

# YEAR ZERO

## ENGINE

*Year Zero Engine*

©2019 Fria Ligan AB.

*This is the OGL version of this text. License found at the end of this document.*

### CONTENTS

- 1. INTRODUCTION
- 2. PLAYER CHARACTERS
- 3. SKILLS
- 4. TALENTS
- 5. COMBAT & DAMAGE

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Year Zero. This document contains the core Year Zero Engine for tabletop roleplaying, used in Free League games such as *Mutant: Year Zero*, *Coriolis - The Third Horizon*, *Tales from the Loop*, and *Forbidden Lands*.

### THE BASICS

This section introduces some key concepts in roleplaying, and how they are used in games using the Year Zero Engine.

### THE PLAYERS

Each player except one controls a player character (PC). You decide what your PC thinks and feels, what they say and do – but not what happens to them. It is your job as a player to immerse yourself in your PC. They may be an adventurer in a faraway fantasy world – but they are still, at heart, a person with feelings and dreams, just like you. Try to imagine – how would you react if you were in their shoes? What would you do? The player characters are always the protagonists of the story. The game is about you. Your decisions, your adventures.

## THE GAMEMASTER

The final player is the Gamemaster, the GM. They describe the game world to you, they play the people you meet, and they control the enemies you fight. The game is a conversation between the players and the GM, back and forth, until a critical situation arises where the outcome is uncertain. Then it's time to break out the dice – read more about this in Chapter 3.

It is the GM's job to put obstacles in your path and challenge your PCs, forcing them to show what they're really made of. But it is not up to the GM to decide everything that happens in the game – and above all, not how your story is supposed to end. That is decided in the game. That is why you are playing the game – to find out how your story ends.

## THESE SIDEBARS

*Italicized sidebars such as this one are interspersed throughout this rules text. They typically contain rules variants, comments and advice on how to play.*

## KEY FEATURES

The Year Zero Engine was originally developed for *Mutant: Year Zero*, but has been further modified and adapted to a wide range of games with different themes and settings. Yet, six core features of the game remain the same in all iterations. These are listed and explained below.

### ACCESSIBLE

The basics of the Year Zero Engine are very easy to learn – roll a pool of six-sided dice, you need at least one six to succeed, and the more sixes you roll, the better the result. This simple core is very easy to teach to new players, making the barrier to play very low. Complexity and depth are added piece by piece, offering more choices to the player as they gain more insight into the system.

### FAST AND DECISIVE

The Year Zero Engine is fast, quickly producing meaningful results by removing all dice rolling, bookkeeping and calculations that don't push the action forward. Year Zero Engine combat systems are often deadly, pushing conflicts to decisive moments. The risks are high, and PCs are rarely safe from danger no matter how experienced they are.

### NO PAIN, NO GAIN

The demand to roll sixes can make it seem hard to succeed in the Year Zero Engine. You can increase your chances significantly by pushing your roll – i.e. re-rolling the dice – but pushing the roll always

comes with a cost. This dynamic constantly pushes you to weigh risks and rewards, and makes the Year Zero Engine particularly suited for harsh, survival-focused games.

## **PLAYER-CENTRIC**

In Year Zero Engine games, the players and their characters are at the heart of the story. The PCs are the protagonists of the story, never the NPCs. The rules focus on the PCs and their actions, while NPCs are handled quickly and effectively by the Gamemaster. The system is designed to always present the players with meaningful choices.

## **STORY DRIVEN**

Roleplaying is about creating stories, memorable moments at the gaming table that you'll remember for years to come. The Year Zero Engine is designed to produce dramatic effects that will push your story forward and make it take unexpected turns.

## **ADAPTABLE**

The Year Zero Engine is designed to be very adaptable for different play styles, themes, and game settings. By using skills and talents in a modular fashion, the system creates building blocks that are very easily added, removed, and re-engineered.

## **TOOLS OF THE GAME**

Year Zero Engine games typically give you plenty of room for improvisation and creativity. Yet they also provide a number of tools to help you create your own story.

## **CHARACTER SHEETS**

To document your character, you use a character sheet. This document does not include a character sheet, as any Year Zero Engine game will need a sheet adapted to the specific rules version and game setting. How you create your character will be described in the next chapter.

## **DICE**

As a character in a Year Zero Engine game, you will have to take risks. Sooner or later, you will end up in situations where the outcome is uncertain, no matter how skilled you are. It's time to break out the dice. Regular six-sided dice (also called D6) are required to play Year Zero Engine, preferably 10-15 in three different colors. Certain rules variations (see Chapter 3) can use more types of dice, including D8, D10

and D12.

## ROLLING DICE

*The rules will sometimes ask you to roll D3, 2D6 and D66. D3 means you roll a D6 and divide the result by two, rounding up. 2D6 means you roll two six-sided dice and add the results. D66 means you roll two D6. The first die represents the tens digit and the second die represents the ones digit. That generates a result between 11 and 66. You can even roll D666, by rolling three six-sided dice. The first die then counts as the hundreds digit, the second as the tens digit and the third as the ones digit.*

## CUSTOM CARDS

Another useful accessory for Year Zero Engine games is a custom card deck. The cards can be used as reference sheets for gear or NPCs, but also to randomize initiative in combat – read more about this in Chapter 5.

## WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

If you have made your way here without knowing what a roleplaying game is, congratulations! Welcome to a rewarding and creative hobby. Roleplaying is a unique form of gaming, or cultural expression if you prefer to call it that, that combines tabletop gaming with storytelling. Roleplaying games give you a set of rules and let you create your own story with your friends in a way that books, movies, TV, and even video games cannot.

If you need advice or ideas, a great resource is the forum on our website, [freeleaguepublishing.com](https://www.freeleaguepublishing.com). Welcome!

## 2. PLAYER CHARACTERS

Your player character (PC) is your most important asset in any Year Zero Engine game. They are your avatar, your eyes and ears in the world. But they, in return, depend on you making the right decisions for them. Don't screw it up. Take your PC seriously and play them as if they were a real person. It's more fun that way. At the same time, don't try to protect your PC from every conceivable danger. The goal of the game is to create a good story. For that to happen you need to take risks.

During the course of the game, your PC will change and develop. Their skills and talents can be developed through experience, but you can also discover how their personality changes and is formed in a way that cannot be measured by numbers on a page. This is when your player character truly comes alive.

## CHARACTER SHEET

To create your player character, you need a character sheet. This document does not include a character sheet, as any Year Zero Engine game will need a sheet adapted to the specific rules version and game setting.

## 10 STEPS OF CREATION

*How you create your player character is explained in detail in this chapter. The summary below is a helpful overview. Grab a character sheet, a pencil, and follow these steps:*

1. Choose your archetype.
2. Decide on your age.
3. Spend points on your attributes.
4. Spend points on your skills.
5. Choose your starting talents.
6. Choose your big dream.
7. Define your relationships to the other player characters.
8. Pick your gear.
9. Decide your appearance.
10. Choose your name.

## ARCHETYPE

Most Year Zero Engine games have some type of **character archetypes** to choose from. The archetypes – which can also be called “roles,” “professions” or “careers” – are based on the game world, and help the players grasp the setting.

The archetype determines what type of person you are, your background and role in the group. Your archetype will influence your attributes, your skills, your starting gear and what starting talents you can learn.

Archetypes can feel stereotypical, and they are meant to be. Picking an archetype is a quick way for yourself and the other players to get an immediate feel for your character. But remember that your character is more than just his archetype. The archetype is just a starting point toward creating a unique player character.

## AGE

The next step is choosing your age. Age (for humans) is divided into three categories: young (up to 25 years), adult (26–50 years), and old (50+ years). You choose your age freely. Write down your choice on your character sheet. Your chosen age category affects your attributes and your skills. Read more about these below.

## ATTRIBUTES

Your character has four attributes that indicate your basic physical and mental capabilities, each rated on a scale from 1 to 5. Your attributes are used when you roll dice to perform actions in the game, and also determine how much damage of various kinds you can withstand before you become Broken. Read more about this in Chapter 5.

**Starting Scores:** When you create your player character, you can distribute a number of points across your attributes. How many points is determined by your age – see the table below. You can assign no less than 2 and no more than 5 points to any attribute.

AGE	ATTRIBUTE POINTS
Young	15
Adult	14
Old	13

### STRENGTH

Raw muscle power and brawn.

### AGILITY

Body control, speed, and motor skills.

### WITS

Sensory perception, intelligence, and sanity.

### EMPATHY

Personal charisma and ability to manipulate others.

### KEY ATTRIBUTES

*In many Year Zero Engine games, each archetype has a “key attribute.” You can have a maximum score of 5 in your key attribute – other attributes are limited to a maximum of 4.*

## SKILLS

Your skills are the knowledge and abilities you have acquired during your life. They are important, as

they determine, along with your attributes, how effectively you can perform certain actions in the game. There are twelve basic skills, and they are all described in detail in Chapter 3. Some Year Zero Engine games have different or additional skills.

Skills are measured by skill level on a scale from 0 to 5. The higher the number, the better.

**No Skill Level?** You can always roll for a skill even if you have no level in that skill – in that case you only use the associated attribute for the skill in question, and gear. Read more about how skills work in the next chapter.

**Starting Skill Levels:** When you create your player character, you distribute a number of points to your skills. How many points is determined by your age – see the table below. You can assign up to a maximum of 3 points to any given skill. You can increase your skill levels during the game.

AGE	SKILL POINTS
Young	8
Adult	10
Old	12

## ARCHETYPE SKILLS

*In many Year Zero Engine games, each archetype lists a number of associated skills. You can only start the game with a skill level 3 in your archetype skills – all other skills are limited to a starting level of 1.*

## TALENTS

Talents are tricks, moves and minor abilities that give you a small edge. They are more specialized than skills and give you a way to fine-tune your character. Talents are further explained in Chapter 4. You can usually pick one talent when creating your character – but your choices are limited. Your archetype typically determines which talents you can choose from. You can learn more talents during the course of the game.

