

Survival Solo RPG



Survival Solo RPG

v3.1

A solo role playing game designed
with rules that don't need books
or tables to be played.

It only requires a knife, some sticks,
and tokens of some sort,
such as stones, or pine cones.

The four sided dice are carved from sticks
with lines carved in them that not only
represent the value of the rolls, but also act
as an oracle to aid in story creation.

This is my attempt to solve
the problem survivalist may face when
alone in the woods with few resources
and no form of entertainment.

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RPG Intro

An RPG is an interactive story in the form of a game. You have characters you can play (Player Characters, or PCs) and characters that are there to move the story along (Non-Player Characters, or NPCs)

Each character has characteristics that indicates their abilities. This can be descriptive, such as, "A hunter that specializes in trapping and snaring." Or they may be described by traits, such as "A strength of 6 and a dexterity of 3."

SSRPG represents it's characters using numerical traits. This is because cutting marks on a stick to represent each value is much easier than memorizing multiple descriptions, and the player may not have access to methods of writing.

As a story progresses, the main character will find challenges they need to overcome. This is when the traits come into play. If you need to get into a house, you could use dexterity to pick a lock, charisma to talk your way in, or even brute strength to break the door down. To overcome an enemy, you might lead them into an ambush, lay traps, run head long into battle, try to talk them into becoming an ally, or maybe just bribe them into returning the stolen item you're trying to retrieve.

Some RPG systems will have a large list of attributes you need to keep track of. Most typically, they use the following six traits:

Constitution (CON): How healthy you are. The more you have, the better you can shrug off injury. This is also used to calculate your Hit Points. (HP)

Dexterity (DEX): How nimble you are. Good for delicate work and using a weapon you need to aim, like a bow or gun.

Strength (STR): How easily you can apply brute strength. Good for smashing.

Charisma (CHA): How convincing you are when interacting with NPCs. Good for convincing others to become allies, or getting information from them.

Intelligence (INT): How smart you are at solving a problem. Good for solving puzzles and using magic.

Wisdom (WIS): How much you know, and how perceptive you are. Good for discovering things and showing faith to your deity.

In SSRPG, charisma, and wisdom are combined into Intelligence to make things simpler. Instead of Constitution, it only uses HP.

A normal RPG would have a "Game Master" that would be in charge of telling the story. When playing solo, a player would usually have charts they can roll on to get keywords that give hints on what the next part of the story will involve, as well as other charts to roll on for changes in environment, random encounters, etc. In SSRPG, each side of the dice have a different meaning, and they are rolled to answer questions asked by the player. There are multiple examples of this at the end of the file.

Only roll the dice when a failure has consequences. When it comes to the story, you can do things without rolling. Normally an elf would need to roll and spend manna to talk to an animal, but if it's outside of a battle, and part of the story, assume your character is calm and has all the energy they need to succeed so that the story can progress without interruption. You may still want to roll to see if you can persuade the animal to give you information, or join your cause, though.

The rest of the file will reiterate these points, but assumes you have some experience with RPGs in general, so this page is here to help give the basics to someone new at the game.

Survival Solo RPG

Use two d4 dice carved from straight sticks with each side having 0 to 3 perpendicular grooves.

Examples of dice:



Rolling Tests

Tests are rolled with two dice and the sum compared to a difficulty (Difficulty Class, or DC). You must roll at least the DC to succeed. A 3 is an average test. See the chart for the equivalent d20 DC in other games.

2d03 Test	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
d20 DC	1	2	5	10	14	17	20
% to roll	100	93.8	81.3	62.5	37.5	18.8	6.3

Saves

Rolling a save is a test to save you from damage (such as fire or poison) or death. You may only make one save per turn. Death saves start at normal and go up in difficulty each turn. On success, you revive with 1 health. (HP) Long running spells will continue to run until you fail your second death save.

Character Stats

Each character has four traits, HP, STR, DEX and INT. Each character or creature gets 2 trait points per level to spend on traits as desired. Heroes start at level 6, with 12 points to spend on traits.

Variable Success

Optionally, rather than have a fail/success roll, roll for how well you succeed.

