

Ebon v1.01

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Ebon is a micro-rpg designed for fast play in a modern horror setting. Adventurers take the role of investigators, mages, priests or soldiers fighting against extradimensional entities of Evil mien, whether traditional evils like werewolves or vampires, or more reality-ripping monsters of a Lovecraftian bent.

Creating Adventurers

Adventurers are composed of 24 Aspects, which are split into four types:

Primary Aspects are your raw talent, and would be used for any Endeavor that doesn't fit into use by any other Aspect. Primary Aspects are "upstream" of all other Aspects.

Secondary Aspects are derived from Primary Aspects, and have narrower uses than Primary Aspects. Think of them as honed raw talents. They are "downstream" of Primary Aspects and "upstream" of Tertiary Aspects.

Tertiary Aspects represent broad classes of skills, learned traits or life experience. They are "downstream" of Primary and Secondary Aspects and "upstream" of Reserves.

Reserves represent your ability to withstand hardship of various kinds without it affecting your other Aspects. Reserves are "downstream" of Tertiary Aspects.

The first thing players do is choose a concept for their adventurer. This concept, in addition to being the personality an adventurer shows, also acts as a free 1 point Reserve that can only be used for an Endeavor related to that concept. So, a fighter could use it in combat, a priest might use it for warding off undead, and so on.

Adventurers get 9 points to split between the three Primary Aspects, with no less than 1 and no more than 6 points in any Primary Aspect. A rating of 1 is abysmal, barely functional in normal society, while a rating of 6 is near but not quite at the top of human potential.

Once this is done, look at the arrows leading from the Primary Aspects to the Secondary and Tertiary Aspects. These point downstream from Primary Aspects towards the Reserves. The value of any given Aspect or Reserve is either the higher of the adjacent upstream Aspects minus 1, or the lower of the adjacent upstream Aspects plus 1, whichever is lower. All Aspects or Reserves have a minimum value of 1, regardless of the upstream values.

So, if you have a **Physical** of 5 and a **Spiritual** of 1, then your **Sanity** is going to be the **Spiritual** plus 1, for a **Sanity** of 2. **Charisma** is based on **Physical** or **Sanity**, so Charisma would be **Sanity** plus 1, for a **Charisma** of 3. **Self-image** would be **Charisma** minus 1, for **Self-image** of 2, and **Emotional Reserve** would be **Self-image** minus 1, or 1.

After this is done, a player can add 1 to one Secondary Aspect, one Tertiary Aspect, and one Reserve. This does not cause any downstream Aspects or Reserves to increase.

Adventurers get a certain number of Size points of starting gear (3 is a good number), possibly a vehicle, and they are ready to go!

Turn Sequence

Adventurers act in order of highest Primary Aspect to lowest, ties acting simultaneously. Normally, the Aspect is Body, but players can declare any Primary Aspect to base their turn order on. However, their action must be based on that Aspect. So, a mage intending to cast spells might declare Spirit as their Primary Aspect. But, having done so, they cannot do a Body action on that turn.

An adventurer can do one **Action** per turn, and as many **Reactions** as they need to. An Action is initiated by an adventurer, like an attack or moving. A Reaction is responding to someone else's Action, like a block or dodge. Adventurers doing an Action or Reaction take a -1 to any Aspect used for each other Action or Reaction previously done that turn.

Within a turn, time, distance and movement is relative, with an appropriate level of scale. A boxing match will take more time than a gunfight but less time than a chess match.

Endeavors

Using an Aspect is an Endeavor. There are two types of Endeavor: **Static** and **Opposed**. **Static** Endeavors are where you try to beat a specific number, often based on some sort of environmental circumstance. This could be something like climbing a wall or picking a lock. *Ranged combat is Static*. An **Opposed** Endeavor is one against someone or something else that also rolls for the task. *Melee combat is Opposed*. Opposed Endeavors see who rolls the most successes against a Very Hard task (a target of 6). If none of those involved get any "6's", then that round is inconclusive.

The player gets to roll 1d6 for each point their adventurer has in the appropriate Aspect, so a player with a **Combat** Aspect of 4 rolls 4d6.

For a Static Endeavor, the gamemaster chooses the Aspect most appropriate to the Endeavor, then decides the difficulty:

Trivial - difficulty of 1

Very easy - difficulty of 2

Easy - difficulty of 3

Average - difficulty of 4

Hard - difficulty of 5

Very hard - difficulty of 6

Impossible - difficulty of 8+

Sometimes a Static Endeavor will be against a target that is the level in someone else's Aspect. Horror is such a case, where a thing will roll against a target number of the Cool or Sanity of the adventurers.

Impossible Endeavors are *theoretically* possible, but they require extraordinary success. Each "6" rolled is rolled again and added to the original "6" to get the total for that die.

Compare each die rolled in an Endeavor to the target number. If at least one die equals or exceeds the target number, an Endeavor is successful. Each successful die past the first increases the quality of the success. The most common use of this is in combat, where each success past the first is +1 effect or damage.

