute and all applicable aspects together. This is your dice pool. You get the result of the roll in aspect points (AP).

If the aspect points are zero or negative the check fails.

Difficulty The checks difficulty is the sum of all aspects that are to be overcome or created. This means that a door having the difficulty 3 to be opened is the same thing as the door having the aspect "Closed 3" on it. If an obstacle can not be partially overcome you can give it a resistant aspect.

The player tries to pick a door lock. The GM decides that he can not partially pick a lock and thus chip away at the door. So he gives it the aspect closed 1[5]. This means that the player needs at least 6 AP to open it and has to

do it with one check.

Collaborative checks Everyone rolls individually and then sum together all AP.

Risky checks Roll an additional d6, called the risk die. If the risk die shows a 6 then the result of the check is used to create a negative aspect. Alternatively you can forego rolling a risky check all together, including the risk die, but then the result is always half of your dice pool.

Taking Time Sometimes a check is too difficult to achieve something within 1 check. Then it may be possible to do multiple checks over a longer time to accumulate the points needed. However, you must decide beforehand how many checks you want to take. The AP of all checks are accumulated after considering the difficulty. The GM has a veto right and can limit the amount of checks.

Limited Aspects To prevent players from stacking up aspects endlessly it may be good to limit the amount of points one can use. The dice pool should be limited to double the sum of the relevant attribute and all used aspect points from character inherent aspects. Feel free to disregard this rule however if it does not fit well with the story.

Multiple Checks Sometimes the players fail to pass an obstacle with just one check. If the players have a new idea on how they might overcome the challenge then you can allow them another check. The new idea may add the checks AP to the previous attempt or replace them, depending on the narrative.

The player has to climb up a cliff. The cliff has the aspect sheer rock face 6[2] At first he tries to just climb. He rolls a 3 on his check. This does not suffice and because of the 2 resistance of the aspect he has only overcome 1 of the 6 AP, he needs. This is harder than expected and considering that he has already climbed some of the distance a failure may end in a fall. He pulls out some wedges from his pack and starts to use them to create some better holds. For this the GM allows a new check, which he gets 7 AP from. With those he just barely climbs the rest of the distance.

2.4 Contest

Quick Reference:

Each participant can make one or more checks each round.

- Action: A check to create an aspect
- Reaction: A check to prevent an aspect from being created.
- Turn Order: From the one with the highest dice pool to the one with the lowest. You can act on your turn or on any later point in the round.
- Multiple (re)actions: Total number of points (dice pool) gained from the attributes is the largest attribute value of the checks. From each attribute (and aspect) you can use at most its value in points.

The prototypical contest is combat, but the same rules can be used any scenario where multiple parties act in opposition to each other. Be it a diplomatic debate or the hostile takeover of a company.

A contest is divided into rounds. Each participant in the contest can make one or more checks each round. When it is a participants turn or on any later point in the round they can perform an action.

Actions An action is a check that tries to create an aspect. Any kind of aspect can be created, based on what fits the scene. You can try to gain an advantageous position, or start a big fire.

If in combat, by default, the aspect that is created is **damage**. Damage is an enduring aspect thus costing 2 AP per level of the aspect. After combat **damage** gets converted to one or more fitting negative aspects like "broken leg" or "battered and bruised". Alternatively the aspect can be **stress** as a non enduring alternative to damage. **Stress** only holds for 1 round but cost only 1 AP per level of the aspect.

If a character has more **damage** than he has points in an applicable attribute and character aspects combined then he is considered incapacitated for the rest of combat. This may mean that he is unconscious, writhing in pain or just to demoralised to fight.

Reactions Whenever someone takes an action and has rolled his dice anyone else can immediately try to perform a reaction to prevent it. A reaction does not by its nature create an aspect. If you announce this before the action is rolled you can take the average on a reaction. You have to announce the number of dice invested. The points from the reaction are then subtracted from the points of the action to lessen its effect.

Turn Order The participants take turn from the one with the highest relevant attribute (+ aspects) to the lowest. On your turn you don't have to act. You can act at any point after you turn in the turn order. Even multiple times.

Alternative:

- All characters of a party act together (typically all player characters or all enemies).
- If a party surprises the others then they go first.
- If a party has significantly less members, then they go first.
- If in doubt then determine the order by comparing the dice pools of the parties. The highest one begins.

Multiple (re)actions Each round you can take multiple actions and reactions. The total number of points gained from the attributes is the largest attribute value of the checks. From each attribute you can use at most its value in points in total. Each Aspect can only be used once or their AP (attribute points) have to be distributed to the (re)actions.

Acting together When acting together all values are combined and a single combined check is made or alternatively everyone rolls separately and only the AP are combined. To act together all have to act at the same time in the turn order, so effectively at the earliest when the slowest has his turn.

2.5 Traits

Quick Reference:

Traits allow characters to break rules in some way. Some checks that can only be performed because of a trait make those checks risky. Traits can be bought for character points.