## PRIDE

*In some Year Zero Engine games, your PC has a Pride – something specific that defines your character and make them stand out. It can be an ability, an event in your past, or something else. Archetypes can suggest Prides, but you are free to make up your own.*

*Once per game session, you may check your Pride to get one automatic success in a dice roll. You can check your Pride after a failed roll, or even after a successful roll in order to get an extra success. You must explain how your Pride helps you. The GM has the final say, but she should give you the benefit of the doubt.*

## DARK SECRET

*In some Year Zero Engine games, your PC has a Dark Secret – something that you have experienced before the game begins that has left its mark on you or still threatens you in some way. Typically, the archetypes suggest Dark Secrets, but you are free to make up your own. Your Dark Secrets is primarily a tool for the GM to create stories with, but can also affect how many Experience Points you get after a game session.*

## BIG DREAM

*Your immediate goal in the game is to live another day. But in the long run, mere surviving is not enough. You also have a motivation of your own, something you dream will one day come to pass, that keeps you on your feet when it would be easier to just lay down and die.*

*You can create your own big dream, or choose from the pre-made suggestions listed for your archetype. During play, you will gain extra XP if you risk or sacrifice something significant to move closer to seeing your big dream realized.*

## RELATIONSHIPS

Your PCs are all in it together as a group, but you are also an individual with personal relationships with the other player characters.

When you create your PC, you should describe your relationship with each of the other player characters, with a short sentence for each on your character sheet. Typically, there will be suggestions to choose from for each archetype. You can also use them as inspiration for your own ideas.

Your choices are also important for the GM, as she can use them to create interesting situations in the game.

**Buddy:** When you have noted your relationships to the other PCs you must choose which one of them you feel closest to. That PC is your buddy. Mark your choice in the checkbox on the character sheet.

## RELATIONSHIPS TO NPCs

*In Year Zero Engine games where the PCs have a clearly defined base of operations, such as the Ark in Mutant: Year Zero, it's useful for each player to define two relationships to NPCs as well – one NPC that the PC wants to protect and another NPC that the PC hates or rivals. The NPCs are very useful tools for the GM to create interesting situations in the game.*

## GEAR

Many (but not all) Year Zero Engine games are focused on survival, and having the right gear will help you do that. You must write down all the items you are carrying. Write down one item per row in the Gear section on your character sheet. If it's not listed on your sheet, you don't have it with you.

**Starting Gear:** Your archetype typically determines what gear you can choose from at the start of the game. Clothes and gear used to carry other gear does not count toward your encumbrance and does not need to be noted down.

## ENCUMBRANCE

You can carry a number of regular items equal to double your Strength. Use your base Strength score,



not the temporary rating reduced by taking *damage*.

## HEAVY & LIGHT ITEMS

An item designated as Heavy counts as two regular items, and will typically take up two rows on your character sheet instead of one. Some heavy items count as three or even four normal items. At the opposite end of the spectrum, there are items that are designated as Light – they count as half of a regular item, and so you can list two Light items on one row on your sheet. Some light items count as a quarter of a normal item in terms of encumbrance - the weight of such items are written as  $\frac{1}{4}$  in the gear lists.

## TINY ITEMS

Items that are even smaller than Light are called Tiny. They are so small they don't affect your encumbrance at all. The rule of thumb is: if the item can be hidden in a closed fist, it's Tiny. Tiny items also need to be listed on your character sheet.

## OVER ENCUMBERED

You can temporarily carry more than your normal encumbrance limit (Strength x 2 items). In this case, you need to make a roll for the Endure skill whenever you want to run in a Round of combat or walk a significant distance. If the roll fails, you must either drop what you are carrying, stay where you are, or suffer one point of *damage* to Agility and keep going.

## MOUNTS

*If you have a horse or other mount, you can let it carry some of your gear. The animal can carry a number of normal items equal to its Strength doubled, and twice that number if you dismount and lead it.*

## CONSUMABLES

A special category of items in the game are called *consumables*. It can be food, water, ammunition, arrows, torches, air supply, electric power or others – depending on the setting of the game. You don't need to track consumables at all times. The GM lets you know when resources are scarce and it's time to start tracking them.

**Supply Rating:** You track each consumable on your character sheet using a Supply rating. A higher rating is better.

**Supply Roll:** At regular intervals (depending on the consumable in question), you need to make a Supply roll. This means rolling a number of dice equal to the current Supply rating – *but never more than six dice*. For every 1 rolled, the Supply rating is decreased by one. When the Supply rating reaches zero,

you're out of the consumable. The effects of lacking air, food and water are explained in Chapter 5.

**Group Consumables:** Usually, consumables are tracked individually, but they can also be tracked for the group as a whole, depending on the situation. The GM has final say.

**Sharing:** If you want to give a consumable to another person, you simply increase the recipient's Supply rating as many steps as you decrease your own.

## APPEARANCE

You can describe your player character's face, body and clothing on your character sheet. In some Year Zero Engine games, the archetypes will suggest features for you.

## NAME

Finally, you give your PC a name. The archetypes typically suggest suitable names, but you are free to make up your own name if you prefer.

## EXPERIENCE

The things you learn during the game are measured in Experience Points (XP). You receive XP after the end of each game session. Talk it through and let the whole group discuss what has happened. For each of the below questions that you can reply "yes" to, you get one XP:

- Did you participate in the game session? You get one XP just for being there.
- Did you risk or sacrifice something significant to realize your big dream?
- Did you risk your life for the PC who is your buddy?
- Did you perform another extraordinary action of some kind?
- Specific games can award XP for other actions as well.

The GM has the final word when it comes to how much XP each character should get. Write down the XP on your character sheet.

## SPENDING XP

You can use your XP to improve your skills and talents, or to learn new ones. You can only spend XP when your PC gets a chance to rest, or between game sessions.

**Skills:** To increase a skill level by one step costs a number of XP equal to the skill level you want to attain multiplied by 5. For example, an increase from skill level 2 to 3 costs 15 XP. You can only increase a skill level one step at a time.

Learning a new skill (at skill level 1) costs 5 XP. To do this however, you must either have used the skill and succeeded (without skill level) during the session, or be instructed by a teacher. The teacher must have at least skill level 1.

**Talents:** Learning a talent always costs 5 XP. It also requires a day of practice and a successful Wits roll (roll for the attribute only, and the roll cannot be pushed). You can make one attempt per day. If instructed by a teacher who has the talent, your roll succeeds automatically.

## **FIND A NEW DREAM**

After any session, you may change your big dream and replace it with a new one. Try to connect the new dream to something that has happened during the course of the game.

## **CHANGE RELATIONSHIPS**

After the end of a game session, you are free to redefine your relationships to the other PCs and NPCs as you see fit.

# **3. SKILLS**

Roleplaying is a conversation. The Gamemaster describes the scene, you describe how your PCs behave, the GM describes how any NPCs react, you reply, and it goes back and forth. That is how the story is told and progresses. But sooner or later, a decisive situation will arise, a point of no return, a conflict that conversation alone cannot resolve. Then it's time to break out the dice and use one of your skills.

## **THE 12 CORE SKILLS**

- Craft (Strength)
- Endure (Strength)
- Fight (Strength)
- Sneak (Agility)
- Move (Agility)
- Shoot (Agility)
- Scout (Wits)
- Comprehend (Wits)
- Survive (Wits)
- Manipulate (Empathy)
- Sense Emotion (Empathy)
- Heal (Empathy)

## OTHER SKILLS

*Individual Year Zero Engine may have other skills than the ones listed here, and even more skills than twelve. We don't recommend more than sixteen skills however. Skills should be fairly broad – fine-tuning of characters is done with talents.*

## ROLL THE DICE

There are twelve core skills in total in the *Year Zero Engine*, and they are all described later in this chapter. Every skill is connected to one of the four attributes: Strength, Agility, Wits, and Empathy.

When you perform an action, you first describe what your player character does or says. Then you grab a number of six-sided dice equal to your skill level plus your current score in the attribute that is connected to that skill. If you have some sort of gear that may be helpful, you will get extra dice from that as well.

Then you roll all the dice at once.

## DIFFERENT COLORS

Whether a certain die you have rolled originates from your attribute, your skill, or your gear, may be important. For that reason, you should use dice of three different colors. The dice from attributes are called Base Dice, the dice from skills are called Skill Dice, and the dice from gear are called Gear Dice.

## CUSTOM DICE

*Several Year Zero Engine games have sets of custom dice available. These often have special symbols on the one and six sides, to make it easier to identify successes and banes.*

## SIXES MEAN SUCCESS

To succeed with your action, you must roll at least one six. A six is called a *success*. If you roll more than one success you can achieve additional effects in some cases – this is specified by each skill.

## ONES WEAR YOU DOWN

Ones on Base Dice and Gear Dice can be bad for you – they can mean that you suffer damage, exhaustion, fear, or that your weapon has been damaged. Ones have no effect on your first roll, only if you choose to push your roll (see below). A one is called a *bane*. Ones on Skill Dice are never counted as banes.

## DESCRIBE YOUR ACTION

*In all Year Zero Engine games, you create a story together. A dice roll is a dramatic peak – first you should describe what you are trying to achieve, so that everyone knows what is at stake. Then you roll your dice. Interpret the result and describe what happens. Describe what you do, what you say, or what you are thinking. If you push your roll, describe how. Do it yourself, don't wait for the GM – the GM should only stop you if you go beyond the results you have rolled.*

## ROLLING WITHOUT SKILL

If you don't have the skill required for the particular action you want to perform, you can roll anyway – simply roll your Base Dice and any applicable Gear Dice.

## THE ART OF FAILURE

If you roll no success (six) in your skill roll, something goes wrong. For some reason, you failed to achieve your goal. Feel free to elaborate on why with the help of the GM. She might even let a failed roll have further consequences to move the story forward in a dramatic way.

Failure must not stop the story completely. Even when you fail, there must be a way forward – perhaps at the cost of time, risk, or silver, but still a way. The GM has the final say on the consequences of failure in that particular situation.

You have one last chance if you really want to succeed – you can push the roll.

## DON'T ROLL TOO OFTEN

*It's quite hard to succeed with skill rolls. If you lack the right gear or friends that can help you, there is a great risk of spectacular failure. With that in mind, you should never roll dice unless it is absolutely necessary. Save the dice for dramatic situations or tough challenges. In any other situation, the GM should simply allow you to perform whatever action you wish.*

## CHANCE OF SUCCESS

When you roll a lot of dice, it can be hard to predict the chance of success. The table below shows the chance of success when rolling with 1–10 dice. The third column shows the chance of success if you push the roll.

NUMBER OF DICE	CHANCE OF SUCCESS	PUSHED ROLL
1	17%	29%
2	31%	50%
3	42%	64%
4	52%	74%
5	60%	81%
6	67%	87%
7	72%	90%
8	77%	93%

9	81%	95%
10	84%	96%

## PUSHING YOUR ROLL

If you are desperate to succeed with a dice roll, you can choose to push it. This means that you grab all the dice that did not come up as a success (six) or a bane (one on Base Dice and Gear Dice) and roll them again. You get a new chance to roll sixes.

