

# DRAFT: RPG NAME TBD

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Difficulty \ Outcome	Very Bad	Bad	Mixed	Good	Very Good
Very Easy	–	$\leq 0$	1 – 4	5 – 8	$\geq 9$
Easy	$\leq 0$	1 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12	$\geq 13$
Medium	$\leq 4$	5 – 8	9 – 12	13 – 16	$\geq 17$
Hard	$\leq 8$	9 – 12	13 – 16	17 – 20	$\geq 21$
Very Hard	$\leq 12$	13 – 16	17 – 20	21 – 24	$\geq 25$

Table 1: Outcome Table for Unopposed Rolls

Difference	$\leq -6$	-5 – -2	-1 – 1	2 – 5	$\geq 6$
Outcome	Very Bad	Bad	Mixed	Good	Very Good

Table 2: Outcome Table for Opposed Rolls

# 1 Rolls

When a Player Character (PC) attempts to do something that is not certain, they must roll for it. There are two types of roll: opposed rolls for when another character is resisting the effort and unopposed rolls for when success is not guaranteed but nobody is actively resisting the effort. The result of a roll is measured by an **Outcome**: *Very Bad*, *Bad*, *Mixed*, *Good*, or *Very Good*.

When the *Outcome* of a roll is *Mixed* or better (*Mixed*, *Good*, or *Very Good*), the PC achieves what they rolled for; on a *Very Good* outcome they either achieve something extra or gain an *Advantage*. When the *Outcome* is *Mixed* or worse (*Mixed*, *Bad*, or *Very Bad*), there is either a negative repercussion, and a particularly bad repercussion on a *Very Bad* result, or the GM gains an *Advantage*, or two on a *Very Bad* result.

The GM may declare any roll to be **Dangerous** in which case a *Bad* outcome is treated as a *Very Bad* outcome.

## 1.1 Unopposed Rolls

For an unopposed roll, the GM will select the appropriate *Skill* for the task and set a **Difficulty** for the task, which is *Very Easy*, *Easy*, *Medium*, *Hard*, or *Very Hard*. The player then rolls 3d20 and generally takes the middle value and then adds their *Skill* bonus and any relevant bonuses to the roll; this total is then compared to Table 1 to determine the *Outcome*.

## 1.2 Opposed Rolls

For an opposed roll, both the Player and GM roll and add their appropriate *Skill* bonuses and any other relevant bonuses as well. Then, the Player's result is computed as their roll minus the GM's roll and this is compared to Table 2. Similarly, the GM's result is computed as their roll minus the Player's and this is compared to Table 2.

## 1.3 Group Rolls

Groups rolls, for circumstances where multiple characters are working together on something or all doing something where failures can impact each other, have slightly different rules. There are two types of Group rolls, whose rules are detailed below.

### 1.3.1 Collective Rolls

A Collective Roll is used when characters are working together on a large task that could not be reasonably be completed by just one. For example, a Collective Roll might be used when a group of PCs is researching in a large library looking for information pertaining to the location of an ancient ruin. In a Collective Roll, the GM may also allow multiple rounds of rolls to be collected together for tasks that might take more time and effort than just the single roll.

For a Collective Roll, the GM sets a *Difficulty* and a **Magnitude** (a whole number). The characters then each roll as normal, but instead of converting their roll to an outcome, they instead total their rolls together. This total is then divided by the *Magnitude* set by the GM (always rounding towards zero) and then this result is compared to Table 1 to determine the group's outcome of the roll.

In our example of searching a library, the GM may determine that this task is relatively easy and risk free and set a *Difficulty* of *Easy* but because of the massive size of the library determine that the *Magnitude* is 10. Then, if the party rolls a total of 48, we divide this by the *Magnitude* to get a 4, which is a *Bad* outcome.

When a GM allows multiple rounds of rolls, the party totals their rolls from each round together and then divides by the *Magnitude* to determine the *Outcome* for each round. While a *Bad* or *Very Bad* result on a round of rolls is not a failure of the entire effort, the GM may still impose negative outcomes or gain *Advantage* for each round until the group reaches a *Mixed* or better result.