Traits are distinguishing things about the character that allow him to break a rule of the world or the game in some way. For example with the Trait Night Vision you can just see in the dark. No rolls required. Some traits (like all magic) should come with a risk, meaning all checks that can only be made with this trait are risky checks. They can be bought for character points, this is possible both at character creation and later in the game.

See the chapter List of Traits for examples.

2.6 Karma

Quick Reference:

Each player can have up to 3 karma. They can be used at any point in time to repeat a single die roll (not just your own) or to add an interesting aspect to a scene. The GM has veto rights. Karma can be recovered by a characters aspect or trait being used against them or by objectively failing in a scene or as a reward for good role play (anything that brings joy to all players and the GM).

2.7 Character Creation

Quick Reference:

Distribute 150 CP on your Attributes, Aspects and Traits.

Use the rules under equipment to limit your starting gear.

Character Advancement: You may reward your players with CP (character points) for reaching milestones in the story or simply surviving the session.

- An attribute point costs 6 CP.
- An Aspect point typically costs 6 CP but can vary based on how specific they are.
- A Trait typically costs 15 CP but can vary widely. Negative traits can even have a negative price.

A typical player character will have:

- all attributes with value 2 on average
- 3 aspects with value 2
- 1 trait

2.8 Movement and Range

Quick Reference:

Sometimes it is useful to draw maps and define distances. In a contest split the area into roughly 3-5 zones. A character can move from one zone to another each round. If one can act at a range, like for example when shooting a bow, one can act 1-2 zones far. During the round a character is moving he can be considered to be in both zones at once.

2.9 Items and Equipment

Items have a description and a resource value (RV). The RV is an abstraction for the items price or usefulness. Items may have an aspect associated with them. If you want items to have any specific effects you may add aspects. At any time the GM can choose to give an item an aspect. Normally it will have the resource value of the item in AP. You don't have to write down the obvious aspects an item has. For example you don't need to specify that the sword is good for slicing stuff.

A few examples can be found in the section List of Items.

RV	Description	Example
0	Free	a club
2	Cheap	simple clothes, basic tools
4	Affordable	regular car, apartment
6	Costly	regular house
8	Expensive	sports car, designer clothes
10	Very Expensive	small airplane
12	Luxurious	private jet

Armor / Damage Reduction There is no Armor but some aspects can act as such. If an aspect can be used in a defensive (re)action, this effectively reduces the amount of AP of the attack. Thus they act like armor. Think of armor items as having the protective aspect on them. If an aspect can be used is up to the GM. So he can decide that the very expensive ballgown can not be used to defend against a bullet.

Equipment Characters can have gear with a value of up to the attribute Gear in RV on them. They must be able to carry all that gear on them or if it is part of their household it must fit in their normally furnished home. Apply reason as necessary.

When out adventuring characters have all the gear that they have written down. Additionally they can be allowed to make a Gear check against the RV of what they would like to have in the moment to see if they do. The check is risky and if they fail they get the negative aspect "Packed the wrong stuff" until the end of the mission or until they resupply.

Buying Characters can buy new items with a Finances check. It works just like crafting an aspect with the resource value (RV) in aspect points (AP). If you succeed in buying the item then you take a negative aspect on your finances for

some time. The GM does not have to let you retry on a fail. If you use items with aspects to do this like the "Treasure" you found during your last adventure you may lose them if you succeed on the check.

Crafting Characters can also build their own items. For that they need the appropriate tools and resources. The resources may be bought and have a RV of the item to be build minus 1. To build the item the character needs to make a check and achieve at least the items RV in AP. If that fails the resources might be lost, depending on what they are.

Gathering Resources can be gathered with a check and their RV as difficulty.

Describe To create an item first give it a short description. Second you determine its value if applicable. Add aspects if applicable. The sum of the aspects AP should not exceed the RV.

Bribing To Bribe someone you need to give them more than they can normally comfortably afford. This means you need more than their finances value in RV to bribe them.

3 Optional Rules

3.1 Magic

Magic gives a huge narrative flexibility to explain aspects. To balance this out any checks made using magic should be risky checks.

Depending on the setting, a trait might be necessary to cast magic or even a specific kind of magic.

With this magic can still become quite powerful, since one can create several aspects and combine them for bigger spells. For example a mage might make special conjuration candles, draw a pentagram with magic symbols and then use those two aspect to assist in his conjuration spell.

It is up to the individual games setting to define how magic works. By themselves the rules above give a very soft magic system, but by defining how magic works in your world, you can make it a hard magic system.

3.2 Less precise Attributes

Instead of using the attributes as listed you can use only the categories (Physical, Mental, Social, Resources). Learning a level in one of the categories costs double of what a level in an attribute would cost. For GMs it might even be useful to combine all attributes into a single value called the capability (CB) for some NPCs. In this case the costs are 8 times that of what a level in an attribute would cost.

3.3 No Abstraction for Wealth

To remove the resources category from the attributes just raise the price of learning a level of the other attributes by $\frac{1}{3}$ (from 6 to 8). The costs for goods and services depend on the campaign setting.

3.4 Retroactive Actions

The GM may allow players retroactively having performed some action. For example having placed a trap beforehand. To balance this any check on such an action should be a risky check.

