

Unhex

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Intro

Why this game?

This is a tactical tabletop roleplaying game that doesn't depend on hex or square grid maps for interesting positional decisions. The rules should fit in your head. Actions are resolved with a single roll to determine success, including damage and hit location. You only have a [single target number](#) to keep track of, and no modifiers.

Materials

- Pencils
- Paper
- Printouts of the character sheet at the end of the book, or more blank paper
- Percentile dice. You need separate dice for the tens and ones digits, not a 100 sided die.
- If you're playing online, some way to share a basic drawing. I like excalidraw.com

Participants

You need 2-5 people. One person is the Game Moderator (GM), the other players each create and control a Player Character (PC).

Players make decisions for their PCs. The GM is responsible for making decisions for all Non-Player Characters (NPCs). The GM isn't the author of the story, but they keep the story interesting by challenging the players.

Meta

More specific rules override general rules. When timing matters and is not otherwise specified, out of combat the PC decides, in combat the side with initiative decides. There's no division in this game, so don't worry about rounding. 'You' may refer to you as a player or your character, it should be clear from context. If a rule is unclear, the GM decides, but please file an issue at <https://github.com/koeninger/unhex/issues> and I'll clarify.

Characters

To create a character, decide on a concept, a name, and a description, then fill in your character sheet.

Level

Your level is your basic percentage chance of success when [rolling dice](#). Your current and **max** level start at 50, and are tracked separately on your character sheet. The word 'level' by itself always refers to current level unless prefixed with **max**.

Your level can decrease when you're [hurt in combat](#) and increase when you [rest](#). It can't increase higher than your **max** level. If it reaches zero, you're [unconscious](#).

Abilities

[Abilities](#) give you different beneficial special rules. You start with one non-combat ability and one combat ability.

Items

You start with 5 slots for combat related [\[items\]](#). The number and type of non-combat items you can have are up to you, as long as the GM agrees. You can change or replace items when you rest.

Use the top slot(s) on the sheet for the items you typically want in your hands at the start of combat. Items will specify whether they require one or two hands. I'm assuming humanlike physiology, if you want to play an octopus work it out with the GM.

Advancement

All players' **max** level increases by 1 at the end of a session if they achieved their goal for that session. Near the beginning of a session the players should agree on a single goal collectively. The GM may set the scene, and may warn players when a goal isn't likely to be achievable by the end of a session, but may not choose a goal for the players.

When your level increases to a number ending in 5 you get another slot for items. At level 55 you can have up to 6 combat related items, at level 65 up to 7, etc.

When your level increases to a number ending in 0 you choose another ability. At level 60 you can choose a second combat or non-combat ability, at level 70 another, etc.

Your **max** level can't increase beyond 99.

Rolling dice

When a result is uncertain, roll dice to see what happens. Don't roll dice unless there's potential for both success and failure to have interesting consequences. Once consequences have been decided, don't keep re-trying for a different result.

Basic rolls

Roll percentile dice. Equal to or under your level is a success. Over your level is a failure. 00 on one die and 0 on the other die is read as one hundred, not zero.

Degrees of success

In some situations, how successful you are is more interesting than just a binary success or failure. In that case, higher successful rolls are better. In other words, rolling exactly equal to your level is the best you can do.

In some situations, there may be two separate degrees of success. In that case, you pick which die is used for which. Each die indicates a degree of success from zero to nine. Higher is usually better. For instance, in [combat](#) after a successful attack you pick one die for damage, and the other for hit location.

Critical rolls

If you roll doubles, i.e. the tens die and ones die match, it's a critical, meaning the effect of success or failure is magnified. Rolling exactly equal to your level is also a critical success. Rolling one hundred is always a critical failure.

If you roll a critical success, choose one of the following options, *not both*:

1. Take the result shown and gain another [action](#). In other words, if you keep rolling critical successes, you can keep taking actions.
2. Or adjust the dice to any number equal to or under your level. If you rolled exactly your level, you can adjust the dice to any number equal to or under your **max** level, and it is still treated as a success.

If you roll a critical failure, something especially bad happens. Out of combat, the GM decides. In combat there are some specific options, but the default is that you lose your next action.