If the GM for the party searching the library allows the party another round, the GM may collect an *Advantage* for the failure on the first round (or impose some negative outcome). The party then rolls a total of 33 on the next round, for a total of 81 now, which is an 8 after division by the *Magnitude* and is therefore a *Mixed* result now. The party therefore has now found the information they are looking for, but the GM may take another *Advantage* or impose a negative outcome.

### 1.3.2 Cooperative Rolls

A Cooperative Roll is used when characters are each performing similar actions with similar goals but failures by some characters may impact the entire group. For example, a Cooperative Roll might be used when a group of PCs is sneaking into the collections of a museum seeking an artifact not on display.

For a Cooperative Roll, the GM sets a *Difficulty* for each character which each character rolls against. This *Difficulty* and the *Skill* used for the roll is often the same for all characters involved but not necessarily. Then, the total successes and failures are totaled, where a *Very Bad* counts as -2, *Bad* as -1, *Mixed* as 0, *Good* as +1, and *Very Good* as +2. This total then is converted into an *Outcome* in the same manner, so a result of -2 or less is *Very Bad*, -1 is *Bad*, 0 is *Mixed*, 1 is *Good*, and 2 or higher is *Very Good*.

For our party attempting to sneak into the museum collections, the GM may set a *Difficulty* of *Hard* and have each PC roll for stealth. If the party rolls two *Bad*, one *Mixed*, and one *Very Good* result, the outcome of the roll is *Mixed*. If, instead, they had rolled two *Bad*, one *Good*, and one *Very Good* the outcome would be *Good*.

## 1.4 Helping Out

A character can **Help** another creature on a roll with that creature's and GM's approval. Based on how they are helping out, the GM will pick a skill for the helper to roll; this will generally be against a *Medium* difficulty though the GM may adjust this for particularly difficult tasks or when the assistance is difficult to render. On a *Mixed* or better result the creature being helped gains an *Advantage*.

## 1.5 Increased and Decreased Rolls

In some circumstances a character's roll may be **Increased** or **Decreased**. *Increases* and *Decreases* can stack and cancel each other out, so one *Increase* and one *Decrease* cancel out, while two *Increases* and one *Decrease* cancel out to one *Increase*.

On a roll with one *Increase* the highest of the 3d20 is read, while on a roll with one *Decrease* the lowest of the 3d20 is read. On a roll with two or more (net) *Increases* it is treated as if a 20 had been rolled and on a roll with two or more *Decreases* as if a 1 had been rolled.

## 2 Advantages

**Advantage** are meta-currency which represent power, preparation, luck, and other circumstances that may benefit the players or the GM. Each Player can collect *Advantage*, as can the GM. *Advantage* can be spent in a number of ways, detailed below and there may be other options that a GM allows or that are available based on particular creatures' abilities.

1. *Increasing a roll:* An *Advantage* can be spent to *Increase* a roll; this does not need to be a roll by the person spending the *Advantage* though their character must be able to narratively aid in the situation.
2. *Decreasing a roll:* An *Advantage* can be spent to *Decrease* a roll; a Player's character must be able to narratively disrupt the roll to use *Advantage* in this way.

Size	Scale
Tiny	1'
Small	2'
Medium	5'
Large	10'
Huge	20'
Gigantic	50'

Table 3: Sizes and Scales

Speed	Distance	Definition
None	—	0× scale
Slow	Near	3× scale
Medium	Close	5× scale
Fast	Mid-Range	10× scale
Very Fast	Far	20× scale

Table 4: Speeds and Distances

Skills		
Balance	Bargain	Climb
Codebreak	Convince	Defend
Disguise	Escape	Fish
Hide	Insight	Jump
Lift	Medicine	Perceive
Pick Lock	Pick Pocket	Plot <sup>a</sup>
Run	Search	Shove
Sneak	Survey <sup>b</sup>	Swim
Tame	Track	Willpower

Table 5: General Skills

<sup>a</sup>Planning and preparing for a heist or infiltration effort

<sup>b</sup>Map an area, find points of interest, judge survival aspects, etc.

