

Neon Manifesto

NeonManifest

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1 What is Neon Manifesto?

Preamble (what)

1.1 Who is NeonManifest

1.2 How to play Neon Manifesto

In order to play Neon Manifesto, the following materials are needed:

- Six-sided dice, that will be dubbed d6 in this game. One is fine, but this game rolls up to 8 at a time;
- Twelve-sided dice, that will be dubbed d12 in this game. One is enough for any roll in this game;
- Pencil and paper, at least one and one sheet for each person playing;
- Most importantly, boundless imagination.

In this game, players gather on a table and take on two distinct roles: the CONDUCTOR is responsible for setting the stage of the game world, preparing adventures, and adjudicating rules. Other players are responsible for controlling a single character – or a small group of characters – in the game world, these are dubbed PLAYERS.

Chapter 4 describes all procedures of play in detail but the standard game loop is as follows:

- The CONDUCTOR describes the situation, setting the stage for the players;
- A PLAYER declares an action, describing what their character does to respond to or interact with the situation;
- Die rolls are made as necessary to determine the outcome of the declared action;
- The CONDUCTOR narrates the result of the action, updating the situation based on the outcome;
- The play procedure begins anew.

1.3 Example of Play

2 Creating a Character

PLAYERS are responsible for controlling one or a few characters acting in a game world of shared fiction. The procedure for creating a character is as follows, the PLAYER follow these steps taking note of every decision or discovery along the way:

1. Choose or discover the character's class, taking note of the characters HIT VALUE (i.e. how hard it is for them to be hit) and number of HITS (i.e. how many hits they can take before being taken out) and MAX BENNIES (a character cannot have more BENNIES than that value);
2. Choose or discover the character's appearance. Each class has a suggested appearance table in their respective section. Choose, roll, customize the result or interpret it to suit your character;
3. Choose or discover the character's starting gear. Refer to the class description for starting equipment. Add personal flair or backstory elements to these items;
4. Discover the character's skills. Each class grants specific skills. Note these abilities for gameplay;
5. Discover or decide what the character was doing before they became an adventurer. This shouldn't be more than a paragraph;

3 Character Classes

This chapter describes the six standard character classes in Neon Manifesto. Each class provides unique traits, skills, and equipment that define a character's role and capabilities in the game.

3.1 Selecting a character class

A PLAYER may select a character's class or use the following table to roll on a random class.

d6 Roll	Result
1	Chump
2	Imagined
3	Fighter
4	Knave
5	Mage
6	Talking animal

Table 1: d6 Table for Discovering a Character Class

Each class has unique traits, abilities, and starting equipment:

- **Chump:** A hapless character with little skill but endless determination.
- **Imagined:** A creature brought to life through imagination, artistry, and craftsmanship. Scarecrows, Galateas, and Frankenstein's Monsters all fit into this class.
- **Fighter:** A skilled combatant with powerful weapons and armor.
- **Knave:** A versatile adventurer who is always ready for anything.
- **Mage:** A master of arcane arts with powerful spells.
- **Talking animal:** A whimsical, mysterious creature capable of speech and unique talents.

3.2 Chump

The weakest class, a Chump is a commoner of the world, starting at level 0 and requiring a single EXPERIENCE to level up to 1. There is nothing inherently special about playing a Chump, other than the challenge, the excitement of being weak, and the drama potential it brings. When a Chump reaches level 1, they change their class.

- **HIT VALUE:** 2
- **HITS:** 2
- **MAX BENNIES:** 2

Appearance

Roll 1d6 or choose from the table below to determine your Chump's very ordinary appearance:

d6	Appearance
1	Plain face
2	Slightly pudgy
3	Balding
4	Calloused hands
5	Nervous demeanor
6	Easily overlooked

Starting Gear

Chumps always start with a tool of their trade (determined by their starting skill) and a questionable trinket that might come in handy:

d12	Questionable Trinket
1	A bent spoon that occasionally vibrates
2	A small pouch of sand that always feels damp
3	A rusty key that fits no known lock
4	A wooden duck whistle that sounds like a chicken
5	A pair of mismatched socks that never get dirty
6	A compass that always points to the nearest tavern
7	A pocket watch that runs backwards
8	A small mirror that shows yesterday's reflection
9	A tin of mints that taste like grass
10	A quill pen that writes in invisible ink
11	A miniature sundial that works indoors
12	A mood ring that's perpetually stuck on "mildly annoyed"

Starting Skills

Roll 1d12 on the table to determine your Chump's starting skills. You may also choose a line. Con-

sidering all of the first skills in every line is a specification of the Art/Craft skill, a Chump gets a +3 bonus to their standard rolls using those skill with their starting tool, and would roll 3d6 if they somehow manage to attack using the skill and the tool.

d12	Skills
1	Farming 1, Strength 1
2	Carpentry 1, Manuality 1
3	Blacksmithing 1, Strength 1
4	Weaving 1, Manuality 1
5	Pottery 1, Manuality 1
6	Cooking 1, Calculus 1
7	Masonry 1, Strength 1
8	Leatherworking 1, Manuality 1
9	Brewing 1, Calculus 1
10	Tailoring 1, Manuality 1
11	Scribing 1, Languages 1
12	Animal Handling 1, Strength 1

Class Change

Once a Chump reaches level 1, they roll on the Class Change table instead of rolling for a talent. It's possible that a Chump that wasn't an animal or a creature of imagination becomes a Talking Animal or an Imagined. This is intentional. Chumps adopt the HIT VALUE, HITS and MAX BENNIES of their new class, keep their existing skills, and gain the new class's skills through the starting skills table. Their appearance can be changed through the new class' appearance table. They don't get the new class' starting gear.

d6 Roll	Result
1	Gain a new Chump starting skill set (by rolling at the table), then reroll
2	Imagined
3	Fighter
4	Knave
5	Mage
6	Talking animal

3.3 Fighter

The combat specialist, the questing knight, the old soldier. The fighter is the class for those who wish to excel in direct confrontation.