Rolling On A Trait

Compare the trait to some target number, then roll a test with a DC that's appropriate for the difference and the circumstances.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
*	-5	-3	+/- 1	+3	+5	+7

For example, DEX 5 vs DEX 3 = DC 2

* Attacking with a greater than 5 point advantage is an automatic success, but an 8 point disadvantage is an automatic failure.

Races

Dwarf

Strong, offensive, elemental magic. Durable elemental enhanced weapons.

Human

Electrical magic. Electronics. Constructs. Complex mechanical traps. Complex weapons such as firearms, crossbows, etc.

Elf

Nature / spiritual magic. Healing magic. Clay golems. Sentient weapons.

Beast-Kin

Self transformation / boosting magic. When changing into their animal or human form, manna tokens are redistributed to traits in a way that makes sense. The animal form cannot use weapons or armor. Beast-kin can only use magic or regenerate manna in their natural form.

Transformation always succeeds and takes one full turn.

Learned Magic

Any race can learn the magic of another race through practice. Since this is not natural for the race, no more than 3 spells from other races can be learned.

Playing The Game

During an adventure, playable characters (PCs) will have encounters with non-playable characters. (NPCs) Unless it makes sense to do otherwise, (such as an NPC surprise attack) the PCs will act first, followed by the NPCs. On a character's turn, they may take two actions, such as moving, attacking, talking, etc. Movement is typically limited to about 25 feet per action. Movement can be split around other actions as long as the total remains within the limit.

Magic

You have one manna (magic) token per point of INT. When making a test with manna, decide how much manna to use, then roll a test. The manna is spent even if the test fails. You regenerate one lost manna token per turn, up to INT tokens. Manna spent on a spell doesn't start regenerating until the turn after the spell ends. For example, a spell that costs 2 manna can be cast every other turn without running completely dry of manna.

Creating Things Magically

Roll a test with manna. On success, create the object at a level equal to the amount of manna spent. Manna used to create an object does not start regenerating until the object is destroyed or dismissed. Manna boosts from meditation may be used.

Breaking Objects

Attacker rolls on STR to beat the object's level difficulty.

On failure you can try again at a +1 DC. A second failure means the object is too difficult for your character to break and further attempts won't help.

Constructs And Golems

Pets are created using the same rules as creating other objects magically.

Pets can perform the same magic you have access to. Pets start with 0 manna and must regenerate their manna, the same way as a player.

Meditation

You can choose to meditate once after each encounter. To meditate, roll a test. On failure, a minor wondering monster or beast will find you and have first attack. On success, your meditation is successful and you get a temporary 1 point manna boost. You keep this manna boost until it is used. Manna boosts stack if not spent.

Magical Focus

You may make a test with manna where on a success, the manna will be added to the value of any one roll on your next action.

Traps

Attacker rolls on INT against the trap's level to disarm. A failed roll to disarm will trigger the trap. Level acts like DEX if triggered.

Healing

Each ally can heal 1 HP after each encounter. Healers may test to heal 1 HP per manna expended, or raise the dead at a manna cost of the target's max HP, which would revive the target with 1 HP and zero manna if successful.

Leveling

Heroes level up after each adventure, or after accomplishing a great challenge. Add two points to your traits.

Constructs Example

I have 5 points into my INT. On my first action, I spend 3 manna to try to create a construct. I fail the test. With my other action I spend the remaining 2 manna and pass the test, creating a level 2 construct. The 3 manna lost with the first attempt will regenerate over the next 3 turns. Once the construct dies, the 2 manna put into it will regenerate over the following 2 turns.

If I meditate first, bringing my manna up to 6, and create a LVL 3 construct on my second attempt. I will only regenerate 2 manna over the next two turns, since 3 points are in the construct, and I have 5 points of INT.

Fighting

Fray Die

Before a hero attacks an enemy, roll one die. If it's a 3, do 1 damage to the opponent in addition to attacking. These are attacks "in the fray" such as dagger swipes, critical hits, etc. They land even if the attack misses.

Attacking

Depending on the weapon type and attack type, you can use either STR or DEX to attack or defend. Roll a test on the attacker's chosen trait vs the defender's chosen trait.

For example, if the attacker is using a sword with 5 STR and the defender decides to dodge with 2 DEX, roll a DC of 2 to land the attack.

