

Kedrik had seen a lot of pirate bands in her time on the waves, and these were hardly the most impressive - a ragtag group of ardent, their clothes branch-torn and stained with sap.

That said, the crossbow they had aimed her way looked to be in perfect working order.

"We can do this the easy way," a voice floated out from the back of their group, "or the hard way". The one with the crossbow gestured with an appreciable attempt at menace.

Kedrik sighed, flexing thousands of tiny arachnid muscles under her jacket. About as inventive as they were impressive, it seemed.

"Would you mind terribly if I chose option three?"

The crossbow bolt pierced the unexpectedly empty jacket as it fell, its wielder having a fraction of a second to consider his mistake before being overwhelmed by a wave of spiders.

Actions

When your character does something during the game, it's referred to as an **action**. Usually, performing an action is as easy as stating your intention out loud. "I want to open that door", "I draw my pistol", or "let's see what this bastard has to say for himself" all let your group know you're performing an action.

Most actions are entirely **freeform** - if it feels right for the situation and you think your character has a chance of pulling it off, you should go for it.

Action Rolls

Sometimes the action you want to attempt will be **difficult, dangerous, or dramatic**. In these cases, the Firefly may ask for an **action roll** - a roll of the dice to determine whether your action results in **triumph, conflict or disaster**, and whether there were any unexpected narrative **twists**. The specifics of these outcomes are on the next page, while the rest of this section details how to roll and read your dice.

There are four stages to any action roll...

1. Building a Dice Pool
2. Describing Your Action
3. Rolling and Reading the Dice
4. Playing the Outcome

There are also some situations where the way you make a dice pool or read the results are a little different; these are covered during the next few chapters.

1. Building a Dice Pool

Actions are rolled with between one and six d6s, by making a pool and looking for the highest result. To create a dice pool for your action, you can draw from...

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Edge (1d6)} \\ &+ \\ &\text{Skill or Language (up to 3d6)} \\ &+ \\ &\text{Advantage (up to 2d6)} \end{aligned}$$

Edges, skills, and languages are found on your character sheet, representing the ways you most effectively tackle problems. If one of your edges is appropriate for the action, it adds **1d6**, and if one of your skills or languages is appropriate, it adds d6s equal to its rank. You can only gain the benefit of one edge and one skill or language per action roll.

An **advantage** is anything you can use from your possessions or situation that works in your favour. This might be a piece of the **environment**, a resource, an **aspect** of your character (such as a trait or piece of gear), or even a **helpful crewmate**. If you have an advantage that helps with your action, it usually adds **1d6**, but if you have many different sources of advantage, the Firefly might raise this to **2d6**.

If you're attempting an action roll but have nothing to draw from to make your pool, roll 1d6 and count triumph results as conflicts instead.

2. Describing Your Action

As you build your dice pool, you should also be describing your intentions and approach - how is your character performing this action? What methods are they using and what are they trying to achieve? This helps other players visualize what you're doing and aids the Firefly as they consider possible outcomes.

The way you phrase your actions will often have narrative effects. For example, saying "I open the door as softly as possible" will give you a very different outcome than "I kick open the door and leap into the room," or "I pull the door out of its frame with my grappling hook".

3. Rolling and Reading the Dice

When your dice pool is ready, you roll all the dice in it at once, then read off the **highest number** as your result.

You should also read off whether you got any **doubles**. The number shown on the doubles doesn't matter, just whether two (or more) dice came up the same (managing a triple or higher still counts as a double, so there's no mechanical difference to the outcome of the roll).

Example: A roll of 2, 3, 5 would give a result of 5. A roll of 1, 2, 2, 3 would give a result of 3 with doubles.

4. Playing the Outcome

Reading off your result kick-starts the conversation again, usually with a description of what the outcome of your action looks like in-game.

In some cases you'll be describing the effects yourself, in others, the Firefly will take the reins. If there's a twist involved, the description might be a group effort, as other players suggest possible unexpected outcomes.

Action Roll Results

6

Triumph

A complete success with no drawbacks. If you're affecting a track, this lets you mark or clear a box.