- **HIT VALUE:** 4
- **HITS:** 6
- **MAX BENNIES:** 3

Appearance

Roll 1d6 or choose from the table below to determine your Fighter's appearance:

d6	Appearance
1	Battle scars
2	Shining armor
3	Tons of tattoos
4	Ripped body
5	Lean and elegant
6	Small and angry

Starting Gear

Fighters always start with their weapon of choice (you choose what the weapon is) and some adventuring gear:

d6	Adventuring Gear
1	Rope, whetstone, glowing war paint
2	Grappling hook, flint and steel, singing shield
3	Waterskin, bandages, armor that changes color with mood
4	Torch, rations, boots that never get muddy
5	Bedroll, compass, helmet that translates bird speech
6	Map, spyglass, weapon oil that smells like your enemy's fear

Starting Skills

A Fighter always begins play with a skill value of 2 on their chosen weapon. Roll

1d6 on the table to determine your Fighter's starting skills. You may also choose a line.

d6	Skills
1	Strength 2, Climbing, Swimming and Running 1
2	Manuality 2, Acrobatics 1
3	Art/Craft (choose) 2, Manuality 1
4	Awareness 2, Survival 1
5	Healing 2, Poison 1
6	Rhetoric 2, Languages 1

Fighter's Deed

Whenever a Fighter makes an attack, they roll an additional d6. If the Fighter's attack scores a hit and the additional d6's value is above the target's HIT VALUE, the Fighter may perform a deed, which is a feat of great combat prowess. A deed can be anything cool and fighterly your CONDUCTOR agrees to, some sample deeds are:

- Tripping or disarming the target;
- Pushing the target away;
- Gaining +1 to HIT VALUE for the round;
- Hurting a specific body part;
- Grappling or pinning the target;
- Foregoing the deed and gaining a BENNY.

2d6 Roll	Talent
2	Iron Constitution: Increase your maximum HITS by 1.
3-5	Relentless Assault: When attacking, spend a BENNY to reroll up to X dice showing 1, where X is times you have this talent.
6	Defensive Expertise: When an attack against you has an exploding d6, spend a BENNY to negate that explosion (initial hit still applies). Use X times, where X is times you have this talent.
7	Combat Focus: Gain a COMBAT BENNY (+2, attack rolls only). Recover it as you would regular BENNY. Max X COMBAT BENNIES, where X is times you have this talent.
8	Multiattack: You may attack a second time, with 1d6 and a deed die. Taking this talent multiple times increases the number of successive attacks possible.
9-11	Counter-Strike: Roll +1d6 on return attacks (after a FOE misses with all attack dice).
12	Choose any other talent from this table.

3.4 Knave

The witty minstrel, the cunning rogue, the varlet in sour armor. Knaves are resourceful adventurers, relying on skill to outlive the competition.

- **HIT VALUE:** 3
- **HITS:** 4
- **MAX BENNIES:** 7

Appearance

Roll 1d6 or choose from the table below to determine your Knave's appearance:

d6	Appearance
1	Flamboyant clothes
2	Fit body
3	Brooding and mysterious
4	Vulpine grin
5	Practical attire
6	Ordinary (roll on the Chump appearance table)

Starting Gear

Knives always start with a weapon of choice (you choose what the weapon is), a set of tools for operating mechanisms and devices (e.g. lockpicks), a bundle of rope and other adventuring gear. Roll or choose on the table.

Starting Skills

All Knaves start with Mechanisms and Devices 2. Roll or choose on the table, once for each column, to determine your Knave's starting skills.

d6	Basic	Trade	Cunning
1	Awareness 2	Weapon (choose) 2	Script 3
2	Strength 2	Languages 2	Disguise 3
3	Calculus 2	Healing 2	Acrobatics 3
4	Rhetoric 2	Evaluate 2	Poison 3
5	Manuality 2	Survival 2	Art/Craft (music or dance) 3
6	Spell 2	Art/Craft (choose) 2	Choose another class' table to roll from, adding up redundant skills

Knave's Craft

Whenever a Knave rolls a 1, 2 or 3 on a die, they may spend a BENNY to reroll the die. This works even on light and supply rolls.

2d6 Roll	Talent
2	Skill and Luck: Increase your maximum BENNIES by 2.
3-5	Stumble Forward: When you fail to score a HIT in an attack roll. Gain an additional BENNY.
6	Reliable Knave: Pick a skill, once per day you can choose to roll a six on a standard roll using the skill. You cannot choose the same skill for this talent.
7	Skill Focus: Gain a SKILL BENNY (+3, standard rolls using a starting skill only). Recover it as you would regular BENNY. Max X SKILL BENNIES, where X is times you have this talent.
8	Flagrant Strike: The first time you attack a target unaware of your presence and/or hostility in a combat, you roll an additional d6
9-11	Knave's Vigor: spend 6 BENNIES to recover a HIT at any time. Each time you take this talent reduce the BENNIES cost by 1
12	Multiknave: Choose any other talent from any class table.

