

SKILL CHECKS

When a player character does something challenging, we make a skill check to see how it turns out. A skill is challenging if there's an obstacle to the PC's goal that's dangerous or troublesome in some way. We don't make a skill check unless the PC is put to the test. If their skill is something that we'd expect them to simply accomplish, then we don't make a skill check.

Each game group will have their own ideas about what "challenging" means. This is good! It's something that establishes the tone and style of your Id series.

To make a skill check, we go through six steps. In play, they flow together somewhat, but let's break each one down here for clarity.

1. The player states their **goal** for the skill.
2. The player chooses the **skill rating**.
3. The GM sets the **position** for the roll.
4. The GM sets the **effect level** for the skill.
5. Add **bonus dice**.
6. The player rolls the dice and we judge the result.

THE PLAYER STATES THEIR GOAL:

Your goal is the concrete outcome your character will achieve when they overcome the obstacle at hand. Usually the character's goal is pretty obvious in context, but it's the GM's job to ask and clarify the goal when necessary.

"You're punching him in the face, right? Okay... what do you want to get out of this? Do you want to take him out, or just rough him up so he'll do what you want?"

THE PLAYER CHOOSES THE SKILL RATING:

The player chooses which **skill rating** to roll, following from what their character is doing on-screen. If you want to roll your *Skirmish* action, then get in a fight. If you want to roll your *Command* action, then order someone around. You can't roll a given action rating unless your character is presently performing that action in the fiction.

THE GM SETS THE POSITION:

Once the player chooses their skill, the GM sets the **position** for the roll. The position represents how dangerous or troublesome the skill might be. There are three positions: **controlled**, **risky**, and **desperate**. To choose a position, the GM looks at the profiles for the three positions and picks one that most closely matches the situation at hand.

By default, an action roll is risky. You wouldn't be rolling if there was no risk involved. If the situation seems more dangerous, make it desperate. If it seems less dangerous, make it controlled.

THE GM SETS THE EFFECT LEVEL:

The GM assesses the likely **effect level** of this skill, given the factors of the situation. Essentially, the effect level tells us "how much" this action can accomplish: will it have **limited**, **standard**, or **great** effect?

*The GM's choices for effect level and position can be strongly influenced by the player's choice of action rating. If a player wants to try to make a new friend by **Wrecking** something—well... maybe that's possible, but the GM wouldn't be crazy to say it's a desperate roll and probably limited effect. Seems like **Consorting** would be a lot better for that. The players are always free to choose the action they perform, but that doesn't mean all actions should be equally risky or potent.*

ADD BONUS DICE:

You can normally get two bonus dice for your action roll (some special abilities might give you additional bonus dice).

For one bonus die, you can get **assistance** from a teammate. They take 1 stress, say how they help you, and give you +1d.

For another bonus die, you can either **push yourself** (take 2 stress) or you can accept a **Devil's Bargain** (you can't get dice for both, it's one or the other).

DEVIL'S BARGAINS:

PCs in 1(800) are reckless scoundrels addicted to destructive vices—they don't always act in their own best interests. To reflect this, the GM or any other player can offer you a bonus die if you accept a Devil's Bargain. Common Devil's Bargains include:

- Collateral damage, unintended harm.
- Sacrifice coin or an item.
- Betray a friend or loved one.
- Offend or anger a faction.
- Start and/or tick a troublesome clock.
- Add +2 Wanted Stars to the crew from evidence or witnesses.
- Suffer harm.

The Devil's Bargain occurs regardless of the outcome of the roll. You make the deal, pay the price, and get the bonus die.

The Devil's Bargain is always a free choice. If you don't like one, just reject it (or suggest how to alter it so you might consider taking it). You can always just push yourself for that bonus die instead.

If it's ever needed, the GM has final say over which Devil's Bargains are valid.

ROLL THE DICE AND JUDGE THE RESULT:

Once the goal, skill rating, position, and effect have been established, add any bonus dice and roll the dice pool to determine the outcome. (See the sets of possible outcomes, by position, in the table.)

The skill check does a lot of work for you. It tells you how well the character performs as well as how serious the consequences are for them. They might succeed at their skill without any consequences (on a 6), or they might succeed but suffer consequences (on a 4/5), or it might just all go wrong (on a 1-3).

On a 1-3, it's up to the GM to decide if the PC's skill has any effect or not, or if it even happens at all. Usually, the skill just fails completely, but in some circumstances, it might make sense or be more interesting for the skill to have some effect even on a 1-3 result.

Each 4/5 and 1-3 outcome lists suggested **consequences** for the character. The worse your position, the worse the consequences are. The GM can inflict one or more of these consequences, depending on the circumstances of the skill check. PCs have the ability to avoid or reduce the severity of consequences that they suffer by **resisting** them.

When you narrate the skill after the roll, the GM and player collaborate together to say what happens on-screen. Tell us how you vault across to the other rooftop. Tell us what you say to the Inspector to convince him. The GM will tell us how he reacts. Etc.

SKILL CHECK SUMMARY:

- A player or GM calls for a roll. Make a **skill check** when the character performs a dangerous or troublesome skill.

- The player chooses the **skill rating** to roll. Choose the skill that matches what the character is doing in the fiction.
- The GM establishes the **position** and **effect level** of the skill. The choice of position and effect is influenced strongly by the player's choice of skill.
- Add up to two bonus dice. 1) **Assistance** from a teammate. 2) **Push yourself** (take 2 stress) or accept a **Devil's Bargain**.
- Roll the dice pool and judge the outcome. The players and GM narrate the skill together. The GM has final say over what happens and inflicts consequences as called for by the position and the result of the roll.

SKILL CHECK:

- **1d** for each Skill rating dot.
- **+1d** if you have **Assistance**.
- **+1d** if you **Push yourself** -or- you accept a **Devil's Bargain**.

Controlled—You act on your terms. You exploit a dominant advantage.

- **Critical:** You do it with **increased effect**.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You hesitate. Withdraw and try a different approach, or else do it with a minor consequence: a **minor complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**, you suffer **lesser harm (1)**, you end up in a **risky** position.
- **1-3:** You falter. Press on by seizing a **risky** opportunity, or withdraw and try a different approach.

Risky—You go head to head. You act under fire. You take a chance.

- **Critical:** You do it with **increased effect**.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You do it, but there's a consequence: you suffer **harm (2)**, a **complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**, you end up in a **desperate** position.
- **1-3:** Things go badly. You suffer **harm (2)**, a **complication** occurs, you end up in a **desperate** position, you **lose this opportunity**.

Desperate—You overreach your capabilities. You're in serious trouble.

- **Critical:** You do it with **increased effect**.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You do it, but there's a **consequence**: you suffer **severe harm (3)**, a **serious complication** occurs, you have **reduced effect**.
- **1-3:** It's the worst outcome. You suffer **severe harm (3)**, a **serious complication** occurs, you **lose this opportunity for skill**.

DOUBLE-DUTY ROLLS:

Since NPCs don't roll for their skills, a skill check does double-duty: **it resolves the skills of the PC as well as any NPCs that are involved**. The single roll tells us how those skills interact and which consequences result. On a **6**, the PC wins and has their effect. On a **4/5**, it's a mix—both the PC and the NPC have their effect. On a **1-3**, the NPC wins and has their effect as a consequence on the PC.