If the attacker succeeds in landing the attack, roll one or more dice, depending on the weapon, and add the results. This is the damage done. Each die adds an average of 1.5 points of damage. It is possible to roll a zero for damage, representing a non-critical hit or glancing blow.

Magic Attacks

Because of the different ways magic can be used, there are no set rules or spells. Many magic spells may only require a test for success and a mana cost. See spell examples below.

Getting attacked by a group

Sure you could dodge a single rat with DEX 1 when you have DEX 10, but can you dodge 10 at the same time? No, not likely. When getting attacked by a group, add the appropriate trait of all the attackers and roll on that. How much damage you take would depend on how well you roll. Use your best judgment, since they wouldn't all land. When attacking a group, roll on a single target and use damage overflow to take out multiple targets.

Damage Overflow

If you do more damage than a single enemy can take, you can spend the overflow damage on an enemy, of equal or less level, adjacent to the first.

This can be repeated for as many enemies as there are, as long as they are adjacent to each other.

More Traditional Rules

If you prefer a more traditional method of dice rolling, you can roll two dice, then one (The top most or left most) is multiplied by 4, and the second die is added to that. (total value 0-15) You would then add the appropriate trait. This is similar to rolling a d20 in a traditional RPG with the traits acting as modifiers.

Using A Coin

I had someone ask if they could use a coin instead of the dice. If you want to, you can flip a coin twice, and if heads the first time, add 1 point. If heads the second time, add 2 points. If you want to use the traditional rules, keep flipping for 4 and 8 points. (doubling the value each flip) This will give you an even distribution of numbers.

Using d6 dice

You can use d6 (cube) dice as a replacement for the d4 dice. Just start at level 12, make monsters twice as strong, and use a DC of 7 for the "average" difficulty.

Final Notes

Remember, these are guidelines. If you forget a rule, just fudge it. The real world is chaotic and inconsistent. Feel free to make up new rules on the fly as well.

Give your character a backstory with strengths and weaknesses. You may find yourself in situations your character may excel at, or have difficulty dealing with. This adds to the randomness and makes the experience feel more realistic. Use this to modify the DC of a challenge.

BEND the rules! Make your best judgment for each situation. An enemy that's trapped or slow will be easier to hit. One that's small or hard to see will be harder. Landing a blow on a pixie will be an instant kill and rolling for damage would be unnecessary. An enemy prone after slipping in mud would be impossible to miss.

Example Spells

Here are some example spells. In all examples, a standard test is rolled with the specified amount of manna.

Dwarf

Stone Skin (Earth)

For each manna spent, add 1 to STR on your next block.

Terra Form (Earth)

Cost: 2+ manna

Use manna to quickly move dirt and stone into crude forms, such as walls, ditches, etc.

Muddy Grounds (Earth + Water)

Duration: End of encounter

Cost: 4 manna (2 for Earth + 2 for Water)

The ground becomes slick with mud. All entities beside yourself have their movement speed is reduced by half. You may choose to pull objects or entities adjacent to yourself with you as you move. On all other standing entity's next turn, they must roll a save at disadvantage or fall, losing one action to get back up.

Freeze (Water)

Cost: 2 manna

Duration: End of encounter

Freeze any water source.

Tornado (Wind)

Use manna to knock all non-anchored objects back a short distance around a target. Using more manna will knock objects back further.

Wind Arrow (Wind)

Cost: 2 manna

Your next arrow gets a +2 bonus to DEX and 1 extra die to damage.

Fire Breath (Fire)

Cost: 2 manna

You breath fire out of your mouth in a straight line for 25 feet.

Human

Create Constructs

See notes on constructs & golems

Shock

Lightning jumps between enemies a short distance apart. This is a chain, so the next target just needs to be near the previous target, not the first one. Cost is one manna per target. Each target hit must roll a save at disadvantage or be stunned and lose their next turn.

Pulse

Cost: 4 manna

Create an EMP that will disable all nearby electronics, including constructs, for 2 turns.

Electric Sense

Cost: 2 manna

Increase your sense of electrical fields to the point of detecting very slight currents such as heart beats. Casting and detection take two actions.

Weld

Cost: 4 manna

Use an electric arc to weld two metal objects together or repair a metal object.

Magnetic Grip

Cost: 2 manna

Create a magnetic field in your hands in order to grip or pull on metal objects. This can also be used to feel for hidden or buried metal objects.

