

Oneshot RPG

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This is a simple tabletop RPG designed to let people play a short mission with some fun characters. It's within the Rules-lite family of RPGs which relies on precedent and GM fiat rather than multiple pages of printed rules. Players and GM can create the rules together as they play.

Boring things like carrying enough ammunition and food usually take a back seat. It is assumed the characters have access to all the most basic stuff. If they don't, this can start a scene such as hunting something to eat, or a complication during a scene such as a character's gun jamming. Everything drives the story.

Characters do not have hitpoints; injuries also drive the story. Sometimes this might mean a turn based scene continues for several more turns while somebody is treated, or it might mean a new scene frantically transporting a character to a medical facility.

Creating a Character

1. Decide on your character's archetype and describe the character in a few words. For example on a space ship you might be a Grumpy Doctor, Nerdy Engineer, Salacious Captain, Scottish Engineer, Paranoid Security Guard, etc.
2. Agree two skills with the GM. For example, a ship's doctor might have Medicine as a skill which will allow them to perform advanced actions and used advanced equipment to heal those on board.
3. Give your character a tragic flaw. This is something which villains can exploit, and something which the GM can use in random encounters. Perhaps they forget passwords, or they're scared of vacuums.
4. Write a single paragraph backstory. You don't have to share this with other players. Less is more; the GM won't remember 327 pages of text.

Playing

The GM will describe a scene, then ask the players what their characters will do. A scene can be turn based, or real time.

Players can then decide what they want to do. If an action does not have a chance of failure, it will automatically succeed and consequences are announced immediately. Otherwise, a roll will be required.

If a scene is turn based, go clockwise around the table. If this is the first turn based scene in the current session, start with the player to the left of the GM; otherwise, begin with whoever was next in the previous turn based scene. Each character will get 10 seconds to do whatever they can. For example, firing a burst of shots from a plasma pistol, then hiding behind a vending machine might take 10 seconds. Alternatively, running up the street to escape from a robotic dog might take 10 full seconds.

Rolls

If an action has a chance of failure, the GM will ask for a number of successes (4..6 on a D6) equal to how difficult the action seems to be. Collect up dice and roll.

- Always start with 2 dice, which represent basic equipment and training required to attempt the task.
- Add a die if one of your skills can help with the check. e.g. you might add a skill of Guns
- Add a die if you have special equipment and the training to use it, e.g: a high tech sniper rifle
- Add a die if there is an external factor helping with the action, e.g. the wind is in your favor
- Add a die if another character is able to help you

Once the roll is complete, the GM should determine the outcome based on the number of successes.

Opposed Rolls

Some actions are opposed with a counter-roll. The target will also roll and can use their successes to block successes from the initiator. For example, if an automated turret is shooting at a player character, the player can roll to defend and hopefully block its successes.

Story Points

At the start of each session, there is a pool of story points, equalling the number of players plus two. The extra two start on the GM side, the rest are with the players. Once spent, they go into the opposing side. They can be spent as follows:

1. One point: A player or GM can flip a die from fail to success before the consequences of a roll are announced
2. Two points: A player can retcon having brought special equipment, or having prior training which is applicable to an action, e.g: "Everything is flooded? Isn't it lucky we brought breathing apparatus with us?"
3. One point: The GM can introduce a sudden complication when a player attempts an action, e.g: "You pull the trigger and realise your gun is jammed"
4. Two points: The GM can introduce an ongoing complication during a scene, e.g: "An electric eel emerges from around a corner. It stares at you with its cold, emotionless eyes."
5. Three points: Random encounter! The characters suddenly find themselves thrust into an unexpected scene. E.g: the cargo bay just depressurised and all your rations were ejected into space. Better get suited up.