

OneDeeSixTimesFour System for RPGs

This system can be used to create a role-playing game.

Character Descriptor Sheet

A Character Descriptor Sheet contains a header and a list of Descriptors. A Descriptor consists of the name of the Descriptor and optionally the Default Value, the Current Value, and Notes. If there are no Notes, the Notes column header can be omitted.

Example:

Character's name and brief description of the character

Descriptor	Default	Current	Notes
Descriptor 1	+1		(Note 1)
Descriptor 2	-2	-1	(Note 2)
Descriptor 3	+5 (1)	(0)	(Note 3)

and so forth.

At the beginning of each day (in game terms), all of the Current Values are erased and all of the Descriptors return to their. During the day, the Current Values of the Descriptors can change. If it is permanent change, the Default Value is changed. Some Descriptors have no Value and both the Default Value and the Current Value are left unspecified.

Numbers with + or - in front of them are added or subtracted from rolls, and numbers in parentheses indicate how many times something can be used.

Notes are placed between parentheses.

Core Descriptors

The Core Descriptors are:

- Defense
- Fitness
- Knowledge
- Precision
- Reflex
- Speed
- Stealth
- Vitality
- Wealth

They are relative measures.

Defense measures how well a character can defend itself.

Fitness measures how physically fit a character is.

Knowledge measures how much a character knows about the game world.

Precision measures how well a character can do tasks that require a lot of precision such as aiming a weapon.

Reflex measures how well a character can react to things automatically.

Speed is a rating of how fast a character can move relative to other characters.

Stealth measures how well a character can avoid detection.

Vitality measures how much life a character has in it and how sturdy a character is.

Wealth represents how much money a character has.

Since roleplaying should be emphasized, there are no Descriptors for persuading, mentally manipulating others, or the like. All of those things must be achieved through clever role-playing on the part of the players.

To determine the Default Value of the Core Descriptors, each player rolls a d6 and a d4 for each Core Descriptor. The value on the d4 is subtracted from the d6, and that Value is written down on the Character Descriptor Sheet as the Default Value.

Alternatively, a player can choose to not roll for the Core Descriptors, and instead start with +0 for each. In that case, it is not necessary to even include them on the Character Descriptor Sheet unless during the game their Values ever fall below +0. This makes it possible for anyone to jump into a game in progress without any preliminary steps.

After rolling for the Core Descriptors, the GM may optionally provide the players with Templates from which they can select Descriptors. They will be presented with no Header. Only the Default Value is specified:

Here are some examples of Templates:

Medical Doctor:

Healing Ability (1)

Medical Kit

Knowledge +2

Witch:

Fitness -1

Reflex +1

Broomstick

Cauldron
 Magic Ability +5 (inf)
 *Fly on Broomstick (inf)
 *Turn Person to Frog (inf)

The players can choose between those templates, and will append the Descriptors from the Template that they select to their Character Descriptor Sheets. If they already have some of the Descriptors, they will instead add or subtract the Values from the Template to the Default Values already on their Character Descriptor Sheets. For instance, a player who rolled -3 for Knowledge who chooses the Medical Doctor Template will get to add +2 to his character's Knowledge Descriptor, which would raise it to -1.

The GM can provide several different types of Templates to the players.

Restoring Descriptors to their Default Values

Every new day (in game time), the Current Values of all the Descriptors are erased and therefore all of the Descriptors return to their Default Values.

Physical Items

Most Physical Items have no Default or Current Value. If the character has several of a certain Item, the quantity is specified before the name of the Item. For example, two shovels and twenty feet of thread would be indicated as follows:

Descriptor	Default	Current
2 shovels		
20ft of thread		

An Item possesses a Default or Current Value if it possesses an inherent quality about it that could be used to modify a die roll. For instance, an especially good or even magical slingshot that can be fired particularly accurately by anyone could have a Default Value, and if a character possessed such an item, it would be indicated on its Character Descriptor Sheet as follows:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Slingshot	+4	

