Iron & Aether Quick-Reference Guide

Learning a new tabletop RPG can be a daunting and often confusing task, so to make it a bit easier, given here is a "cheat sheet" of sorts to help familiarize new players with some of the most commonly-used rules. The character Chainbreaker will be used as an example for each rule.

Attacking (Part 6: Chapter 5)

Attacks are very similar to skill and ability checks, the only difference being that the dice used when attacking varies depending on the weapon. When making an attack, first find out that weapon's base damage die and what Weapon Skill it belongs to (both found in Part 5: Chapter 2), determine your proficiency in that weapon's Skill (Weapon Skills are on the bottom middle of the character sheet), roll a number of that weapon's base damage dice equal to your proficiency with that skill (or the half the base damage die if your proficiency is 0), then add either your STR or DEX score depending on the weapon.

Example. Should Chainbreaker choose to attack an enemy with its claymore, since it has 2 proficiency in Large weapons and claymores have a base damage die of 1d8, its player would roll 2d8 + its STR (4).

Formula: Weapon proficiency (base damage die) + STR or DEX

Defenses (Part 1: Chapter 5)

There are two types of defense: regular Defense (DEF), which defends against attacks made in melee, and Ranged Defense (RaDEF), which defends against attacks made at range. These numbers tell you how much you reduce damage from incoming attacks; simply subtract your (Ra)DEF score from the damage the GM says you take, and the result is how much your Health is reduced by.

Example. If Chainbreaker were to be subjected to an incoming melee attack that dealt 8 damage, it would reduce that incoming damage by its DEF of 4, thereby only losing 4 Health. Alternatively, if it were subjected to a ranged attack that dealt 9 damage, it would reduce that amount by its RaDEF score of 6, this time only losing 3 Health.

Formula: Melee: Incoming damage - DEF;
  Ranged: Incoming damage - RaDEF.

Actions in Combat (Part 6: Chapter 1)

On their turn in combat, a character can perform up to 2 actions. There are many available actions that your character can perform, but the most frequently used are explained in brief here.

Attack. Most of the mechanics for attacking are covered under "Attacking" above; additionally, the number of attacks you can make when you take this action is determined by your DEX score, as detailed in Part 1: Chapter 1.

Move. The distance a character can move is largely determined by their Size (Part 1: Chapter 8) and their AGI score (Part 1: Chapter 1).

Opportunity Attack. In addition to 2 actions, each character also gets 1 reaction, which they can perform in response to something another creature does. One such reaction is an opportunity attack, which is an attack that can be performed on a creature that is attempting to flee melee combat.

Class Feature. Many classes get features that grant them unique actions; read your class' description to see what, if any, unique actions your class grants you.

Skill Checks (Part 1: Chapter 3)

Whenever your GM asks for a skill check (e.g. Perception, Persuasion, Stealth, etc.), refer to the list of skills on your character sheet (on the left, next to the ability scores) to check your proficiency in the requested skill; then, roll a number of d10s equal to your proficiency in the skill and add the associated ability score. If the referred-to skill is not on that list, it is likely a Tool Skill; your character's Tool Skill proficiencies are on the bottom right of the character sheet.

Ability checks work in exactly the same way, but using the appropriate ability score instead of a given skill. If the ability score that you would add to your check is a non-whole value, round the value of the score down

Example. If Chainbreaker were asked to make a Stealth check, since it has 2 proficiency in Stealth and a DEX of 3.5, its player would roll 2d10 + 3.

Formula: Skill proficiency (d10s) + associated ability score (rounded down)

Advantage/Disadvantage (Part 1: Chapter 3)

Advantage refers to your character gaining a situational boon specific to whatever action they are performing; mechanically, this means that half (rounded up) of the dice normally rolled for whatever you're doing are automatically taken at their highest value while the rest are rolled normally. Disadvantage is very similar, except that half of the dice normally rolled are taken at their lowest value.