You cannot choose which dice to reroll. When you push, you must roll all dice that did not come up as a success or a bane.

Usually, you would only push a roll if you failed it – although you can push your roll even if you rolled successes at first, to get more successes to increase the effect of an attack for example. Pushing a roll is not without risk – more on that below.

How a pushed roll plays out in story terms depends on what kind of action you are performing. It doesn't have to be a physical effort, it might be about complete mental focus or an emotional struggle.

**Skill Dice:** Ones on Skill Dice do not count as banes and can thus be re-rolled when you push the roll.

**Gear Dice:** If you push your roll, you must also push any Gear Dice.

**Only Once:** You can only push your roll once. If you don't succeed on your second try, you just have to deal with the consequences.

## BANES ARE ACTIVATED

When you push yourself hard, there is a risk that you will suffer injury or exhaustion, or that your weapon will be damaged. After you have pushed your roll, look at all the dice on the table. In the first roll, banes (ones on Base Dice and Gear Dice) had no effect, but when you push they become active. It doesn't matter if the banes came up in the first roll or the second.

- If you rolled one or more bane on a Base Die when you push, you suffer 1 point of damage to the attribute you have used for every bane rolled. Read more about damage in Chapter 5.
- If you rolled one or more bane on a Gear Die when you push, your item's Gear Bonus is decreased by 1 per bane rolled.
- Ones on Skill Dice never count as banes.

## WILLPOWER POINTS

*In some Year Zero Engine games, rolling banes on Base Dice can also have positive effects – it gives you the force of will required to use special abilities like mutations, magic, and special talents.*

*For every bane you roll on the Base Dice when you push, you get a Willpower Point (WP) in addition to any damage you suffer. The Willpower Points are required to use your special abilities. Banes on Gear Dice never give Willpower Points.*

*The GM usually has her own pool of Willpower Points to use for all NPCs, and the GM can push rolls to get more WP just like players.*

## PUSHING VARIANTS

*The basic push mechanism described here – ones in pushed rolls damage you or your gear – is the original one, used in *Mutant: Year Zero* and *Forbidden Lands*. However, tinkering with the push mechanic is a great way to change the tone of the game and to enhance the key themes of your Year Zero Engine game. Here are some examples of different push effects:*

- *Each time you push, you get a Stress Die. Stress Dice are added to any skill roll you make, but if you roll a bane on a Stress Die, a panic roll is triggered. This version, optimized for high-tension play, is used in the *ALIEN* roleplaying game.*
- *Each time you push, you get a named Condition. Each Condition gives you a -1 modification to all skill rolls, but it's also a cue for roleplaying. This version, suitable for rules-light narrative games, is used in *Tales from the Loop*.*
- *Each time you push, the GM gets a point of narrative plot points that she can use to introduce new threats and obstacles to the game. This version is used to simulate the *Dark Between the Stars* in *Coriolis*.*

## ONLY ONE CHANCE

As a rule, you only have one chance to succeed with any action. Once you have rolled the dice – and pushed the roll – you may not roll again to achieve the same goal. You need to try something different or wait until the circumstances have changed in a substantial way. Or let another player character try. This rule does not apply to combat, where you can attack the same enemy multiple times.

## GROUP ROLLS

When you face a challenge together with the other PCs, don't roll dice separately. Instead, you choose who among you is best suited to take on this challenge. The others may help (see below) if it's relevant to the situation. If the roll fails, it counts as a failure for all of you – you are not allowed to try one time each. This rule does not apply in combat, where each adventurer is free to attack any enemy they like.

## MODIFICATION

Sometimes, external factors help you to succeed. This gives you extra Skill Dice to roll. Other times, something hampers your action. This gives you fewer Skill Dice to roll than normal. This is called *modification*.

Modification +1 means you roll one extra Skill Die, +2 means you roll two extra Skill Dice, and so on. Modification -1 means you roll one Skill Die fewer than normal, -2 means two fewer, and so on. Several modifications can apply to the same roll – add them together. A modification of +2 and one of -1 add up

to +1.

If you don't have enough Skill Dice to remove after a modification, remove Gear Dice. If you run out of Gear Dice as well, remove Base Dice. If you end up with no dice at all, you have no chance to succeed at this action – time to rethink your strategy!

You can get modifications in several different ways: through talents, through the difficulty of the action itself, and through the help from others.

## DIFFICULTY

Normally, the GM doesn't assess how difficult an action is. You only roll dice in challenging situations – period. But sometimes, the GM might want to underscore that external factors either help or hinder an action. Use the following table for guidance:

DIFFICULTY	MODIFICATION
Trivial	+3
Simple	+2
Easy	+1
Average	0
Demanding	-1
Hard	-2
Formidable	-3

There are also cases when modifications are imposed by the rules, like when you *aim* carefully with a ranged weapon, shoot at long distance, or if you're in a bad bargaining position when you attempt to Manipulate someone. Some talents can also give you a positive modification in certain situations.

## HELP FROM OTHERS

Other PCs or NPCs can help you succeed at a skill roll. This must be declared right away, before you roll your dice. It must also make sense in the story – the individual helping you must be physically present and have the capacity to support your action. The GM has the final say.

For each person helping you, you get a +1 modification. No more than three people can help you with a single roll, meaning your maximum modification from assistance is +3.

In combat, helping counts as the same type of action as the one you are supporting (fast or slow).

NPCs can help each other in the same way as player characters. Letting NPCs act in groups instead of individually is often an easy way to manage large numbers of NPCs in combat.



## OPPOSED ROLLS

Sometimes rolling a six isn't enough to succeed with your skill roll. In some cases, you have to beat your foe in an *opposed roll*. To win an opposed roll, you have to roll successfully and roll more sixes than your adversary. Every six your adversary rolls eliminates one of your sixes. Only you (the attacker) can push your roll.

Sometimes you and your adversary roll for different skills, sometimes the same. Opposed rolls are common when you Manipulate or Sneak, and when someone uses those skills against you. The GM can also use opposed rolls when she deems it appropriate, like rolling Force vs Force to determine the outcome of an arm-wrestle.

## NPCS AND SKILLS

*Non-Player Characters use skills in the same way as player characters. The GM rolls dice for them, and they can push their rolls just like PCs can. But the GM only has to roll for actions that affect a PC directly – for example, if the NPC is attacking a player character or is attempting to save them. When an NPC performs an action that does not directly affect a PC, the GM can simply decide what happens, without rolling dice.*

## GEAR

To increase your chance of success, you can use gear. Gear can take many different forms depending on the setting of the game, and often includes weapons. Some example weapons are listed in Chapter 5. Useful gear gives you Gear Dice to use in skill rolls. This is called the Gear Bonus. You roll Gear Dice together with Base Dice and Skill Dice, and they are counted the same way: sixes mean success.

## GEAR GETS WORN

When you use gear and push your roll (see above), there is a risk your gear may be damaged. For every bane (one) you roll with your Gear Dice when pushing the roll, the item's Gear Bonus is decreased by one. It simply doesn't work as well anymore. If the Gear Bonus reaches zero, the item is broken and cannot be used.

## REPAIR

Luckily, damaged gear can be repaired. It takes a *Shift* of work and a successful Craft skill roll. If the roll is successful, the Gear Bonus is recovered by one point for every success rolled, up to the starting score. If the roll fails, the Gear Bonus is permanently decreased to its current score. If the Gear Bonus has been reduced to zero and the attempt at repair fails, the item is permanently destroyed.

Certain items can require special talents to repair.

## ARTIFACT DICE

*Some Year Zero Engine games use polygonal dice such as D8, D10 and D12 as so-called Artifact Dice, from especially powerful or magical items. Such items are divided into three categories, depending on the type of dice they give:*

- *D8: Mighty*
- *D10: Epic*
- *D12: Legendary*

*When you roll an Artifact Die, any result of 6 or higher counts as a success. Really high results count as several successes. See the table below. Artifact Dice are never lost due to wear, but an item with Artifact Dice is still unusable if it's Gear Bonus is reduced to zero.*

## ARTIFACT DICE SUCCESSES

RESULT	D8	D10	D12
6	1	1	1
7	1	1	1
8	2	2	2
9	-	2	2
10	-	3	3
11	-	-	3
12	-	-	4

## PRIDE

*As mentioned in Chapter 2, in some Year Zero Engine games, your PC has a Pride – something specific that defines your character and makes them stand out. Once per game session, you may check your Pride to get one automatic success in a dice roll. You can check your Pride after a failed roll, or even after a successful roll in order to get an extra success. You must explain how your Pride helps you. The GM has the final say, but she should give you the benefit of the doubt.*

## THE SKILLS

This section describes the twelve core skills of the Year Zero Engine.

### ENDURE (Strength)

When your physical endurance or stamina is tested, roll to Endure. For example, roll for this skill when you travel in extreme weather or when you are forced to suffer bitter *cold*.

**Failure:** You just can't take it anymore. You give in to the pain and suffer the consequences.

**Success:** You manage to push on, ignoring the pain just a little longer.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- Give one success to another PC in the same situation as you.
- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.
- You're hardened by the experience, and don't need to roll to overcome the exact same challenge in the future.
- You impress someone.

## FIGHT (Strength)

Sometimes, you have no choice but to fight for your life, eye to eye with the enemy. Roll for this skill when you attack someone in close combat. Read more about close combat and damage in Chapter 5.

**Failure:** You stumble and miss. Now it's your opponent's turn...

**Success:** You hit, and inflict damage to Strength equal to the weapon's Damage rating on your opponent. Read more about damage *here*.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one of these stunts:

- You inflict one more point of damage to Strength. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several bonus successes.
- You tire your enemy. They suffer one point of damage to Agility. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You outmaneuver your enemy and can trade *initiative* scores with them, taking effect next turn. You can't go back to your earlier initiative.
- You knock or pull a weapon or other object from your opponent. You choose which. During combat, picking up a dropped object counts as a *fast action*.
- Your opponent falls to the ground or is pushed back – through a door or over a cliff, for example.
- You hold the opponent in a *grapple*.

**Weapons:** In close combat you can use *melee weapons*.

**Blocking:** When someone attacks you in close combat, you can try to *block* the attack.

## CRAFT (Strength)

When you need to repair gear or tinker with mechanical items in some other way, roll for the Craft skill. Repairing a broken item generally takes a Shift of work (see Gear above).

**Failure:** The blasted thing just won't do what you want. And what if the noise you made attracted unwanted company?

**Success:** With a groan, the item bends to your will. If you're repairing a damaged item, its Gear Bonus is increased by one.

