

YEAR ZERO ENGINE

Year Zero Engine Standard Reference Document v1.0

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1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Year Zero. This document contains the core Year Zero Engine mechanics for tabletop roleplaying, used in several Free League games.

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 portray 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.

ABBREVIATIONS

PC = Player Character

NPC = Non-Player Character

GM = Gamemaster

YZE = Year Zero Engine

SRD = Standard Reference Document

YOU AND OTHERS

Most of the rules in this document are written in the second person - i.e., speaking to "you." Rules that apply to you also apply to others in the game, both PCs and NPCs, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

KEY FEATURES

The Year Zero Engine was originally developed as the ruleset 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. It is 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 any dice rolling, bookkeeping and calculations that don't move 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.

RISKS & REWARDS

In the Year Zero Engine, you can increase your chances significantly by pushing your roll - i.e. re-rolling the dice - but pushing 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.

THESE SIDEBARS

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

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.

DICE POOLS vs STEP DICE

Every Year Zero Game is different, but two main forks can be identified – the original dice pool variety (using pools of D6s) and the more recent step dice version (using a variety of polyhedral dice). Both versions are included in this SRD. When designing your game, you can choose whichever version you prefer.

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 YZE 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 the dice pool version YZE, preferably 10–15 of them, while the step dice version of YZE uses polyhedral dice, including D8, D10 and D12. Some rules variations require dice in different colors.

ROLLING DICE

The rules will sometimes ask you to roll D3, 2D6, D66, and D100. 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.

D100 means you roll two D10. The first represents the tens digit and the second the ones digit. A double zero counts as 100. 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 YZE 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 4.

MEASURING TIME

Three units are used to measure time in YZE games, depending on the situation at hand. See the adjacent table. The exact duration of a round, stretch and shift can vary depending on the situation. It's the GM's job to track time and determine when another round, stretch or shift has passed. There are typically four shifts in a day: morning, day, evening, and night.

UNIT OF TIME	DURATION	USED IN
Round	5-10 seconds	Combat
Stretch	5-10 minutes	Exploration
Shift	5-10 hours	Travel

PLAYING SAFELY

In YZE games, you are largely in control of the story, and with this comes responsibility. The player characters will face great danger and difficult challenges, but no player should find the situations they experience unpleasant or offensive. It is important that everyone around the gaming table is having fun and feeling safe.

Before starting the game, talk things through and see if someone wants certain subjects to be kept out of the game. Always respect a player who wants to pause and discuss what is happening in the game, or even leave the table if the player so chooses. And you may also want to talk about what happened after the game session.

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. 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 specialties 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 SRD does not include a character sheet, as any YZE game will need a sheet adapted to the specific rules version and game setting.

SEVEN 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. Determine your attributes.
3. Determine your skills.
4. Choose your starting specialty.
5. Determine your personality traits.
6. Pick your gear.
7. Choose a 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, skills, specialties, and starting gear.

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 their archetype. The archetype is just a starting point toward creating a unique player character.

ATTRIBUTES

Your character has four attributes that indicate your basic physical and mental capabilities. Your attributes are used when you roll dice to perform actions in the game, and also determine how much damage and stress can withstand before you become broken. Read more about this in Chapter 4.

- ✦ **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

DICE POOL ATTRIBUTES

In the dice pool version of YZE, human attribute scores range from 1 to 5. See the table below.

STARTING SCORES: Typically, you can distribute 14 points across your attributes. You can assign no less than 2 and no more than 5 points to any attribute.

KEY ATTRIBUTE: 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.

ATTRIBUTE	DESCRIPTION
5	Extraordinary
4	Capable
3	Average
2	Below Average
1	Feeble

STEP DICE ATTRIBUTES

In the step dice version of YZE, attributes are rated on a scale from A to D. Each attribute rating is connected to a specific die type. See the table below.