3. *Increase damage*: An *Advantage* can be spent to increase the number of damage dice rolled by a creature by one; the damage roll does not need to be by the person spending the *Advantage* though their character must be able to narratively impact the situation.
4. *Decrease damage*: An *Advantage* can be spent to reduce the number of damage dice rolled by a creature by one; a Player's character must be able to narratively impact the situation to use *Advantage* in this way.

## 3 Character Attributes and Skills

Characters are defined by their *Attributes* and by their *Skills*. *Attributes* define certain properties of characters, such as their size, movement, wealth, and ability to take damage while *Skills* define how good characters are at certain tasks and are used for rolls.

### 3.1 Attributes

Character **Attributes** represent certain character abilities, in particular they describe certain aspects of health, movement, and wealth.

#### 3.1.1 Health

There are three health related *Attributes*: **Life**, **Recovery**, and **Block**. A creature's *Life* defines how much damage it can take until it falls unconscious or dies. Its *Recovery* defines how much *Life* a creature regains when it heals, rests, and recuperates. *Block* defines how much damage a creature can just absorb without any impact, as described later *Block* is subtracted from damage dealt to a creature before subtracting the damage from its *Life*.

A character's *Maximum Life* has a numeric score between 1 and 40, its *Recovery* a numeric score between 1 and 20, and its *Block* a numeric score between 0 and 2. Other creatures may have values outside of these ranges.

#### 3.1.2 Movement

Each creature has a **Size** which describes its size and is used, along with its **Speeds** to determine how much it can move each turn. A creature's *Size* is one of *Tiny*, *Small*, *Medium*, *Large*, *Huge*, or *Gigantic*. Table 3 lists each size along with a *scale*; this *scale* is used to define speeds, in addition a creature of a given *Size* fits in a square area with side lengths of its size's *scale*.

A creature has five different **Speeds**: *Walking*, *Swimming*, *Flying*, *Climbing*, and *Burrowing*. Each of these speeds has a value of *None*, *Slow*, *Medium*, *Fast*, or *Very Fast*. Table 4 lists each speed along with its corresponding **Distance** that a creature with that speed can move on a turn and a *Scale* multiplier that defines that distance. Note that a GM may allow creatures with speeds of *None* to still move in certain circumstances, for instance a creature with *None* for its *Swimming* or *Climbing* speed may still be able to swim or climb but it may be quite slowly or may require a roll.

Wealth Value	Example Purchases
None	nothing
Wretched	basic food and lodging daily
Squalid	basic (though sturdy) supplies like rope, arrows, and tents
Modest	rare supplies like climbing equipment, a day of unskilled labor, a beast of burden
Comfortable	a sailboat, a comfortable wagon, a day of skilled labor
Luxurious	a mercenary, an abandoned warehouse or small property

Table 6: Wealth

Skill	Specializations
Alchemy	Products: acid, glue, salve, ...
Art	Medium: painting, drawing, composing, ...
Craft	Material: glass, metal, jewelry, ...
Drive	Vehicle: cart, carriage, boat, ...
Forage	Environment: forest, mountain, jungle, ...
Forge	Material: art, jewelry, documents, ...
Hunt	Environment: forest, mountain, jungle, ...
Inquire	Social Group: criminals, aristocracy, urchins, ...
Knowledge	Subject: arcana, geography, history, nature, nobility, ...
Magic	See Section 3.2.1
Performance	Medium: acting, dancing, piano, ...
Reputation	Social Group: criminals, aristocracy, urchins, ...
Ride	Mount: horse, camel, donkey, ...
Weapon	Weapon: knife, sword, bow, ...
Language	Language: common, local languages, sylvan, ...

