Project Melee

The Roleplaying game

By: Gabriel Stroe

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# Introduction

Project Melee is a Fantasy Tabletop Roleplaying game that seeks out to accomplish these major goals:

* Provide a more dynamic form of combat, (Especially for martial characters) avoiding the simple I attack X times and deal X damage as the standard turn.
* Increasing player engagement during the full combat round so they do not feel like they are sitting out waiting for long periods of time.
* Be easy enough for players new to Roleplaying games.

To reach these goals Project Melee uses a several systems that diverge from the standard fantasy roll playing games and others that are very similar.

## How to Read this Rulebook

The best way to read this rule book is to first read the next section were the basic mechanics of the game are explained, see ***[INSERT SECTION NAME]***. Then from there if you are a Game Master, it is recommended you read the How-to Game Master ***[INSERT SECTION NAME]*** section next. If you are not a Game master then, you show go ahead and go to character creation ***[INSERT SECTION NAME]*** section.

For new players, I would not recommend looking at the leveling ***[INSERT SECTION NAME]*** section as Project Melee’s leveling system is flexible enough that decisions made at character creation do not lock your character’s progression in a specified path. I would recommend that new players just try anything they think sounds fun and if you decide you don’t like what you’re doing, you absolutely can change it while leveling,

At the end of this document you will also find a glossary ***[INSERT SECTION NAME]*** of key words with a short descript and a page number where you can find out more about that keyword. If you see any **Bolded** word in this document, then it is a key word with a section in the glossary.

## Early Questions?

Now I’m sure with that you have some immediate questions.

~~First, I bet what some of you are thinking is with Project Melee using a card system for combat, does this mean that this is a dice-less system???~~

* ~~No, it is not and the dice system works in as similar manner to D&D 5e or Pathfinder. Understanding one of those dice systems should give you a good idea on how Project Melee will work when it comes to die rolls. The cards used in project melee are just to support the simultaneous combat system.~~

What fantasy-based setting does Project Melee use, or does it have its own?

* There is no fixed setting for Project Melee. It is designed to be flexible enough to work with any setting. Although not yet implemented, the magic system will be done in such a way that you can easily add and remove spells to fit your setting of choice. This document by default assumes the Game Master will run this game in a traditional D&D setting, but realistically it can be adapted to any medieval fantasy setting.

How important is the roleplay, with everyone acting at the same time won’t that make the roleplaying aspect difficult?

* You can’t have a roleplaying game without the role-play. Project Melee is a roleplaying game first and foremost, so yes role playing is still very important to the game. Although, normally it is up to the Game Master and the other players at the table to determine how much roleplay is in their game, and Project Melee. Is no exception to that.   
  Also, even though players are acting and resolving their abilities at the same time, it does not take away from the roleplaying aspect, it merely changes the style a little bit. Instead of painting each turn how a character acted in a scene, in Project Melee each turn will paint the entire scene with each character acting in it.

# How to Play

## The Basics

Fundamentally Project Melee is still a role-playing game. The game is prepared by a Game Master (GM) and is ran by the GM. The GM creates (or recites in the case of a premade scenario) the setting and the players act as individuals in this world. The world responds to the players action and thus a story is formed. During this How to Play section, this document will divide the gameplay as **out of combat** and **in combat**. Please note that many of the items in the out of combat section can still be used **in combat** and vice versa. This is only divided in these two categories for simplicity and organization.

Often this document will refer to the non-GM characters as the Player Characters (PCs) or simply the party when referring to them as a group.

### The Dice System

Generally, for most rolls, this game uses a set of dice called D-percentiles. There are two 10-sided dice. One dice contains the numbers 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9. This dice is what will be referred to as the Small-D10. The other 10-sided dice contains the numbers 00,10,20,30,40,50,60,70,80,90. This dice is referred to as the Big-D10. Normally these dice are rolled together to form a number from 0 to 99 with the Big-D10 representing the tens digit and the Small-D10 representing the ones digit.

For example, if you roll a 40 on the Big-D10 and a 0 on the Small-D10, then the final number on your roll is 40. If you roll a 00 on the Big-D10 and a 7 on the Small-D10, then the final number on your roll is 07.

There are also dice ranging from a 4-sided die all the way to a 20-sided die that are used for this system, but these dice are really only used for damage and determining your action initiative. There will be more on that in later sections.

