

VIGILANT CITY

Core Rulebook

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Introduction

In a city where the institutions have failed the average person, criminal organizations have risen, and corruption runs deep. As an extraordinary individual, will you become a part of the rot that plagues the city, or will you stop it?

Vigilant City is a tabletop roleplaying game where the players play as a hero or villain in a city where vigilantism runs rampant.

Requirements

To play, the GM will need a copy of this rulebook and each player will need a copy of both pages of the character sheet. Each player will also need 1 20-sided die (d20) that will serve as their Action Die.

Basic Game Flow

The game requires at least 2 players: a game master (GM) and a player. It is best when played with 3-5 players. The basic flow of the game is as follows:

1. Setting the Scene
2. Player Approach
3. Player Rolls
4. GM Counteraction
5. Repeat

Setting the Scene

The GM will set the scene and describe the placement of the non-player characters, the scenery, and any enemy characters that may or may not be around.

Player Approach

Each player will tell then tell the GM and other players how they will individually approach the current situation before any dice rolls are resolved. Therefore, each approach that a player decided on must be able to be resolved regardless of if another player's approach succeeds or fails. All players may cooperate as to how they wish to approach the situation. There is no official turn order, but the GM can choose to implement one of the following:

- Random Order
- Highest Movement goes first
- Set order dictated at beginning of game
- Age of players

An approach will usually consist of any basic movement (such as walking toward somebody or a quick sprint across the room) + one of the following:

- A. Basic Move Roll

- B. New Skill Attempt
- C. Skill Use
- D. Take a Breath
- E. Plan Ahead

It is up to the GM if they want to allow more or restrict actions in a single approach for dramatic effect.

Basic Move Roll

There are 12 basic moves that exist in Vigilant City. 3 for each of the basic stats: Grace, Intellect, Might, and Spirit. What each of the Basic Moves is used for will be discussed in detail in the Character Sheet section of the rulebook.

When making an approach using a Basic Move, the GM will have to determine how difficult the approach is based on a scale of Easy to Impossible. The player will roll their Action Die and add the number of that Basic Move from the character sheet to pass the check in the parentheses for each difficulty level below:

- Easy (5): This will include things like using Diplomacy to convince someone who's half-dead to tell the truth or using Might to break a stick in half. Something that should be extremely easy for a regular person to do, let alone someone with powers.
- Average (10): This will include things that might be slightly harder for a regular person to do. Such as, using Might to kick a door open or using Tinker to make a minor repair to a vehicle.
- Difficult (15): Now we're getting into some interesting territory. This will include things like using Willpower to see through a magical illusion or using Shoot to hit somebody close by in the exact body part you're aiming for.
- Backbreaking (20): These are things that in most cases will be improbably difficult, however, with enough skill, the character may succeed. Examples include using Knowledge to read a dead language because the character may have seen a book on it once or using Melee to punch someone in an exact pressure point that will cause them to vomit.
- Impossible (20 on the die): These are truly impossible unless divine intervention is at play. Unlike the others, where your stat matters, an impossible approach will only succeed if the player rolls an exact 20 on the die. This includes using Deduction to know the exact plans of a major villain based on a cloth left behind by a henchman or using Movement to climb a 100 story building without any skill or powerset that allows you to do so.

New Skill Attempt

Just because you have powers or a special weapon of some sort, doesn't mean you know how to use them. To master a Power Set, the character must develop skills. To attempt a new skill, the player will say what specifically they are trying to accomplish with their character's power set.

Once the player has expressed their skill attempt, the GM will determine the difficulty. This will be like Basic Move Rolls, with a difference being that Attempting a Skill requires the use of Energy, has no stat associated with it, and has consequences if it fails (unless attempting an easy skill). If the player succeeds, the skill gets added to their skill list along with the associated Energy cost. Once learned, they no longer have to roll to use that skill.