**Stunts:** For each extra success rolled beyond the first, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- If you're repairing an item, its Gear Bonus is increased one additional step. It cannot go above its

starting score.

- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.
- You got this. You don't need to roll to overcome the exact same challenge in the future.
- You do it quickly, in half the time it would normally take.
- You do it quietly.
- You show off.

## CRAFTING NEW ITEMS

*In some Year Zero Engine games, you can use the Craft skill to create new items, not only repair existing ones. It requires a Craft roll just like repairing, but you also usually need raw materials, special tools, specific talents, and usually a lot more time.*

## SNEAK (Agility)

Often enough, it's wiser to avoid conflict and instead Sneak by your enemies. Use this skill when you try to move without being noticed or when you attempt a *sneak attack*. Roll an *opposed roll*, using your Sneak score against a Scout roll for your enemy.

**Failure:** Your enemy sees you or hears you, and the element of surprise is lost.

**Success:** You move like a shadow in the night, noticed by no one.

**Stunts:** For each extra success rolled beyond the first, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- Give one success to another PC in the same situation as you.
- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.

## GROUP STEALTH

*When you and the other adventurers use Sneak side by side, each and every one of you does not roll for the skill. Instead, only the PC with the lowest skill level rolls, and the result applies to the whole group.*

## MOVE (Agility)

When the heat is on and you are trying to dodge the jaws of death, you need to keep a cool head and move quickly and silently. Roll for Move when you want to get out of a hazardous situation—be it a risky climb, a dangerous jump, or an enemy coming at you.

**Failure:** Despite your best efforts, you fail and must suffer the consequences.

**Success:** You survive the sticky situation.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- Give one success to another PC in the same situation as you.
- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.

- You impress someone.

## SHOOT (Agility)

If you have a gun you can take down your enemy from a distance without getting your hands bloody. Use the Shoot skill to fire all types of ranged weapons. Read more about ranged combat in Chapter 5.

**Failure:** The shot misses your target. Maybe it hits something else? And the sound of gunfire could attract unwelcome attention...

**Success:** You hit, and inflict damage to Strength equal to the weapon's Damage rating on your opponent.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one of these stunts:

- You inflict one additional point of damage to Strength. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You pin down your enemy. They take one point of damage to Wits. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You position yourself and get to exchange your initiative score with your enemy, taking effect next turn. You can't go back to your earlier initiative.
- Your target drops a weapon or other hand-held object. You choose which.
- Your opponent falls to the ground or is pushed back, for example through a doorway.

**Taking Cover:** When bullets start flying, it's often a good idea to seek *cover* behind something sturdy.

## SCOUT (Wits)

In a Year Zero Engine game, you need to be on your guard at all times, or you won't live long. You use your Scout skill to spot someone sneaking (opposed roll, see Sneak). You can also use the skill when you spot an unknown threat of some kind, to learn more about it.

**Failure:** You can't really make out what it is, or you mistake it for something else (the GM feeds you false information).

**Success:** You are able to make out what it is, and whether or not it looks like a threat. The exact information you get is up to the GM.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, you get to know the answer to one of these questions:

- Is it coming for me?
- Are there more of them close by?
- How do I get in/past/away?

## GROUP SCOUTING

*When you and the other PCs Scout at the same time, you do not roll separately. Instead, only one PC rolls, and that result applies to the whole group. Who makes the roll is up to you.*

## DON'T ROLL TO FIND HIDDEN THINGS

*The Scout skill is not used to find hidden things like secret doors or hidden clues. If you describe how your PC searches the right place, the GM should simply let you discover what you are looking for if it is possible to find.*

## COMPREHEND (Wits)

Many Year Zero Engine games are filled with wondrous locations, phenomena, creatures and items of all kinds. Roll for Comprehend when you want to understand something strange and interesting that you encounter.

**Failure:** The object of your study makes no sense to you at all, or you are mistaken (in this case, the GM can feed you false information about the object):

**Success:** You understand the nature or function of the object.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.
- You impress someone.

## SURVIVE (Wits)

Year Zero Engine games often take place in harsh and dangerous environments. Roll for Survive when you're in a hazardous environment of some kind, be it extreme heat and cold, sandstorms, acid rain, or other forms of extreme weather, and need to figure out a way to stay alive.

**Failure:** You find no safe haven. Unless someone comes to your rescue, you're on borrowed time.

**Success:** You find a safe haven to weather the storm.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one stunt applicable to the situation:

- Give one success to another PC in the same trouble as you.
- Gain a +1 modification to a later skill roll relating to this one.
- You impress someone.

## MANIPULATE (Empathy)

Year Zero Engine games have many dangers, but you can often reach your goals without violence, through charm, threats, or sensible reasoning. To make another person see things your way, make an

opposed roll for Manipulation against your opponent's Sense Emotion. Your chances are affected by your *negotiating position*.

**Failure:** Your adversary won't listen and won't do what you want. They might start to dislike you, or even attack you if provoked.

**Success:** If you succeed, your adversary must either do what you want or immediately attack you physically. Even if your adversary chooses to do what you want, they can still demand something in return. The GM decides what that entails, but it should be reasonable enough for you to be able to meet those demands. It is up to you to accept the agreement or not.

**Stunts:** For each success you roll in excess of what you need to win the opposed roll, you can choose one of these stunts:

- Your opponent does what you want without demanding a favor in return.
- Your opponent does more than you ask for, for example giving you some useful piece of information. Details are up to the GM.
- Your opponent is impressed by you and will try to help you later on in some way. Details are up to the GM.

**Being Manipulated:** NPCs and other PCs can Manipulate you. If their roll succeeds, you must attack or offer a deal of some kind. Then it is up to the GM (or the other player) whether your adversary accepts or not.

## NOT MIND CONTROL

*When you Manipulate someone, you do not take control of their mind. What you are trying to convince your adversary about must be somewhat reasonable, otherwise the GM can disallow it.*

## SENSE EMOTION (Empathy)

To be able to read another person like an open book can be a mighty weapon. You roll for Sense Emotion when someone tries to Manipulate you (above). You can also use the skill when you want to know an NPC's mood or intent toward you. You need to be within Short distance.

**Failure:** You fail to read, or misread, the NPC. The GM can feed you false, or a mix of true and false, information.

**Success:** The GM must reveal the NPC's most powerful emotion at this point in time – hate, fear, contempt, love, etc.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, you get the answer to one of these yes/no questions about the NPC:

- Are they telling the truth?
- Do they want to hurt me?
- Do they want something from me?

## HEAL (Empathy)

As a character in a Year Zero Engine game, there is a significant risk that you and your friends will be injured, sooner or later. This is when the Heal skill is useful. It can be used in two different ways:

**Recovery:** A person who has suffered so much damage to Strength or Agility that the attribute has been reduced to zero is Broken, and cannot act any further. If you apply your Heal skill to them and your roll succeeds, they get back on her feet and immediately recover a number of attribute points equal to the number of successes you roll. Read more about damage in Chapter 5.

**Save a Life:** The most important application of Heal skill is giving first aid and saving the life of a fallen comrade who has suffered a *critical injury*. A failed roll at this point could mean the end for your patient, so be careful!

## 4. TALENTS

Skills and attributes paint a broad picture of your character. In order to let you fine-tune and specialize your character, most Year Zero Engine games use *talents*. Talents can affect how you use skills or how you recover from damage, or even let you do things that are quite simply impossible to others.

There are two distinct types of talents – *archetype talents* and *general talents*. Archetype talents can only be learned by characters with a specific archetype. General talents can be learned by anyone.

### TIERED TALENTS

*In most Year Zero Engine games, talents are not rated – you either have them or you don't. Some games, however, have talents tiered in ranks – usually three. Each rank gives you additional bonuses or effects. Tiered talents give the game more complexity and "crunch." Low-crunch games such as Tales from the Loop don't even have talents at all.*

## GENERAL TALENTS

This chapter contains a limited number of general talents only, as the selection of talents in a specific Year Zero Engine game are closely tailored to the setting and theme of the game. The talents listed here should be considered examples only.

### BODYGUARD

If someone within Short range of you is hit by an attack, you can dive in to take the hit. Roll for Move. It doesn't count as an action in combat. If you roll one or more successes, you take the hit instead of your friend. You can push the roll.



## COMPASSION

You can push any skill roll based on Empathy twice, not just once like other characters.

## FAST REFLEXES

You can draw two initiative cards instead of one during the *initiative draw*. Choose the one you want to use, and shuffle the other one back into the deck before others draw their cards.

## FIELD SURGEON

You know the delicate art of stopping a wound from bleeding or treating grave injuries. You get a +2 modification to Heal when treating someone who is about to die from a critical injury.

## FLYWEIGHT

When you block in close combat, you can use Agility instead of Strength.

## GUT FEELING

You have a knack for sensing when trouble is coming your way. You can roll for Scout using Empathy instead of Wits.

## HARD HITTER

You get a +2 modification to Fight if you sacrifice your fast action in the Round.

## HEALER

You are very resilient and recover quickly from injuries. The healing time of *critical injuries* is halved for you.

## INQUISITIVE

You can push any skill roll based on Wits twice, not just once like other characters.

## KILLER

You know where to strike to make your enemy fall and not get up. Ever. When your enemy sustains a critical injury you may switch the D66 roll so that the ones die becomes the tens die and vice versa. This talent can only be used on humans.

## LUCKY

No matter what horrible situations you end up in, you always seem to make it out unscathed. When you roll for a *critical injury* on yourself, you get to re-roll the dice and choose the result that you prefer.

## MENACING

You have a scary physical presence that makes it easy to intimidate people. You can roll for Manipulate using Strength instead of Empathy when you threaten someone to make them do what you want. If you succeed, your opponent cannot demand anything in return from you. He can still choose to attack you.

## MERCILESS

You can perform a *coup de grace* without rolling for Empathy.

## PACK MULE

You can carry twice as many objects as normal without being *encumbered*.

## QUICK DRAW

You can draw your weapon so quickly it doesn't cost you an action.

## RECKLESS

You can push any skill roll based on Agility twice, not just once like other characters.

## SECOND WIND

When you are Broken by having an attribute reduced to zero, you can get back on your feet immediately, without anyone *coming to your aid*. Roll for Endure, using Skill Dice only. You cannot push the roll. For every success you roll, you get one attribute point back. You can only use this talent once while Broken,

and it has no effect against critical injuries.

## TRUE GRIT

You can push any skill roll based on Strength twice, not just once like other characters.

## WATCHFUL

The hairs on the back of your neck stand up when enemies lurk nearby. You get a +2 modification to Scout when trying to spot a sneak attack.