3.5 Quicker Battles

Instead of differentiating between attacking and blocking you can speed up combat by handling it all as generic combat. If someone initiates combat with his action, others may react with combat in return. Whoever wins the contest makes the difference as a damaging aspect.

3.6 Stress in Contests

To speed up and simplify contests you can always create an abstract Aspect called "Stress". Stress does not hinder you in a contest but once it reaches the same value as your attribute you lose the contest. After combat stress converts into an appropriate aspect of equal size.

3.7 Only Players Roll

If you like you can generally let only players roll the dice. Everyone else will take the average result. This means that in combat only players will roll to hit or roll to block.

3.8 Unexpected Results

Assuming you play with a set of cards. Add the two jokers to the deck. If a joker is drawn then draw again and resolve the check normally. Afterwards, if the joker was red create an aspect worth the difficulty of the check in AP to the characters disadvantage. If the joker was black create an advantageous aspect instead. The new aspect does not have to be related to the check. If a complication has appeared in the scene already you may ignore a joker (GMs choice).

A negative aspect during a mountaineering expedition may be that it starts to rain Aspect: heavy rain

A positive aspect during a fight against goblins may be that you decapitate the goblin in an intimidating display, Not only does the goblin die but the display also weakens the goblins resolve. Likely they will try to flee after seeing this. Aspect: Intimidatin display

3.9 Alternative Dice Mechanics

The rules often mention a dice pool. This pool is hypothetical. It means if you always used a number of d_02 to perform any check this would be your dice pool. A d_02 has an average result of 1. Therefore the dice in the dice pool is always exactly the average result of a check. This does not mean you have to roll your checks in that way. See the following for alternatives.

3.9.1 Shorthand notation

A $F \cdot Nd_0X$ means rolling dice with 0 to X as possible results N times, and adding the results, multiplying the result with F . Since there are very few dice that that have a 0 as a possible result you can use other methods to get the result. I suggest to draw a playing card.

3.9.2 Playing cards instead of dice

To use Playing cards instead of dice you can do the following. Take a standard 54 card deck of playing cards. Remove the 2 Jokers from it. Shuffle and pick a card. If it is a number then take the number as a result. Aces count as 1. Jacks count as 11, Kings count as 12. Queens count as 0 since Q looks most like a 0.

3.9.3 Alternative Dice

- $1d_02$ is worth exactly 1 dice from the pool (this is the default)
- $1d_0N$ is worth $\frac{N}{2}$ dice from the pool
- $1dN$ is worth $\frac{N+1}{2}$ dice from the pool
- Take the average: N constant points is worth N dice from the pool
- Any dice multiplied by a factor F is worth the price of a single dice multiplied by this factor F

The default is to use $F \cdot 1d_08 + c$. This means that the factor F is the dice pool divided by $\frac{8}{2} = 4$ with c being the remainder. The players are free to use any other combination of dice they like as long as they don't exceed the dice pool. Note that the more dice you roll the more predictable the results will be.

One way to do this is to use a d10 die. Most of them start are actually a d_09 . You can use it as a d_08 by ignoring any 9 that is rolled or if you use the Unexpected Results optional rules, treat a 9 as if it were a joker.

If you don't take the average then it is advisable to keep the constant points between $-\frac{N}{2}$ and $+\frac{N}{2}$, to keep the window of possible results wide.

4 Lists

None of the following lists is exhaustive. They should be taken as examples. You are invited to design your own with your group.

4.1 List of Traits

Friend of Nature (7): You can talk to the forces of nature and have a chance to convince them to help you. This can be asking, a bird what he has seen, letting yourself be concealed by a bush or calling a wild bear to aid you in combat.

Illusionist (7): You are adapt at creating illusions. The bigger and more complex they get the harder this is.

Speedster (14): You have incredible speed. Others see only a blur when you sprint past them. This often gives you an advantage on dexterity checks and you always have at least 1 success in them. It takes you half the dice to move on a round.

Medium (7): You can commune with ghosts and spirits. You have no control over them, but you can gain their attention.

Night-vision (7): You can see in darkness as if it were light.

Sleepless (7): You don't need sleep. This means you have a lot more time in a day, but you still need to rest from too much physical or mental exertion.

Flight (16): You can fly. Be it with wings or otherwise. Your speed in flight is no different from your speed on land.

Tinkerer (7): You can build wondrous mechanical marvels. From clocks up to steam powered automatons.

Hacker (7): You are not only proficient in computer science but you can even achieve movie worthy feats like stopping another car with only your laptop during a car chase. Tools not included.

Plot Armor (3): Each scene you can disregard an aspect representing damage.

Short Weapon Fighting (1): You can not get disadvantage because your weapons are too short compared to your opponent.

Unarmed vs. Armed (2): You can fight against armed opponents even when you have no weapon without disadvantage.

Alchemist (7): You can brew potions, salves and other things which create wondrous effects.

Shape Shifter (7): You can alter the physical form of either yourself or that of others.

Seer (7): You have the ability to see glimpses of future, past and present. Both at your current position and over great distances.

Amphibious (7): You can live both underwater and on land.

