sTGS

smpl Tabletop Gaming System

For all who love tabletop gaming.

Introduction

sTGS is intended to be an easy-to-use, customizable system for role playing gamers to get campaigns up and running quickly. It simplifies and abstracts away a lot of the math while still allowing a fair amount of complexity and nuance. The goal is to deliver a system is enables fast gameplay, requires less tedious calculations, and is flexible enough to work for different genres.

The key differentiators of sTGS are the preset level scales, the relativistic classifications of physicality, called builds, and the single-die system for executing actions. These each play a unique roll that, together, create fast, fun game flow allowing Game Masters and players to focus on campaign management and role playing.

Scales

Scales represent the levels of characters' abilities and provide a glance-able reference for checks and comparisons. Each numerical value of a 1d20 die correlates to levels laid out in tables. Each table is a scale for a particular category. Level ranges from inferior to superior, Severity from minimal to maximal, and Potency from ineffective to overwhelming. Then, there is fortuity, which has a different value correlation and ranges from worst case scenario to best case scenario.

d20 VALUE	LEVEL	SEVERITY	POTENCY
19-20	superior	maximal	overwhelming
15-18	progressed	major	strong
7-14	average	average	adequate
3-6	regressed	minor	weak
1-2	inferior	minimal	ineffective

- **Level** measures the status of characters' individual attributes and faculties.
- **Severity** measures the amount of harm or damage caused by actions or weapons.
- **Potency** measures the effectiveness of drugs, poisons, potions, and magical effects.
- **Fortuity**–shown below–measures the luck characters have with actions and scenarios.

Fortuity values have a different arrangement than the other scales. Instead of least to most, they are arranged in relative, probabilistic groupings ranging from best case scenario to worst case scenario.

Fortuity represents the chance of beneficial or detrimental outcomes and is determined by the difference between competing roll results. This is either between the GM and a player or two players.

The distance between the two results determines how beneficial or detrimental an outcome may be. The larger the distance between the results, the more beneficial or detrimental the outcome.

> **Example:** *Player 1's roll total is 18 while the GM's roll total is 12. The difference between the rolls is 6, which would be neutral fortuity.*

Fortuity checks are not required for most actions. Its implementation is left up to the GM's discretion.

d20 VALUE DIFFERENCE	FORTUITY
17-20 above	best case
11-16 above	beneficial
1-10 above or below	neutral
11-16 below	detrimental
17-20 below	worst case

Scales serve as guides for checking characters' abilities when needed. They're also used to quickly set required levels for particular actions when building quests and tasks. If a character has the correct level, there's no need them to roll unless the GM requires it. This allows gameplay to move quickly while still keeping constraints on character abilities.

Example: A GM creates a task within a quest that requires a progressed strength level to execute. If the character has an equal or greater level, they can automatically succeed at executing the task. However, maybe the character just finished a battle, so even though they have an equal or greater level to execute the task, the GM could require them to roll equal to or higher than the correlated number value of that level in order to succeed.

Actions

Actions in sTGS differ from most conventional tabletop gaming systems in that they are simultaneous rather than turn-based. Players still execute one action at a time, but they can do so at the same time.

Example: Two or more players engaged in combat roll simultaneously to execute their actions all at once.

This leads to faster sequences of events, such as players taking damage at the same time and both being able to state their next desired action right away.

Many actions do not require rolling to determine success or failure, because GMs can quickly make a determination on the fly by checking character levels using the scales. When rolls are required, success or failure is determined by rolling 1d20 and accounting for advantages, disadvantages, and fortuity.

Single-Character General Actions

Single-character actions don't require players to roll unless the GM specifies it as most actions can be quickly determined by checking character levels. When specified as needed, the process is as follows:

1. **Desired Action**
   - Player describes an action they want to perform.
     Example: "I'm leaping over the crevice."

2. Level Checks

- GM checks or sets the the level required for a successful attempt.
- GM checks the character's level that best corresponds to the desired action.
- If the level is greater than what the action requires, the attempt succeeds.
  Example: Player's level is Average, which is above the required level of Regressed, so they succeed.
- If the level is less than what the action requires, the attempt fails.
  Example: Player's level is Regressed, which is below the required level of Average, so they fail.
- If the level is equal to what the action requires, the attempt succeeds unless the GM challenges them to a roll-off.
  Example: Player's level is Average, which is equal to the required level of Average, so they succeed or roll 1d20 against the GM.

3. Roll-Offs

- If the player rolls equal to or higher than the Game Master, they succeed.
  Example: Player's roll total is 10 and GM's roll total is 10, so they succeed.
- If the player rolls lower than the Game Master, they fail.
  Example: Player's roll total is 10 and GM's roll total is 12, so they fail.

4. Fortuity (Optional)

GM may check fortuity to determine how it should affect the outcome.