d12	Common Gear (roll or choose twice)	Oddities (roll once)
1	Grappling hook	A faithful steed
2	Crowbar	Book of Boredom: Whoever tries reading it falls asleep after a minute
3	10-foot pole	Vial of Spirits: When drunk, puts the drinker's body into a coma. The drinker's spirit can roam freely, incorporeal, can speak but not attack. The effect lasts for a day.
4	Oil flask	Fiddle of Captivity: When played in a haven or demesne, you become the main event. Everyone in the location can do nothing but attend and engage with your performance. Usable once a week.
5	Wooden Stakes (10)	Pipes of Hamelin: If in a haven or in the underworld, a swarm of rats will assist you as long as you're playing it, and then they'll go away in peace
6	Bundle of wolfsbane	Immovable cat: The cat is loyal to you and becomes immovable if tapped on the nose
7	Holy water flask	Potion of Flight: Fly at your normal speed for a watch
8	Caltrops	Potion of Invisibility: Become invisible for a watch or until an attack roll is made
9	Ball bearings	Potion of Gaseous Form: Become a slow, intangible cloud for a watch
10	Smoke bombs (3)	Wishing Brandy: Make a wish as you drink it. It comes true for a watch, then reality goes back to normal
11	Forgery kit	Amulet of Silence: Once activated, nothing within a meter of the holder of this amulet can cause any sound at all
12	Disguise kit	Horn of the Herald: When playing it, you can choose how far the horn is heard. Its maximum range spans the entire realm

3.5 Mage

The hedge witch, the possessed child, the magic-wielding fencer. Mages are mystical adventurers, using fantastic spells to overcome challenges.

- **HIT VALUE:** 3
- **HITS:** 3
- **MAX BENNIES:** 3

dagger), and a magic item, rolled or chosen from the table.

Appearance

Roll 1d12 or choose from the table below to determine your Mage's appearance:

d12	Appearance
1	Long flowing robes
2	Bushy long hair
3	Goggles
4	Huge silly hat
5	Toady skin
6	Cat eyes
7	Forked tongue
8	Burn scars
9	Third eye
10	Snake eyes
11	Horns
12	A non-prehensile tail

Starting Skills

A Mage always begins with Spell 3. Roll 1d6 on the table to determine your Mage's other starting skills. You may also choose a line.

d6	Skills
1	Script 2, Disguise 1
2	Calculus 2, Dagger 1
3	Art/Craft (choose) 2, Mechanisms and Devices 1
4	Survival 2, Awareness 1
5	Poison 2, Healing 1
6	Languages 2, Rhetoric 1

Magic Spells

Since they have the Spell skill, a Mage can use a magic tool to cast spells. Chapter 6 describes the rules for learning casting spells in Neon Manifesto. Mages are not restricted by discipline when learning spells due to the character's Spell skill value.

Starting Gear

Mages start with an ornate dagger, a magic tool (e.g. a wand, staff, grimoire, an even more ornate

2d6 Roll	Talent
2	Anyspell: once per day per times you have this talent, you may cast spells from Neon Manifesto even if you don't know them
3-5	Magecraft: magic item creation projects take 1 less day to complete (min. 1)
6	Reliable Spell: choose a spell you know, once per day you can choose to roll a six on a standard or attack roll using the spell
7	Magic Focus: Gain a MAGIC BENNY (+3, rolls using the Spell skill only). Recover it as you would regular BENNY. Max X MAGIC BENNIES, where X is times you have this talent.
8	Special Spell: choose a spell you know, you may spend a BENNY or take a HIT to reroll a die from a standard or attack roll involving it.
9-11	Extra anchor: you can maintain an additional spell
12	Choose any other talent from this table.

d12	Magic Item
1	Immovable Rod: A metal rod that can be fixed in place with a command word, supporting up to 8,000 pounds.
2	Portable Hole: A circular sheet of cloth that unfolds into a 10-foot deep extradimensional hole.
3	Folding Boat: A small wooden box that unfolds into a boat on command.
4	Animal Figurine: A small stone figurine that transforms into a living animal under your command for up to 24 hours once per week.
5	Anchor Token: A small token that, when activated, prevents any vehicle it's attached to from moving
6	Carpet of Levitation: A small carpet that can levitate slowly vertically, carrying up to two people.
7	Cloak of Shadows: A cloak that creates a 5-foot radius of magical darkness around the wearer.
8	Gloves of Earthshaping: Allows the wearer to reshape earth and stone within a 10-foot radius, creating or removing simple structures.
9	Whispering Chalk: Chalk that, when used to write, allows anyone of the user's choosing to hear the written words as if spoken in their mind
10	Prism of Illumination: A small crystal prism that can project bright light in a specific color. The emission lasts for a round, after which the prism must recharge for a watch
11	Amulet of Water Speech: Enables the wearer to converse with bodies of water.
12	Echo Stone: A small stone that can record up to one minute of sound and play it back on command.

3.6 Talking animal

Singing skylarks, cowardly lions, pusses in boots. Talking animals are whimsical creatures of story-books that occasionally join adventuring parties.

- **HIT VALUE:** 3
- **HITS:** 3
- **MAX BENNIES:** 3

Species

A talking animal can be of any real animal species (finally, a TTRPG that lets you play as an amphioxus). You can also play a larger or tinier version of an animal. Talking aquatic animals are magically adapted to life on land. A talking animal's size determines its statistics:

- **Small (dog-sized or smaller):** HIT VALUE +2;
- **Medium (between dog and horse):** MAX BENNIES +2;
- **Large (horse-sized or larger):** HITS +2;

Appearance

Roll 1d12 or choose from the table below to determine your talking animal's appearance:

d12	Appearance
1	Glowing fur
2	Metallic scales
3	Mangy
4	Excessively chunky
5	Wooden prosthetics
6	Rainbow Feathers
7	Silly little hat
8	Neon colors
9	Wears clothes
10	Additional eye(s)
11	(Additional) Horns
12	Additional tail(s)

Gear Restriction

Talking Animals start with no gear. Non-medium Talking Animals cannot benefit from tools when making rolls. Small Talking Animals only have 3 item slots.