## WEAPON SPECIALIST

You're an expert at using a certain type of weapon. When you use this type of weapon, you get a +2 modification. You can choose this talent several times, once for each weapon type. You can be a specialist at fighting unarmed.

## WILLPOWER TALENTS

*Some Year Zero Engine games include a special class of powerful talents that require Willpower Points to use. Such talents are typically reserved for specific archetypes or character classes.*

# 5. COMBAT & DAMAGE

Combat is deadly in most Year Zero Engine games. Before you enter a fight, you should always ask yourself: Is it worth it?

## MAPS & ZONES

A violent conflict is typically played out using a map of the location your characters happen to find themselves fighting for their lives in.

The map is divided into zones. A zone is typically a room, a corridor, or an area of ground. How big a zone is varies—from a few steps across up to about 25 meters. A zone is generally smaller in a cramped environment than in open terrain.

In pre-made scenario material, zones are usually indicated on a location map. In random encounters created on the fly, the GM can make a quick sketch of the area or simply describe it.

## PLAYING WITHOUT MAPS

*Although maps can be useful, you can always choose not to use them and let certain conflicts play out only in the “theater of the mind.” This can be a good solution in close quarters conflicts between a small number of combatants.*

## ZONE FEATURES

Zones can have various features, which affect actions performed within them. Here are some examples:

**Cluttered:** The zone is covered by dense undergrowth or filled with debris of some sort. You must roll for Move when you move into the zone. Failure means you manage to get into the zone, but you fall down.

**Dark:** The zone is dimly lit. Scout rolls in the zone get a -2 modification. Ranged attacks into the zone also suffer a -2 modification, and can't pass through the zone.

**Cramped:** A crawlspace or narrow tunnel. In a cramped zone, you can only *crawl*, not run. You also cannot move or shoot past individuals next to you against targets behind them.

## BORDERS & LINE OF SIGHT

The border between two adjacent zones can be open or blocked by a wall. A blocked border can have a door or a hatch, as indicated by the map, allowing movement between the two zones.

Open borders don't block vision or movement. A blocked border generally blocks line of sight even if there is a door or hatch in it – unless you're actively standing by the doorway and peeking through.

## RANGE CATEGORIES

The distance between you and your opponents is divided into five range categories. See the table below.

RANGE	DESCRIPTION
Engaged	Right next to you
Short	A few meters away, in the same zone as you
Medium	Up to 25 meters away, in an adjacent zone
Long	Up to about one hundred meters (four zones) away
Extreme	Up to about one kilometer

## MEASURING TIME

Three separate units of time are typically used in the Year Zero Engine, depending on the situation at hand. See the table below. The exact duration of a Round, Turn and Shift can vary depending on the situation. It's the GM's job to track time and determine when another Round, Turn or Shift has passed. There are typically four Shifts in a day: Morning, Day, Evening, and Night.

UNIT	DURATION	PRIMARY USE
Round	5-10 seconds	Combat
Turn	5-10 minutes	Exploration
Shift	5-10 hours	Recovery

## ACTIONS & INITIATIVE

When a combat begins, the first step is to determine who has the initiative. Do this before anyone rolls dice for an action.

### DRAWING THE INITIATIVE

Grab ten cards, numbered 1 through 10. All the players taking part in the conflict, either voluntarily or involuntarily, each draw a card and the GM draws one card for every NPC. This is called drawing the initiative. The number on the card determines the order in which you act in the combat.

Number 1 acts first, number 2 acts second, and so forth until everyone has acted. Place your initiative card by your character sheet, so everyone can see in which order you all act. The GM puts their initiative cards in front of them.

When all the participants in the combat have acted once, the Round is over, and a new Round begins. The round order remains the same throughout the whole conflict – drawing the initiative is only done once, at the start of the first round.

### SURPRISE

If you perform an attack that the GM deems surprising, you may draw two initiative cards, and choose which one of the two you want. The card you do not choose is put back in the deck which is shuffled again before the others (either players or GM) draw their cards.

### TALENTS

Some talents also allow you to affect your initiative. Read more in Chapter 4.

### CHANGING THE INITIATIVE

You never draw a new initiative card during a fight, but you can exchange your initiative card – and thus your initiative for the round – with another player character. This can be done at the start of the fight or at the start of the round, but never during a round. You and the other player character must be able to speak to each other to exchange initiatives.

## NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

*In typical conflicts, the GM draws one initiative card per NPC. If there are a lot of NPCs and the number of combatants is above ten, the GM will split the NPCs into groups. All the NPCs with identical stats will form a single group, and the GM will draw one initiative card per group instead of one per individual. All the NPCs in a group act at the same time in the turn order. In what order they act individually within the group is up to the GM.*

## SLOW & FAST ACTIONS

When it is your time to act in the Round, you can perform one slow action and one fast action, or two fast actions. A slow action usually consists of rolling for a skill. A fast action is quicker and doesn't always require rolling dice, though it might. See the lists of typical slow and fast actions below. How attacks work is explained in detail in the sections Ranged Combat and Close Combat.

**Describe Your Actions:** When it's your time to act, simply state which two actions you wish to perform, describe how you go about it, and roll dice to see if you are successful. Some actions will give your opponent the opportunity to perform a reactive action. Read more about this under *Close Combat*.

### SLOW ACTIONS

ACTION	PREREQUISITE	SKILL
Crawl	You are prone	–
Close combat attack	–	Fight
Shoot ranged weapon	Ranged weapon	Shoot
Reload	Firearm	–
First aid	Broken or dying victim	Heal
Persuade	Your opponent can hear you	Manipulate
Enter/exit vehicle	Vehicle	–
Start engine	Vehicle	–

### FAST ACTIONS

FAST ACTION	PREREQUISITE	SKILL
Run	No Engaged enemy	Move (if Cluttered zone)
Move through door/hatch	–	–
Get up	You are prone	–
Draw weapon	–	–
Block attack	Attacked in close combat	Fight
Grapple attack	You've grappled an opponent	Fight
Retreat	Engaged enemy	Move
Aim	Ranged weapon	–
Seek cover	Cover in same zone	–
Grab the wheel	Vehicle	–
Drive	Vehicle	Move

Use item	Varies	Varies
----------	--------	--------

## MARK YOUR ACTIONS

*As reactive actions such as blocking and overwatch fire break the initiative order, it can be hard to keep track of how many actions a combatant has performed in the Round. A tip is to keep track of this by turning the initiative card 90 degrees for every performed action. Turn it to the left for a fast action and to the right for a slow action, and all the way around 180 degrees once both actions in the turn are used up.*

## HELPING OTHERS

If you help another player character or NPC perform an action, it costs you one action of the same kind (slow or fast). You have to state that you are helping someone before any dice are rolled. Helping others breaks the initiative order in the Round. You can read more about helping *here*.

## MOVEMENT

To move during combat, you can spend a fast action to run from one zone to a neighboring zone or between Short and Engaged range from an enemy or PC in the same zone you are already in. No roll is required to run, unless it's into a Cluttered zone.

**Crawling:** If you are prone, you can't run. Instead, you must crawl. Crawling works just like running, but it's a slow action. That means you can't crawl twice in the same round. In a Cramped zone, crawling is the only movement possible.

**Close Combat:** If you have an active enemy at Engaged range, you can't just walk away from them. Instead, you must *retreat*.

**Doors & Hatches:** You can open an unlocked door or hatch with a fast action. A locked door or hatch can be broken down. A typical wooden door or hatch can take 5 points of damage before it gives in. More sturdy doors require more force, and also have an *Armor Rating*.

## FLEEING THE CONFLICT

If you're losing a fight, it might be better to retreat and perhaps return with back-up. If you want to leave the conflict immediately, and you don't have any enemies at Engaged range, you can roll for Move – a successful roll means you manage to get away somehow, and the conflict is over. If the roll fails, you remain in combat with your opponent and cannot get away – you remain where you are.

You cannot flee in this way if you are trapped or surrounded. The GM has final say. You cannot use your roll to move past an opponent – you must flee in the same direction you came from. The GM can modify your roll depending on the terrain and the distance to the next opponent, see the table below.

## FLEEING COMBAT

RANGE	MODIFICATION
Short	-1
Medium	0
Long	+1

## AMBUSHES & SNEAK ATTACKS

The key to winning a conflict is often attacking when your enemy least expects it. You can achieve this in several different ways.

**Sneak Attack:** When you stalk someone and your attack catches them unawares, it's called a sneak attack. First, roll an opposed roll with your Sneak versus your target's Scout. You get a modification depending on how close you want to go; see the table below. If you want to attack in close combat, you usually have to move to within Engaged range of your enemy. If you fail, your opponent spots you at your starting distance – draw initiative.

If you succeed, you get a free action (slow or fast, but not both) before you draw the initiative. Your target cannot block a sneak attack. Sneak attacks are always done individually, by one attacker against one target.

**Ambush:** A special kind of sneak attack is an ambush; you lie in wait for your enemy and attack when they come close. When you ambush someone, you roll for Sneak against Scout as described above, but with a modification of +2 for the attacker, since it is the target and not the attacker that is moving.

Ambushes can be carried out by a group and against a group of targets. This follows the usual rules for stealth – the character with the lowest Move skill level rolls for the attackers, while the target with highest Scout skill level rolls for the targets.

## SNEAK ATTACKS

RANGE	MODIFICATION
Engaged	-2
Short	-1
Medium	0
Long	+1
Ambush	+2

## SOCIAL CONFLICT

Sometimes, you can make things go your way without resorting to violence. Instead, you trick or convince your opponents without drawing your weapon. This might even be possible in the midst of combat, if the GM judges it plausible. For non-violent conflicts, you use the Manipulate skill.



What you ask of your opponent or what you want them to do must be within reason – no NPC will agree to do anything or act completely against their own interests, no matter how good your roll is.

## RESOLUTION

When you try to convince or bluff someone, make an opposed roll of Manipulate versus your opponent's Sense Emotion. It only counts as a (slow) action for you. If you successfully persuade your opponent, they must either do what you want or immediately escalate the conflict and attack you using physical violence.

Even if your opponent chooses to do what you want, they can still demand something in return. The GM decides what that entails, but it should be reasonable enough for you to be able to meet those demands. It is up to you to accept the agreement or not.

## NEGOTIATING POSITION

Your chances of persuading someone successfully are affected by your negotiating position, which is determined by the GM. Each of the following factors modifies your roll by +1:

- You have more people on your side.
- What you ask for doesn't cost your opponent anything.
- Your opponent has suffered damage to any attribute.
- You have helped your opponent previously.
- You present your case very well (determined by the GM).