STARTING SCORES: You start with a baseline of C in all four attributes. You may then make three increases, of one step each, up to A. You can increase any attributes you want. You can gain one extra increase by decreasing one attribute from C to D.

DIE SIZE: A term sometimes used in the step dice rules text is “die size.” This simply means the highest possible result on a particular die type. The die size of a D6 is 6, the die size of a D8 is 8, etc.

ATTRIBUTE	DIE TYPE	DIE SIZE	DESCRIPTION
A	D12	12	Extraordinary
B	D10	10	Capable
C	D8	8	Average
D	D6	6	Feeble

HEALTH & RESOLVE

Your attributes determine how much damage and stress you can take before being broken and thus taken out of action. In some YZE games, this is measured by your Health and Resolve scores. Read more about how those work in Chapter 4.

DICE POOL RATINGS

- ♦ **HEALTH:** Your starting Health equals the average of your Strength and Agility scores, rounding fractions up, plus one.
- ♦ **RESOLVE:** Your starting Resolve equals the average of your Wits and Empathy scores, rounding up, plus one.

STEP DICE RATINGS

- ♦ **HEALTH:** Your starting Health equals the sum of the die size for your Strength and Agility scores divided by 4, rounding fractions up.
- ♦ **RESOLVE:** Your starting Resolve equals the sum of the die size for your Wits and Empathy scores divided by 4, rounding up.

VARIATIONS

There are other ways to manage damage and trauma within the Year Zero Engine, which don't require Health or Resolve scores at all. Two variants are described below: ♦ **JUST HEALTH:** Some YZE games have only a Health rating, not Resolve.

♦ **ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE:** You suffer damage directly on your attributes, reducing your effectiveness. You are broken if any attribute is reduced to zero.

♦ **CONDITIONS:** Each point of damage gives you a condition (page 21) and you are broken when you have suffered a set number of conditions.

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 in the YZE SRD, and they are all described in detail in Chapter 3. Some Year Zero Engine games have different or additional skills.

DICE POOL SKILLS

In the dice pool version of YZE, 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 SKILLS: Typically, you can distribute 10 points across your starting 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.

SKILL LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
5	Elite
4	Veteran
3	Experienced
2	Trained
1	Novice

STEP DICE SKILLS

In the step dice version of YZE, skill levels are measured on a scale from A to D just like attributes. Just like for attributes, each skill level is connected to a specific die type. See the table below.

NO SKILL LEVEL? You can generally roll for a skill even if you have no level at all in that skill – in that case, only use the associated attribute for the skill in question.

STARTING SKILLS: Choose one B level skill, two C level skills, and three D level skills. Your B level skill must typically be one listed by your archetype. You can choose your C and D level skills freely.

SKILL LEVEL	DIE TYPE	DIE SIZE	DESCRIPTION
A	D12	12	Elite
B	D10	10	Veteran
C	D8	8	Experienced
D	D6	6	Novice

SPECIALTIES

Specialties are tricks, moves and minor abilities that give you a small edge. In some Year Zero Engine games, they are instead called talents. Specialties are more narrow than skills and give you a way to fine-tune your character.

You can typically pick one specialty when creating your character, but your archetype determines which specialties you can choose from. You can learn more specialties during the course of the game.

You can find a few examples of specialties in Chapter 3 (page 8 and forward), but most specialties are tuned to the specific game and its setting.

PERSONALITY TRAITS

Year Zero Engine games use a variety of methods to give your PC unique personality traits beyond the numerical stats. Some examples follow below.

PRIDE: Something specific that defines your character and makes them stand out. It can be an ability, an event in your past, or something else. Once per game session, you may check your Pride to get one automatic success in a dice roll. You must justify how your Pride helps you.

WEAKNESS: An Achilles heel that can get you into trouble somehow. Your weakness adds depth and personality to your character and can also be used by the GM to create challenges for you. Roleplaying according to your weakness gives you extra XP at the end of the session.

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. Your Dark Secrets is primarily a tool for the GM to create stories with, but can also earn you extra XP you get after a game session.

