

Descent into Hell



A game about adventure, demons, and unlikely friendships.

By Monica Phadnis.

Welcome to Hell. No, really.

You wake up in a forest after a great earthquake knocked you out. But the landscape that you see is not the one you were in before. You see this is your new reality. Hell on Earth.

There are demons, monsters, and other ferocious creatures that are trying to kill you. And of course, the Seven Deadly Sins and Satan are fighting amongst themselves over power over Hell. Meanwhile, rumors of a new evil-er (is that even possible??) power to the southeast are rising.

So you look for other humans like you. To your dismay, the Rapture has taken place, and you and millions of other people are now living in a reconstructed Earth, which takes on the shape of Hell. When you find your companions, you're unsure if you'll all get along. But you guess you have to in order to survive with threats surrounding you.

Despite not having a full grasp about what challenges you will face in the future, you all embark on a journey, to save other humans, and uncover the mysteries of this world. Gather around the table (or on a Zoom meeting!) and tell the story of your group.

You will need:

A d4, d6, d8, d10, for each of the players. Descent into Hell is a shared GM game. The GM narrates the game, while the other 3-5 players narrate their actions. If a player must do something that requires taking an action, they must roll for success using their assigned die. (More on this later!)

But... who am I?

It's totally up to you! You can decide everything about yourself, including your name, your weapon, and what subject you study.

Pick your roll by answering this question:

When you are about to fight, what's your preferred fighting style?

a. I prefer to use my words and charm to smooth over conflicts. I'm not one for taking part in the heart of battle but I'll help develop our strategy before-hand.

You sound like a Diplomat! Though you may not charge headfirst into battle or be in the thick of the fighting, you're excellent at using words and your smarts to help fight demons. Your dice will be a d4, and you have a natural advantage at guiding light, knowledge, and companion rolls.

b. I like being good at a little bit of everything instead of just one thing. I can fight and strategize. I always seem to be in the middle of action however...

You sound like the Jack-of-all-Trades. Your mental prowess isn't that of the diplomat, but that doesn't mean you aren't smart! You're also great at physical activities on-top of things, so you can run through strange terrains with ease.. Your dice will be a d6, and you have an advantage at knowledge and power rolls .

c. I like to go into battle head-first without a plan. I mean, who needs a plan anyways. I'm the first to start a fight and am great at offense!

You sound like a Rogue. Your fighting skills are unmatched! You're the team member who is the most ready to charge into battle. Whether you're given a sword, spear, or just have a twig you found in, you know how to use it to the best of your ability. Your dice will be a d8, and you have a natural advantage at power and skill rolls .

d. I like to take care of others and try and shield those who need help. More than anything I want to help keep us safe.

You sound like a Protector. You do the most damage in the group and can take damage the best as well. Your knowledge and power rolls aren't as good as the Diplomat, but you will have excellent skill and damage rolls. You can take hits from strong demons much easier than your companions, which means you find yourself in danger much more. Your dice will be a d10, and you have a natural advantage at sword and defense rolls.

Your die is the only one you will roll in the entirety of the game, so keep it safe. It is the embodiment of your being.



Guiding Light

4 6 8 10

Your Guiding Light is within you. Whenever you roll a 4, 6, 8, or 10 (the highest value on your die), you can call upon your guiding light to help you take an action with advantage (even actions that your roll can't naturally take!).



Knowledge

2 3

Knowledge rolls have to do with anything that involves planning, strategizing, using charm, and more!



Power

3 4 5 6

Power rolls have to do with anything that requires physical strength. If its running down a door, jumping, or using any kind of brute force, it's a power roll.



Skill

4 5 6 7

Skill rolls have to do with combat. If your swinging your sword at a monster or fighting a demon, roll for skill.



Defense

5 6 7 8

Defense rolls are for... defense! If you're protecting a friend, using your shield, or standing up to a bad guy, it's a defense roll.



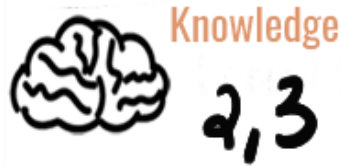
Animal Companion

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Your animal companion will help you in any way possible! You rescued them after all. If the scenario in which your companion is helping you makes sense (at the discretion of your GM) your animal companion will help you.

More on deciding your character...

So you've chosen your roll and know what you're good at, but who are you really? Here are some things that will help you come up with your character. Give yourself a cool name and a short (1-2 sentences) back story and pick out some other things for yourself.