Build

Cost: 2+ manna

Requires: raw components to be transformed
Create an electronic device that may be powered by electrical manna or a charged crystal.

Charge

Cost: 1+ manna

Store electrical manna in a crystal to be used as a battery for electronics. The charge can be released slowly, or all at once. The manna spent starts regenerating immediately.

Elf

Create Golem

See notes on constructs & golems

Heal

See rules above on healing

Entangling Vines

Vines grow out of the ground and grab the enemy. Cost is 1 manna per target. Targets must roll a test at disadvantage to escape or lose an action.

Grow And Shape

Cost: 4 manna

Duration: 1-3 turns

Cause any seeds to grow rapidly. You can also control the shape of the plant as it grows to form shelters, fences, weapons, armor, etc. The correct seeds must be collected and planted.

Speak With Animals

Cost: 2 manna

Speak with any one animal or group of the same animal as your next action.

Speak With Plants

Cost: 2 manna

Speak to the spirit of any one plant to gather information about the environment, etc.

Speak With The Dead

Cost: 2 manna

Speak with a dead or undead entity.

Luck

Cost: 2 manna

Create an aura of luck. When activated, you may choose to re-roll any one dice roll. Luck cannot be cast during battle.

Tame

Cost: 1-4 manna

Tame a wild animal. The larger the animal, the more manna it takes to tame. Manna will start to regenerate on your next turn.

Beast-Kin

Heal Self

See rules above on healing

Bug Attack

Cause nearby insects to attack your enemies. Cost is 1 manna per target. Targets must roll a test at disadvantage to avoid the bugs or lose an action swatting them away.

Enhance

Duration: end of encounter

Move manna to other traits as desired

Speed Boost

Cost: 2 manna

Duration: end of encounter

Double your movement speed.

Camouflage

Blend in with the background to become unnoticeable. Cost is one manna per turn until dismissed. If character moves faster than half speed, must roll a save to keep from being spotted by any entities facing that direction. Manna spent does not start regenerating until spell ends.

Soft Foot

Become silent at any speed. Cost is one manna per turn until dismissed. Manna spent does not start regenerating until spell ends.

Transform

Cost: All your manna (minimum 4 manna)

Transform into any animal, not just your animal type. Manna is not reassigned and must regenerate. Must call Transform again after manna regenerates in order to transform back into natural form. STR and DEX are modified to match the new animal. INT and HP remains the same. Using Transform, a beast-kin may use magic in animal form.

Speak With Animals, Tame

(same as for Elves)

Oracles

An oracle is some tool used to add randomness to a story.

Tarot cards are one example: You flip over the grim reaper, the joker, and the garden gnome? That means you're going to die in a humorous way and it'll be posted on Reddit.

The magic 8-ball is another example: Is this slobbering wolf going to attack me? All signs point to maybe.

For RPGs, there are tables you can roll dice on, sometimes with names like, "action", "subject", "location", and "complication". This may result in "find", "dog", "market place", and "alien invasion". Depending on your story, you may interpret this as, "You are an elf that can talk to dogs. A dog is asking you to find its ball, but it's lost in the bustling market. As you are looking for it, a group of illegal aliens attack, throwing the market into chaos." or in a modern world, "A girl asked you to find their lost purse dog at the mall, only to find out it's an undercover alien meeting up with its comrades to plan a world invasion."

There are also oracle dice you can find online with image on the faces. So after talking to the dog, you roll your oracle dice and they come up

with a shield and an old man. So maybe you need to protect the dog from an ancient evil.

Similar to the 8-ball, you can also use a 6 sided die as an oracle, with the numbers 1-6 representing: "No, and...", "No", "No, but...", "Yes, but...", "Yes", and "Yes and...". So if you ask, "Is this girl willing to help me on my adventure?", you may get, "No, but... she will if you can convince her parents to allow her to." or "Yes, and... she's an expert swordsman." (You fill in the remainder of the sentence)

To best use an oracle, ask a question relevant to the current situation, use the oracle, and interpret the results in some interesting way. Try changing up your interpretation each time. The grim reaper might me an animated skeleton, and old man, a vague danger, the passage of time, etc.