Each of the following factors modifies your roll by -1.

- Your opponent has more people on their side.
- You ask for something valuable or dangerous.
- Your opponent has nothing to gain by helping you.
- You are having trouble understanding each other.
- You are not in the same zone.

## MANIPULATE A GROUP

When you want to manipulate a whole group, you usually address the group's leader or spokesperson. Remember that your roll is modified by -1 if your opponent has more people on their side. If you reach an agreement with the leader, the rest of the group usually follows. If there is no given leader it's harder – every single opponent acts individually.

## RANGE

To manipulate someone, you usually need to be in the same zone, but it can sometimes be done at

longer distances or via radio. The GM modifies your roll negatively if she deems that the range impairs your negotiating position (see above).

## CLOSE COMBAT

When you attack someone with your bare fists or a melee weapon, you use the Fight skill. Close combat usually happens at Engaged range from your target. You can fight unarmed or use a weapon, which gives you a *Gear Bonus*. Drawing a melee weapon from its sheath or a belt is a fast action.

To attack an opponent in close combat, you need to be standing on your feet. If you are prone, you must first spend a fast action to get up before you can attack. While you are prone, standing enemies get a +2 modification on all close combat attacks against you.

## RESOLUTION

If your Fight roll is successful, your attack hits and you inflict damage to your target's Strength equal to the weapon's Damage rating. Damage may be mitigated by armor.

**Stunts:** For every extra success you roll, choose one of these stunts:

- You inflict one more point of damage to Strength. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several bonus successes.
- You tire your enemy. They suffer one point of damage to Agility. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You outmaneuver your enemy and can trade initiative scores with them, taking effect next turn. You can't go back to your earlier initiative.
- You knock or pull a weapon or other object from your opponent. You choose which. During combat, picking up a dropped object counts as a fast action.
- Your opponent falls to the ground or is pushed back – through a door or over a cliff, for example.
- You hold the opponent in a grapple (below).

## BLOCKING

If you are attacked in close combat, you can choose to block the attack, to avoid being hit. Blocking is a fast action, and you roll for Fight. You must declare that you are going to block before the attacker rolls for their strike. For each success you roll, choose an effect below:

- You remove one of the enemy's successes. If they are left at no successes, the attack misses. This effect can be chosen multiple times.
- You perform a counterattack, dealing damage to the attacker equal to the Damage rating of your weapon. You cannot spend additional successes to increase the damage of your counterattack.
- You disarm your enemy.

**Reactive Action:** Blocking is a reaction that breaks the normal initiative order in the Round. However, it

does count against your two available actions in the Round (one slow and one fast). Each time you block, you lose one action later in the Round, and if you have already used both your actions, you can't block. When it's your time to act, it might therefore be wise to save your fast action if you fear you might be attacked later in the Round.

**Blocking Unarmed:** If you are unarmed, you can only block unarmed attacks from other humans. To block an armed close combat attack, or an attack by an animal or beast of some type, you need to wield some kind of sturdy weapon or tool.

## GRAPPLING

If you grapple your opponent as a stunt in close combat (see above), both you and your opponent fall to the ground. The opponent drops any weapon they were holding, and cannot move. The only action they can perform is an attempt to break free – which is a slow action that succeeds if the opponent wins an opposed Fight roll against you. While you are grappling, the only action you can perform (apart from releasing your opponent) is a grapple attack. This works as a normal unarmed attack, but is a fast action and cannot be blocked.

## RETREAT

If you have an active enemy at Engaged range, you must make a Move roll to move away to Short range from them. If you fail, you still move but your enemy gets a free close combat attack against you. The free attack doesn't count toward their actions in the Round and you can't block it.

## RANGED COMBAT

When you shoot at someone from a distance, roll for Shoot. You need to be able to see your target. You also need a ranged weapon, even if it's simply something to throw. You'll find a table with various weapons *here*. To draw a weapon is a fast action, while firing a weapon is a slow action.

**Aiming:** If you take your time to aim carefully before squeezing the trigger, you get a +2 to your attack roll. Aiming is a fast action. If you do anything else except shoot your weapon after you have aimed, or if you are hurt, you lose the effect of the aim and you need to spend another fast action to aim again.

**Range:** The weapons tables indicate the range of each weapon, i.e. the maximum range category at which the weapon can be used. The farther away your target is, the harder it is to hit. At Medium range you get a –1 modification, and at Long range you get –2. At Engaged range you get –3, because it's hard to draw a bead on an opponent that close. You don't get this penalty if you fire at a defenseless or unwitting enemy – instead, you get a +3 modification.

**Target Size:** Firing at a large target, such as a vehicle, gives a +2 modification to the attack. Firing at a small object, such as a hatch or a hand-held item, gives a –2 modification.

## RANGED FIRE MODIFICATIONS

FACTOR	MODIFICATION
Aimed shot	+2
Target Engaged	-3/+3
Short range	-
Medium range	-1
Long range	-2
Extreme range	-3
Large target	+2
Small target	-2
Dim light	-1
Darkness	-2

## RESOLUTION

If your attack hits, you inflict damage to your target's Strength equal to the weapon's Damage rating. For every extra success you roll, choose one of these stunts:

- You inflict one additional point of damage to Strength. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You pin down your enemy. They take one point of damage to Wits. You can choose this stunt multiple times, if you roll several extra successes.
- You position yourself and get to exchange your initiative score with your enemy, taking effect next turn. You can't go back to your earlier initiative.
- Your target drops a weapon or another hand-held object. You choose which.
- Your opponent falls to the ground or is pushed back, for example through a doorway.

## FIREARMS & AMMUNITION

Ammunition for firearms can be handled in different ways, depending on the technological level of the game setting and level of complexity you want in your game. You can count individual bullets if you like, group them together into "shots" comprised of several bullets, or use a more abstract system. Simple single-shot weapons need to be reloaded after each shot. Reloading a firearm is a slow action.

## BOWS & SLINGSHOTS

Bows and slingshots cannot be "reloaded" as such – instead, you need to spend a fast action to prepare the weapon by nocking an arrow or placing a stone in your sling. Once you have readied your weapon, you can't do anything except shoot or aim (above) – if you do anything else, you must prepare the weapon again before you can shoot. Crossbows don't need to be prepared in this manner. They can be carried loaded as a firearm, and loading it is a slow action.

## FULL-AUTO FIRE

*Some weapons are capable of full automatic fire. The rules to use for this, or even whether to have specific rules for it at all, depends greatly on what pushing mechanism you use and the level of complexity you want in your Year Zero Engine game. For examples, see *Mutant: Year Zero* and the *ALIEN* roleplaying game.*

## OVERWATCH

As a fast action, you can assume an overwatch position in a specified direction, as long as you have a ranged weapon and no enemies within Engaged range. This means that you aim in the specified direction and are ready to shoot. Between the time you assume the overwatch position and your time to act in the next Round, you can fire your weapon against a target in the chosen direction.

You can fire whenever you want in the turn order, and your shot is resolved before all other actions – even if they are already declared. For example, if an enemy in the direction you are aiming declares that they want to fire a weapon, you can shoot first. The enemy is not allowed to change their attack after your overwatch attack.

Firing when in overwatch position counts as a normal attack (a slow action). Therefore, you must save your slow action in the Round for any overwatch attack you want to make.

If both you and an enemy assume overwatch positions against each other, and both choose to fire against each other, then an opposed Shoot roll determines which attack goes first. This roll does not count as an action for either of you.

**Losing Overwatch:** You keep your overwatch position as long as you do nothing but shoot in the chosen direction. If you perform any other action, the overwatch position is lost. It is also immediately lost if either of the following occurs:

- You are attacked in close combat.
- You suffer damage of any kind.

## WEAPONS

Using a weapon will greatly improve your effectiveness in combat. The table below describe a few typical weapons of various types. Which exact weapons to include in your game depends greatly on the setting of the game. The features used in the weapon tables are explained below.

**Grip** indicates if you need one or two hands to wield the weapon. A two-handed weapon can't be combined with a shield, and some critical injuries will prohibit the use of two-handed weapons.

**Bonus** indicates how many Gear Dice you can roll when using the weapon. Remember that the Gear Bonus can be reduced if you push your roll – the bonus decreases by one for every *bane* you have rolled. If the Gear Bonus is reduced to zero, the weapon breaks and needs to be fixed using the Craft skill.

**Damage** indicates your base Damage rating, i.e., how many points of damage to Strength your

opponent suffers if your attack is successful. If you roll extra successes, you can deal additional damage.

**Range** indicates the maximum range category at which the weapon can be used.

**Weight** indicates how many typical items the weapon counts as in the inventory list.

## WEAPONS

WEAPON	GRIP	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT
Unarmed	-	-	1	Engaged	-
Blunt instrument	1H	+1	1	Engaged	1
Knife	1H	+1	2	Engaged	1/2
Club	1H	+2	1	Engaged	1
Sword	1H	+2	2	Engaged	1
Battleaxe	2H	+2	3	Engaged	2
Spear	1H	+1	2	Short	1
Thrown rock	1H	-	1	Medium	1/4
Sling	1H	+1	1	Medium	1/2
Bow	2H	+1	1	Long	1
Pistol	1H	+2	2	Medium	1/2
Rifle	2H	+2	2	Long	1

## CRIT RATINGS

*In some Year Zero Engine games, weapons also have Crit ratings. If you inflict damage equal to or in excess of the Crit rating in a single attack, you immediately inflict a critical injury on the target, even if they are not Broken by the damage. Read more about critical injuries [here](#).*

## DAMAGE

Year Zero Engine games can be deadly. The rewards for your PC may be great, but the only thing you know for sure is that you will suffer all sorts of damage along the way. Damage can come in many forms, and reduces one of your four attribute scores:

**Damage to Strength:** Bleeding wounds, broken bones, and pain. This is the default type of damage. If the type of damage is not specified, it's always damage to Strength.

**Damage to Agility:** Physical fatigue and exhaustion.

**Damage to Wits:** Fear, panic, confusion, misjudgment. Read more about fear [here](#).

**Damage to Empathy:** Cynicism, distrust, callousness.

## SUFFERING DAMAGE

You can suffer damage in many ways. These are the three most common:

- **By rolling a bane** (a one) on a Base Die when you push a roll. When pushing, you suffer one point of damage to the attribute used for every bane you roll.
- **From attacks.** Whenever someone successfully attacks you in close combat or with a ranged weapon, you suffer damage to Strength equal to the Damage rating of weapon, plus damage for any extra successes rolled.