Multi-Character General Actions

Multi-character actions don't require players to roll unless the GM specifies it as most actions can be quickly determined by checking character levels. When specified as needed, the process is as follows:

1. Initiative

GM assesses situation for initiative and grants it to correct player(s).
Example: Player 1 is the first to decide on an action, so they will have initiative.
If the situation doesn't warrant it, players roll 1d20 to determine initiative.

2. Desired Actions

All players describe actions they want to perform.
Example: "I'm retreating to the doorway." "I'm ducking down." ...

3. Level Checks

- GM checks or sets the levels required for success attempts.
- GM checks characters' levels that best correspond to the desired actions.
- If all characters' levels are greater than what the actions require, they all succeed.
  Example: *All characters have a required Agility level of 9 or greater, so they all succeed.*
- If all characters' levels are less than what the actions require, they all fail.
  Example: *All characters do not have a required Agility level of 9 or greater, so they all fail.*
- If any character's level is equal to what the action requires, they succeed unless the GM challenges them to a roll-off.
  Example: *Player 1's character has a required Agility level of 9, but GM challenges them, so they roll 1d20 against the GM.*

4. Roll-Offs (Optional)

- If any player rolls equal to or higher than the Game Master, they succeed.
  Example: *Player's roll total is 13 and GM's roll total is 10, so they succeed.*
- If any player rolls lower than the Game Master, they fail.
  Example: *Player's roll total is 11 and GM's roll total is 15, so they fail.*

5. Fortuity (Optional)

- GM may check fortuity to determine how it should affect the outcome.

Combat Actions Process

Combat actions always require players to roll. The process is as follows:

1. Initiative

- GM assesses situation for initiative and grants it to correct player(s).
  Example: *An undetected character performing a stealth attack will have initiative.*
- If the situation doesn't provide it, players roll 1d20 to determine initiative.

2. Desired Actions

- All players describe combat actions they want to perform.
  Example: *"I'm swinging my sword attacking his nearest leg."*

3. Level Checks

- All players check for differences between the skill levels corresponding to their desired actions noting any advantages and disadvantages.
- If the skill levels are equal, there is no advantage or disadvantage.
  Example: Player 1 and Player 2 both have BP of 13. No advantage or disadvantage.
- If the skill levels are unequal, there is an advantage for the higher skilled character and a disadvantage for the lower skilled character according to how many levels apart they are. Each level apart equals one point added to the rolls of the higher skilled character and one point subtracted from the rolls of the lower skilled character. The largest gap is a four-point gap.
  Example: Player 1 BP is 12 and Player 2 BP is 14. The 2-point difference is an advantage for Player 2 as a bonus on action rolls and damage dealt and is a disadvantage for Player 1 as a penalty on action rolls and damage dealt.

Outcomes

- All players engaged in combat simultaneously roll 1d20, add any advantage to their result, and subtract any disadvantage from their result to calculate their roll total.
- Players that roll higher than their opponents' chosen skill level and roll total succeed.
  Example: Player 1's roll total is 16, which is higher than Player 2's roll total of 15 and chosen skill level of 12, so they succeed.
- Players that roll higher than their opponents' chosen skill level, but less than their roll total, fail.
  Example: Player 1's roll total is 15, which is higher than Player 2's chosen skill level of 12, but lower than Player 2's roll total of 17, so they fail.
- Players that roll lower than their opponents' chosen skill level, but higher than their roll total, claim initiative. If they already have initiative, they get a disengage opportunity where opponents can't attack.
  Example: Player 1's roll total is 10, which is lower than Player 2's chosen skill level of 12, but higher than Player 2's roll total of 8, so they claim initiative or get a disengage opportunity.
- When two or more players' roll totals are equal and higher than their respective chosen skill levels, this results in simultaneous success. Players involved take damage and roll again to claim initiative.
  Example: Player 1 and Player 2 both have a roll total of 15, which is higher than both of their chosen skill levels of 11 and 12, respectively.

- When two or more players' roll totals are equal, but less than their respective chosen skill levels, this results in simultaneous failure. Players involved don't take damage and roll again to claim initiative.
  Example: *Player 1 and Player 2 both have a roll total of 9, which is lower than both of their chosen skill levels of 11 and 12, respectively.*

Fortuity (Optional)
- GM may check fortuity to determine how it should affect the outcomes.

Monikers

Monikers provide a clear organization for the multiple names characters may be known by.

MONIKER	DESCRIPTION
Birth Name	The primary name a character was given at birth.
Chosen Name	The secondary, chosen name a character uses for various purposes.
Nickname	The tertiary, playful name a character uses within their social circle.

Builds

Builds represent characters' overall physicality and limits their maximum potentials of strength, speed, agility, stamina, and endurance. These limitations are established using combinations of statures and somatotypes.

Statures

Stature is the natural height of characters. It's the measure that maintains relativity of overall performance of groups regardless of somatotype, because performance varies more between dissimilar statures. Essentially, height accounts for greater differences in athletic performance than somatotype.