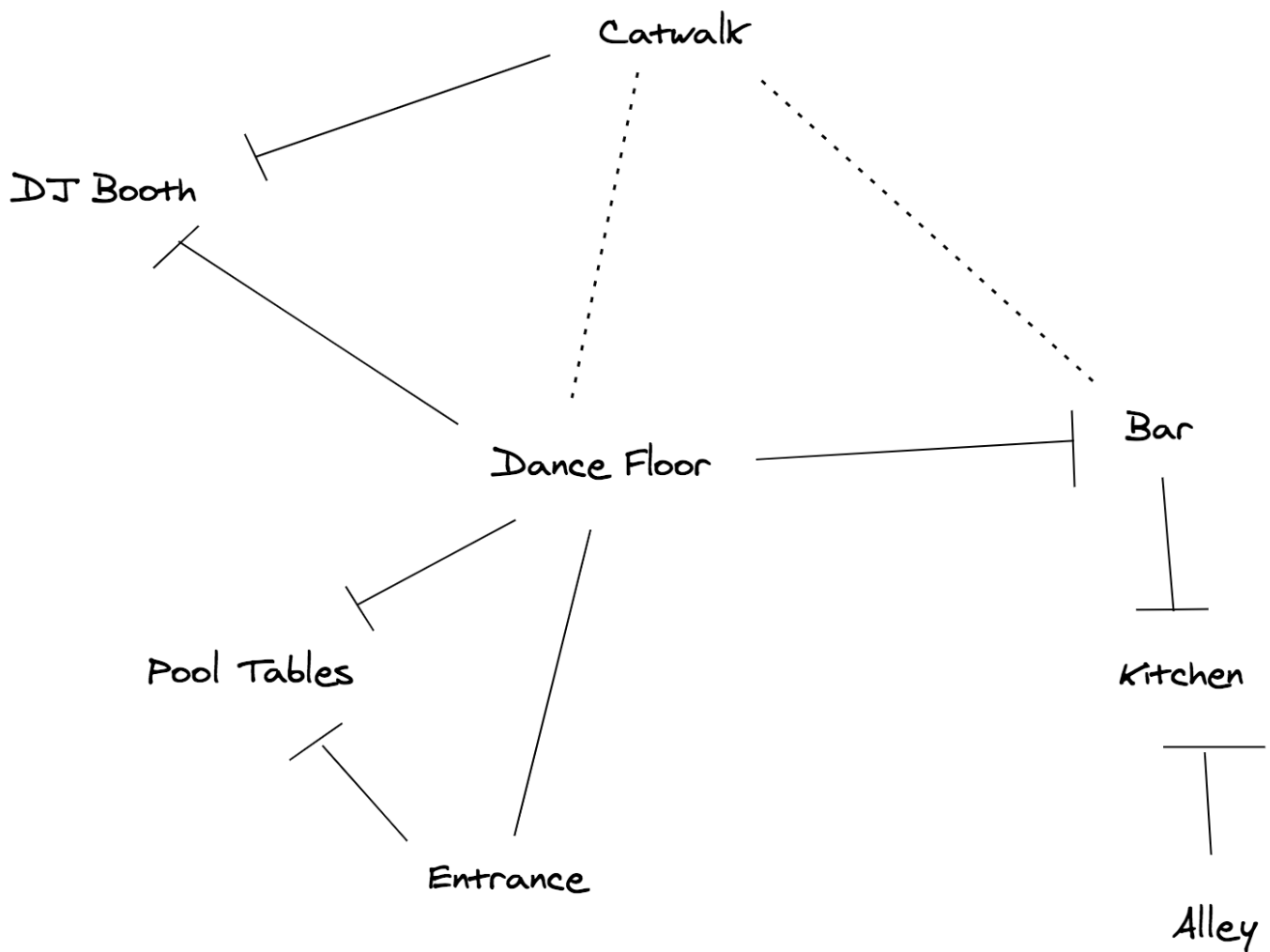
Good rolls

If you are **good** at the action you're rolling for, usually due to an [ability](#), you may re-roll one or both dice after seeing the initial result. You must keep the second result. You can't re-roll one die, see the result, and then re-roll the other. If you're playing online using a die-rolling app, be sure to specify up front whether you're rerolling the ones or tens die. You can get a critical success on a re-roll. Critical failures can't be re-rolled.