BIG DREAM: This is your PC's main long-term goal in the game. 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 relationship with each of the other PCs, described with a short sentence for each. Your relationships are mainly used by the GM to create interesting challenges for you in the game.

BUDDY: The PC in the group that you feel closest to. Making a sacrifice or taking a big risk for your Buddy will earn you extra XP.

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 unhindered carry a number of regular items up to your carry limit, which is equal to double your Strength rating (dice pool system) or equal to your Strength die size (step dice system). Heavier items count as two, three or more regular items. Light items count as $\frac{1}{2}$ or even $\frac{1}{4}$ regular items.

BACKPACK: If you have a backpack, you can use it to carry an additional number of regular items equal to your carry limit. However, carrying a backpack gives you a -2 modifier on all Mobility skill rolls (page

12). The backpack itself does not affect your encumbrance.

TINY ITEMS: Items with negligible weight, that can be hidden in a closed fist, are called tiny. They are so small they don't affect your encumbrance at all. Tiny items still need to be listed on your character sheet.

MOUNTS & VEHICLES: If you have a horse or other mount, you can let it carry some of your gear. The animal can carry a number of regular items up to its own carry limit, and twice that number if you dismount and lead it. Vehicles can store even more gear.

ENCUMBRANCE VARIANTS

The YZE encumbrance rules can be modified according to the type of game. Two options follow below. **Weapons at Hand:** In this variant, you can have up to three hand-held weapons at hand, which means that they are kept in a sheath or holster or otherwise readily available for use in combat. Weapons kept at hand do not count toward your encumbrance. Any helmet or armor worn on your body also does not count toward your encumbrance. This variant reduces record-keeping. **NO ENCUMBRANCE:** If your YZE game is not focused on gear, you can do away with encumbrance rules

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. There are two main ways to manage consumables.

TRACKING: The obvious way to manage consumables is to simply track them on your character sheet. Write down every ration of food, arrow or bullet, and reduce the amount as they are used up. A ration of food, ten arrows, or 25 bullets typically count as $\frac{1}{4}$ of a regular item.

SUPPLY ROLLS: To emulate the scarcity of consumables without tracking each and every unit, you can use supply rolls. For each consumable in the game, you have a Supply rating. A higher rating is better. For encumbrance, each consumable counts as one regular item no matter the Supply rating.

At regular intervals (depending on the consumable in question), you need to make a supply roll. This means rolling a number of D6 equal to the current Supply rating – but never more than six dice. For each 1 rolled, the Supply rating is reduced by one. When the Supply rating reaches zero, you're out of the consumable.

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

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?
- ✦ Did you explore a new location?
- ✦ Did you defeat one or more dangerous adversaries?
- ✦ Did you overcome an obstacle without using force?
- ✦ Did you act according to your weakness / dark secret / big dream / relationships (page 6)?
- ✦ 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.

SPENDING XP

You can use your XP to improve your skills and specialties, 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 indicated in the tables on page 7. You can only increase a skill level one step at a time. Learning a new skill (at skill level 1/D) costs 5 XP.

In addition, to raise a skill level or gain a new skill, you must have used the skill and succeeded at least once since your last increase. Make a mark by the skill on the character sheet to indicate this. Only meaningful skill rolls where something is truly at stake count for this purpose. The GM has final say. As an alternative to making a skill roll, you can be instructed for one shift by a teacher with a higher skill level than you.

SPECIALTIES: Learning a specialty always costs 10 XP, but also requires a teacher – a PC or NPC who already knows the specialty – instructing you for at least one shift. After the shift, the teacher makes a Persuasion roll. If they fail, you learn nothing this shift. You keep your XP and the teacher can try again in another shift.