4.2 List of Items

Sword (2): It's a stabby piece of metal. Especially good at harming unarmored enemies. Not so great at slicing through armor.

Mail shirt (3): A metal fabric that protects your torso and arms from being cut or stabbed pretty well. However it helps little against blunt force trauma.

Club of the great Bear (4): A mystical club made from the thigh bone of the great bear that terrorized the Inokwa people. It still contains the strength of the mighty beast. When using this club you gain 1 in strength checks.

Knightly Armor (4): A good example of heavy armor that protects from physical damage from most weapons.

Protective Amulet (2): This amulet made from magically potent elder wood protects lightly (1 damage reduction) from mental damage coming from magic.

Pentagram Amulet (2): This amulet was made to prevent possession and influence of otherworldly forces. Allows you to reroll 1 die against attacks against your mental state when coming from ghosts, magic, or similar forces.

Potion of Healing (3): When being drunk it allows you to reduce the healing time of up to 3 physical damage from M to S

Shield (2): Gives the reroll of 1 die when blocking with the shield.

Sword (2): This stabby piece of steel typically makes class M damage. Its also good at slicing.

4.3 List of NPCs

The following are examples of NPCs and monsters. They are all created using the rules for Character Creation.

Average Citizen (96CP)	
Competency	2
Aspects: • None	Traits: • None

Goblin (75CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
2	1	1	1
Aspects: • None	Traits: • Night Vision		

Ratling (54CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
1	1	1	1
Aspects: • Strength in Numbers 1	Traits: • None		

Wolf (78CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
3	1	2	0
Aspects: • Endless endurance 1	Traits: • None		

Guard (108CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
3	2	2	2
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 			

Dark Mage (237CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
2	7	3	5
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necromancer 3 Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telepathic link to undead servants 			

Ogre (192CP)							
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
15	7	5	1	1	1	1	1
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 							

Zombie (75CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
2	1	1	1
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infectious bite 			

Bandit (108CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
3	2	2	2
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 			

Combat Drone (105CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
3	1	1	1
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting 3 Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night-vision 			

Orc Veteran (171CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
5	3	2	2
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reckless and Bold 2 Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night-vision 			

Orc Warrior (105CP)			
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
3	2	1	1
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reckless and Bold 1 Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night-vision 			

Giant Spider (117CP)							
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
2	4	2	2	1	1	2	1
Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spider Webs 2 Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night-vision 							

5 Advice

5.1 Gameplay Notes

Since aspects can appear, disappear and change frequently during play, it is good to write them down and show them to your players. For this i suggest to use post-it notes. This has the nice effect that you can give your players something physical that represents the advantages they created or can use.

5.2 Character Creation

When creating a character you should adhere to the following advice:

- No attribute above 6
- No attribute below 2
- Have 1 aspect describing what you want to be good at
- Have 1 aspect describing how you make your living
- Have 1 aspect describing what you like to do as a hobby
- Formulrate your traits and aspects such that they can be interpreted as a vulnerability
- Have at least 1 trait

Break these rules as you like.

5.3 Encounter Design

The challenge value (CV) is a number servig as a quick reference for how hard aspects to overcome should be or how strog enemies should be, When creating aspects that the players must overcome use the CV as the AP (aspect points). Then creating enemies that the players must fight set their Competence or attribute to the CV.

- For static challenges, the players CP divided by 25 is a good challenge value.
- For group challenges, the sum of all players CP dividec by 25 is a good challenge value.
- For contests match the enemies total CP with that of the players.
- Let your players become creative and create aspects to help them better their odds.
- Try to give any noteworthy opponent an advantageous and a disadvantageous aspect. Give the players a chance to find out about those.

5.4 How to Rule: Stealth as a Group

Only roll the checks for the players and take the average for everyone else. Compare the sneaking of each from the one party to the perception of each from the other party. If any perception is higher than any of the sneaking values then they get spotted. Often times the characters in the party help each other. Let them distribute some points within the group after they rolled their checks. This represents something like the best scout sneaking ahead and finding the best route for the others, or distracting a guard such that the more obvious members of the party can pass unnoticed.

5.5 How to Rule: Taunting

Let the player make a check to create the "taunted by .." aspect. This may be opposed by the other party. If the aspect is created then it hinders any attack on someone else. It may also impact other actions. It may be a smart choice to make the "taunted by .." aspect enduring and affecting the whole group.

5.6 How to Rule: Extremely Small Creatures

Lets say a player turns himself into a mouse. How does this impact his strength, dexterity and intellect? In most cases being a mouse is just an aspect on the player (here it is "mouse form 5"). Lets say the player has a value of 3 in all Checks with zero or negative dice pools. Shift the dice pool for the check up until it reaches 1. Perform the same shift for the reaction. If multiple parties participate

If a dice pool turns negative it does not mean that you can not roll. Checks are really just a comparison between the rolled AP and either the AP oposing force. By default it is 0.