Opposed rolls

In some situations characters' actions directly oppose each other, e.g. attempting to defend an attack. In that case, highest successful roll wins. On a tie of a PC vs an NPC, the PC wins. It's winner take all, the loser gets no degree of success, and does not reduce the winner's degree of success. If both fail the result is a failure for both. A critical success does not beat a higher normal success, just compare the numbers shown on the dice. If the loser rolled a critical success, they still benefit from effects they chose (such as not spending their action), as long as those effects don't require a degree of success.

Combat



Legend:

Move OK ———

Line of Sight,
but no Move

Cover |————— No Cover

Maps

Use a simple map of the different areas reachable in combat, indicating which lines of movement, sight, and cover are available. The important point is to make the consequences of positioning unambiguous before combat begins, in order to avoid confusion or GM fiat during combat. It's up to you whether you use tokens or minis to indicate where characters are, or use "theater of the mind".

The example map on the previous page shows the drawing conventions I use. You're welcome to use your own as long as they're consistent and players understand.

The GM decides which areas NPCs are in at the start of combat, the players decide where PCs are, within limits set by the GM.

In the example map, the GM might tell PCs they can start in the entrance or alley.

Movement

Solid lines connecting areas indicate you can see and move between them. Moving from one area to an immediately connected area takes one action.

Any number of characters can be in an area, and are assumed to be making small movements within that area during combat. If you want to indicate a one-way transition between areas (jumping down?) use an arrow. I don't think doors are interesting, but if you do, use a box along the connection and require an action to open / close them.

Cover

A solid mark perpendicular to the connection into an area means characters in that area benefit from cover against attacks originating from the other area. If you benefit from cover, you get to choose which die is used for damage and which is used for location, instead of your attacker.

A character in the bar would have cover against a shot from the dance floor. That same character in the bar would not have cover against an attack from the catwalk.

Don't consider the attacker's area when determining cover.

A character on the dance floor would not have cover against a shot from the bar.

When checking for cover along multiple connections, if at least one of the shortest paths has

cover, the target benefits from cover.

A character in the bar would have cover against a shot from the DJ booth.

Only things shown on the map can provide cover, not other characters. Shields have a similar effect, but are not cover and do not affect line of sight.

Cover applies only to attacks made by characters from other areas. This means it does not apply to melee attacks, or to ranged attacks by a character in your area.

Range

To make an attack you must be within range of your target. Maximum range is determined by the item or ability you're using to attack. Melee attacks all have a range of zero. One-handed ranged attacks have a range of zero to one, inclusive. Two-handed ranged attacks have a range of one up to anywhere on the map within line of sight, but can't attack at range zero.

Count the number of connections on the shortest path between the areas. Characters in your area are at range zero. Characters in an immediately connected area are at range one, two areas away at range two, and so on.

The range from the entrance to the dance floor is one. The range from the entrance to the catwalk is two.

If a character is in the process of moving between areas, use the smaller range. A character moving into or out of your area is at range zero, and so on.

The range from the entrance to a character moving between the catwalk and dance floor is one.

Line of Sight

To make a ranged attack, you must have line of sight to your target.

To determine whether you have line of sight to an area, count the number of cover marks (not including your area) along the shortest path. If one of the shortest paths crosses two or more cover marks, you don't have line of sight. You always have line of sight to a target in your area, even if there's cover in all directions.

A character in the alley has line of sight to the kitchen, but not the bar. A character in the pool tables has line of sight to the bar, but not the kitchen. A character in the DJ booth has line of sight to another character in the DJ booth.

Dashed lines connecting areas indicate you can draw line of sight between the areas, but not move directly between them.

A character on the catwalk can see someone on the dance floor and vice versa, but can not move directly between them. They would have to move to the DJ booth first.

There's no distinction between line of sight and line of effect, if you can see it you can shoot it. I advise against making a one-way line of sight. In the rare situation where there shouldn't be line of sight between two areas, but you don't want to add enough cover to prevent it, use a dashed line between the two with an X in the middle to indicate line of sight is blocked.