If an Item contains other Items it can be notated thusly:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Backpack		
Book		
Quill		
Sack		
Bread		
Flask		
Water		

Likewise if an Item has a Sub-Ability, it is notated in a similar manner as above. When necessary to disambiguate a Sub-Ability from an Item contained within an Item, an asterisk can be added in front of it:

Pocket		
1 Lock pick	+2	
*Open Lock	(inf)	

Expertise

If a character has particular expertise in using a certain type of Item, the word Expertise is appended to the end of the name of the Descriptor so as not to confuse it for possessing the Item in question. For instance, a character with Expertise in Slingshots would have the following noted on its Character Descriptor Sheet:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Slingshot Expertise	+2	

If the character also possesses a Slingshot, the Character Descriptor Sheet would appear as follows:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Slingshot Expertise	+2	
Slingshot	+4	

The GM will likely take both into account when calling for a roll.

Location Descriptor Sheets

Locations Descriptor Sheets can be used to describe various locations. This is primarily for the GM.

City
 123 Elm St.
 House
 Back Door (Opens to Kitchen)

Kitchen (Doors: N to Living Room, East to Back Door)

Table

Bowl

Soup

Character: Mark, 25 year old Human, green shirt, black pantaloons

Vitality +5

Speed +2

Stick +3

Dollars (8)

Cents (20)

Bedroom

Bed

Chair

Dresser

Living Room (Doors: S to Kitchen)

Table

12 chairs

Money

Money is indicated in the following way:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Wealth	+3	

When a character pays for an item, Wealth's Default Value is lowered rather than its Current Value since it is a permanent loss that will not be restored the next day, and the Current Value is left blank.

Alternatively, the GM could do a Wealth Test.

The Wealth Descriptor cannot be used once it reaches -5.

Physical Items could also be used as an alternative system for money. In which case, the GM should remove the Wealth Descriptor from the game.

For example:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Dollars	(300)	
Cents	(20)	

Abilities

Abilities are a type of Descriptor. The GM may either give players a list of Abilities from which they can choose before the game begins or assign characters Abilities. Characters can also acquire Abilities in-game. Abilities are indicated on the Character Descriptor Sheet in the following manner:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Healing Ability	+3 (1)	

Ability Descriptors always include the word Ability.

The number with either + or - in front of it indicates what to add or subtract if the GM calls for a Test of that Ability. The number in parentheses indicates how many times it can be used. Either number can be omitted if it is not important.

Every time an Ability is used, the number in parentheses is decremented by 1. Abilities cannot be used once they reach (0). This means that a character who has not specifically acquired an Ability cannot use it at all. An Ability also cannot be used if the number that is added to a die roll ever becomes -5, due to some effect that lowered it.

Healing Ability

If a character has the Healing Ability Descriptor, it can heal itself or another character. A Vitality Adjustment is performed: a d6 is rolled to determine by how much to increase the target character's Vitality. It can be increased to no higher than its Default Value. If the roll is higher than the Default Value of the target's Vitality Descriptor, it is instead restored to its Default Value. The healer then decreases the number in parentheses of his own Healing Ability Descriptor. If it is (0), the character cannot use the Healing Ability until the Healing Ability Descriptor is restored to its Default Value at the start of the next day (in game time.)

Sub-Abilities

Abilities and Physical Items may contain Sub-Abilities. Sub-Abilities are indicated with an asterix when it is necessary to disambiguate them from Items contained within other Items.

For instance:

Descriptor	Default	Current	Notes
Lock pick	(inf)		
*Open Lock	(inf)		
Poison Antidote			
*Counteract Poison	(1)		
Magic Ability	+2 (5)		

*Turn Invisible	(1)	(Lasts 3 minutes)
*Open Lock	(1)	(Must do an Open Lock Test)

The number in parentheses indicates how many times a Sub-Ability can be used. Sub-Abilities with unlimited uses are indicated with (inf). Every time a Sub-Ability is used, the Current Value of the number in parentheses is decreased, as well as the Current Value in parentheses of its parent Item or Ability. A Sub-Ability cannot be used if either its Current Value or the Current Value of its parent Item or Ability is (0).