Starting Skills

A talking animal's starting skills are determined by their size.

Size	Skills
Small	Acrobatics 2, Awareness 2, Survival 2
Medium	Strength 2, Awareness 2, Survival 2
Large	Strength 4, Climbing, Swimming and Running 2

Also, choose or create another skill relevant to the animal species itself (e.g. poison for a snake, disguise for a fox), your Talking Animal gains 2 on the chosen skill.

2d6 Roll	Talent
2	Fable's Favor: Once per session, narrate a short fable or moral lesson. If the CONDUCTOR finds it fitting, gain Xd6 temporary BENNIES that can go over your maximum, where X is the number of times you have this talent.
3-5	Shapeshifting: Choose another animal species, and you may turn into it at any time, gaining the benefits and gear restrictions of the other species (your skills are unchanged). You may reroll this talent if you don't like it.
6	Strength of the Moon: Increase your MAX BENNIES by 1
7	Spoken Boon: Choose another class and roll a talent from its table
8	Strength of the Wild: Increase your maximum HITS by 1
9-11	Storybook Magic: Choose a fairy tale or fable. Once per session, you can perform a magical feat inspired by that story (e.g., spinning straw into gold, putting others to sleep with a song). The CONDUCTOR determines the effect's potency. You may reroll this talent if you don't like it.
12	Choose any other talent from this table.

3.7 Imagined

An adventurer not born, but created from thought, art and craft. A living sculpture, a painting that came to life, a song that grew legs and arms of its own. The imagined were once objects but have the breath of life in them, and occasionally take part in adventures.

- **HIT VALUE:** 4
- **HITS:** 4
- **MAX BENNIES:** 4

They are very much human after all. An Imagined, however, does not need to breathe.

Starting Gear

An Imagined starts with a tool related to its make and an enchanted trinket. Roll on the table to make a unique trinket.

1d6	An object	That does	To something
1	A coin	that scares	humans
2	A pocket watch	that distracts	beasts
3	A pen	that enrages	spirits
4	A book	that confuses	dragon-types
5	A kalimba	that calms	giant-types
6	A jaw harp	that weakens	mages

Make

Roll 1d12 or choose from the table below to determine your Imagined's make:

d12	Appearance
1	Song
2	Painting
3	Carpentry
4	Weaving
5	Smithing
6	Clock-making
7	Cooking
8	Medicine
9	Alchemy and Chemistry
10	Pottery
11	Script
12	Masonry

Starting Skills

An Imagined starts with skill value 3 on the skill of its make, and a skill value of 2 for using its starting tool as a weapon. Also, choose or create another skill, the Imagined gains 2 on the chosen skill.

Regardless of appearance and make, an Imagined's abilities are limited to those of a human.

2d6 Roll	Talent
2	Potentiality: once per session, when rolling to determine if you got better at a skill, you may choose to succeed
3-5	Art Enhancement: Increase your MAX BENNIES by 1
6	Living Art: You can animate small objects related to your make. These can perform simple tasks and talk. You can have one such object per times you have this talent.
7	Imagined Boon: Choose another class and roll a talent from its table
8	Imagination: projects related to your Make take 1 less day to complete (min. 1)
9-11	Craft Enhancement: Increase your maximum HITS by 1
12	Choose any other talent from this table.

4 Rules and Procedures of Adventure

The standard play procedure is as follows:

- The CONDUCTOR describes the situation, setting the stage for the players;
- A PLAYER declares an action, describing what their character does to respond to or interact with the situation;
- Die rolls are made as necessary to determine the outcome of the declared action;
- The CONDUCTOR narrates the result of the action, updating the situation based on the outcome;
- The play procedure begins anew.

4.1 Standard Roll Procedure

When the outcome of an action is uncertain, the roll procedure is called as follows:

1. The PLAYER describes what their character is doing, if the CONDUCTOR identifies that action as having a chance of failure and either success and failure would change the character's situation in the narrative, they may call for a roll;
2. The CONDUCTOR asks the PLAYER whether they have any skills that could help in this situation;
3. The CONDUCTOR sets the difficulty for the roll;
4. The player rolls a d12 and adds their skill, attempting to roll over the difficulty of the roll;
5. After seeing the roll's result, the PLAYER may supplement its result using BENNIES, each BENNY spent grants a +1 to the roll
6. The CONDUCTOR describes the outcome of the roll.
7. If the player used a skill, they take note of it.