If there are more "1's" rolled in an Endeavor than there are successes, there is a Setback. The Endeavor can be successful, but with a setback that affects action on later turns. For instance, a gun could hit a target, but run out of ammo and have to be reloaded.

Reserves

An adventurer's Reserves represents the damage they can take, the depth of their character, faith, mana, tolerance, and so on. An adventurer struck with a weapon will take damage to their Physical reserve, while one publically humiliated may take damage to their Social reserve. Each arm on the Aspect record has a Reserve, and the six Reserves are (clockwise from top): Intellectual, Social, Magical, Spiritual, Emotional, Physical.

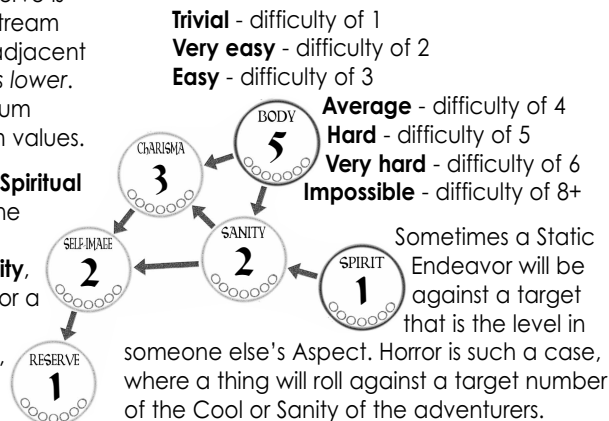
Damage of a particular kind subtracts from the appropriate Reserve. When the Reserve goes to zero, further damage travels up the chain of arrows. The player chooses the upstream path taken, and each Aspect takes an amount of damage equal to its level before damage continues upstream.

In the example to the lower left, if 4 points of Emotional damage were taken, this would empty the Reserve (1 point), reduce Self-Image to zero (2 points), and then reduce either Sanity or Charisma by 1 point. At this point, the adventurer is so emotionally shaken that they will automatically fail any Endeavor that requires or targets their Self-Image.

If a Primary Aspect is reduced to zero, an adventurer is incapacitated. They could be wounded and unconscious, socially shamed and flee the scene, or mentally wrung out and unable to think straight. The best way to keep track is to fill in the circles on the Aspect record when you make an adventurer, leaving open as many circles as the Aspect level. So, if you have a Cool of 3, leave open 3 circles in Cool, and make a pencil "X" in those when take damage to your Cool.

Reserves also serve the function of being a well from which adventurers can draw strength in a crisis. In any given Endeavor, a player can damage 1 point of a Reserve to give a +1 to any given Aspect. However, you can only spend from the Reserve that is opposite the type of endeavor attempted:

Physical is the opposite of **Magical**
Intellectual is the opposite of **Spiritual**
Social is the opposite of **Emotional**



Weapons & Damage

Weapons have a **Damage**, **Range** and **Size**. **Damage** is the amount of damage they do to the Physical Reserve. Each success past the first in a Combat Endeavor adds 1 to this damage. **Range** is a number from -2 to +1. This is how accurate it is compared to other weapons. So, if you have a +0 weapon and the gamemaster says a shot is Average for you, someone in similar circumstances with a -1 weapon (more accurate) would have an Easy shot.

Size is just a measure of how encumbering the weapon is to carry or hide. Weapons may also have special traits, like an ability to fill an area, damage that recovers faster than normal, and so on.

Armor has a rating that simply subtracts from the damage of weapons. The rating reflects both absolute protection and the degree of body coverage.

Horror

There are two kinds of horror in **Ebon**, the mundane and the supernatural. Mundane horror is blood, gore, extreme violence and other things that are loathsome, but purely natural. Supernatural horror is things that have a component that is not of this world, which inspire fear, dementia, and insanity. Each type of horror will have a rating that it rolls as a Static Endeavor. Mundane horror rolls against Cool, and supernatural horror against Sanity. The same roll is used against everyone who is exposed to the horror, and only one roll is required per encounter, using the most horrific of things involved. If a horror succeeds, it does 1 hit to the appropriate Reserve on a success, and +1 hit for each additional success.

If there are multiples of a given horror, increase its rating by +1, and if the adventurers have recently defeated or resisted the effects of that horror, decrease its rating by -1.

Magic

Adventurers can use their **Magic** aspect as an attack or a defense. As an attack, it can be used against the mundane world or mundane creatures or objects. The nature of the attack/defense is chosen (physical, mental, social, spiritual, emotional, magical), and the type of attack (static or opposed). Use the following guidelines:

Attacks made at range are counted as a weapon with -1 Range.

Attacks requiring touch are +1 to the Magic aspect of the attacker.

Opposed attacks are resisted by a Primary or Secondary Aspect (plus any defenses).

Static attacks go against a target number of the Primary or Secondary Aspect targeted (plus any defenses), and do 1 hit to the appropriate Reserve on a success and for each additional success.

Magical defenses/boosts operate much the same way, but increase the Aspect targeted by +1 on a success and +1 more for each additional success. An Aspect can only have the benefit of one magical defense.