6 Game-play Examples

6.1 Character Builds

Anna the Alchemist						(261CP)	
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
3	3	4	6	4	3	6	6

Traits:

- Magical Alchemy

Aspects:

- Third daughter of an Aristocratic Family 2
- Proud member of the Alchemists Guild of Mistwater 3
- Hobby Horse Rider and Trainer 1

Bob the Barbarian						(234CP)	
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
6	5	4	3	2	4	2	2

Traits:

- Cold Resistance
- Plot Armor: Can prevent getting a damaging aspect up to one time per scene.

Aspects:

- Member of the isolated Nomads of the eastern steppes 2
- Best Fighter of his tribe and wrestling champion 3
- Gambler 1

Generic Citizen		(96CP)	
Competency		2	

Traits:

- None

Aspects:

- None

Shapeshifting Druid						(278CP)	
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
4	4	5	3	3	4	3	2
<div> <div>Traits:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • druidic magic • Magical alchemy • Shapeshifting • Seer </div> <div> <div>Aspects:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shapeshifting Druid 4 • Protector of the Ancient Grove 3 • Knowledgeable in the alchemy of the gifts of nature 2 </div>							

Space Pirate						(252CP)	
Physical		Mental		Social		Resources	
Str.	Dex.	Will	Int.	Emp.	Cha.	Gear	Fin.
3	3	4	5	3	4	3	4
<div> <div>Traits:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bionic Eye with super zoom level and infrared vision. • Bionic Leg </div> <div> <div>Aspects:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has lived in space all his life 2 • If the captain ordered it, it has to be done 2 • Space engineer 1 • Gambler 2 • Really good with the needle 1 </div>							

Cody the Cowboy			(174CP)
Physical	Mental	Social	Resources
2	2	2	2
<div> <div> Traits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None </div> <div> Aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • True frontiersman 2 • Gambler 1 • Horse Whisperer 2 • • Has lived in space all his life 2 • If the captain ordered it, it has to be done 2 • Space engineer 1 • Gambler 2 • Really good with the needle 1 </div> </div>			

6.2 Example: Ambushed by Goblins

GM is the Game Master Mathew controlling the 3 goblins (P: 2, M; 1, S: 1, Life of Banditry 1)

A is the player Anna with her character Amy (P: 3,M: 6,S: 4, Proud member of the Alchemists Guild of Mistwater 3)

B is the player Ben with his character Boris (P: 6,M: 4,S: 3, Best Fighter of his tribe and wrestling champion 3, Member of the isolated Nomads of the eastern steppes 2)

GM: As you walk along the forest trail please roll for perception with your will.

- GM rolls $6d = 4$ for the 3 goblins trying to ambush
- A rolls $4d = 4$
- B rolls $6d = 10$

GM: You notice a shuffling in the bushes before you reach the choke-point. You exchange a quick look with one another and know that the Goblins must be here.

B: I try to intimidate the goblins in order to prevent them from attacking us. I step forward as if there was nothing there and say to Amy "Remember the Wivern we killed last week. Turns out it ate one of the royal knights. What total weaklings they must have been. I mean we ripped that lizards fucking head of without breaking a sweat."

GM: roll for intimidation with charisma, you can use your barbarian aspect for it. The story sounds very much like what a barbarian would do.

- B rolls $6d = 2$

- GM rolls $3d = 5$

GM: They block with their empathy. Sorry Ben, the goblins are not convinced. They jump out of the bushes.

A: Can i have prepared a smoke bomb?

GM: Ok, make a retroactive check for your alchemy.

- A rolls $9d = 6$ with an "and"

A: It should cover an area with smoke. For the and, how about it also causes coughing.

GM: Sounds good. As i said the goblins jump out of the bushes and attack, still thinking that you don't expect them. Lets start the turn order. Anna, Ben you go first. Since you have equal values decide among yourself who begins.

A: I throw the bomb at them. I use 1d and the smoke bomb. I want it to cover a zone.

- A rolls $7d = 5 \Rightarrow$ the smoke aspect has strength $5/2 = 2$

GM: The goblins dont expect this and dont try to defend. I will add covered in irritating to them.

B: I attack with my axe. I use 3 of my strength dice and my fighting aspect.

- B rolls $6d = 0$ "and"

GM: During the attack you step partially into the smoke and breathe in some of it. I give you the aspect coughing 2. The goblins attack. They rolled 5 please defend ben.

- GM rolls $9d-2d = 7d = 5$

A: I want to assist in bens defense.

- A rolls $2d = 3$
- B rolls $6d-2d = 4d = 3$

GM: Together you manage to defend with 6 against 5. Next round. It is your turn.

B: I attack

- B rolls $4d + 3 = 9$
- GM rolls $7d = 4$

GM: You kill two of them outright.

A: I attack the remaining one.

- A rolls $3d = 1$

GM: After this. He will try to flee.

A: "Let him run"

GM: The goblin runs away and soon the smoke dissipates and the street is silent once more.

6.3 Example: The Ambush

The players are preparing an ambush on a patrol. The GM describes the scene

GM: You know that the patrol is going to pass through this area, using the small forrest path. It is barely wide enough for a single cart and shallow ruts in the road indicate that the path is only used ocasionaly. The underbrush is thick in some parts, but there are also stretches of dark pine forrest. Because of the recent rains there are mud puddles everywhere.