## ARMOR

By wearing armor, you can protect your body from damage to Strength. Armor doesn't provide protection from other kinds of damage, or from damage you inflict on yourself when you push a roll.

The effect of armor is determined by its Armor Rating. When you suffer damage from a physical attack, you roll a number of Gear Dice equal to the Armor Rating. Every success you roll decreases the damage by one. This roll does not count as an action and cannot be pushed.

If any damage penetrates your armor, its Armor Rating is decreased – every bane you rolled reduces the Armor Rating by one. If the armor absorbed all the damage, any banes rolled has no effect. Armor can be repaired by using the Craft skill.

**Helmets:** You can only wear one type of armor at a time, but you can combine body armor with a helmet. Add the Armor Rating of any helmet you wear to the rating of your body armor before you roll. If the armor is degraded, you can choose if it is the body armor or the helmet that is damaged.

All helmets also have an extra effect: If you despite the armor roll suffer physical critical injury #16, #64 or #65 (see the table *here*), roll a number of Gear Dice equal to the Armor Rating of the helmet. If you roll one or more successes, the critical injury is changed to the #12 instead. A solid helmet can save your life!

## COVER

When enemies are shooting at you, hunkering down behind cover – preferably something solid – can save your life. Taking cover in the zone you're in counts as a fast action. Cover has an Armor Rating and works exactly like armor – but only against ranged attacks. Cover can be degraded just like armor. Cover can be combined with armor – roll for cover first, then armor.

## COVER

BARRIER	ARMOR RATING
Furniture	3
Wooden Door	4

Tree Trunk	5
Wooden Wall	6
Stone Wall	8

## BROKEN

When an attribute score reaches zero, you are Broken. This means that you are put out of action in one way or another. Exactly what it means to be Broken depends on what attribute has been depleted:

**Strength:** You're knocked senseless. Roll for a physical *critical injury*. If you're not dead, you can only crawl and mumble through the pain. You can't perform any other actions and you can't roll for any skills.

**Agility:** You collapse from exhaustion. You can only crawl and wheeze. You can't perform any other actions and you can't roll for any skills.

**Wits:** You're paralyzed by fear or confusion. Roll for a critical injury on the *mental trauma table*. If you remain conscious, you can run to a safe place, but you can't perform any other actions and you can't roll for any skills.

**Empathy:** You break down in despair or self-pity. You must either explode in a violent outburst, kicking and breaking everything around you, or withdraw from everyone around you. In either case, you're uncommunicative until you've recovered a point of Empathy.

## MORE DAMAGE

You can't go below zero in any attribute, if you suffer any further damage to Strength or Wits while Broken, you suffer another critical injury.

## COUP DE GRACE

An opponent who has lost all Strength or Agility is defenseless. If it's an intelligent being (with Wits) and you want to give him a coup de grace and kill him outright, you must *fail* an Empathy roll (roll for the attribute only). Even if the roll fails, you suffer one point of damage to Empathy – killing in cold blood is not as easy as you might think. Some talents can let you kill defenseless enemies without these negative effects.

## RECOVERY

As long as you're not Broken, you recover one lost attribute point per Turn (5–10 minutes) of rest, assuming you're not suffering from any *condition* that blocks recovery. If you have several damaged attributes, you decide the order in which they are healed. Using the Heal skill on you has no effect if you're not Broken.



## GETTING BACK UP

If you are Broken, the fastest way to recover is for someone else in the same zone to treat you by a successful Heal roll. You immediately recover a number of points in the Broken attribute equal to the number of successes rolled. Further Heal rolls have no effect, and the same person can only try once. If no one helps you within one Turn, you recover anyway and get one point back in the relevant attribute score. After you're no longer Broken, you recover the remaining lost attribute points normally (above). Critical injuries can still affect you after all your attributes are restored, however.

**Critical Injuries:** If your Strength is Broken and you have suffered a critical injury, there might be a risk that you will die unless you are treated in time. Read more below.

## BROKEN NPCS

*NPCs can be Broken in the same ways as PCs. An NPC can Heal a PC and vice versa. However, dice are usually not rolled when an NPC Heals another NPC – instead, the GM decides what happens. The GM can also decide that a minor NPC whose Strength is Broken simply dies.*

## CRITICAL INJURIES

Being Broken is always bad, but having your Strength or Wits Broken is especially dangerous – it can trigger long term effects and even cost you your life. The critical damage tables are found below. Roll D66 on the table for the type of damage you have suffered – physical (if your Strength is Broken), or mental (if your Wits is Broken).

## DEATH

If you suffer a critical injury listed as *fatal*, you must make a Death Roll when the listed time runs out. A Death Roll is a roll for Endure, using your full Strength score, modified by the number in the Fatal column. You are *not* allowed to push the roll. If the Death Roll fails, you die. If you succeed, you linger on but you must make another Death Roll when the same amount of time has passed.

**Broken:** If you are both Broken and have sustained a fatal critical injury (or several), two separate Heal rolls are needed: one to get you back on your feet, and another one to save your life. These two rolls can be made in whichever order you prefer.

**Instant Death:** Note that there are a small number of critical injuries that kill you outright. If you roll either of these, that's it. Time to create a new character.

## HEALING

Each critical injury has a specific effect that you suffer during the healing time indicated – measured in days.

**Care:** If someone manages to Heal you during the process of healing a critical injury, the remaining healing time is reduced by half. Any earlier roll to save your life does not count towards this – a new roll is required to reduce the healing time.

**Attribute Points:** Note that you can recover all your lost attribute points, but still suffer the effects of a critical injury.

## NON-TYPICAL DAMAGE

For some special types of physical damage – for example from fire, cold, starvation, etc. – the critical damage table is not used. Instead, the effects of being Broken by these forms of damage are described in the relevant rules section below.

## PUSHED DAMAGE

There is one case where you don't risk any critical injury when Broken: when you push a roll so hard that you break yourself. This is very rare, but it can happen. This means you can never kill yourself by pushing a roll.

## CRITICAL INJURIES - PHYSICAL

D66	INJURY	FATAL	TIME	EFFECTS	HEAL
11	Winded	No	–	None.	–
12	Stunned	No	–	None.	–
13	Crippling pain	No	–	None.	–
14	Sprained ankle	No	–	Move –2 and can't run until Heal roll is made.	–
15	Blood in eyes	No	–	Scout and Shoot –2 until Heal roll is made.	–
16	Concussion	No	–	Move –2.	D6
21	Severed ear	No	–	Scout –2.	D6
22	Broken toes	No	–	To run becomes a slow action.	D6
23	Broken hand	No	–	Can't use hand.	D6
24	Knocked out teeth	No	–	Manipulate –2.	D6
25	Impaled thigh	No	–	To run becomes a slow action.	2D6
26	Slashed shoulder	No	–	Can't use arm.	D6
31	Broken nose	No	–	Manipulate and Scout –1.	D6
32	Crotch hit	No	–	One point of damage at every roll for Move and Fight.	D6
33	Broken ribs	No	–	Move and Scout –2.	2D6
34	Gouged eye	No	–	Shoot and Scout –2.	2D6
35	Busted kneecap	No	–	Can't run, only crawl.	2D6
36	Broken arm	No	–	Can't use arm.	2D6
41	Broken leg	No	–	Can't run, only crawl.	2D6
42	Crushed foot	No	–	Can't run, only crawl.	3D6

43	Crushed elbow	No	-	Can't use arm.	3D6
44	Punctured lung	Yes	Day	Endure and Move -2.	D6
45	Bleeding gut	Yes	Shift	One point of damage at every roll for Move and Fight.	D6
46	Ruptured intestines	Yes	Shift	Disease with Virulence 6.	2D6
51	Busted kidney	Yes	Day	Can't run, only crawl, Move -2.	2D6
52	Severed arm artery	Yes -1	Turn	Can't use arm.	D6
53	Severed leg artery	Yes -1	Turn	To run becomes a slow action.	D6
54	Severed arm	Yes -1	Shift	Can't use arm.	Permanent
55	Severed leg	Yes -1	Shift	Can't run, only crawl.	Permanent
56	Cracked spine	No	-	Paralyzed from the neck down. If not given Healed in time, the effect is permanent.	3D6
61	Ruptured jugular	Yes -1	Round	Endure -1.	2D6
62	Ruptured aorta	Yes -2	Round	Endure -2.	3D6
63	Disemboweled	Yes	-	Instant death.	-
64	Crushed skull	Yes	-	Your story ends here.	-
65	Pierced head	Yes	-	You die immediately.	-
66	Impaled heart	Yes	-	Your heart beats for the last time.	-

## CRITICAL INJURIES - MENTAL

D66	TRAUMA	EFFECTS	HEAL
11-16	Trembling	Modification -1 to all rolls for Agility.	D6
21	White hair	None.	Permanent
22-24	Anxious	Modification -1 to all rolls for Wits.	D6
25-31	Sullen	Modification -1 to all rolls for Empathy.	D6
32-35	Nightmares	Make a Sense Emotion roll every Shift spent sleeping. Failure means that the sleep doesn't count.	D6
36-41	Nocturnal	You can only sleep during the light part of the day.	2D6
42-43	Phobic	You are terrified by something related to what Broke you. The GM decides what it is. You suffer one point of damage to Wits each round within Short range of the object of your phobia.	2D6
44-45	Alcoholic	You must drink alcohol every day, or suffer one point of damage to Agility.	3D6
46-51	Claustrophobic	Every Turn in a confined environment, you suffer one point of damage to Wits.	2D6
52	Mythomaniac	You cannot stop yourself from lying about everything. The effect should be roleplayed.	2D6
53-54	Paranoia	You are certain that someone is out to get you. The effect should be roleplayed.	2D6
55	Delusion	You are totally convinced of something that is totally untrue, for example that a certain color or item doesn't exist.	3D6
56	Hallucinations	Make a Sense Emotion roll every Shift. If you fail, you suffer a powerful hallucination. The GM determines the details.	3D6
61-62	Altered personality	Your personality is altered in a fundamental way. Determine how together with the GM. The effect should be roleplayed.	Permanent

63	Amnesia	You lose all memory, and cannot recollect who you or the other PCs are. The effect should be roleplayed.	D6
64-65	Catatonic	You stare blankly into oblivion, and do not respond to any stimuli.	D6
66	Heart attack	Your heart stops, and you die of pure fright.	-

## CONDITIONS

In the Year Zero Engine, there are four *conditions* your PC can suffer: Starving, Dehydrated, Exhausted, and Freezing. These can cause damage and block recovery. Mark conditions in the relevant check boxes on your character sheet.