~~Please note that sometimes you will be asked to refer to the value of the Small-D10 by itself. In this case the value of the zero on that die is 10. A quick example of this is that in that roll of 40 in the previous example, if that roll was an attack roll the damage is based on the value of the Small-D10. In that case the value is 10 not 0. The Small-D10 can only have a value of 0 when reference with the Big-D10 as a D-percentile to form a number from 0-99. More on damage values in a later section of this document.~~

### Theater of the Mind verses Gridded Maps

Theater of the Mind is when the actions and happenings of your role-playing game are happing entirely within the party’s mind. There is no board or map that lays out the scene. Project Melee is written so that it can be play entirely within the theater of the mind if that is what the Party would like. However, like most role-playing games using a mixture of Theater of the Mind, and gridded maps for more complex combat encounters is recommended.

## Out of Combat

When out of combat the game will work similar to many other roleplaying games. The GM will describe what is happening and you as one of the PCs will try to do something. The GM then reacts to that action. Sometimes the GM may ask you to perform a skill roll to see if that action can be done successfully. A simple example of this may be that a short bridge you encounter is partially submerged. You may choose to simply swim across the river. Since the river is very slow the GM does not require a roll to see if you can swim across. Alternatively, you may try to jump across the unsubmerged part of the bridge, and in this case the GM will ask you perform an acrobatics skill check. From there the GM will determine what happens if you succeed the role or fail the role, and the narrative will continue.

### Performing a Skill Check

To perform a normal Skill Check, look at your character sheet and find the skill your GM asked you to role. Then roll a D-Percentile (a Big-D10 and a Small-D10). If you roll equal to or under the number listed on your sheet, the roll is successful, otherwise it fails and the GM will explain what happens from there.

As you approach the broken bridge, the GM ask you to perform an acrobatics skill check. On your sheet you can see that your acrobatics is 55. You roll the dice and roll a 46. This is under 55 so you succeed the roll. The GM tells you that your character safely makes it across the bridge.

### Skill Modifiers

When performing a skill check, sometimes the GM may decide that what you are trying to do needs to be easier than normal, or harder than normal. In this case a modifier will be applied to the listed number on you character sheet that you need to roll under. Generally, the GM will tell you to make a roll with X difficulty. The different difficulties are shown on the bottom of your character sheet. They are as follows:   
Easy +25 | Routine +10 | Normal +0 | Challenging -10 | Difficult -25 | Hard -40 | Extreme -60

## Combat

At a certain point a physical struggle may ensue, and they party will enter combat. When that occurs, the game will move to a specific sequence to maintain some level of order in the chaos of combat. Note that out of combat style skill checks may still be performed during this phase, although base on the GMs discretion you might be required to spend an action point to do so.

### The Combat Sequence

Combat is split into multiple rounds. Each of these rounds represents about 6 seconds of game world time. Meaning 10 of these rounds would take approximately 1 minute of in game world time. Like combat in the real world, typically combat lasts only a few rounds so it will be a few seconds in the game world.

A Round is split into 3 phases. Initiative, Upkeep, Actions. Once a round ends a new one begins immediately unless it is determined that the combat is over (typically when people stop fighting).

### Initiative

Each PC Has 3 Action Points each round to spend on actions and reactions (More on that Later). Each Action point has its own spot turn order. This order is called Initiative and “having the Initiative” means that your action point is next. Currently there are 3 ways to do determine in Project Melee. Your DM should pick the system that works best for your group. Note that GM’s NPCs have a shared pool of action points (For simplicity), and some NPCs can have more or less than 3 action points.

#### D20 Initiative

To use D20 initiative, for each action point a character has (3 by default for PCs) roll that many D20s. If you have an Initiative Bonus on your character sheet, use the chart below to determine if you should roll any extra dice.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Initiative Bonus | Extra Dice to Roll |
| 0-3 | 0 |
| 4-5 | 1 |
| 6-7 | 2 |
| 8+ | 3 |

After you Roll all your dice select some to reduce down to your Action Points (3 by default for PCs). You may want to write those values down as dice can get bumped.

The GM’s NPCs do not get Initiative bonus and roll all the dice in their pool. Then the GM chooses which NPC uses that Action Point. A NPC can only use 1 more action point then they provide.

Now when you move to the action phase, you go from highest value to lowest. If there is a Tie for a number, then the PCs will take the initiative first and alternate with the GM if there is multiple ties. If two PCs tie, they can choose who goes first. If they can’t agree then simply roll a d10 higher number has the Initiative.