**5
4**

Conflict

Still a success, but with a drawback of some kind (such as taking damage or losing a resource). If you're affecting a track, this usually still lets you mark or clear a box.

**3
2
1**

Disaster

A failure that also introduces a narrative complication or drawback of some kind. If you're affecting a track, this usually doesn't let you mark or clear at all.

Doubles

Twist

An unexpected outcome in addition to the usual result, often something small but potentially useful. This twist can be suggested by any player at the table, but the Firefly has the final say.

Actions in Play

Todd: Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!

Laura: Agreed. I'm going to try to untangle this chain from the sawprow then, that should get us going again. You killed the engine, right? I don't want this thing starting up again as soon as the chain's free...

Freya: Yep, it's off. Be careful though - that's still ship-sized chainsaw you're messing with.

Firefly: Freya's right - however you approach this, it's likely to be pretty dangerous, so I'm going to ask you to get a roll ready. Focus is on you!

Laura: And I'm ready for it! I think I'll try something simple first, just yanking the chain free. I can use my legs to push against the hull, and I've got the guide-ropes to keep me stable...

Firefly: Sounds like a d6 of advantage. What else have you got?

Laura: My Iron edge feels like it's going to work here, and I've got the Brace skill at rank 2, which seems fitting. That's 4d6 in total, so it could be a lot worse. Well, here goes nothing...

Laura rolls her dice pool, getting a 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Laura: Five's my highest, that's a conflict!

Firefly: Well, the good news is that you've pulled that chain free of the leading edge, but you weren't exactly quiet about it... The ship is free, but you hear more bells ringing in the distance - I'm marking that track again.

Twists

Twists occur whenever a roll of the dice comes up with a double – they don't replace the usual result, but instead signify that something extra and unexpected has happened (usually related to the action or situation that caused the roll). Twists are often something beneficial, though they don't technically have to be.

Twists aren't decided by the player that rolled the dice. Instead, they're thrown over to anyone else at the table, including the Firefly – if anybody has an idea for the effect of a twist, they can put it forward in the moment. Here's an example...

Reya rolls to convince a surly engineer to work on her crew's damaged ship, getting a triumph with a twist. Leo, one of the other players, suggests the twist could affect the engineer's stock – he has a surplus of the materials needed, which might lower the price of the repairs.

If there are multiple ideas put forward for a twist, it's up to the Firefly to choose which one best fits the situation at hand, but they might defer to the player that rolled instead (especially if it's something that affects their character's backstory). Here's a continuation of the previous example...

Cody, playing another one of Reya's crewmates, suggests that the engineer might recognize a family resemblance in Reya's character to a previous customer. After all, Reya's grandfather was pretty famous around these parts. The Firefly loves this idea, but checks with Reya first, as it directly affects her character's history. She's completely in favour, and the conversation continues with that extra detail thrown in.

The Limits of a Twist

It's easier to set out what a **twist can't** do than what it can; though some twists have explicit mechanical benefits (such as a twist rolled while defending allowing a counterattack), most are a purely narrative experience. They allow players to step into the Firefly role for a moment and contribute their ideas to the wider story. Because of the flexibility they offer, it's really up to your table to determine whether a twist would be 'too powerful' in a given situation, but there are a few hard rules you should stick to. **Twists should never...**

- ☛ Invalidate or override the result of the roll that caused them (a disaster with a twist is still a disaster, just one with an unexpected narrative extra)
- ☛ Force a player to accept something about their own character that they hadn't planned themselves (so in the example above, creating a grandfather for Reya's character in the moment would have been a step too far)

You'll find more examples of, guidance on, and alternate rules for using twists in the Firefly chapter of this book.



Cut

'Cutting' a dice roll is represented by removing a number of results after the roll is made, starting with the highest. The larger the cut, the less likely you'll get a straight success or doubles.

Example: A roll of 1, 5, 5 and 6 would usually give a result of 6 with doubles. If you had to cut two results, you'd remove a 6 and a 5, giving a new result of 5.