STATURE	HEIGHT
Giant	6'6"+
Tall	6'1" – 6'6"
Average	5'1 – 6'
Short	4'7" – 5'
Dwarf	4'6"-

Somatotypes

Somatotype is the bodily form and constitution characters have. It's the measure that maintains relativity of overall performance of groups of similar stature, because performance varies less between similar statures. Essentially, constitution accounts for less differences in athletic performance than stature.

SOMATOTYPE	DESCRIPTION
Ectomorphic	Underweight and not muscular; Not athletic.
Meso-Ectomorphic	Muscular and lightweight; Athletic or not athletic.
Mesomorphic	Muscular and normal weight; Athletic or not athletic.
Meso-Endomorphic	Muscular and heavy to overweight; Athletic or not athletic.
Endomorphic	Overweight and not muscular; Not athletic.

Physicality Levels

Combining the five statures and five somatotypes results in twenty-five unique builds. Each build has a preset maximum physicality relative to the rest with slim to muscular somatotypes being the most athletic at every stature group.

Example: A character with a dwarf–ectomorph build can never be as strong as one with a dwarf–mesomorph build and a character with a giant–mesomorph build can never be as nimble as one with an average–ectomorph build.

Builds deal with overall performance instead of specific attribute levels. This keeps characters relative to each other while simplifying in-game calculation, which speeds up gameplay. This system assumes characters are created at their peak physicality. The twenty-five builds are assigned a level based on real-world research and of figures across major sports, including the Olympics. The GM makes decisions according to their knowledge of their current set of characters. The system is human scale, but can be extended to include other kinds of beings with a few tweaks as you see fit.

STATURE	ECTO	MESO-ECTO	MESO	MESO-ENDO	ENDO
Tall	average	superior	progressed	progressed	regressed
Giant	regressed	progressed	progressed	average	regressed
Average	regressed	progressed	progressed	average	average
Short	regressed	average	average	regressed	inferior
Dwarf	inferior	regressed	regressed	regressed	inferior

Rates

Rates are a simple way to set and track fluctuating values. The rates are all derived and set from 1d20 during character creation. The lower the value, the slower the rate.

RATE	DESCRIPTION
Fatigue Rate	Speed of tiring and becoming exhausted. Lower is better.
Recovery Rate	Speed of healing from illness and injury. Higher is better.
Leveling Rate	Speed of leveling up from XP gained. Lower is better.

Skillsets

Skillsets allow players to use bodies of knowledge and abilities to create highly specialized, unique characters. All skillsets are considered to be at the maxed out peak once allocated a point value, so it's quite important to allocate points with careful intention during character creation. GMs and players create whichever skillsets fit their game genre. The default skillsets are survival, combat, and magic.

Survival Skill Specializations

SKILL	DESCRIPTION
Craft & Build	Crafting or building with natural resources.
Hunt & Gather	Foraging, hunting, trapping, and sourcing water.
Kindle	Creating and sustaining fire with or without technology
Prepare & Cook	Preparing animals and other foods and cooking them.
Remedy	Creating natural or unnatural remedies for illnesses.
Treat	Treating aches, pains, cuts, burns, and other injuries.

Combat Skill Specializations

SKILL	DESCRIPTION
Dodge	Dodging strikes, grapple or throw attempts, and projectiles.
Block	Blocking strikes, grapple or throw attempts, and projectiles.
Parry	Parrying strikes, grapple or throw attempts, and projectiles.
Strike	Striking with body parts or various objects and weapons.
Grapple	Holds, throws, takedowns, slams, and ground maneuvers.
Target	Throw or shoot various kinds of projectile weapons.

Magic Skill Specializations

SKILL	DESCRIPTION
Incantation	Verbal invocations, casting via word sequences of power.
Forming	Magic using geometric forces to bind, protect, etc.
Additive	Constructive magic used to create, heal, add to, etc.
Subtractive	Destructive magic used to destroy, harm, take from, etc.
Dual	Additive and subtractive used to transform, change, etc.
Manipulative	Not additive or subtractive, for levitation, manipulation, etc.

Weaponry

Weaponry is anything a character uses to harm another. From hands to random objects to melee or ranged weapons, nearly any and everything can be considered a weapon. There are four, default categories of weaponry. GMs and players should create their own lists of weapons to fit their game style.

Type of Weaponry

SKILL	DESCRIPTION
Blunt	Doesn't have a sharpened or pointed edge.
Edged	Has a sharpened edge or blade.
Pointed	Has a stiff, penetration point.
Combustive	Any manner of harmful fire wielding.
Explosive	Any manner of harmful explosions.

Weaponry Ranges

RANGE	HAND TO HAND	WEAPON EXAMPLE
Close	head, elbow, knee, etc.	pen, knife, bottle, etc.
Short	hand, knee, foot	stick, bat, wakizashi, etc.
Mid	hand, knee, foot	chucks, mace, sword, etc.
Long	n/a	katana, staff, spear, etc.
Far	n/a	darts, blowgun, bow, etc.

Character Profile