

Aspects of Nature - Rulebook

Aspects of Nature is a story-focused, rules-lite tabletop roleplaying game. Set in a world populated by several varieties of humanoid races, all are born with the ability to manipulate one or more elements of nature, or **Aspects**, to their will.

Game Flow

Players should first create their characters, assigning attributes, aspects, and traits that suit them.

The narrator¹ should prepare a scenario for the players to play through, whether it's a single-session one-shot, or a campaign spanning over dozens of sessions. Sessions can last anywhere around 1 to 3 hours, depending on the energy levels, attention span, and/or available time for those playing.

The game starts and runs as a back-and-forth between players and the narrator.

Players

When building your character, aside from their personality and overall vibe, one of the things you'll want to give them is a goal. It can be something concrete, such as wanting to find a lost sibling, or it can be a general north star that guides their decisions. Examples:

- A doctor who lost someone close to them. This leads them to try to help others when they can, even to the detriment of themselves.
- A rogueish drifter who's felt betrayal by those they thought they trusted. They now only view others as resources to take advantage of.
- A business owner who always tries to steer themselves towards opportunities for profit. With a weakened sense of self damaged by their upbringing, they know

no other means of proving their own worth.

During gameplay, you'll tell the narrator what you would like your character to do in any given scene. You'll usually make actions that fit with your character's strengths. For example, as a strong brute type character, a lot of your problem solving would involve Strength checks. As a charming social butterfly, a lot of your actions would involve Wit.

Narrator

As the narrator, start by describing the scene to the characters. Describe the look and feel and mention any other NPCs who might be present, as well as any points of interest.

When players want to do something, think about whether it's something that could fail. If so, ask for a skill check, picking the appropriate skill.

Although players will attempt to lean on their character's strengths, it can make things interesting to put them in situations that force them to make unfavorable compromises.

Additionally, consider the scenario, and whether there are factors that might help or hinder their attempt. If so, apply power or risk dice as appropriate. If a player is asking a favor from an NPC, asking a helpful long-time friend might give them a power dice, but asking an irritable, unfriendly stranger might give them one or more risk dice instead.

For a compelling, immersive game, consider parallel story threads or imminent events that may be happening in the background, and how they might affect the player's current situation.

It can also help to inject minor bits of trivia to diagetically add flavor to the world. Here's an example:

"You walk into a café at night. The interior is warmly lit with light aspect crystals lining the walls and hanging from the ceiling. The tables and chairs sport the

dark greenish color of the tall trees that border your town.

Behind the counter, you see a brown-skinned barista with a set of panda ears, tail, and small stubby horns that suggest a mixed lineage. You watch as she operates a small metal brewery range, sending heat through it to keep her pots of coffee and tea steaming hot.

She notices a pot that's nearly empty. After discarding the old coffee, she fetches a bag of beans and pours them in a grinder. You watch her blow softly into a compartment of the grinder, a small bit of wind art which prompts it to spin rapidly, chopping up the beans into coarse bits ready for a fresh pot.”

Characters

Define the following for your character:

- Name
- Attribute values: give each one a score from 1 to 6, and they should add to 18
- Traits: choose three
- Aspects: choose one or more and assign 6 points among them. to each aspect, add your character's value for that aspect's related attribute

Other values:

- Hits: starts at 0
- Toughness: equals strength + agility
- Fatigue: starts at 0
- Resolve: equals sense + intellect + wit
- Comeback: starts at 0

Attributes

Characters have a number in each attribute from 1 to 6, all adding to 18

Intellect

breadth of knowledge and how to apply it

- **Intuit** - understand complex concepts or make logical deductions
- **Recall** - remember facts, details, or past experiences
- **Aid** - provide medical treatment or assistance
- **Operate** - use complex tools or machinery
- **Tinker** - repair, modify, or craft items

Sense

strength of mind, ability to focus and perceive

- **Spy** - spot hidden details or distant objects
- **Listen** - detect and identify sounds
- **Feel** - notice changes in temperature, pressure, or vibrations
- **Shoot** - attack accurately with ranged weapons
- **Focus** - maintain concentration or resist distractions

Agility

nimbleness, adaptability, swiftness

- **Dash** - move quickly in bursts or sprint
- **Jump** - leap across gaps or over obstacles
- **Climb** - scale walls, trees, or other vertical surfaces
- **Dodge** - avoid incoming attacks or hazards
- **Maneuver** - perform acrobatic movements or maintain balance