4.2 Wilderness Exploration Procedure

When the PLAYER characters explore the wilderness, this procedure activates. The **unit of time** during wilderness exploration is called a **phase**. There are three **phases** in a day:

- **Morning:** From dawn to noon;
- **Afternoon:** From noon to dusk;
- **Night:** From dusk to dawn;

During each phase, each character can take one action:

- **Standard:** each character may take actions individually, wilderness actions can be anything that makes sense in the shared narrative, some sample actions are:
 - **Forage:** a character makes a difficulty 7 roll using their survival skill. If succeeding the supply check for the day is not made, and the party will not take a hit due to their supplies being depleted;
 - **Navigation:** a character discovers nearby hexes, spotting mountains up to 4 hexes away, civilization up to 2 hexes away, and the terrain types of neighboring hexes;

- **Scouting:** a character searches the hex, discovering its adventure and possibly an advantageous angle for approaching it;
- **Sentinel:** a character in sentinel keeps watch over the party to ensure safety for the phase. The CONDUCTOR may prompt the character to make a roll using the Awareness skill to perceive danger proactively;
- **Rest:** a character in wilderness exploration that doesn't take the rest action at least once a day will take a hit that will not recover until rest is taken.
- **Travel:** the whole party decides on a travel action to perform, and move around the world accordingly. The unit of distance in wilderness traveling is a **hex**, the main travel actions are:
 - **Trek:** The party travels 1 hex;
 - **Gallop:** can be used if the whole party is mounted. The party travels 2 hexes, mounts will get tired unless you're entering or leaving civilization this phase. Tired mounts cannot gallop;
 - **Ferry:** can be used on a water vehicle. The party travels 3 hexes.

When ending a phase in wilderness, make a wilderness roll (d6):

- **1 - Encounter an adventure;**
- **2-3 - Encounter clues for the hex's adventure and landmark;**
- **4-6 - Encounter the hex's landmark;**

At the end of each day in the wilderness, the travelling party rolls to see if their supplies. Supply starts as a d12 roll, and the party's leader must roll above 3 to keep supplies from dwindling. Failing this roll will decrease the supply die to a d10, and each failure reduces the dice size (d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4). Once a supply roll fails at d4, the party's supplies have been depleted. Each member of a party whose supplies have been depleted take a hit that will not recover until the party is fed again.

4.3 Dungeon Exploration Procedure

When the PLAYER characters explore the underworld, this procedure activates. The **unit of time** during dungeon exploration is called a **turn**. The amount of time a **turn** takes is highly variable and subjective. Each character can perform an action each turn. The turn procedures as follows:

1. The conductor ticks light. At every six ticks, the exploring party rolls to maintain their light. Light starts as a d12 roll, and the party's leader must roll above 3 to keep the light from dwindling. Failing this roll will decrease the light die to a d10, and each failure reduces the dice size (d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4). Once a light roll fails at d4, the party's light has been totally depleted and the party is in the dark. Things get FREAKY in the dark.
2. The conductor describes the location the characters are;
3. Each character takes an action, which can be anything that makes sense in the narrative, sample actions are:
 - **Move to another room or hallway;**
 - **Search a 10-foot (6 meter) square;**
 - **Interact with something the conductor describes;**
 - **Rest;**

4.4 Haven Procedure

A haven is any safe patch of civilization where characters can take restful activity, a haven turn happens when PLAYER characters reach one and decide to spend time there. The **unit of time** in haven is days, during which characters can take one action. Sample actions are as follows:

- **Prepare:** Each party member gains a BENNY (max 3 per character);
- **Work on a project:** a character rolls using a relevant skill for the project. If successful, they mark a progress in the project. Finishing a project requires taking this action after progress has been filled;
- **Gather information:** a character discovers two rumors about the region: one true and one false. They do not know which one is which;
- **Carouse:** trade a treasure for debauchery and sin. Gain 1 EXPERIENCE. Roll a d12, if the result is above the carousing character's level, a mishap happens. Appendix ?? contains carousing mishaps tables for each class;
- **Gear up:** the character acquires up to 3 pieces of adventuring gear;

Characters recover 1 HIT and gain 1 BENNY every haven turn.

4.5 Projects

Each project has an objective (i.e. what the project is trying to reach) and a time (measured in haven days). Projects are discussed between PLAYER and CONDUCTOR but can be

- Create or find a specific treasure, like a magic item;
- Brew a potion;
- Create a new spell;
- Acquire advanced adventuring gear, such as an airship or mounts;
- Help or sabotage a faction;

4.6 Demesne Procedure

A demesne is a territory controlled and maintained by a character, a demesne turn happens when CHARACTERS reach a demesne and decide to spend time there. Typically, parties of level 4 and above might acquire a demesne as part of the story. The **unit of time** in demesne action is seasons, during which characters can take two actions. Sample actions are as follows:

- **Work on a project:** any project that had its time measured in days can be completed in a demesne action;
- **Work on a building:** add a new installation to your demesne;
- **Hire a specialist:** hire a specialist to manage a building;
- **Hire a warband:** hire 12 ordinary soldiers, they can act as a unit;
- **Command an operation:** move warbands you control to perform a military operation;
- **Establish a successor:** create a new character, this character will stay in the demesne and inherit half of the acting character's EXPERIENCE when the acting character dies;

- **Research:** discover about a new faction, realm, or region;

Characters recover all hits every demesne turn and gain MAX BENNIES. After taking the final demesne turn before transitioning to other procedure of play, a haven turn takes place. Factions may advance their objectives.

4.6.1 Factions

Factions are powerful forces that are managed by the CONDUCTOR. There are around three factions acting in each realm. Factions have goals they must accomplish and resources to accomplish them. Each faction has a statblock containing:

- **The faction's roster:** an encounter table of faction's rank and file and elite members;
- **The faction's territory:** hexes the faction occupies of competes for;
- **The faction's objectives;**
- **The faction's resources;**
- **The faction's friends and foes, including the player party;**

Each goal has a progress requirement associated with it. At the end of every season, each faction rolls 1d6 for each objective, adding +1 for every resource they have that is relevant to the objective. On a 4 or more, mark progress on the objective. When an objective is completed, it becomes a resource. Factions with three or more resources can field warbands.