It is not necessary to create Sub-Abilities for things that are obvious, or include the asterix when it is obviously a Sub-Ability, so the above can be expressed more simply as:

Descriptor	Default	Current	Notes
Lock pick			
Poison Antidote			
Magic Ability	+2	(5)	
Turn Invisible	(1)		(Lasts 3 minutes)
Open Lock	+4	(1)	(Must do an Open Lock Test)

Using Dice

Two dice are used in the game: a six-sided die (called a d6), and a four-sided die (called a d4). If a four-sided die is not available, a six-sided die may be used, re-rolling if it lands on five or six. The four sided die is only used when rolling for the Default Value of the Core Descriptors.

Tests

If the GM wants to leave something up to chance, rather than simply deciding whether a character succeeds or fails at a task, the GM may call for a Test. The main mechanic is to multiply a d6 by four and add that to the Current Value of one or more Descriptors that are relevant to the situation. Before asking for a roll, the GM decides how difficult a task is and assigns a number to it based on the probability of it succeeding. A difficult task will require a higher number than an easy task. The GM does not reveal the number to the player. The player rolls a d6 and multiplies the value rolled by 4. The GM may have the player add the Current Value of one or more Descriptors to the resulting number if it seems relevant or important to the situation. If the final number meets or exceeds the number the GM decided upon earlier, the task succeeds. Otherwise it fails. For instance, if a character is trying to move a heavy rock, the GM might call for an Fitness Test to see if a character succeeds at lifting the rock. The player rolls a d6, multiplies the value rolled by 4 and adds the Current Value of his character's Fitness Descriptor. If the result is greater than or equal to the number the GM determined earlier, the character succeeds at moving the rock. Players are not allowed to call for a Test, or ask the GM to call for a Test. Players must always describe what their character is doing and the GM will call for a Test only when it is necessary, in order to keep the focus on role playing. However, when the GM calls for a Test, a player may ask the GM if he can add a Descriptor that seems relevant to the situation.

Tests involving multiple characters

The GM will call for more than one player to perform a Test when two or more characters are competing against each other. For instance when one character attempts to attack, overpower, outrun or otherwise compete with another character. The GM will ask each player involved to do a Test. The GM may have all the players add the same Descriptors, or different Descriptors depending on the nature of the test. The player who gets the highest result prevails over the opponent. For instance characters running a race would each perform a Speed Test to determine their placement. Likewise, a Test involving multiple characters can be used to determine who gets to attack first in a fight.

If a Test involves two characters competing against each other in some way, it is known as a Two-Way Test. Alternatively, the GM can have one player, usually the defender, add 14 to the relevant Current Descriptor Value(s) rather than rolling, while the other player rolls.

Fighting

When a player wishes to fire a slingshot, for example, the GM might ask for a Precision+Slingshot Expertise+Slingshot Test. The player rolls a d6, multiplies it by 4 and adds the Current Value of those Descriptors. If the character lacks the Slingshot Expertise Descriptor, it is assumed to be +0. Since it is an Expertise Descriptor, the Test can still be performed, because Expertise Descriptors can be used unless they are greater than or equal to -5. However, the Test could not be performed at all if the character lacked the Slingshot Descriptor, and would automatically fail since the Descriptor Slingshot is a Physical Item Descriptor. The character being targeted will be asked to do a Defense Test. The player who gets the highest result prevails. If the attacker prevails, the GM will call for a Vitality Adjustment. If the defender prevails, the attack missed, and no Vitality Adjustment is performed.

If both characters are attacking each other with a knife, the GM can call for a Two-Way Test where they both do an Fitness+Knife Expertise+Knife Test (rather than one character doing a Defense Test). A Vitality Adjustment is performed and the loser of the Fitness Test has his Current Vitality Value lowered. This saves time than always having to do two separate Tests.