Example. Should Chainbreaker gain advantage on its Stealth check – say, by sneaking in the dark – the result of his check would automatically be 10 + 1d10 + 3. If it instead had disadvantage – by sneaking while using its Electric Eyes feature, for instance – his check result would instead be 1 + 1d10 + 3.

Formula: Advantage: Max value of ½ of the dice to be rolled (rounded up) + remaining dice + appropriate bonus

Disadvantage: Min. value of ½ of the dice to be rolled (rounded up) + remaining dice + appropriate bonus

Saves (Part 1: Chapter 6)

Saves work exactly the same as skill and ability checks, but use the called-for save score to determine the number of d10s to be rolled. The bonus to the roll is determined by the larger of the two ability scores that make up the save.

Example. Chainbreaker has a Fortitude score of 3, and since its STR (4) is larger than its CON (2.5), its Fortitude bonus is +4. If Chainbreaker were subjected to something that forced it to make a Fortitude save – such as poison – its player would have to roll 3d10 + 4 to determine whether Chainbreaker makes the save or not.

Formula: Save score (d10s) + score bonus

Enduring (Part 6: Chapter 4)

Enduring occurs when a character's Health is reduced to 0 but they are not killed outright. On an Enduring creature's turn they must roll a d20 and add either their Fort. or Will. score (ignoring that score's bonus), attempting to beat a DR of 1; on each of that creature's turns thereafter, this DR doubles until it reaches 20. Should a character succeed when the DR is 20, they are stabilized and do not need to continue making saves. They are also stabilized by either regaining any amount of Health or if another character succeeds on a Medicine check (same DR as the save) on their body. Should a character fail this save, they will either die or go unconscious for 8 hours, at which point they regain 25% of their Health.

Example. If Chainbreaker were to be reduced to 0 Health, on its next turn, its player would have to roll 1d20 and add either its Fortitude (3) or Willpower (1) score; since its Fortitude score is greater, they add that to their roll. If at any point they fail to meet the DR, Chainbreaker may die or go unconscious, depending on the GM's discretion.

Save Formula: 1 -> 2 -> 4 -> 8 -> 16 -> 20 (Roll d20 + Fort. or Will.)

The Basics of Aetherians (Part 4: Aetherian)

The full rules for the Aetherian class and the dynamics of its spellcasting abilities are vast and complex, but for the purposes of this cheat sheet, some of the more important aspects of playing these powerful spellcasters are covered briefly here.

Aether. A term that refers to both the substance from which Aetherians' powers come from and the powers themselves. An Aetherian's proficiency with their Aether is reflected in their Aether Die (AD), which starts as a d6 but becomes a d8 at 11th level. Your AD is important for spell damage and your Aether Save DR (ASDR), which is 10 + your Aetherian level + ½ the value of your AD.

Elemancy. Elemancy refers to the practice of creating small, relatively inconsequential effects with your Aether; an instance of Elemancy can deal up to 2 AD damage before costing Mana.

Mana. Mana is the resource that Aetherians use to cast spells and is recovered via resting and ethers, which are a special type of concoction specifically made for the restoration of Aetherians' Mana.

Spellcasting

There are 7 important factors to consider when spellcasting:

Mana Cost (M.C.). The amount of Mana it costs to cast a given spell.

Casting Time (C.T.). The amount of time it takes to cast a given spell.

Range (Rng). How far away the origin point/target(s) of the spell can be.

Damage (Dam). What kind of damage a spell deals and how much; if the amount of damage is not given, the spell deals 3 AD damage against the target's RaDEF.

Save. What kind of save a spell requires its target(s) to make, if any.

Duration (Dur). How long the spell lasts once it has been cast.

Area of Effect (AoE). The area that a spell affects (if the AoE is a sphere, the spell's description gives the *diameter* of the sphere).

Notable Effects (Efcs). What noteworthy effects a spell has on its target(s), if any.