Cutting for Difficulty

If the action you're attempting is particularly unlikely to succeed, the Firefly will ask you to cut for difficulty. Sometimes it means you're attempting a harder-than-average action (such as climbing onto the back of a rampaging beast versus climbing a wall), sometimes that you're approaching a task in a way that makes it less likely you'll succeed (such as trying to pick a lock with a splinter of bone rather than a normal lockpick).

The Firefly will usually warn you of **cut** as you describe your approach. This gives you a chance to reconsider your methods, try to get the most out of your dice pool, or at least ready yourself for a higher chance of disaster.

Cutting for Precision

When in combat with a creature, you can **cut 1 result to aim at a particular part with precision**. This often allows you to deny the creature access to some of its special abilities, or to deal extra damage by hitting a weak point. Cutting for precision is voluntary, but must be requested before you roll.

Cutting for Impact

If you want to achieve more than you'd usually be able to, you can **cut 1 result for extra impact** (you'll find more information on impact in the next column). Cutting for extra impact is voluntary, but you have to request it before you roll your dice.

From the Jaws of Victory

Cutting often leads to unexpected conflicts and failures, so play into that as the conversation continues! You were so close - what went wrong? Or, if you managed a decent success even with the cut, how did your character pull that off against the odds?

Impact

Impact is a measure of the effect your action has on the world, usually determined by the approach you're taking and how effective it is. There are four levels: **low, normal, high, and massive**.

Example: Karabet picks up a chair and swings it full-force at the marauder squaring up to him in a dockside junction, an action with **normal impact**. If the marauder had been completely unaware and unable to defend themselves, the Firefly might have bumped the impact up to **high**, and if the marauder had been holding onto the chair as well to diminish the force of the blow, the impact would likely have been **low**.

If your action will have higher or lower impact than usual, the Firefly will let you know, though sometimes not until the action is in full swing.

Low Impact

Your action is weaker, having less effect on the world. This might reduce the number of boxes you mark or clear when affecting a track, or downgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as only letting you kick a panel out of a door rather than kick the door fully open).

Normal Impact

Most actions you take throughout the game will have **normal impact**, with no special rules to follow at all.

High Impact

Your action is stronger and has more effect on the world. This normally lets you mark or clear an additional box when affecting a track, but in some circumstances might upgrade the raw power of whatever you're attempting (such as letting you kick a door off of its hinges rather than just kick it open).

Massive Impact

Usually reserved for damage from ship-mounted armaments, an action with **massive impact** is terrifyingly potent. If you're marking a track, mark every box (and if you're kicking a door open you might take part of the wall with it as well, even if you didn't mean to).

Actions in Play, Alternate

- Todd: Well, I suggest we make ourselves scarce before whoever set that snare up arrives!
- Laura: Agreed. I'm going to try to get this chain off of the sawprow. Do I have to roll for that?
- Firefly: Definitely, and since you're doing it while dangling off a rope in the middle of the thrash, I'm giving you a cut of one.
- Laura: That's fair... Now, how am I going to do this?
- Freya: Ooh! Don't you still have some of those rust-beetles we picked up back at Myrin? Would they be interested in the chain?
- Firefly: Definitely! They're voracious little things, so I'm actually going to increase your impact.
- Laura: Great, that works for me! Time to build that dice pool. I'm hanging awkwardly but my grace edge helps with that, so that's 1d6 already. I'm going to use my break skill here too - I don't care about keeping the chain intact as long as the ship gets free.
- Firefly: Your beetles will give you an extra d6 of advantage too, but you'll risk losing them if something goes wrong.
- Laura: Sounds like 1d6 from my edge, 2d6 from my skill, and 1d6 from risking those beetles. 4d6 in total. Not great with the cut, but it'll have to do. That's... 1, 1, 5 and 6. Cut the 6 and that's a conflict with a twist.
- Firefly: The chain falls free after a few seconds, your beetles making short work of it with their increased impact. They're a little overzealous though, so you take two marks of Spike damage as they search for more food. Anyone got an idea for a twist?
- Todd: She could grab a length of chain before it falls, getting a new resource?
- Laura: Nice! I'll add 'Rusted Chain' to my salvage.