4.7 Combat Procedure

When one side wants to impose power over another, resisting, side, combat ensues. Combat may be perpetrated through fighting but also through debate or other situations where a party aims to overpower the other. The unit of time in combat is a largely subjective measurement of time called **rounds**. Combat flows just like the standard play procedure: with the CONDUCTOR describing the situation; A PLAYER acts describing what their characters do to react to it; roll procedures happening; and then the play loop begins anew.

In combat, it's important that each PLAYER acts at least once each round. Players act in a clockwise order, starting with a player chosen by the CONDUCTOR or determined by the situation. A round elapses when every PLAYER-controlled character that can act has acted and every FOE that can act has acted.

In combat, it's common for characters and foes to activate Attack Rolls in order to harm each other. Combat ends when one of the parties is unable, or unwilling, to participate in it. The party that does not fold from combat in the end WINS and gains power over the losing party.

Gaining power over the losing party primarily grants narrative leverage. This could include slaying the opposing party, driving them off, or other story-driven outcomes. While the victors may impose terms or secure control in various ways, the game explicitly avoids themes of slavery, sexual violence, or any equivalent dynamics. Players and the CONDUCTOR are encouraged to frame outcomes with creativity and sensitivity to the game's tone and themes.

4.7.1 Attack Rolls

Attack rolls are a special kind of roll where the action being described consists of a character attempting to harm another, physically or otherwise. The procedure for attack rolls differs slightly from standard rolls.

1. The PLAYER initiates saying something like “I attack” or “My character attacks” or by describing an action that qualifies as an attack. The attack’s target must be in condition of defending themselves and fighting, otherwise the roll is not an attack;
2. The CONDUCTOR asks the PLAYER whether they have any skills that could help in their chosen attack method;
3. The roll’s difficulty is set by the FOE being attacked’s HIT VALUE (which is presented in its statblock, or in PLAYER character’s cases the character sheet);
4. The player rolls a Xd6 (minimum 1) where X is the relevant skill’s value, attempting to roll over the FOE’s difficulty;
5. If the situation is advantageous to the attacker, they add another 1d6 to the roll. If it’s disadvantageous, they remove 1d6 (the attack automatically fails if its roll is 0d6);
6. After seeing the roll’s result, the PLAYER may supplement its result using BENNIES, each BENNY spent grants a +1 to the roll of one die;
7. The CONDUCTOR describes the outcome of the roll using the following guidelines:
 - **Each die equal to or above the FOE’s HIT VALUE** causes 1 hit;
 - **Each die resulting in 6 or above explodes!** Causing 1 hit and adding another d6 to the roll;
 - **If no d6 causes a hit, the FOE will immediately return with an attack of its own**, the PLAYER gains a BENNY.

Foe attacks work just like player attacks.

4.7.2 Conditions

Some foes, spells, and adventuring gear are able to enhance their attacks with conditions. A condition is associated with one or more HITS causing it, and those cannot be recovered unless the condition is cleared first. Conditions feature the following characteristics:

- **Clearing Condition:** actions that have to be taken within the narrative for the HIT to be recoverable;
- **Condition Effect:** a continuous effect that affects the character .

Appendix A presents conditions used by the foes, spells, and adventuring gear.

4.8 When things get FREAKY

- Fights are resolved as one-roll fights.
- The difficulty of every standard d120 check – including rolls using skills – is 12.
- Moving to another room or hallway is the only dungeon action allowed.
- Supply checks in the wilderness always fail.
- Trek, Gallop and Ferry are the only wilderness actions allowed;
- If in the underworld or wilderness, conditions cannot be cleared.

4.8.1 One-roll fights

1. Each side rolls a d6, adding:
 - +1 for each combatant with 4 or more HIT VALUE;
 - +1 if the side outnumber the other; +2 if the side outnumber the other 2-to-1, +3 if the side outnumber the other, etc;
 - +1 for each magic user who casts a combat-relevant spell (such as a fireball) during the fight;
 - +1 for each of the following advantages each side has. Such as cover, high ground, formation that can't be flanked, surprise, superior firepower, poison, traps, etc.
2. The side that rolls highest wins. Ties are rolled again.
3. Each PLAYER character (regardless of winning or not) rolls a d6, if they roll over their HIT VALUE, they take a number of hits equal to the number rolled;
4. Each PLAYER character on the losing side rolls a d6, if they roll over their HIT VALUE, they are slain or captured;
5. Each CONDUCTOR character on the losing side is slain or driven off.

4.9 Skill Descriptions

Each character begins with a set of skills, determined by their class (for PLAYER characters) or their statblock (CONDUCTOR characters);

Acrobatics

Used for rolling, balancing, falling in style, jumping, chandelier swinging, etc.

Awareness

Use this to perceive things normally hidden or out of ordinary, to spot traps, and to use all of the character's senses to the best of their ability. This skill can be used in attacks that involve aiming carefully.

Art/Craft (S)

A skill that describes doing a job: be it blacksmithing; painting; fishing; any job that is not covered by the standard skill set. In order to take this skill, a character **must** specify which art or craft they are good at, specifying gives a +1 to standard d12 rolls using this skill.

Calculus

Represents the ability to detect fulcrum points, architectural stability, predict the motions of bod-

ies, all of the math and physics that takes extraordinary skill to do on the fly.

Climbing, Swimming and Running

Represents the ability to move quickly and safely through terrain and water.

Disguise

The ability to impersonate someone else or play a role.

Evaluate

Describes the ability to ascertain the value of an object and its true characteristics, mundane, magic, spiritual, etc.