Test Descriptors

When Tests are frequently done with multiple Descriptors, they can be notated as a separate Descriptor. For example if adding together Precision+Slingshot Expertise+Slingshot equals 3, it can be notated as:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Precision+Slingshot Expertise+Slingshot Test	+3	

Alternatively, it can be made as a Use of the Slingshot:

Descriptor	Default	Current
Slingshot		
*Attack	+3	

The GM could then simply call for a Slingshot Attack Test.

Vitality Adjustment

If a character has succeeded in injuring or healing another character, the GM will call for a Vitality Adjustment. If the Item, Use or Ability doesn't specify how to perform the Vitality Adjustment, a d6 is rolled and the Current Value of the targeted character's Vitality is increased or reduced by that amount.

Increasing Descriptors:

After having adventured a certain amount of time, the GM may allow the players to increase some of their characters' Descriptors such as Vitality. For instance the GM might ask a player to increase his character's Vitality by 2d6.

Missing Descriptors

If a character does not have a certain Descriptor on its Character Descriptor Sheet, it is assumed to be +0. (unless it is a Physical Item or an Ability, in which case the character simply doesn't have it and can't use it) If it is decreased during the course of the game, the Descriptor is written on the Character Descriptor Sheet with a Default Value of +0 and its new Current Value.

Descriptor	Default	Current
Descriptor name	+0	-1

If it is a Physical Item, the character is assumed to not possess the Item, and it will not be written on the Character Descriptor Sheet in any case. Likewise Abilities and Uses cannot be used if the character doesn't already have them.

Descriptors at (0) or -5

Descriptors cannot be used if they are at (0) or -5. If it is at (0) it is used up. If it is at -5, if the GM calls for a Test the player must inform the GM and the GM will not allow that player to perform that Test. Whatever the character is attempting to do will automatically fail.

If a character's Vitality reaches -5 or lower, the character becomes unconscious. If that character receives any additional injury after that, it will die.

At the beginning of a new day (in game time) all Descriptors are restored to their Default Values. To indicate this, erase all of the Current Values.

Magic

If the game takes place in a setting that includes magic, the GM can either use free form magic or non-free form magic. Characters that can perform magic must be given the Descriptor "Magic Ability", and its Default Value must be greater than (0). Characters that have the Magic Ability Descriptor can perform magic until their Magic Ability Descriptor's Current Value reaches (0).

Free form magic

In order to use free form magic, the player tells the GM what he wants the magical effect to be. The GM will then ask him to perform a Magic Test, which is possible unless his character's Magic Ability is already (0). The player will perform a Magic Test and then decrement his character's Magic Ability (by 1 or whatever the GM decides). When it reaches (0), his character can no longer perform any magic. Characters who do not have the Descriptor cannot perform magic at all.

The GM will determine the actual effects based on what is reasonable and how well the player rolled.

If a character wishes to use magic to attack or otherwise adversely affect another character, creature or Physical Item with magic, the GM will call for a Two-Way Test.

Non-free form Magic

Instead of using freeform magic, the GM can include Uses inside the Ability "Magic Ability", and give players whose characters have the Descriptor "Magic Ability" a list of Uses that their characters can use. As characters continue adventuring, the GM can give more Uses, either in-game or before the start of a session.

Example Template:

Magic Ability	+5 (2)	
*Turn Invisible	(2)	(up to 3 minutes)
*Open Lock	(1)	
*Change Speed	(1)	(Increase or Decrease a character's Current Speed by 1d6. Can be used to increase it to above its Default Value.)

The amount by which to decrease the Current Value of the Magic Ability and its Uses will depend on how magic is works in the game world.

See the part about Uses for more information.

GM created characters and creatures

The GM should only include the most important Descriptors for characters or other creatures that will be played by the GM. Other Descriptors are assumed to be +0. Vitality should usually be included even if it is +0 so there will be space to record its Current Value in case it changes.

For example:

(Character name and brief description go here)

Descriptor	Default	Current
Vitality	+0	
Speed	+2	
Sneak	+1	
Sword	+1	
Money	+9	

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