- Easy
 - o Roll: 5
 - o Energy Cost: 1
 - o Consequence: None
 - o Examples:
 - Fire Manipulation: Setting something flammable on fire
 - Telekinesis: Moving a small rock
- Average
 - o Roll: 10
 - o Energy Cost: 4
 - o Consequence: Minor injury that reduces a Basic Move roll by 1 until the character Takes a Breath.
 - o Examples:
 - Electric Powers: Draining the electricity from a vehicle to make it inoperable
 - Wind Powers: Blowing away a person into a building to hurt them
- Difficult
 - o Roll: 15
 - o Energy Cost: 8
 - o Consequence: Major injury that reduces a Basic Move roll by 2 until healed by outside means (hospital or good night's sleep)
 - o Examples:
 - Super Strength: Lifting a house
 - Gadgeteer: Using your built-in weaponry demolish a building
- Backbreaking
 - o Roll: 20
 - o Energy Cost: 12
 - o Consequence: Major injury that knocks the character out. See [Knockout and Death](#) section for more details
 - o Examples:
 - Earth Mover: Turning a mountain into flat land
 - Telepath: Manipulating a major villain to stop their evil plans
- Impossible
 - o Roll: 20
 - o Energy Cost: All Energy (character must have at least 12)
 - o Consequence: Death. The character will not survive if they fail.
 - o Examples:

- Speedster: Going faster than the speed of light to travel back in time to change the past
- Water Manipulation: Sending all the water from the ocean into space

Skill Use

Once a character has acquired a skill, they no longer need to roll to use it. If they have the required energy, they can just subtract the energy cost and it automatically succeeds.

Take a Breath

Taking a breath means not taking an action for a slight break. If the player decides to Take a Breath, they may roll their Action Die twice and take the lowest of the results. They can add that result back to their Health or Energy (without exceeding the max). They can also split the amount between the two.

Plan Ahead

If a player doesn't have an approach that they want to take, they may Plan Ahead by saying that they want to react in case something happens. For example, a player might say that they want to have a fireball ready in hand to counter with if they are attacked. Another option could be that the character will hide around a corner and immediately punch then next person they see. The benefit to planning ahead is that no roll will need to occur if the GM accepts the plan that the player has mentioned. The drawback is that if the trigger isn't hit, the player loses their action that round.

Player Rolls

Once each player has determined an approach, any dice rolls that need to happen will occur. The GM will resolve any consequences to the players, the enemies, or the environment.

GM Counteraction

Once the GM resolves the results of the player rolls, the GM will then determine any consequences to the players' actions. Did the attack result in a building falling? Did the ruckus cause an ensuing avalanche? We'll find out. This is also the time when the GM determines how any enemies will react to the players and if they will attack them. (More on combat later).

Once the immediate events are established and the enemies do their attacks, the GM will once again set the scene.

Combat

Combat occurs during a Player Approach or a GM Counteraction. When a player uses a Basic Move such as Melee or Shoot to do a basic attack, the roll is always successful unless the player rolls a 1 on the die.

Roll	Damage
1 on the die	Fail
2-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16+	5
20 on the die	10

The player may choose to use a Basic Move to do a special attack, like aim for a weak spot. If so, the player will determine difficulty like any other Basic Move and the damage will be according to the following table:

Difficulty	Damage
Easy	1
Average	3
Difficult	5
Backbreaking	10
Impossible	Instant Kill

If a player uses a skill to attack, the amount of damage is equivalent to the Energy cost. If a player uses a skill to attack multiple enemies, the damage is split according to the player's wishes.

Knockout and Death

A player character is considered knocked out if their health reaches 0 or less. If the character is knocked out, on their next turn they must roll their Action Die:

- On a 20, the character awakens with half of their max Health
- On a 15-19, the character awakens with 1 Health
- On a 10-14, nothing happens this turn and the character is still knocked out
- On a 5-9, the character is still knocked out and will suffer a permanent consequence of one of the following:
 - o Lose a skill
 - o Gain a weakness
 - o Permanently lower one of the following by 1
 - Any Basic Move (can go to negative)
 - Max Health
 - Max Energy
- On a 1-4, the character dies

The Character Sheet

The following is to assist you in filling out a player's character sheet. To start, the player should envision what type of hero or villain they would like to play. Once that's done, the GM can assist in filling out to the following fields to make a proper character.

Alias

This is what your character is called by the public. Normally, it's a cool nickname that describes the character's power set, but that's not always the case. Depending on the situation, it could just be the character's real name.

Real Name

The character's real name. In some cases, this may be the same as the Alias.

Stats

There are 4 main stats in the game: Grace, Intellect, Might, and Spirit. They are divided into three basic moves a piece that determine general interactions in the game (regardless of the character's power set). At the beginning, the player will set each of these 4 stats to 16, 12, 8, and 4. The player should not consider any powers when distributing. Instead, the player should distribute them as how the character would be if they lost all their special abilities and weaponry.

Health and Energy

Health is determined by the Might stat + 10 and Energy is determined by the Spirit stat + 10.