Healing

Use this to undo harm to a character. To heal a character, make an attack roll against the foe that caused the harm's difficulty (or 3 if not specified) each hit recovers a hit. Rolling under the difficulty with all the dice causes 1 hit of damage

to the character being healed. Harm from different sources must be treated separately. Healing a character takes a unit of **time**.

Languages

Represents knowledge in the many tongues of the world. Use this for comprehending and speaking foreign, liturgic or ancient languages.

Manuality

Use this to pick pockets, sleight of hand, perform in stage magic, and make attacks using skill and grace.

Mechanisms and Devices

This skill measures the ability to interact with locks, traps, and the like.

Poison

A skill that abstracts the making and using of poison. When creating a poison, make an attack roll against difficulty 3, the number of hits is equal to the difficulty of the foe the poison is effective for. Poison creation takes a unit of **time** and a unit of **loot**. Only make an attack using poison if you are actively using it in a fight (e.g. through a poisoned weapon).

Rhetoric

Use this to express yourself in spoken and nonverbal language. To present arguments, and to strike with words in situations where its possible.

Script

Use this to express yourself in written language, includes the making of both legitimate and forged documents. If you are creative, this can be used as an attack method.

Spell

The ability to perform magic spells, can also serve as an attack method when using an attack spell. Chapter 6 explains the usage of this skill in detail.

Strength

Use this to lift heavy objects, bend bars, break doors and the like. This skill is also a reliable attack method.

Survival

Use this for foraging while travelling in wilderness.

Weapon (S)

Use this to fight with a weapon. When picking this skill, the character **must** specify which weapon they are good at. Specifying gives the character +1 to standard d12 rolls using this skill, but not to attack rolls.

Other skills

There are as many skills as there are abilities that might be relevant to characters in a game setting. Players should feel free to discuss adding them to characters if they make sense in the shared fiction. When applicable, specific skills add +1 to standard d12 rolls, but not to attack rolls.

4.10 Ending a Session

- Fifteen minutes before the session's scheduled end, things get FREAKY;
- Five minutes before the end of session, the standard play loop stops. Players answer these questions as a group, marking 1 EXPERIENCE for each 'Yes':
 - Did we overcome a difficult or powerful foe?
 - Did we loot, find or acquire something cool?
 - Did we learn something new and important about the world?
- Each character with six or more EXPERIENCE may level up:
 - The character spends 6 EXPERIENCE. If their level is 3 or above, they must spend 12 EXPERIENCE to level up;

- If they spent the appropriate amount of EXPERIENCE, their level increases by 1;
- They roll on their talent table, acquiring a new ability;
- The maximum level a character can be is 6;
- Players roll to see if they got better at skills. For every skill the character used, the PLAYER rolls a d6. If the result is over their current skill value, they permanently increase their skill value by 1.
- The session then ends. The group may then excitedly schedule the next.

5 Adventuring Gear

Each PLAYER or FOE character has 12 maximum burden, which they can use to carry gear. Each point of burden is identified by an equipment slot, inside of which there can be an item of gear or part of an item. This chapter describes adventuring gear in three distinct tiers: basic; advanced; and magic. The items described, however, are not an exhaustive list of every piece of gear that can exist in every Neon Manifesto game world, but a set of common and suggested gear with help on how to adjudicate each. PLAYERS and CONDUCTORS may add new pieces of gear to the game world, though it's up to the CONDUCTOR to classify gear between the three tiers.

In the world of Neon Manifesto, only merchants and the rich deal in coins. Acquiring gear can be done through actions in haven and demesne phases, as well as found or looted during adventured.

5.1 Basic Gear

Tools

Tools relevant to a skill will add a +1 to standard rolls using the skill.

Weapons

Weapons are required to make attacks using the relevant skill, and will work as tools providing +1 to standard rolls using their skill.

Two-handed or dual weapons

Weapons that must be wielded in both hands. Fighters and Knaves wielding them add a d6 when attacking.

Shields

Shields can be wielded if the character is not wielding two-handed or dual weapons. Shields have three uses, and can be used to nullify a hit, after which the shield breaks. A character – except for example a large talking animal – cannot carry more than one shield, as it's awkward to.

Oil

If there is light, oil can be thrown at foes and ignited. This is an attack that always rolls 4d6. Oil can also be thrown on the floor to make a pool of fire that hits those who try passing through it once per round.

Holy water

If there is light, holy water can be thrown at unoly enemies. This is an attack that always rolls 4d6.

Refreshments

Fine long-lasting food, meats, cheeses and wines can be offered to underworld and wilderness denizens as coin and tribute.

Other basic gear

Gear that doesn't require a lot of work, advanced (think renaissance) technology or magic to make is considered basic gear.

5.2 Advanced Gear

Effective medicine

Can be consumed during rest in the underworld or wilderness to recover 1d6 HITS.

can also be used to pay for the cost of projects, should the CONDUCTOR stipulate.

Metal Treasure

Like refreshments, can be offered to underworld and wilderness denizens as coin and tribute. It

Gems and Jewelry

Like metal treasure, except six of these are required to take up a burden.

5.3 Magic Gear

Potion of Healing

Can be consumed at any time to recover 1d6 HITS.

Potion of Extra Healing

Can be consumed at any time to recover all lost HITS.

6 Magic

Characters with the Spell skill are able to use magic. This chapter describes how magic and spells work in Neon Manifesto.

6.1 Spell Thematics

When you create a character or pick up the Spell skill, you choose the distinct general theme or appearance that all your spells will have: what does your magic look like?