Strength

physical prowess, strength of body

- **Strike** - attack with melee weapons or bare hands
- **Block** - defend against physical attacks with your body or shield
- **Throw** - hurl objects or people with force
- **Lift** - carry heavy objects or move obstacles
- **Endure** - resist physical strain, exhaustion, or harsh conditions

Wit

social skills, insight, manipulation

- **Charm** - persuade or influence others positively
- **Intimidate** - threaten or pressure others through fear
- **Deceive** - lie convincingly or misdirect
- **Read** - understand others' emotions and intentions
- **Sneak** - move quietly and remain undetected

Traits

Each player character picks three traits for their character to have, and each trait specifies two related attributes which:

- Adds a power die to rolls made with that attribute
- Lets you pick a proficient skill for that attribute

Some aspects also favor certain traits, where said traits will give +1 power die to checks made with that aspect.

For example, let's say you give your character a long tail. This means that all Sense skills and all Agility skill checks will receive +1 power die. Wind aspect checks also receive +1 power die. Then you can pick a proficient skill from each of those categories, let's say Listen from Sense, and Dash from Agility. Your Listen and Dash checks both now have +2 power dice.

The traits can come in whatever form you choose. For example, a tail could be long and thick like a lizard's, or thin with a spaded tip like a devil's. You can add any number of additional traits beyond the first three for narrative flavor, even ones from this list, while specifying the ones that apply their attribute buffs.

Antennas

- attributes: intellect, sense
- aspect: darkness

Bioluminescence

- attributes: intellect, wit
- aspect: darkness

Claws

- attributes: strength, wit
- aspect: fire

Fins

- attributes: agility, sense
- aspect: water

Furred ears

- attributes: sense, wit
- aspect: light

Horns / antlers

- attributes: strength, sense
- aspect: light

Long tail

- attributes: sense, agility
- aspect: wind

Scales

- attributes: strength, intellect
- aspect: water

Sharp teeth / fangs

- attributes: strength, wit
- aspect: fire

Wings

- attributes: agility, intellect
- aspect: wind

Hits & Toughness

- Hits represent how many blows you've taken.

- Toughness is the number of hits you can take.
- Once your hits reach your toughness, you go down.
- While down, you can't make any actions.
- Your hits cannot exceed your toughness.
- Once your hits are healed, you are no longer down.
- After combat, if you are down, you may attempt to succeed a Focus or Endurance skill check to heal 1 hit.

Fatigue & Resolve

- Aspect art and other special actions require taking fatigue
- You can only take up to your resolve, then you can no longer use abilities that require taking fatigue
- 1 fatigue: for aspect art
- 2 fatigue: to reroll a die (only once)
- 2 fatigue: for an additional combat action (once per round)

Resting

- Resting allows you to heal hits and fatigue, one each per in-game hour.

Actions

Actions are the player's primary medium of interaction

Some actions may require a dice roll, such as a skill check or an aspect check, which determines how well you do.

Attacks

Attacks are a specific kind of action with the intent to damage another character. With the appropriate justification, they can be made with any skill. Successful attack checks will deal either 1 hit or 1 fatigue, depending on the manner of attack. For example, physical attacks like Strike or Shoot would deal 1 hit. Scaring someone into a corner or weakening their morale would deal 1 fatigue.

Comeback

Players earn 1 comeback point when failing a roll. They can spend any number of them to reduce a roll's result. They cannot use a comeback point on the same roll that gave it to them. Comeback points return to 0 at the end of a session.

Skills

Skill checks:

- Roll a d6, represents the difficult of the task
- Success = equal or less than the character's value in that skill
- On a failure, you earn one comeback point

Power & risk dice:

- Added to skill checks via effects or situationally by the narrator
- Power die: subtracts from the roll
- Risk die: adds to the roll
- d6, where:
 - 1-3 = nothing
 - 4-5 = adds or subtracts 1

- 6 = adds or subtracts 2
- Can add any number of them to a roll

Proficient skills:

- Determined by your trait attributes
- Gives +1 power die for skill checks made with that skill (*on top of* trait bonuses)
- Proficient skills must be unique; cannot make a skill proficient twice

