Fate's Edge Quickstart Guide

A World of Consequences

1   Welcome to Fate's Edge

Fate's Edge is a narrative-first tabletop RPG where every action carries weight, every choice has consequence, and every spell risks backlash. This quickstart guide covers the core rules from the SRD.

2   Core Resolution

2.1   The Art of Consequence

All significant actions follow this three-step process:

1. **Approach**: Player describes intent and method

2. **Execution**: Roll Attribute + Skill d10s (6+ = success, 1 = SB)

3. **Outcome**: GM interprets successes vs DV, spends SB for complications

2.2   Attributes (1-5)

- **Body**: Strength, endurance, physical action

- **Wits**: Perception, cleverness, reaction speed

- **Spirit**: Willpower, intuition, resilience

- **Presence**: Charm, command, social force

2.3   Skills (0-5)

- **Melee**, **Ranged**, **Athletics**

- **Sway**, **Deception**, **Insight**

- **Stealth**, **Survival**, **Command**

- **Arcana**, **Lore**, **Craft**

2.4 Difficulty Values (DV)

DV	Situation
2	Routine: Clear intent, modest stakes
3	Pressured: Time pressure, mild resistance
4	Hard: Hostile conditions, active opposition
5+	Extreme: Multiple constraints, high precision

2.5 Position & Effect

- **Position**: Controlled (safe), Risky (default), Desperate (high stakes)

- **Effect**: Limited (weak), Standard (expected), Great (strong)

2.6 Outcome Matrix

Result	What Happens
Successes ≥ DV, 0 SB	Clean Success: Intent achieved
Successes ≥ DV, 1+ SB	Success & Cost: Intent + complications
0 < Successes < DV	Partial: Progress with complication (gain 1 Boon)
Successes = 0	Miss: No progress (gain 2 Boons)

> **Story Beats (SB)**
>
> GM spends SB to introduce narrative twists:
>
> - **1 SB**: Minor pressure (noise, trace, +1 Supply)
>
> - **2 SB**: Moderate setback (alarm, lose position, lesser foe)
>
> - **3 SB**: Serious trouble (reinforcements, gear breaks)
>
> - **4+ SB**: Major turn (trap springs, authority arrives)

3 Description Ladder

How you describe actions affects the roll:

- **Basic**: Roll as-is (all 1s generate SB)

- **Detailed**: Re-roll one die showing 1

- **Intricate**: Re-roll all 1s + add flourish on success

Note: Re-rolling 1s doesn't remove their SB; new 1s on re-rolls add more SB.

4 Boons: Reward for Meaningful Failure

When you **Miss** (0 successes) on a significant action with stated stakes, gain **2 Boons**.
When you achieve a **Partial** (successes < DV but > 0), gain **1 Boon**.

4.1 Using Boons

- Re-roll one die in any pool

- Activate an on-screen Asset

- Improve Position by 1 step

- Convert 2 Boons → 1 XP (once per session, max 2 XP)

4.2 Boon Limits

- Hold up to 5 Boons (trim to 2 at scene end)

- Max 2 Boons from failure per scene

5 Combat System

Combat uses the same core mechanic with tactical positioning.

5.1 Combat Procedure

1. Declare action and approach

2. GM sets Position (Controlled/Risky/Desperate)

3. Roll Attribute + Skill dice

4. Count successes vs DV, 1s generate SB

5. GM resolves outcome and spends SB

5.2 Harm System

- **Level 1**: Minor injury (-1 die to related actions)

- **Level 2**: Serious wound (-1 die to most actions)

- **Level 3**: Critical injury (incapacitated/dying)

5.3 Tactical Clocks

Track persistent combat conditions:

- Mob Overwhelm [6]

- Fatigue Spiral [4]

- Morale Collapse [6]

- Environmental Collapse [8]

6 Magic System

6.1 Three Paths of Magic

- **Caster (Freeform)**: Weave & Cast using Eight Elements (requires Caster's Gift)
- **Rites User (Runekeeper)**: Patron-based rituals with Obligation (requires Codex)
- **Invoker (Symbol Path)**: Ritual magic using Patron Symbols