SSRPG also uses an oracle system which is easy to memorize (in my opinion) and a little more adaptable than the typical 6 sided die oracle. Each side of a die can have multiple meanings depending on context. If you find yourself using the same meaning over and over, try thinking of a different way the roll can be interpreted.

The oracle will give you the basic plot lines. It's up to you to weave that into a full fledged story that you can use as the foundation of your adventure.

The Oracle Dice

Roll one die as an oracle. Roll multiple times to get modifiers.

Die	Trait	Element	Race	Relationship	Alternate	Gender	No / Yes
0	HP	Earth	Dwarf	Family	Grounded / Solemn	Manly Man	No
1	STR	Water	Human	Friend	Relaxed / Social	Male	Maybe No
2	DEX	Air	Elf	Lovers	Excited / Active	Female	Maybe Yes
3	INT	Fire	Beast-kin / Creature	Enemy	Scared / Protective / Agressive	Girly Girl	Yes

The oracle is based around the 4 elements in order of state (solid, liquid, gas, plasma)

- Earth is the foundation. Your body / HP. The flat surface representing a flat field.
- Water is strength of movement. The ability to carve through earth. Your STR. The single line represents a river.
- Air is fast and flitting, like a bird. Your DEX. The two lines represent the movement of a breeze
- Fire has the power to modify the other elements. It is the danger of magic and the most active of the elements. Your INT. The three stripes represent the tips of a flame.

Creatures are ordered based on a matching element

- Dwarfs (Earth) live under the Earth. They work metal (Earth) using fire and wind to heat it, and water to quench it. So while they live in the Earth, they use the other elements to work it.
- Humans (Water) live on the Earth. They till the Earth to plant food and build their homes. They master energy and electricity.
- Elves (Air) are fast and light. They flit between tree branches, living high above the ground in the trees, using bows to attack. They are in tune with nature.
- Beast-kin (Fire) are temperamental and dangerous. They're constantly changing to destroy anything in their way. The three stripes representing the swipe of a claw.

Relationships are represented by the lines on the die

- The blank side is your family, foundation, or past. Your starting point.
- The single line is your friend. The person who will stand with you.

- The two lines are the lovers, standing together.
- The three lines are a danger, a group of people ganging together.

Example Adventures Using The Oracle Dice With Real Dice Rolls

Adventure #1

Adventure is caused by [1] a friend.

What is the issue? [3] a danger.

What kind of danger [1] involving a friend.

Is the second friend trying to attack the first friend? [1] no, but they're not getting along.

So that tells me there's a danger my friends need to work together to defeat, but since they're not getting along, they can't defeat it.

What kind of danger are they trying to work together to defeat? [0] Family. **(see alternate branch below)**

I'd say the second friend's family is causing a danger, but they're unwilling to recognize it.

The first friend and I need to go to the second friend and convince them of the danger.

I suspect the family will have spies that will tell the family of our plans and they will try to stop us.

Adventure #1, alternate branch

...

What kind of danger are they trying to work together to defeat? [0] Something in their shared past.

Did it involve all three of us? [2] partly, yes.

A curse? [0] no

An item? [0] no (I'm going to ignore this later because of the next answer)

Treasure? [1] not exactly

So an item we got that didn't appear valuable at the time, but isn't cursed.

This item involves my two friends more than me. I'll say someone is looking for that item, but doesn't know I was involved in finding it. That makes me uniquely qualified to fix the problem. My friends are in danger and can't get directly involved.

Do I have the item? [0] No.

Does a friend have the item? [3] Yes, in their possession.

It must be the friend talking to me. (A [2] would be the other friend who we'd have to find.)

Is the person looking for the item, evil? [1] Not obviously so, but may turn out evil later.

I have my friend go into hiding and talk to the person looking for the item. They tell me the item is dangerous and needs to be destroyed. They'll stop at nothing to get the item. I offer to destroy it myself and they respond with [0] absolutely not. Only they can destroy the item. (If the answer was "yes", the person would have sent me on a journey to destroy it) I return to my friend but he's missing. Now I need to find him to retrieve the item so it can be destroyed. I recruit the help of the second friend. After I get the item, I return it to the person who wants to destroy it. Does he reveal himself as being evil? [3] Yes! Boss battle. (A [1] could have meant he tries to use the item for good but it backfires. A [2] could mean he got corrupted by the item.)