DICE POOL SKILL LEVEL INCREASE

TARGET LEVEL	XP COST
1	5
2	10
3	15
4	20
5	25

STEP DICE SKILL LEVEL INCREASE

TARGET LEVEL	XP COST
D	5
C	10
B	15
A	20

PERSONALITY TRAITS

After any session, you may change personality traits such as your pride, weakness, dark secret, big dream, and relationships. Try to connect the change to something that has happened during the course of the game.

3. SKILLS & SPECIALTIES

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

- ♦ Force (Strength)
- ♦ Melee (Strength)
- ♦ Stamina (Strength)
- ♦ Marksmanship (Agility)
- ♦ Mobility (Agility)
- ♦ Stealth (Agility)
- ♦ Crafting (Wits)
- ♦ Observation (Wits)
- ♦ Survival (Wits)
- ♦ Healing (Empathy)
- ♦ Insight (Empathy)
- ♦ Persuasion (Empathy)

OTHER SKILLS

Individual YZE games may have other skills than the ones listed here, and even more skills than twelve. We don't recommend more than 16 skills however. Skills should be fairly broad - fine-tuning of characters is done with specialties.

ROLL THE DICE

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

DICE POOL SKILL ROLLS

To roll for a skill in the dice pool version, 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. These are your base dice. Then roll all the dice together.

SUCCESS: To succeed with your action, you must roll at least one 6. A 6 is called a success. If you roll several 6s, you get several successes.

NO SKILL? If you don't have the skill required for the particular action you want to perform, you can roll anyway – simply roll the base dice for your attribute alone.

GEAR: Useful gear can give you extra base dice to roll.

STEP DICE SKILL ROLLS

To roll for a skill in the step dice version, grab two dice – one for your skill level and another for the base attribute that is connected to the skill. These two dice are called your base dice. The type of base dice to roll depends on your levels in the skill and attribute (page 5). Then roll your two base dice together.

SUCCESS: To succeed with your action, you must roll 6 or higher on at least one base die used in the roll. A roll of 6 or higher is called a success, and is marked in the rules with the eye symbol. A roll of 10 or higher on a single die (only possible with a D10 or D12) counts as two successes.

NO SKILL? If you don't have the skill required for the particular action you want to perform, you can roll anyway – simply roll the base die for your attribute alone.

GEAR: Gear can give positive modifiers (page 11) or even additional dice to roll.

MULTIPLE SUCCESSES

If you roll two or more successes, you reach your stated goal, but also gain some additional bonus effect, depending on the situation and the skill used. In combat, extra successes can increase the damage done. For other skills, you can suggest a bonus effect yourself. The GM has final say. Some suggestions:

- ✦ You act quickly.
- ✦ You act quietly.
- ✦ You help another character.
- ✦ You impress someone.

✦ You discover something unexpected.

MORE SUCCESSES: Rolling three or even more successes generally only matters in combat, where each additional will increase the damage done by one point.

THE ART OF FAILURE

If you roll no success, something goes wrong. For some reason, you failed to achieve your goal. Feel free to elaborate on why with the help of the GM. They 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 additional time, risk, or resources, but still a way. The GM has the final say regarding the consequences of failure in a particular situation.

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

CUSTOM DICE

Several YZE games have sets of custom dice available. These often have special symbols on the 1 and 6 sides, to make it easier to identify successes and banes.

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.

PUSHING YOUR ROLL

Your initial skill roll reflects a safe and controlled action. If you fail your initial roll, or if you want additional successes, you can lean into the action, giving it everything you've got, pushing yourself to the limit.

This is called pushing the roll, and lets you re-roll any dice that don't show the result of 1. A base die showing a 1 is called a bane and can never be re-rolled when pushing. After a push, you cannot change back to the previous result. All dice count after the push, even any dice you didn't re-roll.

COST OF PUSHING

Pushing always comes with a risk or a cost. These vary greatly depending on the game and the version of

the YZE you use. The push mechanic is generally the best place to highlight the core themes of an YZE game. Several options follow below.

