

Survival Solo RPG



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v3.0

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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Survival Solo RPG

These rules assume you have some experience with other RPG systems, so they won't go into detail on what an RPG is.

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

Examples of dice:



Rolling Tests

Tests are rolled with two dice and the sum compared to a difficulty (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)

Character Stats

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

Rolling On A Trait

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

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1/5 -	1/4 -	1/3 -	1/2 - 2x	- 3x	- 4x	- 5x

For example, DEX 5 vs DEX 2 = DC 2

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 the 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.

Some magic may overlap. For instance, it would make sense for both Elves and Beast-kin to have the ability to talk to animals.

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.

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. The one exception is that pets can't create other pets.

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.

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 manna cost. See spell examples below.

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.

Crunchier 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 dice 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.

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. When using the oracle, 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.

You can also add or subtract points from a roll based on your character's strengths and weaknesses when relevant.

Things to remember

Starting at level six gives you an average of three points per trait, similar to if you rolled for them.

Manna is like batteries that recharge one at a time. When in use, they are "attached" to the spell for its duration.

Saves for static tests like reviving the dead, breaking an object, etc. only have two attempts. After that, it's considered too difficult, or some other condition is preventing success.

Saves for dynamic tests, like putting out fire, can be made multiple times, but only once per turn.

#1 thing to remember: A good RPG is an interactive story. Do what fits the story, not the rules. In this world of magic, anything is possible.

Example Spells

Here are some example spells. In all examples, a standard test is rolled with the specified number 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 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, and the manna spent starts recharging 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 to any stage. 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

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

Turn invisible in the visible spectrum. Cost is one manna per turn, pay as you go. 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 humanoid 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)

The Oracle Dice

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

Die	Trait	Element	Race	Relationship	Fighting Style	Gender	No / Yes
0	HP	Earth	Dwarf	Family	Support	Manly Man	No
1	STR	Water	Human	Friend	Fighter	Male	Maybe No
2	DEX	Air	Elf	Lovers	Thief	Female	Maybe Yes
3	INT	Fire	Beast-kin	Enemy	Magic User	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 into different forms 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.

Rolls can be interpreted many different ways

For example, 2 could be a lover, someone married, someone overly friendly / flirty with you, or with the people around them, etc.

If you are a male and meet a male in a bar who acts “2” towards you, he might be trying to set you up with the barmaid, playing the wing-man.

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 no 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 danger

What kind of danger? [3] an enemy.

Is the danger to me specifically? [3] Yes.

An attempt on my life? [0] No.

A danger to my livelihood? [0] No.

How does it affect me? [1] Friend.

Is a fiend of mine also involved? [2] partly, yes.

Did my friend bring this danger to me? [0] No.

Did I bring the danger to my friend? [1] Not really, but they were involved.

I'll assume my friend and I did something which got us both involved in the danger.

Was it a previous adventure? [1] Not directly.

Did we take something that someone else wanted? [2] yes, sort of.

Does the danger come from an adventurer, or a villain? [2] a minor villain.

I'm going to say the story goes like this: My friend and I found a golden item, but we didn't know what it was, so I took it as part of my share and sold it. My friend recently found out that a minor villain is looking for the item to make themselves more powerful. They tracked it to me and my friend. We need to find where the item is now, before the villain, while also fending off attacks from the villain's followers. If we fail to find it first, the villain will become more powerful and a large battle will ensue.