6.2 Learning a Spell

For every 1 in the Spell Skill value, a character rolls 2d6 in 6.5 to determine which spell they automatically acquire. Learning or creating new spells can also be done as a project that takes around 20 days and costs three treasures. Characters have the option of choosing their first spell. There are six disciplines of magic in Neon Manifesto:

- **War:** straightforward combat magic;
- **Wizardry:** the domain of wizards, this discipline contains spells that change and manipulate the spiritual properties of objects and characters;
- **Illusion:** spells that deceive and elude the senses;
- **Divination:** spells around gathering information and knowledge;
- **Thaumaturgy:** miraculous spells, this discipline is centered around controlling magic and the soul itself;
- **Transmutation:** spells that manipulate the physical qualities of objects and characters.

When characters learn an innate spell, unless they are a Mage, cannot learn spells from opposing disciplines (if they come up in the 2d6 rolls you learn from the opposing discipline they have). The opposing pairs are:

- **War-Thaumaturgy**
- **Wizardry-Transmutation**
- **Illusion-Divination**

6.3 Casting a Spell

In order to cast a spell, make a Casting roll, that is a standard d12 using the Spell skill:

- If the Spell roll comes up with a Natural 1 (by rolling 1 on the die), the spell fizzles, you lose it for the day, and a calamity happens;
- If the Spell roll fails (by rolling 7 or below), the spell fizzles and you lose it for the day;
- If the Spell roll succeeds with a degree of I (by rolling 8 to 12), it's I effect is activated, you may choose to lose it for the day or incur 1 WRATH;
- If the Spell roll succeeds with a degree of II (by rolling 13 to 17), you may activate its I or II effect, you may choose to lose it for the day or incur 2 WRATH;
- If the Spell roll succeeds with a degree of III (by rolling 18 or more), you may activate its I, II or III effect, you may choose to lose it for the day or incur 4 WRATH;

Casting spells may accumulate WRATH, which will make everything worse when a calamity happens to the caster. Unlike with standard and attack rolls, you can use BENNIES to subtract what you would add to the roll.

6.4 Attacking with a Spell

A creative PLAYER will find that every spell listed in Neon Manifesto can be conceivably used as an attack method. To attack with a spell, make an attack roll using the Spell skill simultaneously as the standard roll using the Spell skill. The attack is determined as normal but the spell roll will give the attack additional consequences:

- If the Casting roll fails, lose the highest-valued half of the dice before any explosions (round up);
- If the Casting roll succeeds with a degree of I (by rolling 8 to 12), the attack proceeds as normal;
- If the Casting roll succeeds with a degree of II (by rolling 13 to 17), add a d6 to the attack;
- If the Casting roll succeeds with a degree of III (by rolling 18 or more), add two d6 to the attack;

The Bolt and Blast spells are special cases in which they are spells best suited for attacking, thus have special rules.

6.5 Spells by Discipline

1 - War

1. Bolt
2. Blast
3. Darkness
4. Shield
5. Sword
6. Web

2 - Wizardry

1. Enchantment
2. Magic Circle
3. Summoning
4. Telepathy
5. Ward
6. Astral Projection
7. Telekinesis

3 - Illusion

1. Phantasm
2. Mirage
3. Sound
4. Invisibility
5. Mirror Image
6. Masquerade

4 - Divination

1. Portent
2. X-Ray Vision
3. Scrying
4. Olfactory Trace
5. Cartomancy
6. Oneiromancy

5 - Thaumaturgy

1. Antimagic
2. Emotion
3. Necromancy
4. Command
5. Sealing
6. Miracle

6 - Transmutation

1. Polymorph
2. Alchemy
3. Shape Water
4. Shape Earth
5. Gravity
6. Gate

6.6 Spells in Alphabetical Order

Alchemy
Antimagic
Astral Projection
Blast
Bolt
Cartomancy
Command
Darkness
Emotion
Enchantment
Gate
Gravity
Invisibility
Magic Circle
Masquerade
Mirage
Mirror Image
Miracle
Necromancy
Olfactory Trace
Oneiromancy
Phantasm
Polymorph
Portent
Srying
Sealing
Shape Earth
Shape Water
Shield
Sound
Summoning
Sword
Telekinesis
Telepathy
Ward
Web
X-Ray Vision

6.7 Calamities

7 Foes

Appendices

A Conditions

B Gaming references in alphabetical order

- 13th Age for the escalation die
- Against the Wicked City for Game-enhancing powers, game-ruining powers, and yet more magic items
- Bastionland for interesting magic items
- Blueholme for adventuring gear ideas
- Call of Cthulhu for the procedure for getting better at skills and pushing rolls
- Cavegirl for one-roll fights
- Coins and scrolls for the treasure overhaul draft
- Daggerheart for its d12 usage
- Dungeon Crawl Classics for the use of metacurrency to influence rolls, character class inspiration, and magic system
- Dungeon World for the end of session move.
- Electric Bastionland for starting item inspiration
- Errant for its specification of procedures of play
- EZD6 for simple foe stat blocks and magic system
- Goblin Punch for minor magic items
- Jeff's Gameblog for carousing rules
- Mausritter for its faction play
- Mythic Bastionland for wilderness procedure
- Papers and Pencils for haven turns
- Savage Worlds for the exploding dice
- Shadowdark for the class talent table
- So you Want to be a Game Master for dungeon and wilderness procedures and faction play
- Troika! for its skill system

C Literary fiction and fantasy references in alphabetical order

- Jojo's Bizarre Adventure
- Wizard of Oz