### STARVING

You must eat a ration of food at least once every day, triggering a *Supply* roll for food. After a day without food, you become Starving. This has several effects:

- You cannot recover Strength in any way. You can recover other attributes.
- You suffer one point of damage to Strength per week. If your Strength is Broken while Starving, you die after another week without food.
- As soon as you have eaten, you are no longer Starving, and you can recover Strength normally.

### DEHYDRATED

You must drink a ration of water at least once per day, triggering a Supply roll for water. After a day without water, you become Dehydrated. This has several effects:

- You cannot recover any attributes. If you are Broken, you need to drink water to get back up again.
- You take one point of damage to both Strength and Agility every day. If either of your Strength or Agility are Broken while Dehydrated, you die after another day without water.
- As soon as you drink, you are no longer Dehydrated, and you can recover your attributes normally.

### EXHAUSTED

You need to sleep for at least one Shift each day. After one day without sleep, you become Exhausted. This has several effects:

- You cannot recover Wits. If your Wits are Broken while Exhausted, you must sleep for at least one Shift to get back up again.
- You take one point of damage to your Wits each day. If this damage breaks your Wits, you collapse and sleep for at least one Shift. You do *not* suffer a critical mental injury.
- As soon as you have slept for at least a Shift, you are no longer Exhausted, and you can recover Wits normally.

## FREEZING

In an environment without enough clothes or shelter, you become Freezing. Being Freezing has several effects:

- You cannot recover Strength or Wits. If you are Broken while Freezing, you must make a Death Roll the next time you would need to roll for the cold.
- You need to make Endure rolls at regular intervals. The colder it is, the more frequently you need to roll. If above freezing, once per day is enough. In sub-zero temperatures, roll once per Shift, and in extreme cold, you need to roll every Turn. If you fail, you suffer one point of damage to both Strength and Wits - as the cold seeps into your body and makes the blood run slower to your brain. You can even hallucinate, causing you to act irrationally - details are up to the GM to decide. Some say that when you are close to freezing to death, you feel a strong burning sensation that can make you tear your clothes off.
- After you have warmed up again, if only by a campfire, you are no longer Freezing and you can recover Strength and Wits normally.

## FIRE

A fire is measured in Intensity. A typical fire has Intensity 8. When exposed to fire, roll a number of Base Dice equal to the Intensity. For every success rolled, you suffer one point of damage. Armor can protect you.

If you take damage, you catch fire and continue to burn and suffer another attack at the start of each new Round. The Intensity increases by one each Round. As soon as a fire attack inflicts no damage, the fire goes out by itself. You, or a friend at Engaged range, can put out the fire with a successful Move roll (slow action).

If you are Broken by fire damage, or suffer fire damage when already Broken, you must make a Death Roll every Round until you die or you are saved by a Heal roll.

## EXPLOSIONS

The force of an explosion is measured in Blast Power. For each person within Short range of the blast when the detonation occurs, roll a number of Base Dice equal to the Blast Power. For every success rolled, the victim suffers one point of damage. The roll cannot be pushed. Victims at Engaged range from the detonation suffer one extra point of damage.

**Effect Radius:** Powerful charges, with a Blast Power of 7 or more, can harm people even at Medium range. The Blast Power is then reduced by 6. If there are many people within Medium range of the blast, the GM can simplify the process by rolling once and applying the result to all victims.

## FALLING

Falling on a hard surface automatically inflicts an amount of damage to you equal to the height of the fall (in meters) divided by 2, rounding all fractions down. In a controlled jump, roll Move – each success rolled reduces the damage done by one. Armor can also protect you from falling damage, but not if it is made of metal.

## DROWNING

All PCs are assumed to know how to swim. If you end up in water, you need to make an Endure roll every Turn to stay afloat. If you wear metal armor, you need to roll every Round.

If you sink, you need to make an Endure roll every Round to hold your breath. If you fail, you start to drown and suffer one point of damage to Strength every round until someone saves you. If you are Broken when drowning, you die after one Turn.

## POISON

Poisons are measured by Potency. A weak poison has Potency 3, a strong poison has Potency 6, and an extremely potent poison can have Potency 9 or even more. If you ingest poison in some manner, roll an opposed roll against the GM – she rolls a number of Base Dice equal to the Potency and you roll for Endure. If the poison wins, you suffer its full effect. If you win the roll, you only suffer the limited effect of the poison.

### LETHAL POISON

**Full Effect:** You take one point of damage to Strength each Round until you are Broken. Your critical injury counts as non-typical. If you drink an antidote in time, the effect of the poison is halted.

**Limited Effect:** You take one point of damage to Strength.

### PARALYZING POISON

**Full Effect:** You take one point of damage to Agility each round until you are Broken. If you drink an antidote in time, the effect of the poison is halted.

**Limited Effect:** You take one point of damage to Agility.

## SLEEPING POISON

**Full Effect:** You take one point of damage to Wits each round until you are Broken, at which time you fall unconscious for one Shift. You don't suffer a critical injury. If you drink an antidote in time, the effect of the poison is halted.

**Limited Effect:** You take one point of damage to Wits.

## HALLUCINOGENIC POISON

**Full Effect:** You take one point of damage to Empathy each round until you are Broken. If you drink an antidote in time, the effect of the poison is halted.

**Limited Effect:** You take 1 point of damage to Empathy.

## DISEASE

When exposed to a dangerous contagion or infection, you need to roll an opposed roll for Endure against the Virulence rating of the disease. This is called a sickness roll. A typical disease has a Virulence of 3, but there are diseases with much higher ratings. If you fail the roll, you fall Sick, which has several effects:

- The day after the infection the disease breaks, at which time you suffer one point of damage to both Strength and Agility.
- You can't recover your Strength or Agility while Sick.
- Make another sickness roll once per day. Each failed roll means you suffer another point of damage to both Strength and Agility.
- If your Strength is Broken when Sick, you die after another day if you don't get well before then.
- As soon as you succeed at a sickness roll, you are no longer Sick. Stop rolling sickness rolls and recover your attributes normally.

## MEDICAL AID

If you are cared for by someone during your sickness, this person can roll your sickness rolls instead of you. The healer rolls for their Heal skill against the Virulence of the disease.

## FEAR

Terrifying experiences, be it from fantastical creatures or mundane horrors, cause what is called fear attacks. A fear attack is rolled with a number of Base Dice. Each success rolled causes one point of damage to Wits. All fear attacks have Short range, unless stated otherwise. Some fear attacks target a

single victim, while other affect everyone within range.

## DARKNESS

When you are in complete darkness and lack night vision, you have no choice but to feel your way forward/around. To run in complete darkness requires a successful Move roll, and you generally take one point of damage if you fail that roll.

You can attack Engaged opponents normally in darkness, but you must first Scout successfully to be able to target them. This action takes no time in combat – you can Scout and then attack directly in the same round.

You cannot Shoot at targets at Medium range or more in total darkness. You can shoot opponents at Engaged or Short range, but only if you make a Scout roll first. All attacks in darkness are modified by -2.

## MOUNTS

A horse or other riding animal can be a useful asset. The animal can *carry* gear for you, and you can take advantage of being in the saddle during combat.

**Movement:** Riding animals allow you to move faster across the battlefield than if you are on foot. Every animal has a Movement Rate. This determines how many zones the animal can move with a fast action. Humanoids have Movement Rate 1 and most riding animals have Movement Rate 2.

Mounts generally can't move into Cramped zones at all. In Cluttered zones, their Movement Rate counts as 1.

**Move:** When you are on horseback and make a Move roll, use the animal's Agility instead of your own.

**Close Combat:** You can fight from horseback, but only with one-handed weapons. Opponents attacking you must decide if they attack you or the horse. Attacks against a mounted rider suffer a -1 penalty.

**Ranged Combat:** All ranged attacks from horseback suffer a -2 modification. Opponents shooting at you must decide if they attack you or the horse.

**Damage:** Your animal can suffer damage, just like you can, through attacks or by pushing rolls when you are using the animal's attribute score. Animals recover damage just like adventurers. An animal that has its Strength reduced to zero does not suffer a critical injury, instead it is considered perished. Animals generally don't have Wits or Empathy.



# APPENDIX I

## OPEN GAME LICENSE VERSION 1.0A

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; © "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game

Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

## 15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Year Zero Engine © 2019 by Fria Ligan AB. Developed, authored, and edited by Tomas Härenstam.

## OPEN CONTENT

All content in this document is considered open content.

# LICENSING THE YEAR ZERO ENGINE

In order to publish a product using the Year Zero Engine OGL, follow these simple steps:

1. Read the Open Game License text found [here](#).
2. Copy the OGL license text and include the full text somewhere in your product.
3. Use the text between the dotted lines below as the start of your Section 15 of the OGL.
4. Replace all of the [square bracketed text] with the specifics of your own product.
5. [Download](#) the Year Zero Engine logo and place it somewhere on your product.
6. If you like, you are welcome to offer your game for sale using the Free League Workshop, Free League's Community Content Program at DrivethruRPG.

---

## 15 COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Year Zero Engine © 2019 by Fria Ligan AB. Developed, authored, and edited by Tomas Härenstam.

[Name of this document or material] Copyright [Year], [Copyright Holder's Name]; Author[s]  
[Insert the name or names of the author or authors of this document]

In accordance with the Open Game License Section 8 "Identification" the following designate Open Game Content and Product Identity:

### OPEN GAME CONTENT

[Insert a clear designation of what parts of this document you are releasing as Open Game Content, making it eligible for use by others under the Open Game License. Note that existing Open Game Content must remain OGC. Example: "The contents of this document are declared Open Game Content except for the portions specifically declared as Product Identity."]

### PRODUCT IDENTITY

[Insert a clear explanation of what parts of this document are designated as Product Identity and hence excluded from the designation of Open Game Content. Examples: "All content of this document is Open Game Content" or "All artwork, logos, symbols, designs, depictions, illustrations, maps and cartography, likenesses, and other graphics, unless specifically identified as Open Game Content" or "Any elements of the proprietary setting, including but not limited to capitalized names, organization names, characters, historic events, and organizations; any and all stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, documents within the game worlds, quotes from characters or documents, and dialogue"]

---

## SOURCE

[Open Gaming License](#) at Free League Publishing  
Year Zero Engine OGL

From:

<https://www.weylan-yutani.com/> - **Weylan-Yutani Corporation**

Permanent link:

[https://www.weylan-yutani.com/year\\_zero\\_engine](https://www.weylan-yutani.com/year_zero_engine)

Last update: **2023/03/17 23:51**