DAMAGE & STRESS: After a pushed roll, you immediately suffer one point of damage (if you rolled for Strength or Agility) or one point of stress (if you rolled for Wits or Empathy) for each bane (1) rolled on your base dice. If this damage or stress breaks you, this happens after the action is resolved.

As an option, when using a weapon or a tool of some sort, the tool suffers damage (or reduced durability) instead of you.

Note that this pushing version works best in the step dice version of YZE, as having more dice to roll in a dice pool will increase the risk of suffering damage or stress when pushing.

ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE: For each bane (1) rolled on your base dice after a pushed roll, you immediately suffer one point of damage directly on the attribute rolled for. Only the base dice from the attribute count, not base dice from skills or gear. For this reason, you should preferably have base dice of separate colors for attributes, skills, and gear. For each bane rolled for a piece of gear in a pushed roll, the bonus from the gear is reduced by one step. If this damage or stress breaks you or your gear, this happens after the action is resolved. Note that this pushing version requires attribute damage (page 20).

In some YZE games using attribute damage, rolling banes on base dice can also have positive effects – it gives you the force of will required to use special abilities like magic (see Chapter 5). For every point of attribute damage you suffer from pushing, you gain a Willpower Point (WP). The WP are required to use your special abilities.

STRESS DICE: When you push a roll, you immediately take one stress point. When making skill rolls, including the immediate re-roll when pushing, add a number of stress dice to your roll equal to your current amount of stress points.

Stress dice are D6s that are added to your roll and sixes on them count as successes, meaning the built-up stress actually increases your chances to succeed, as it makes you more sharp and alert. However, if you roll a bane on one or more stress dice (even in the initial roll, without pushing), you trigger a roll on a panic table or some other unwanted effect. You can find a sample panic table on page 10.

Stress is typically relieved – all stress points removed – after a stretch of rest in a (reasonably) safe location. The pushing version works very well in horror-oriented games.

CONDITIONS: When pushing a roll, you immediately suffer a condition of some sort, such as Exhausted, Angry, or Scared. For each condition you haven't, you suffer a negative modification on some or all skill rolls. Conditions also work as cues for roleplaying. This push version is suitable for rules-light narrative games. See page 21 for more on conditions.

DOOM POINTS: Every time you push a roll, the GM gets one Doom Point. The Doom Points can be used by the GM to trigger misfortunes or obstacles for you at any time, such as your weapon misfiring, you dropping something, or your enemy getting reinforcements. Note that the list of what Doom Points can be used for must be very clear and known to all players, as the line otherwise will be blurry between Doom Points and what the GM does anyway to challenge your character.

SAMPLE PANIC TABLE

Roll a D6 and add your current amount of stress points. Effects last until all stress is relieved.

RESULT	EFFECT
1-6	Keeping it Together. You manage to keep your nerves in check. Barely.
7	Nervous Twitch. You and all PCs in Short range gain a stress point.
8	Tremble. You tremble uncontrollably. All skill rolls using Agility suffer a –2 modifier.
9	Drop Item. You drop a weapon or other important item – the GM decides which one.
10	Freeze. You're frozen by fear or stress for one round, losing your next turn.
11	Seek Cover. You must use your next action to move away from danger and find a safe spot if possible. You must make a retreat roll (page 17) if you have an enemy at Engaged range. You lose one stress point, but all other PCs in Short range gain one stress point. After one round, you can act normally.
12	Scream. You scream for one round, losing your next turn. You lose one stress point, but every PC who hears your scream must make an immediate panic roll.
13	Flee. You must flee to a safe place and refuse to leave it. You won't attack anyone and won't attempt anything dangerous. You lose one stress point, but every PC who hears your scream must make an immediate panic roll.
14	Berserk. You must immediately attack the nearest person or creature, friendly or not. You won't stop until you or the target is broken. Every PC who witnesses your rampage must make an immediate panic roll.
15+	Catatonic. You collapse to the floor and can't talk or move, staring blankly into oblivion.