6.2 Magic in Combat

- Casting: Channel + Weave = 2 actions
- Rites: 1 action to Invoke (can Push for +1 Obligation)
- Invokers: DV + 1 Player Turns for rituals, or Crack the Seal for instant cast

7 Character Creation

7.1 Starting Build

- **30 XP** to spend
- Attributes: 1-3, Skills: 0-2
- Can take bonds (+2 XP) and complications (+4 XP total)

7.2 Key Talents

- **Caster's Gift (2 XP)**: Freeform magic access
- **Familiar (2 XP)**: Patron features access
- **Codex (4 XP)**: Runekeeper rites and Obligation
- **Patron's Symbol (4 XP)**: Invoker ritual access

8 Range Bands & Movement

8.1 Range Bands

- **Close**: Arm's reach, melee combat
- **Near**: Same room/area, quick movement
- **Far**: Distant but same location
- **Absent**: Off-screen, requires travel

8.2 Movement

- 1 Move shifts one band (CloseNear or NearFar)
- Dash (action) shifts two bands
- Melee Flag: Mark engaged opponents in Near range

9   Travel Framework

9.1   Travel Procedure

1. Break journey into legs with Travel Clock [4]

2. Assign roles: Guide, Scout, Quartermaster, Watch

3. Advance clock through actions/encounters

4. Resolve complications when clock fills

10   Deck of Consequences

Optional tool for narrative complications:

- **Hearts**: Social/emotional complications

- **Spades**: Physical/violent setbacks

- **Clubs**: Resource/wealth problems

- **Diamonds**: Mystical/supernatural events

11   Advancement

11.1   XP Awards

- Standard: 6-10 XP per session

- Major objectives: +2-4 XP

- Discovery: +1-2 XP

- Hard choices: +1-2 XP

- Milestones: +8-12 XP per arc

11.2   Spending XP

- Attributes: New rating $\times$ 3 XP

- Skills: New level $\times$ 2 XP

- Talents: As listed (2-6+ XP)

- Followers: Cap^2 XP

12 GM Quick Reference

12.1 Adjudication Loop

1. Player describes intent and approach

2. Set DV (2-5+) and Position

3. Roll pool = Attribute + Skill

4. Count successes (6+) and SB (1s)

5. Resolve outcome from matrix

6. Spend SB for complications

12.2 SB Spend Menu

- 1 SB: Minor pressure (noise, trace)

- 2 SB: Moderate setback (alarm, lose position)

- 3 SB: Serious trouble (reinforcements, gear break)

- 4+ SB: Major turn (scene shift, authority arrives)

13 Worked Examples

Lockpick Under Pressure

Situation: Picking a lock while guards patrol nearby
Roll: Wits 2 + Stealth 2 = 4d10 → 8, 6, 3, 1
Result: 2 successes (DV 2), 1 SB
Outcome: Lock opens, GM spends 1 SB: "The lock clicks open but the last tumbler makes a loud snap - guards turn toward the sound."

Combat Attack

Situation: Kael attacks cultist with imbued blade
Roll: Body 3 + Melee 2 = 5d10 → 9, 7, 5, 2, 1
Result: 3 successes (DV 2), 1 SB
Outcome: Cultist defeated, GM spends 1 SB: "Blood sprays across the ritual sigil - energy flares, accelerating the summoning."

Partial Success

Situation: Negotiating with a suspicious merchant
Roll: Presence 3 + Sway 2 = 5d10 → 7, 6, 4, 3, 1
Result: 2 successes (¡ DV 3), 1 SB
Outcome: Partial success - deal possible but with harsh terms, gain 1 Boon. GM spends 1 SB: "The merchant agrees but demands an additional favor later."

14   Getting Started

1. Create characters with 30 XP

2. GM prepares starting situation using travel framework

3. Play through scenes using core resolution system

4. Award XP based on accomplishments and choices

5. Let consequences drive the narrative forward

Key Design Principles

- **Narrative Primacy**: Mechanics serve the story

- **Risk as Drama**: Every roll carries potential cost

- **Meaningful Growth**: Advancement changes characters and world

- **Consequence Weight**: Choices ripple outward

- **Fail Forward**: Misses fuel future opportunities

Remember: In Fate's Edge, nothing is free. Every victory has a price, and every choice shapes the world around you.