Table 7: Specialized Skills

### 3.1.3 Wealth

The **Wealth** Attribute describes how much money a creature has and can easily spend. Creatures with a high **Wealth** are able to make larger purchases, without expending other meta-resources, than a creature with low **Wealth**. **Wealth** has one of the values in Table 6 which also describes the sorts of things that can be bought with that level.

## 3.2 Skills

**Skills** represent talents and abilities a creature has. Most skills are *general* and all creatures will have a bonus to them, low as that bonus may be. Some skills, though, are *specialized* and require specific training, ability, or knowledge. The *specialized* skills also have *specializations*, they apply for a particular purpose. For example, characters can have separate **Weapon** skills for each type of weapon they know how to wield. For *specialized* skills, creatures do not necessarily have a bonus for the skill and therefore may not be able to complete an action which requires a roll of that skill, though in some cases the GM may allow use of a similar skill though might impose a penalty by increasing the *Difficulty* or *Decreasing* the roll. For player characters, all skill bonuses fall in the range of -1 – +3.

The *general skills* are listed in Table 5. The *specialized* skills are listed in Table 7 along with examples of their specializations; others may be possible at the GM's discretion and based on the Player or creature's need.

### 3.2.1 Magic

Magic is defined, like most everything else, as a *Skill*. Magic is divided into fifty different magic skills, which are composed of a *verb* describing what the magic can do and a *noun* describing what the magic impacts. The verbs are: *control*, *create*, *destroy*, *perceive*, and *transform*. The nouns are: *air*, *earth*, *fire*, *water*, *animals*, *plants*, *body*, *illusion*, *mind*, and *power*.

The exact meaning of these verbs and nouns should be discussed by the Player and GM and can be given some breadth; for example *fire* may include heat as well as literal fire, or *air* may include lightning.

Keyword	Properties
Melee	Can be used to make a melee attack, dealing 1d8 base damage
Ranged	Can be used to make a ranged attack, dealing 1d6 base damage
Accurate	Increases the base damage of a <i>Ranged</i> weapon to 1d8
Defensive	Grants a +1 bonus to <i>Block</i>
Multihit	Attacker can spend advantage to target a creature and all those adjacent to it at -1 damage dice
Reach	Increases the range of a melee attack to a <i>Near</i> distance
Far Shooter	Increases the range of a ranged attack to <i>Far</i>
Piercing	Attacker can spend advantage to ignore the target's <i>Block</i>

Table 8: Weapon Keywords

## 4 Combat

Combat is broken up into rounds during which each participant has the chance to act. During each round, the GM and Players alternate taking turns to have one creature act, until all participants have acted; if there are more participants on one side or the other the remaining creatures generally act at the end, though one side may pass to allow the other to act an additional time. Either side may also spend *Advantage* once each turn to have two creatures go instead of just one. No creature can act more than once per round, except as allowed by another feature or rule.

On a creature's turn, they can move based on their *Speed*, take an **Action**, any take any reasonable number of **Quick Actions**. An action can be to make an attack, to take additional movement, to *Help* someone else, or similar actions that the GM may permit. Quick Actions include simple tasks like drinking a potion or drawing a weapon.

### 4.1 Making Attacks

When a creature makes an attack against another creature, the attacker and target make an opposed roll. The attacker rolls adding their *Weapon* skill for the weapon being used and the target rolls with their *Defend* skill. Some creatures may have abilities that allow them to attack multiple targets simultaneously, in such cases the attacker rolls once and then computes and resolves their *Outcome* against each target separately.

If the attacker's result is *Mixed* or better, they roll damage of their weapon and add their *Weapon* skill. The target subtracts their *Block* from this number and any remaining damage is subtracted from its *Life*. If the attacker's result is *Very Good* they gain an *Advantage* as normal, which can be spent to gain an additional damage die on their damage roll. If the result is *Mixed* or worse then the target has the chance to strike back if it reasonably can; if it does it deals damage in the same manner, alternatively it can take an *Advantage* or two on a *Very Bad* result.