Making a magical attack is an Action. Setting up a magical defense is also an Action, but maintaining one that had previously been set up is a Reaction. Such a continued defense automatically counts as the first thing done in a turn, so all other Actions or reactions done in that turn will be -1 to the Aspect used.

If a use of Magic or Piety results in a Setback, the adventurer takes 1 damage to a Reserve of their choice.

Piety

Piety operates similar to Magic, but it only works against forces, beings or entities that are supernatural or evil in origin. For instance, Magic could do nothing against a vampire, but Piety could. Similarly, Piety has no effect on a bullet or a person, while Magic does.

Extras

Extras are the people (and entities) that aren't adventurers. They have a much smaller Aspect Record, just combined Primary/Secondary Aspects and Reserve. All use of Aspects will be based on these values, and incapacitation happens if any Primary Aspect is reduced to zero. Objects simply have an Armor, and one Primary Aspect that represents what the

object does. A computer might have a Mental Aspect, while a car would have a Physical Aspect. Damage that exceeds their Armor affects the functioning of the item's Aspect until it finally fails.

Recovery

Each day, adventurers may recover 3 points of lost Reserves or Aspects, plus their concept Reserve, with no more than 2 points recovery in any one Aspect or Reserve. Losses are first recovered closest to the Primary Aspects and work their way out as each Aspect is fully healed. Between adventures, Adventures can recover all losses of Reserves or Aspects.

Experience

At the end of an Adventure, adventurers gain experience, 1 point for each adventurer for "being there", 1 point to an adventurer from the gamemaster for "best play", 1 point to an adventurer voted on by the players (roll a die for tie votes), and +1 point to all adventurers for a long and/or difficult adventure.

It costs experience equal to *double* the level of an Aspect or Reserve to raise it by 1 point. Things to note about spending experience:

Raising Aspects *doesn't* affect Aspects or Reserves downstream from that Aspect.

No Aspect or Reserve can ever be more than 7.

No Aspect or Reserve can be raised by experience to more than the lowest immediately *upstream* Aspect plus 1.

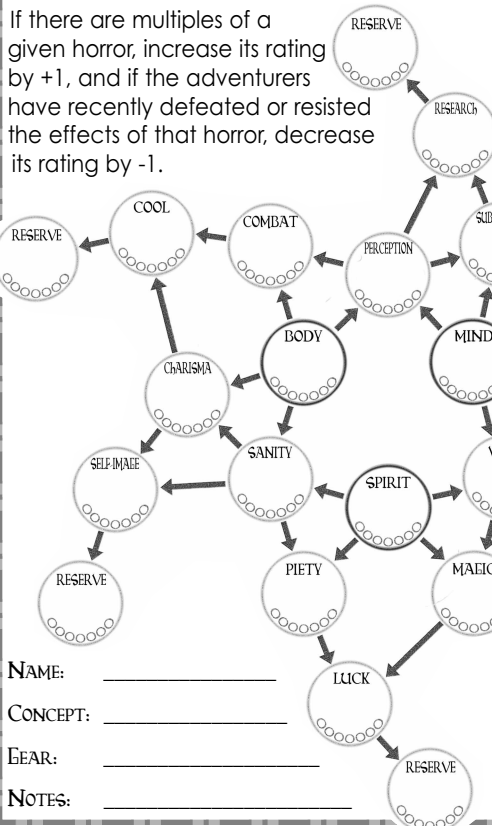
This means that in order to raise an Aspect or Reserve, you may have to raise something upstream of it first.

Gear

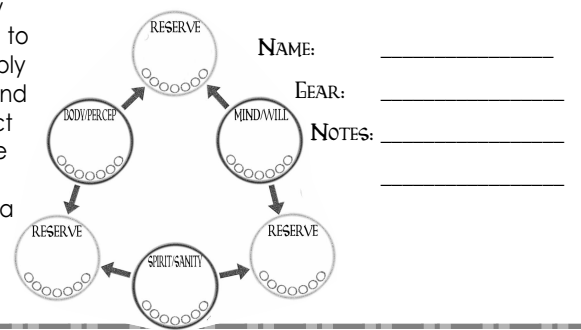
You can carry as many pieces of Gear as you want, as long as their total Size is no more than your *current* Physical Aspect, with each four items of Size 0 counting as Size 1.

Gear	Rating	Range	Size
Light pistol	1	+1	0
Heavy Pistol	2	+0	1
Submachinegun	3	+0	2
Shotgun	2	-1	2
Rifle	4	-2	2
Assault Rifle	5	-1	2
extra clips	-	-	0
Grenade	1 (area)	+1	0
Knife	Body-3	-	0
Sword	Body-1	-	1
Light body armor	2	-	1
Heavy body armor	3	-	2

Gear	Rating	Armor	Size
Walkie-talkie	1	1	0
Motorcycle	5	1	-
Car	4	2	-
Truck	3	3	-



NAME: _____
CONCEPT: _____
GEAR: _____
NOTES: _____



NAME: _____
GEAR: _____
NOTES: _____