He creates some aspects

- shallow ruts 1
- narrow path 1
- thick underbrush 1
- dark shadows under the pines 1
- muddy ground 1

The players will prepare the ambush. For this they can make as many checks to create aspects as they have time to do.

R: As a ranger i am good in nature and will select the best spot for the ambush. It should be especially narrow such that they can not maneuver well. The ground should be muddy and i want particularly dark shadows to cover us, but not the enemy.

GM: So no shallow ruts and no thick underbush?

R: The ruts are fine, but i dont want us to be hindered by the underbrush.

GM: Yes, that is possible. You can use the dark shadows and muddy ground to prepare the spot. Make the intelect check.

R: I have 3 from my attribute and 3 from being a ranger. [rolls $1d_08 + 2 = 6 + 2$ on the check] I have 8AP. I would like the aspect to last the entire scene [AP / 2] and apply to all of us [AP / 2].

He writes the aspect on a postit and places it on the table

- Well prepared Ambush 2

The GM takes the unused aspects back of the table. What is left are

- shallow ruts 1
- narrow path 1
- dark shadows under the pines 1
- muddy ground 1

A: As an Alchemist i would like to prepare a fire bomb at the spot of the ambush. As we establishes last time i should have all the ingredients.

GM: With the muddy ground it will be hard to ignite the bomb.

A: Fine. I can still do it. 4 from my intelect and 3 from being an alchemist.

GM: Dont forget to hide the thing.

T: As a reformed thief i will help him with that. 2 from intellect and 3 from thievery [rolls $1d_08 + 1 = 6$].

A: [rolls $2d_8 - 1 = 2 * 7 - 1 = 13$] Oh, that is going to hurt. I want all of them to be affected [AP / 2].

The players create the aspects

- Fire bomb 6
- Well hidden 6

As they see the numbers fitting so well they replace the aspects with

- Well hidden fire bomb 6

D: My druidic circle specialises in turning into a bear for fighting. So i will shape shift and lie in wait. 4 will and 2 druidry plus 1 from my speciality in shape shifting [rolls $2d_0 - 1 = 2 - 1 = 1$]. That is not going to be convincing.

GM: You dont quite turn into a bear. Instead you become much more hary and a bit stronger.

D: Can i at least hide?

GM: No need. We will roll that check collectively later.

The druid gets the aspect

- Bear'ish form 1

The preparations are done, and the GM narates how the patrol comes down the road.

GM: Lets see if they can spot you. Is a collective check okay for all of you?

All: Yes

A: I have only 3 points, but 2 more from the well prepared ambush makes 5 in total.

T: 6 from me.

D: I can contribute 5. Does my fur help with hiding?

GM: yes, it helps.

D: Then 6 from me as well.

R: I contribute 7. That makes 24 in total. [rolls $6d_08 = 24$]

GM: That makes 6 on average. The 5 soldiers have 4 each so they are surprised 2 ($6 - 4 = 2$) by your attack. You are still unnoticed as they reach the trap.

The GM creates the aspect

- Surprised 2

GM: Let the combat scene begin.

A: Kaboom

GM: Indeed. The bomb explodes. Lets see if any one notices [rolls $1d_08 - 1$ each with the results 3,2,7,7,6 and compares this to the bomb being hidden]. Just two notice the smell of sulphur and try to evade [rolls $1d_08 - 3$ for both with results

2,1 and compares this to the bomb damage]. They all take a lot of damage. Three of them go down immediately. Two try to stand up.

R: I shoot one of them [rolls $1d_08 + 3 = 10$].

T: And i the other [rolls $1d_08 + 1 = 4$]

GM: They are both dead. Congratulations it all worked perfectly. Lets hope the others did not hear the explosion.

All: Oh no.

7 Solo Rules

7.1 Scene

Roll on the Scene type table to find out what kind of scene it is.

For at least 3 descriptors roll on the descriptor table. If you have consecutive scenes then i advise to roll only 1 new descriptor and remove only the first of the previous scene. This will make your encounters more connected to one another.

Lead questions for Scenes:

- Who/What?
- Does What?
- To whom?
- In what manner?

7.2 NPCs

Lead questions for NPCs:

- Who?
- Does What?
- Personality?
- Desires?
- Has Vice?
- Has Virtue?

7.3 Environmental Challenges and Combat Encounters

- take players average strength ($\frac{CP*3}{100}$) and add \$ 1 d_0 8 - 4 \$ This is the difficulty of challenging aspects or the average value for enemies.
- Add some beneficial and detrimental aspects in equal measure as you see fit.

7.4 Descriptors

Ask you question and roll as often on the descriptor table as you need to get a good idea. Feel free to disregard meaning that dont work for you. The descriptor table is based on the Toki Pona language. The second column provides you with the applicable toki pona word and gives you a short form to write it down.