While *Advantage* can be spent on any damage roll to add a damage die to it, the GM cannot spend more *Advantage* for additional damage on a single damage roll than the current round number (where the first round of combat is round 1).

For each attack a character makes in the same round, either as their action or in response to an attack against them, they roll one fewer damage dice, to a minimum of zero damage dice; they can still spend *Advantage* to add additional damage dice to subsequent attacks.

### 4.2 Weapon Properties

Properties of a weapon, or unarmed or magical attacks, such as damage and range are defined by keywords on the weapon. The keywords and their properties are detailed in Table 8. Note that the attack roll for any melee attacks (attacks against an adjacent creature) is *Decreased* if the weapon does not have the *Melee* keyword. Similarly, any ranged attack (any attack against a target not adjacent) without the *Ranged* keyword and any attack beyond a *Mid-Range* are *Decreased*.

### 4.3 Healing

To recover *Life* lost during combat or otherwise during their adventures, creatures will need to **Heal**. When a creature successfully heals, it regains a number of *Life* equal to its *Recovery*. The easiest and simplest way to heal, is to get a night's rest; if a creature rests for 8 hours, with at least 6 hours of sleep and no strenuous activity over

the period of time, they heal. Creatures can attempt to heal, or attempt to help another creature heal, in less time with a roll, with the difficulty depending on the time taken to heal. The GM should determine the *Skill* to roll for healing based on the activities undertaken to heal. The *Difficulty* is generally set based on the time taken to rest: if they spend 4 hours the roll is *Very Easy*, 1 hour is *Easy*, 30 minutes is *Medium*, 10 minutes is *Hard*, and 1 minute is *Very Hard*. The GM may adjust these difficulties based on the situation, for instance a hospital might decrease the difficulty while a busy or dangerous environment may increase it. The time it takes to heal accounts both for time to tend wounds, relax, and so on, it also includes the time to find the necessary supplies; the GM may allow a shorter rest time without increasing the difficulty if sufficient supplies are available. Based on the situation, the GM may allow healing to be attempted as an *Action* in combat, though such a roll is likely to be *Very Hard* and *Decreased*. On a healing roll, the target of the healing regains *Life* equal to their *Recovery* if the roll is *Good* or *Very Good*, on a *Mixed* result they heal half of their *Recovery*. On a *Bad* or *Very Bad* result, the target does not heal but on a *Bad* result the GM should not impose a negative outcome, reserving that for a *Very Bad* result.

#### 4.4 Defeat

When a creature is reduced to 0 *Life*, they are **Defeated**. Depending on the circumstances, the GM may declare that the creature falls unconscious or becomes incapacitated for a number of hours, at which point they will awake with 1 *Life*. If the creature is still in danger, for instance in combat, the creature must choose one of the following options:

- **Blaze of Glory:** the creature dies, but gets to take a final Action whose result is *Very Good*. This action may not be used to Heal itself.
- **Unconsciousness:** the creature falls unconscious and is stable for the moment. At the GM's discretion, the creature may either awaken with 1 *Life* in a number of hours or may require healing within a few hours or die. If the creature is hit by an attack, it becomes *Unstable*.
- **Unstable:** the creature remains alive but barely, with its fate hanging in the balance. The creature remains conscious and can act, but all of its rolls are *Decreased*. At the end of each of its turns, it rolls 1d20 and must roll a *Mixed* or better result with the *Difficulty* of this roll initially *Very Easy* and increasing by one level each round and each time the creature takes damage while in this state. If it fails one of these rolls, it dies.

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## A Inspirations and Mechanics Borrowed From

- Ars Magica
- Fudge
- Prismatic Wasteland
- Tavern Tales

## B Development Notes

### To Do List

- Transformation/Companion abilities
- Leveling Up and Experience Points
- Experience Points as money/resources
- Additional uses of advantage: retaliation attack on a successful hit, additional turn in combat