Basic Moves

As stated earlier, each stat is divided into three basic moves a piece that determine general interactions in the game (regardless of the character's power set). Once the stat has been given a numbered amount, the player will distribute that amount to the three basic moves. (Cannot go below 0)

Grace

- Determines how graceful a character is in speech and movement.
- Divided into:
 - Diplomacy: The ability to convince others and see the truth when others speak
 - Movement: How stealthily and swiftly a character moves
 - Shoot: Aim and ability to attack from afar

Intellect

- Determines what a character knows and how they think.
- Divided into:
 - Deduction: How well the character can figure out puzzles or how things work
 - Knowledge: How much information the character can recall
 - Tinker: How well the character operates machinery or can build things

Might

- Determines how tough and strong the character is
- Determines starting Health
- Divided into:
 - Brawn: How strong the character is when carrying and moving things
 - Melee: How well a character attacks at close-range
 - Resilience: How well the character can take a hit and their general health

Spirit

- Determines how well the character is in touch with their surroundings and with the natural world
- Determines starting Energy
- Divided into:
 - Willpower: How much the character is tapped into the energy of the natural world and how their psychology is holding up
 - Search: How well the character can seek things out
 - Sense: How well the character can sense what is around them

Power Origin

A character's power set (discussed in the next section) must come from somewhere. There are five categories from which a character can derive their power set.

1. Extraterrestrial: Either character is an alien themselves or have imbued with power or weaponry by an alien
2. Technological: The character's power set comes from humanity's scientific pursuits
3. Supernatural: The character's abilities stem from sorcery or from mythical beings
4. Evolutionary: Something unknown within the character's DNA has caused them to be born with special abilities

Power Sets

If a Power Origin answers the question "Why is a character special?" Then a Power Set tells you how a character is special. This is where the player can get creative. A power set can be a literal set of powers like super speed or fire manipulation. It can also be a specific set of gear like power armor or a magical weapon. A character can have a multitude of power sets but it's recommended to stick with 1 to 3. However, it's entirely up to the GM to limit or expand that number.

Weaknesses

A weakness is anything that can put the character in jeopardy. It can literally be an object or substance that makes the character weaker or a character flaw that causes the character to work against their own self-interest.

If a weakness is a character flaw, the GM can force the player to take an action based on the weakness or have the player roll against it.

It's recommended to have 1 weakness for every 2 Power Sets.

Alignment

Alignment has two vectors. The first is the character's relationship to the law and government. It's divided into:

- Official: The character works for with the authority of a government institution.
- Outlaw: The character doesn't work for the government but also isn't adversarial with government figures. Relationships with officials are usually on an individual basis.
- Criminal: The character is wanted by the law and will be arrested on sight.

The second vector in alignment is the character's moral compass which is divided into:

- Hero: The character will always do the right thing or at least attempt to.
- Antihero: The character is neither good nor evil. They may engage in heroic acts as well as villainous ones.
- Villain: The character is a bad guy. There are levels of bad but, ultimately, they are on the side of villainy.

Origin and Notes

This section is optional. If you wish to create a backstory for your character, write it down here. Also, this is a place to write down anything interesting about the character.

Game Master (GM) Section

Enemy Guide

The following is a guide to creating balanced encounters with enemies should they attack. The main types of enemies are minions, underbosses, and bosses.

Minions

Whether it's alien soldiers, tiny robots, or members of a gang. Minions are usually easily defeated but come in large numbers. A good minion will have Health of 5 or less, meaning it can usually be defeated in 1 to 3 hits. They will usually only do basic attacks, though the GM may add some flavor or other consequences to a successful hit.

Underbosses

An underboss is an enemy that oversees the minions but not the primary opponent to the player characters. They should have their own character sheet with skills that can be used against the player characters. The primary way an underboss will oppose the players is using minions. A good encounter will usually be an underboss with several minions at their disposal.

Bosses

The queen of the otherworldly invaders, the scientist gone mad with power, the devil itself are all examples of a Boss. There are several ways to create a boss.

- The Big Bad: A supremely powerful being that has Health equivalent to the sum of all the player characters Health combined x 3.
- The Shielded Brain: The boss isn't that powerful but hides behind some mechanism that prevents them from being harmed. The player characters must find a way to disable their protection.
- The Mastermind: You could easily kill the boss, but what would that do? Their plan is already in effect. You must figure out what they've done and how to prevent the consequences that may occur.