PASSIVE ROLLS

You can only push skill rolls when you actively perform an action. When passive or unaware, for example when rolling Observation to see if you spot a sneaking enemy, you cannot push the roll.

ONLY ONCE

You can only push a skill roll once. If you don't succeed on your second try, you are stuck dealing with the consequences.

WHAT PUSHING MEANS

How a pushed roll plays out in story terms depends on what skill you are using. It can take the form of a great physical exertion, total mental focus, or emotional strain.

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.

MODIFIERS

Sometimes, external factors help you to succeed. Such modifiers will give you additional base dice to roll (in the dice pool version) or step your base dice to bigger dice (in the step dice version). Other times, something hampers your action. This removes base dice from your pool (dice pool version) or downsteps your base dice (step dice).

You can get such modifiers to skill rolls in several different ways: specialties, the difficulty of the action itself, and help from others.

DICE POOL MODIFIERS

A +1 modifier means you roll one extra base die, +2 means you roll two extra base dice, and so on. A –1 modifier means you roll one base die fewer than normal, –2 means two fewer, and so on. Several modifiers can apply to the same roll, and they are cumulative.

Always add and remove base dice from your skills, if you can (not from attributes or gear). If you don't have enough dice from skills, remove base dice from gear. If you run out of gear dice as well, remove base dice from attributes. If you end up with no dice at all, you have no chance to succeed – time to rethink your strategy!

STEP DICE MODIFIERS

A +1 modifier means upgrading a base die one step, a +2 modifier means upgrading two steps, and so on. A –1 modifier means downgrading a base die one step, –2 means two steps down, and so on. Several modifiers can apply to the same roll, and they are cumulative.

When stepping up and down, always try to balance your dice as much as possible – i.e. step up a lower base die first, and downstep a higher base die. You can never go above two D12s, no matter what modifiers you have. To downstep past two D6s, remove one die. You can never go below one D6. If you lack a skill level and start with just a single base die, step up by adding a D6 (as one step up) and step it up further as needed.

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 adjacent table for guidance.

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

SPECIFIC MODIFIERS: 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 negotiation position when you attempt to Persuade someone. Some specialties also give you a positive modifier in certain situations.

ADVANTAGE/DISADVANTAGE

In the step dice version of YZE, you can use an advantage/ disadvantage rule instead of numerical modifiers to a skill roll. It's faster but less detailed, and thus works best in a rules light system. For this system to work, all PCs need a minimum skill level of D in all skills. To use this system, consider any positive modifier (regardless of its magnitude) in this SRD an advantage, and any negative modifier a disadvantage.

ADVANTAGE: When you have an advantage, you add a third base die to your roll, of the same type as your lower die. This means you roll three dice instead of two, counting all successes. You can push the roll normally.

DISADVANTAGE: When you have a disadvantage, you must remove your lower base die. This means you'll be rolling just one die instead of two. You can push the roll normally.

CUMULATIVE: If you have both an advantage and a disadvantage, they cancel each other out. If you have several advantages or disadvantages, one advantage cancels out one disadvantage.

JUST ONE: After balancing advantages against disadvantages as per above, you can never roll for more than one advantage or disadvantage – if you have several, it still counts as just a single one.

HELP FROM OTHERS

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

For each person helping you, you get a +1 modifier. No more than three people can help you with a single roll, meaning your maximum modifier from getting help 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 success isn't enough to succeed with your skill roll. In some cases, you must beat your opponent in an *opposed roll*. To win an opposed roll, you must roll more successes than your adversary. Every success rolled by your adversary eliminates one of your successes. Only you (the active party) can push your roll – and you can decide to do so even after your opponent rolls.

Sometimes you and your adversary roll for different skills, sometimes the same. Opposed can be used when you roll Persuasion versus Insight to influence someone who is actively trying to resist you, or Stealth versus Observation to move undetected past a vigilant guard.

The GM can also use opposed rolls in any case when they deem it appropriate.