The strategy for which dice to remove depends on when you want to act. If you want to act first generally, remove the low dice. If you think you would like to wait for other people’s action to complete before acting then remove the high values. You may also want to spread your numbers to act at different points in the round. Also note that with reactions you still have to option to act when you would like to.

#### Card Initiative

This initiative system is very similar to the D20 Initiative system. Instead of using D20s to represent action points you will use cards drawn from a deck. So each character draws cards equal to their action points (3 By Default for PCs). The GM holds all of the cards drawn for each NPC in one pool. If you have an Initiative Bonus, draw extra cards based on the chart below, then discard down to your total Action Points.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Initiative Bonus | Extra Cards to Draw |
| 0-3 | 0 |
| 4-5 | 1 |
| 6-7 | 2 |
| 8+ | 3 |

Like the D20 system when you move to the action phase, you go from highest value to lowest. The Highest value is an Ace, the lowest is a 2. If 2 cards have the save value it goes based off of their suits in this order: Spades -> Hearts -> Clubs -> Diamonds. The chart below shows this priority when read from left to right and top to bottom.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A♠ | A♥ | A♣ | A♦ |
| K♠ | K♥ | K♣ | K♦ |
| Q♠ | Q♥ | Q♣ | Q♦ |
| J♠ | J♥ | J♣ | J♦ |
| 10♠ | 10♥ | 10♣ | 10♦ |
| 9♠ | 9♥ | 9♣ | 9♦ |
| 8♠ | 8♥ | 8♣ | 8♦ |
| 7♠ | 7♥ | 7♣ | 7♦ |
| 6♠ | 6♥ | 6♣ | 6♦ |
| 5♠ | 5♥ | 5♣ | 5♦ |
| 4♠ | 4♥ | 4♣ | 4♦ |
| 3♠ | 3♥ | 3♣ | 3♦ |
| 2♠ | 2♥ | 2♣ | 2♦ |

If there is a Tie for a number, then the PCs will take the initiative first and alternate with the GM if there is multiple ties. If two PCs tie, they can choose who goes first. If they can’t agree then simply roll a d10 higher number has the Initiative.

At the beginning of each round collect all of the cards and shuffle so that you can draw a new set of cards. If you would like to simplify the number system write 1-52 on the cards and go based off that.

The strategy for which cards to discard depends on when you want to act. If you want to act first generally, remove the low cards. If you think you would like to wait for other people’s action to complete before acting then remove the high cards. You may also want to spread your numbers to act at different points in the round. Also note that with reactions you still have to option to act when you would like to.

### Action Table

This the base action table that all characters have access to. Players will acquire more actions as they level. Please continue the to the next sections to understand more.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Defensive | Offensive | Utility\* |
| Guard Stance (1 point) | Attack (1 point) | Guard Break (1 point) |
| Dodge (1 point) | Aim Strike (2 point) | Grapple (1 point) |
| Counter Strike (1 point) | Throw (1 point) | Run/Jump (1 point) |
|  | Shoot (1 point) | Interact with environment (1 point) |
|  |  | Get item from backpack (1 point) |
|  |  | Change/Stowing weapon (1 point) |
|  |  | Aim (1 Point) |

\* All utility actions can be interrupted (cancelled) by successful melee, range or spell attacks against the player.

### How Actions Work

Throughout the combat sequence players will get their chance to take an action. This moment is called having the initiative. Initiative will be explained more in a later section. But once a character has to

### How Reactions Work

Players will have a set list of actions that they can take when they have the initiative. Reactions are actions that characters may take when they are able to perceive someone else take an action or reaction. Unless otherwise stated any action can be performed as a reaction, but they cost one more action point to do so.

Here's an example: *Lance and Leia are fighting a Dark Knight. Lance has the initiative, so he makes an attack against the Knight for 1 action point. The Dark Knight decides to spend 2 action to perform the Guard Stance action as a reaction. Leia can see both Lance and the Dark Knight so she can choose to react to either person’s action or simple save her action points for later. She decides she will perform a Guard Break action as a reaction for 2 action points.*

Players can learn new action through the talents the acquire as they level. Actions are sorted by 3 categories: defense, offense, and utility. These categories show the usually purpose for those actions and also determine their normal speed. An actions speed determines the order in which it and other reactions will resolve. The order in which actions and reactions are resolved are as follows:

1. Defensive
2. Offensive
3. Utility

So in the previous example