7.5 Tables

Yes / No Questions

1	Very No
2-4	No
5-6	Abiguous
7-9	Yes
10	Very yes

Ammount

1	Very Little
2-4	Less
5-6	Expected
7-9	More
10	Very Much

Scene Type

1-4	As Expected
5-6	Environmental
7-8	Social
9-10	Combat

Description

00	akesi	reptile, amphibian
01	ala	no, not, zero, nothing
02	alasa	to hunt, forage, seek, try to, attempt
03	ale	all, abundant, bountiful, plentiful, life
04	anpa	dependent, under, floor, low, bottom
05	ante	different, altered, changed, other
06	awen	enduring, protected, safe, waiting
07	esun	market, shop, fair, bazaar, deal
08	ijo	thing, phenomenon, object, matter
09	ike	bad, negative, irrelevant, complicated
10	ilo	tool, implement, machine, device
11	insa	centre, content, inside, internal organ
12	jaki	disgusting, obscene, sickly, toxic, unclean
13	jan	human being, person, somebody
14	jelo	yellow, yellowish
15	jo	to have, carry, contain, hold
16	kala	fish, marine animal, sea creature
17	kalama	to produce a sound, recite, utter aloud
18	kama	coming, future, summoned, to become
19	kasi	plant, vegetation: herb, leaf
20	kepeken	to use, with, by means of
21	kili	fruit, vegetable, mushroom
22	kiwen	hard object, metal, rock, stone
23	ko	clay, semi-solid, paste, powder
24	kon	air, breath, essence, spirit
25	kule	colorful, pigmented, painted
26	kulupu	community, company, group, nation
27	kute	ear, to hear, listen, obey
28	lape	sleeping, resting
29	laso	blue, green
30	lawa	head, mind, to control, direct, guide, own
31	len	cloth, clothing, fabric, textile, cover
32	lete	cold, cool, uncooked, raw
33	lili	little, small, short, few, a bit, young
34	linja	cord, hair, rope, thread, line, connection
35	lipu	flat object, book, paper, record, website
36	loje	red, reddish
37	lon	located at, real, true, existing, affirmative
38	luka	arm, hand, five, touch/feel, interact
39	luvin	eye, see, examine, read, seek, try to
40	lupa	door, hole, orifice, window
41	ma	earth, outdoors, world, territory, soil
42	mama	ancestor, creator, caretaker, sustainer
43	mani	money, cash, savings, wealth
44	moku	to eat, drink, consume, ingest
45	moli	dead, dying
46	monsi	back, behind, rear
47	mu	animal noise, non-speech vocalization
48	mun	moon, night sky object, star, glow
49	musi	artistic, entertaining, playful, recreation

50	mute	many, a lot, more, much, quantity
51	nasa	unusual, strange: silly: drunk, intoxicated
52	nasin	way, custom, doctrine, method, path, road
53	nen	bump, button, hill, mountain, nose
54	nimi	name, word
55	noka	foot, leg, bottom, lower part
56	olin	love, respect, show affection to
57	open	begin, start, open, turn on
58	pakala	botched, broken, damaged, harmed
59	pali	do, take action on, build, prepare
60	palisa	long hard thing, branch, rod, stick
61	pan	cereal, grain, barley, bread, pasta
62	pana	give, send, emit, provide, put, release
63	pilin	heart, feeling, emotion
64	pimeja	black, dark, unlit
65	pini	ago, completed, ended, finished, past
66	pipi	bug, insect, ant, spider
67	poka	hip, side, next to, nearby, beside
68	poki	container, bag, bowl, cupboard, vessel
69	pona	good, positive, useful, friendly, simple
70	sama	same, similar, sibling, peer, fellow, as, like
71	seli	fire, chemical reaction, heat source
72	selo	outer form, outer layer, bark, skin, boundary
73	sevi	area above, awe, divine, supernatural
74	sijelo	body, physical state, torso
75	sike	ball, circle, cycle, sphere, wheel
76	sin	new, fresh: additional, another, extra
77	sinpin	face, foremost, front, wall
78	sitelen	image, picture, symbol, mark, writing
79	sona	know, be skilled in, be wise about
80	soweli	animal, beast, land mammal
81	suli	big, heavy, large, long, important, adult
82	suno	sun, light, radiance, shine, light source
83	supa	horizontal surface, bed, table
84	suwi	sweet, fragrant: cute, innocent, adorable
85	tawa	going to, toward, for, moving, going to
86	telo	water, liquid, fluid, wet substance, beverages
87	tenpo	time, duration, moment, period, situation
88	toki	communicate, say, speak, talk, think
89	tomo	indoor space, building, home, house, room
90	tu	two, separate, cut
91	unpa	have sexual relations with
92	uta	mouth, lips, oral cavity, jaw
93	utala	battle, challenge, struggle against
94	walo	white, whitish, light-coloured, pale
95	wan	unique, united: one
96	waso	bird, flying creature, winged animal
97	wawa	strong, confident, energetic, intense
98	weka	absent, away, ignored
99	wile	must, need, require, should, want, wish

8 Scenario: X-Files meets cold war

8.1 Rules

Players can access the resources of their respective Organisation. When they do this they can invoke the aspects of the organisation. The organisation can also act on its own.