Adventure #2

Adventure is caused by [3] danger.

What kind of danger? [0] family.

Is the danger from my family, or to my family? [3] to my family.

Is it to my family in general, or my immediate family? [2] immediate family, a sibling. (a [3] would be a parent)

Brother or sister? [0] brother.

Is he asking for my help? [0] Not at all. So maybe he's missing.

How did I find out? [1] a friend told me.

So my brother is missing. His friend came to me to help find him.

Was he on an adventure at the time? [3] Yes, definitely.

He told the friend where he was going and never came back.

Was he looking for treasure? [3] Yes, purely a treasure hunt.

My brother's friend came to me worried because my brother had gone on a treasure hunt, but hasn't come back yet after several days. The friend wants me to go rescue my brother from whatever dangers he got himself into.

Adventure #3

My character is an orphan with few friends

Adventure is caused by [0] something in my past

What is the issue? [0] my past again. Since I was an orphan, I'll say it has something to do with how I had to survive on the streets.

What in my past? [3] an old danger.

An old rival? [0] definitely not. Someone or something that didn't know me.

A danger to other orphans today? [3] Yes, very much.

So this is a danger I'm familiar with because I was an orphan and it's a danger right now to the current day orphans.

Is it an ongoing issue? [0] So something that rarely happens.

What is the danger to the orphans? [1] friend.

Someone pretending to be a friend? [1] not really, but not acting as an enemy either.

Does this involve slavery? [3] Yes!

So a slave trader is convincing orphans to follow them to a better life. My old contacts let me know

what they suspect is happening, since this is something that also happened in my childhood. Perhaps I escaped them before? I need to find the slavers and rescue the orphans.

Adventure #4

Adventure is caused by [3] a beast-kin / creature

Is it attacking? [1] No, but it might be causing problems.

Is it looking for something? [3] Yes!

Item or entity? [1] An item, maybe one that looks like an entity. A doll?

How big is the creature? [0] Small.

This is a find quest. A pixie has fallen in love with a doll but the doll has disappeared. After seeing the pixie flying around frantically, causing disturbances and damage to the villagers' possessions. I talk to it, find out what's wrong, and decide to help it find the missing doll.

Mid-Game Example

Here's an example of interpreting the die differently while already part way through the story.

I've been traveling all day, has anything happened today? [3] Yes, something major!

What does it involve? [1] I find someone or something friendly or helpful

Is this an object, animal, humanoid, or event? [2] a humanoid.

How big is it? [0] small

On a scale of fairy to dwarf, how big? [1] slightly larger than a fairy.

Is this a gnome or brownie? [2] brownie.

Male or female? [2] female.

What is her general attitude? [3] scared of me.

I find a spot to make camp. As I empty my pack and begin to gather wood for a fire, a small movement catches my eye. A brownie, a young girl by the looks of it, scurries off a short distance, then hides under a bush and watches me gather wood. Once I have the fire burning, the brownie comes closer, seemingly enjoying the heat, but too scared of me to get too close.

I place some food on the ground, does that help? [2] yes, she's less scared.

I sit and eat for a while. Every once in a while I give food to the brownie and she continues to warm up to me.

How does she feel now? [3] She feels protective of me.

Soon, the little brownie warms up to me completely, sitting next to my foot and watching everything I do with great interest. When I pull out my pack, unlatching my bedroll, I notice her watching the shadows and alert to any threats, her little spear ready to attack.

The next morning, I find a dead mouse, skinned, near my bed. The brownie motions at it, showing me it's an offering.

After a small breakfast of mouse meat and other rations, I begin to leave. Does the brownie follow? [3] Yes.

As I walk down the path, I notice the brownie following behind me. After a little pantomiming, I get her to ride on my shoulder, and she becomes my personal alarm, warning me of danger I might miss.

As we near the dungeon entrance, how does the brownie act? [2] Excited for battle!

As I enter the dungeon, the first monsters we find are spiders of various sizes. Does she see them? (DC 2) [1+2] yes, she sees them and alerts me to the danger before they see us. She motions to be put on the ground, and she quickly dispatches the smaller spiders. For battle purposes, she has a spear tipped with poison, which causes 1 point of poison damage per turn for 3 turns. (Or until the poisoned creature does a successful save test)