Location of Objectives

If there are places that are important to the scenario (arcane portals that will close? bombs to defuse? avenues of retreat?) mark them on the map.

Rounds

Combat is divided into rounds, each of which has the following steps:

1. Initiative
2. First team turn, takes actions until they are done
 - a. Second team may react to each
3. Second team turn, takes actions until they are done
 - a. First team may react to each
4. Round ends, repeat

Combat ends when:

- Only one team has remaining characters who haven't surrendered, gone unconscious, or retreated.
- *Or* a GM specified objective is met

Initiative

Initiative is an opposed roll between the single highest level character from each team. The winner of initiative decides the order teams act in, it doesn't have to be winning team first.

Several rounds into combat, the PCs have been beat up a bit, so their highest level character is at 40. The NPCs are in worse shape, with a highest level of 25. The PCs roll a 34, the NPCs roll a 62, failing. The PCs decide to let the NPCs go first, intending to react to their expected attempts at moving to retreat.

There are usually two sides to combat, one team of PCs vs one team of NPCs. If for some reason there are more teams, it's a single multi-way opposed roll between the highest level character from each team, highest roll decides the order all teams act in.

A critical success on initiative is an extra action for the rolling character, a critical failure is a loss of an action. If the NPCs have been wounded in prior rounds and roll a critical failure for initiative, the GM should have them retreat or surrender as appropriate.

If there's a tie for initiative (e.g. both sides fail), initiative stays with the team that had it prior round. If it's the first round the tie goes to the PCs. Similarly, if the order dice are rolled in is important (because one side is **good** at initiative and wants to see what number they're trying to beat), it's decided by who had the initiative prior round, or the PCs for first round.

If there's a tie for which characters are highest level, it's up to that team who rolls. Order of actions within a team's turn is up to that team. If there's a dispute in either case, GM decides.

Actions

Each character gets one action per round. Your action may be used to act when it's your team's turn, or used to react when it's another team's turn. Either case uses your action, you don't get to use a single action to both act and react.

You must declare that you are reacting before dice are rolled, so give people time to do so on your own actions. You can't react to a reaction. If you don't use your action during your team's turn, and don't get an opportunity to use it to react, it's wasted.

Act:

- Attack
- Move

- Use or manage items

React:

- Counterattack (react to attack)
- Defend (react to attack)
- Intercept (react to movement)

Dropping items currently in your hands or speaking a short sentence doesn't take an action. Anything more than that does, at the GM's discretion.

If you gain an action from a critical success, you must use it during this round. If you lose an action from a critical failure, and don't have any additional actions this round, you lose it next round. Use a note or token of some kind to remind yourself.

Attack

Attacking requires that you have a weapon in hand or relevant ability, are in [range](#), and have line of sight if needed. Make a roll. On a success, you choose one die for the amount of [damage](#) your target takes and the other die for [hit location](#). If the target benefits from [cover](#), they get to choose instead.

Move

Moving from one area to an immediately connected area takes one action, and doesn't require a roll to succeed.

Use or manage items

Rearranging which items are in your hands, including picking items up or stowing away items, takes a total of one action. Using an item already in your hands, or that is attached to your area on the map (e.g. a lever or terminal) takes one action.

Counterattack

In response to an attack against you from a character *in your area*, you may use one action to counterattack using a *melee* weapon. This is not an opposed roll, you each make separate attack rolls and apply any effects simultaneously.

To be explicit, you *can* counterattack against a ranged attack as long as it is from a character in your area, i.e. range zero. You *cannot* counterattack using your own ranged weapon, even if it is effective at range zero.

Defend

In response to an attack against you, you may use one action to defend. This is an opposed roll. If you win, the attack misses and does no damage.

Defending against a ranged attack *requires* [\[cover\]](#). To be explicit, this means you cannot defend against a ranged attack at range 0, i.e. from a character in your area.

Damage

Hit location

First aid

Unconsciousness

Death

At the end of combat

mark off ammo. make any additional first aid rolls

Abilities

Non-combat abilities

Combat abilities