*“Tip: Narrators should aim to make failures interesting. For example, consider a character tries to **Spy** for something they lost. On failure, instead of having nothing happen, maybe they find something that a friend lost instead!”*

Aspects

- Aspect art checks: same as skill checks, but with a d12 (power/risk dice are still d6)
- Players can use any aspect art, but the cost depends on whether their character is *attuned* with (has points in) the aspect.
- If they are attuned:
 - small aspect arts are free
 - aspect checks cost 1 fatigue
- If they are *not* attuned:
 - small aspect arts cost 1 fatigue
 - aspect checks cost 2 fatigue, and receive a risk die
- Examples of small aspect arts:
 - Light: making an orb of light

- Water: drying someone's clothes
- Fire: heating a cup of tea
- Wind: making a gentle breeze
- Darkness: send a shiver down someone's spine
- For each action below, must succeed an aspect check for the primary effect to apply, otherwise the failure case applies

Light

vibe: physical light, healing, strengthening

attribute: intellect

- **restore** - heal any 2 hits; on failure, 1 hit
- **sacrifice** - try to heal any 4 hits, then take 1 hit if any hits were healed; on failure, heal any 2 hits (still take 1)
- **inspire** - add 2 power dice to a target's next roll; on failure, add 1 power die
- **justice** - add 1 to a character's chosen attribute or aspect value for their next check with that attribute or aspect; on failure, the attribute or aspect is random

Water

vibe: water, ice, frost, cold, protection

attribute: sense

- **shield** - a target may not take more than 1 damage until your next action; on failure, 2 damage
- **protect** - choose two targets. until your next action, if either of them take hits this round, prevent it, and take a hit; on failure, choose one target
- **castle** - prevent all allies' hits until your next action, you must skip your next action; on failure, you must skip your next 2 actions
- **pacify** - a chosen target may not deal more than 1 hit until your next action; on failure, 2 hits

Wind

vibe: air, sound, weather, speed, acrobatics

attribute: agility

- **evade** - prevent all hits on self this round; on failure, prevent hits up to your Agility
- **adapt** - immediately make another action with two of your attributes swapped; on failure, make your next action with two attributes swapped (not immediate)
- **surge** - apply another character's next action three times; on failure, two times
- **multicast** - add 2 additional targets to another character's next action; on failure, 1 additional target

Fire

vibe: flame, heat, tectonics

attribute: strength

- **flame strike** - deal 3 hits to one target; on failure, 2 hits
- **flame arc** - deal 1 hit to 3 targets; on failure, 2 targets
- **blind fury** - deal a ranged hit to 2 random enemies or 5 random characters; on failure, you must choose 5 random characters
- **inferno** - your next action deals triple the hits; on failure, double the hits

Darkness

vibe: psychology, illusions, reality bending

attribute: wit

- **imperil** - add 2 risk dice to a target's next roll; on failure, add 1 risk die
- **transfer** - try to remove any 2 hits, then deal any 2 hits; on failure, remove 1, deal 1

- **cancel** - prevent a target's next action; on failure, the target is random
- **foresight** - reveal any action, then you may take 1 additional fatigue (once) to let another target character change their action; on failure, you may not allow a character to change their action

Combat

- combat starts when a character acts adversarially against another (such as, but not limited to, making an attack)
- to determine action order, everyone rolls a d6 and adds their choice of Agility (moving quick) or Wit (thinking quick), then every round resolves effects from highest to lowest
- one action per round
- every round, every participant chooses their action and their targets (if any) in secret
- once everyone has written down their action, reveal actions once by one in initiative order, making any necessary rolls at the time of revealing them
- a combat round lasts 5 seconds - for actions that specify "this round", they will last for 5 seconds out of combat

Luck

To determine the outcome of things outside of player's control, players or the narrator may make a luck roll. Luck rolls are made with a d12, treating the result as a gradient from one possibility to another.

Example: a character needs to catch a train to work.

- 12: their path is completely clear
- 9: they got momentarily stopped by a cat along the way

- 6: construction required them to take a different route, but they know the city well enough for that to not be a problem
 - 3: it seems like the whole world doesn't want you to get to that train! they'll need to pass several skill checks to make it on time
 - 1: the train itself got delayed; they'll be late no matter what
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1. In other systems, this is called the game master or dungeon master ↩