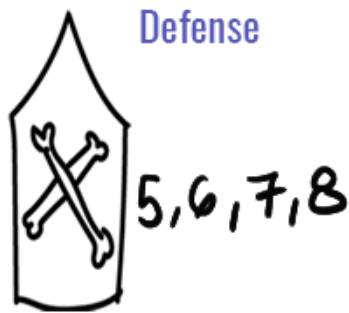


Everyone has something their super into, and this is your knowledge! Whether its demonology, an intense love of 80 rock music, or a video game obsession, it can help you navigate through the world. Who knows, it might help you fight monsters too. Your knowledge topic will help you roll with advantage if it is applicable to the situation you find yourself in.

Example: You find yourself faced against a demon, who is shooting fire at you. Rolling out of the way of each fireball, you think hard, what did my knowledge of 80's rock music help me with again? With that you call up the power of KISS and begin to sing 'Rock and Roll all Nite'. Luckily for you, the demon hated 80's rock music. Screaming a deafening pitch, it began to melt into dush and ash, until the only sound you could hear was ringing in your ears and the soft lull of the world after battle.



You need something to protect yourself with. This can be anything within logical constraints. That is, using totally modern weapons (like missiles) are not on the table however, you could wield a sword, axe, or even a gun. These do not have to follow regular Earth constraints as well- the terrain and geology of this world is much different after all. (More in this in a bit)

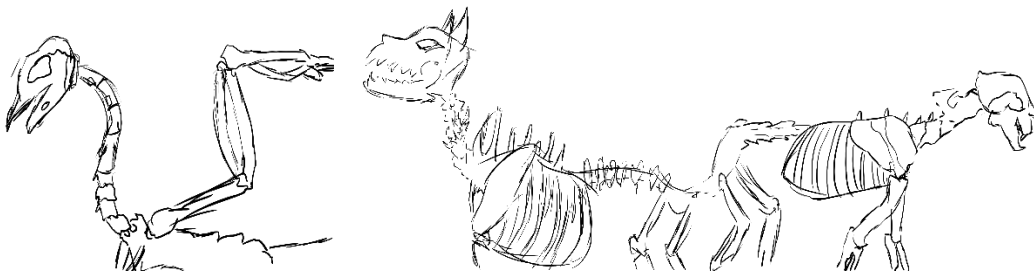


You have picked your sword, but you also need a shield. It can be made of any material you like as well, and just like the previous two, will give you advantage based on the situation.

Some example materials that are available in this world are: Purgatory Iron (a metal that glows when evil is near), Lava Crystals from the pits of Despair, Wood from the Tree of Life, etc. Think Biblical, however use your imagination to come up with whatever you would like.



Finally, your animal companion! You and your group rescued this poor animal, so you need to pick what type of animal it is together. Every animal in this world is skeletal, so keep that in mind when choosing, however your animal will be able to help you fight and solve problems as you call on them, in any way they can. If the situation makes sense (and the GM agrees it works), their power can be called upon.



Example: I am Yia, and I was a college student when the rapture and apocalypse took place. I am knowledgeable in 80's rock bands. I carry a sword made of gold mined in the deepest pits of Hell, that I traded my leather jacket for. My shield is made from wood and stone. The animal companion of our group is a Skele-dog, named Pumpkin.

As group, you should also decided the name of you band of misfits and what motivates you.

Example: We are the Forsakenswords, warriors who seek to protect the innocent. We will slay any evil demons who come across our path and vow to uphold justice.

Or

We are the Bond of Shadows. We vow to always help those in need, and always live by our word. We will try to unite the relms of Hell and bring peace to the souls of our fallen brothers and sisters.

And with that, you are almost on your way to starting your game.

Just one more thing...

Some things that are important to keep in mind are your hearts and condition levels.

Hearts and Conditions

Die	Hearts
d4	4
d6	6
d8	8
d10	10

Everyone starts out with the maximum amount of hearts for their roll. So, for example, a Diplomat (d4) will start out with 4 hearts because that is the maximum number on their die. Along with this, there are certain conditions that affect your rolls:

roll	+	-
knowledge	normal ↔	distressed
power	normal ↔	hurt
skill	normal ↔	tired

If you fall into any of the negative categories, you will roll with disadvantage for each of your turns, UNLESS you are able to satisfy that condition and return to normal (rolling with advantage and disadvantage will be covered later). For example, if you are Tired, to return to normal you must stop and sleep. If you are Hurt, maybe try and wrap your wound or try and find something to help take care of it, such as a mystical plant, or bartering a salve from a mysterious figure in the shadows. Rolling with disadvantage will also consume your hearts. If you roll with disadvantage on 5 turns consecutively, you will lose a heart. When you run out of hearts, you die but fret not! This is Hell after all. You can still join your party in their adventures but will not be able to partake in combat. However, you can still follow them along for their adventures and maybe help in some ghostly ways (as decided by your DM).