Since the players may only have a limited influence to access the resources of the organisation they can only get a limited ammount of help per mission. The value of the abstract authority in <organisation> is this limiting factor. This value is not bought but earned. The GM may award a point to this aspect at the end of a session. The aspect is not bound to a single player character but the entire group. The aspect starts at the value 2.

Sometimes the characters will encounter the mystical. The mythstical can be experienced by everyone but the world has a strong tendency to obfuscate it. Anyone who hinders it in doing so will be cursed with evil things. Those who aid it will sometimes be blessed, but only while in the pursuit of obfuscation. No one knows why this is.

Aspect: Cursed A cursed person may be befallen with disease, bad luck or find himself disliked and not believed by others. The curse tends to disappear as less and less people believe in what ever was revealed.

Apsect: Blessed A blessed person may use the AP from the blessing (once per point) to aid in his actions.

This is also the reason why all organisations dealing with the supernatural tend to be very secretive, small and compartmentalised. Often operators and soldiers know only the bear minimum they need to.

The supernatural creatures are also impacted by this. The universe itself is fighting against these invaders, which bring its internal logic into question. However the supernatural exists and tries to stay alive or even in some cases bring ruin to the universe itself (for example eldrich gods)

8.2 Organisations

Have aspects and traits.

MI13

Observation: Assault: Human Intelligence: Interrigation: Investiga-
tion: Okkultismus:

The MI13 is a secret branch of the British secret services. It deals with the supernatural. Because of the British colonial history, they have

access to ancient artifacts from all over the world. These artifacts are mostly stored in vaults, but in some cases used to further the British agenda.

Trait: A whole lot of artifacts

KGB department Neob"jasnimyj

These department of the KGB is both an espionage and research agency. Since they know about the danger of knowledge they tend to use brainwashing techniques to make others perform some of the more dangerous tasks.

Trait: Brainwashing techniques

FBI / CIA joined taskforce M

Trait: Memory erasure technology

Illuminati

Trait: Occult Obfuscation Rituals

Order of Montessa

Nachfolgeorden der Tempelritter

- Streng christlich
-

Trait: Banishing the Unnatural

Ordo Templi Orientis

Okkulte Organisation Verbindung zu Theodor Reuß und Aleister Crowley

Trait: Sexual magic rituals for the divination of the occult

8.3 Other Groups

Alien Conspiracy Theorists

Ghost Hunters

Whitch Covens Mostly consisting of 3-5 Individuals.

8.4 Monsters and the Supernatural

8.5 Adventure Hooks

8.5.1 Spy in a cult

The players are sent to retrieve documents from a spy that hides in a cult. The spy was caught on film wearing the cult's garb.

- A cult is in possession of a supernatural artifact.
- This artifact is used by the cult to prove the prophets power
 - He uses it to make plants grow
 - It can be used to speed up time in terms of growth
 - He also uses it to age children into adulthood and thus getting untraceable members (secret of the inner circle)
- The cult manages a shelter for the homeless with special accommodation for children.
 - From there some children are transferred to another compound for brain-washing and indoctrination
 - After this they are aged and brought into the main community.
- A spy is hiding within this cult since they give members new names and isolate themselves in an isolated compound
- The spy tries to smuggle some documents out of the country. Neither your side nor theirs knows the contents.

Aspects:

- Isolated Compound 3
- Indoctrinated Members 2
- Communal Ownership 1

8.5.2 The escape plan

The players are tasked with exfiltrating a turncoat from eastern Germany into the west.

Aspects:

- Police State 2
- Oppressed Public 1
- True believers of Communism 1
- The Wall 6

8.5.3 An involuntary source

The players must establish observation of a high ranking official. This can be done by turning him, observing him or extracing information through a honeypot. Let the group figure out how they could achieve this. The goal is to get a steady stream of information from the source.

Aspects:

- Loves Power more than Money 2
- Pride 1
- Strong routine 2
- Hard to work with 1

9 Scenario: WW1 in Fantasy

The world is inhabited by all the typical races you find in fantasy. They are all races of Humanity, meaning that crossbreeding is possible, albeit in some cases may be rare. Magic is a comparatively rare thing. In ancient times it was more prominent but over the centuries the weave of magic became thinner and thinner. All the big nations and kingdoms are mostly homogenous with respect to the race of their citizens.

Technologically the world is comparable to the time of the first world war with a bit of steampunk.

Recently the world has become very tumultuous. Most nations are at war with one another. Alliances are fleeting and the tides of war are constantly shifting. The Nations of the world are not strictly separated by race. So a typical mixed group of players could be from anywhere.

The following assumes the group to play spies or gangsters.

World Aspects:

- Thin magic weave 3
- The tides of war are constantly shifting 2

9.1 Rules

Organisation Influence:

9.2 Adventure Hooks

9.2.1 Missing Orphans

The city is full of orphans because of the ongoing war. The players hear rumors that several orphans have gone missing.

- The institute of archane studies sits in a network of buildings litteres through-out the city.
- The institute provides weapons to the military and uses the Orphans to build some of them. The brains of the children are extracted and used as guidance systems for bombs.
-

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