Successes and Failures

Success: One may roll successfully by achieving one of the target numbers for the aspect they are going for. Rolling with advantage helps you achieve your goal by allowing you to roll your die twice- if either of your rolls succeed, you can accomplish your goal. Any time you have a success, you can take control of the story and narrate your actions- that way everyone has an active role in narrating.

Failures: Not achieving the one of the target numbers of the aspect that you are rolling for counts as a failure. As well as this, when rolling with disadvantage, you must roll twice successfully to succeed. If you fail, the GM takes over the story. They narrate until the next action takes place.

GM's decide what aspect that you are rolling for.

So, what about the bad guys?

In every hero's tale there must be a villain in some way or another. Your villain will be decided by your group. It's important to keep in mind other people's feelings and make sure everyone is comfortable with what you are choosing.

Choosing your villain:

Who do you want your villain to be? They can be a demon overlord from Tartarus, a bad guy from Earth, or even an omnipresent Angel gone bad. The sky's the limit!

Along with this, every bad guy has their army, and you get to decide what they are. Choose hench-monsters for them as well as who/what makes up their army. Also, give them some sort of back story- what are they motivated by? What are they trying to achieve? Do they have a tragic back story? Along with this, what do their hench-monsters look like? For example:

Yia did some scouting by finding some lesser demons and shaking them down for information. She found out that the evil force that was trying to attack them was no other than the evil Abaddon, who was trying to spread his darkness further over Purgatory. His henchmen were two lesser demons named Nocturne and Nox, a set of twins with powers over the night. His army were a group of shades, that were currently small but were growing rapidly in numbers, day by day.

As you might expect, bad guys have Hearts too. That is, they have hearts of darkness. Each individual member of an army has 3 hearts, hench-monsters have 6 hearts, and villains have 9 hearts. When you go up against a villain, they can use their darkness to take away hearts from you. However, your light can go against them.

	hearts
army (ind.)	3
henchppl	6
villian	9

Darkness and Light is assigned to each player, based on how powerful they are. They come into play during combat (or any other necessary action) and are expendable, and you must take a condition after using your light (such as becoming tired or hungry).

roll	light /darkness
diplomat	4
jack of all trades	3
rogue	2
protector	1
army member	3
henchperson	2
villian	1

Light and Darkness points can be used to do special moves like

- Kicking down a huge tree in the forest of Purgatory that blocks your group's path
- A henchman using a spell to damn your soul
- Trying to have some sort of dramatic or crazy narrative event happen, like summoning a pack of hell-dogs by blowing on a weird whistle you found on the ground.

This allows you (and your enemies) to take special actions. The GM will narrate this resource being used up for bad guys.

How do I Play?

Gather your players and GM and have them write their role on the character sheet. Each session should ideally take about 1-1.5 hours.



Attached is a map of this world you are in. You can shape where you are, based off this map, or you can shape your own landscape. You can start out in a particular region and shape its geography and landscape to whatever you want. TAs a group decide on your collective vision of your landscape.

You can imagine Limbo as a dark and decrepit place with strange creatures and faceless ghost wandering around. As The mainland of Hell taking on different geographical terrains and sub-terrains. Such as Treachery, the home of Satan, being

the fieriest place of all the city states, and Lust being a lush forest with succubae and incubi roaming around to suck out the souls of any humans that they find. Your interpretation of Hell's landscape is up to you and what Hell means to your group.

Deciding Your group's tale:

As a group answer the following questions:

- Who is the Villain?
- What hench-monsters work for the villain? Do they have an army?
- What is the name our band of misfits?
- What is the goal of our quest?
- Why are we at odds with the Villain?
- Where does the Tale start?
- Where does the Tale end?

Example: The Villain of our tale is Abaddon, a demon of darkness. He employed lesser demons, Nocturne and Nox to be his monsters in command. Nocturne and Nox are twins who rule over the night. They hailed from the region of Anger, where they spread destruction and chaos throughout the city-state. He is organizing an army of shades to inflict terror on every human that resides in Hell. We as the Protectors of Night seek to end Abaddons evil reign of terror. He sent a small army of shades to fight us and stop us from bringing some humans to safety, as we were crossing over to the Mainland from Purgatory. Therefore, we must try to stop him. Our Tale starts in Purgatory in the Forrest of the Forgotten and ends at the bottom of Mt. Moriah in Anger.

Along with this give your tale a name. Every good story has a name, that will help it be remembered for years thereafter. The sheet on the following page will help you outline the structure of your story.

Character Sheet

Name:

Pronouns:



Guiding Light



Knowledge



Power



Skill



Defense



Animal Companion

Decent into Hell

Name of your EPIC Tale:

Who is the villain?

What hench-monsters work for the villain?
Do they have an army?

Why are we at odds with the villain?

What is the goal of our quest?

Where does our tale start?

Where does our tale end?