TIES: If you and your opponent roll the same number of successes, the result is a tie. Typically, your action will fail if you roll a tie as the active party in an opposed roll, but in some cases, ties have specific effects. If a tie needs to be broken, reroll the opposed roll to determine the outcome.

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

Gear can take many different forms depending on the setting of the game, and often includes weapons. Some example weapons are listed on page 20. Useful gear can give you a positive modifier to skill rolls. This is called a gear bonus. Not all YZE games have this.

DICE POOL DEGRADING GEAR BONUS

In dice pool YZE games with attribute damage (page 20), the gear bonus works like an attribute for the gear, and can be reduced when pushing a skill roll. For every bane (1) you roll on your base dice from gear when pushing, 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. The gear bonus of an item can be

reduced by external damage as well.

STEP DICE GEAR RELIABILITY

In step dice YZE games, gear can have reliability ratings. Each point of damage from pushing rolls or outside force reduces the reliability rating by 1. When it reaches zero, the item is broken and can no longer be used. A typical piece of sturdy, mechanical gear in good condition has a reliability rating of 5, but delicate or badly built gear can start with a lower rating.

REPAIRING GEAR

Damaged gear can be repaired. It takes a Shift of work and a successful Crafting skill roll. If the roll is successful, the gear bonus / reliability is recovered by one point for every success rolled, up to the starting score. If the roll fails, the gear bonus / reliability is permanently decreased to its current score. If the gear bonus / reliability has been reduced to zero and the attempt at repair fails, the item is permanently destroyed. Some items can require specialized tools, spare parts, or specialties to repair.

DICE POOL ARTIFACT DICE

You can use polyhedral dice even in a dice pool YZE game, as 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

Artifact dice are added to your pool, and any result of 6 or higher counts as a success. Results of 10 or higher counts as two successes. Artifact dice are never lost due to wear, but an item with artifact dice is still unusable if its gear bonus is reduced to zero.

THE SKILLS

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

FORCE (STRENGTH)

When something heavy or solid blocks your way and you need to lift, push, or break it, roll for Force. Use this skill for any feat of strength.

MELEE (STRENGTH)

Sometimes, you need to fight for your life, hand-to-hand with your opponent. Roll for this skill when you attack someone or defend yourself using only your body or a melee weapon. Read more about close combat and damage in Chapter 4.

STAMINA (STRENGTH)

When your physical endurance or vigor is tested, roll for Stamina. For example, this skill is used to survive under water or to resist a deadly poison. You also roll Stamina to stay alive when you have suffered a lethal critical injury.

MARKSMANSHIP (AGILITY)

Use the Marksmanship skill to fire all types of range weapons. Read more about ranged combat in Chapter 4.

MOBILITY (AGILITY)

Roll for Mobility when you want to perform any action that requires speed or motor control – be it a risky climb, a dangerous jump, or a foot chase after a fleeing enemy (page 27).

STEALTH (AGILITY)

Roll for Stealth when trying to sneak past someone, staying undetected, or picking someone's pocket. If your opponent is actively looking for you, it's an opposed roll against their Observation. If not, it's just a straight skill roll. Each of the following external factors gives you a +1 modifier to the roll:

- ✦ You blend into your surroundings.
- ✦ The area is dark or dimly lit.
- ✦ The area is crowded or noisy.
- ✦ Your opponent is distracted by something.

Each of the following factors gives you a –1 modifier to the roll:

- ✦ You stand out against the surroundings.
- ✦ There is nothing to hide behind.

CRAFTING (WITS)

The Crafting skill is primarily used to repair broken gear or building new items, but it can also be used to understand or operate mechanical constructions. Repairing a broken item typically takes a shift of work

(see Gear on page 11). The exact uses of this skill vary depending on the specific game setting.

OBSERVATION (WITS)

The Observation skill can be used to examine an area to find useful information or to spot something or someone from a distance. When the GM calls for it, you can make a passive roll for this skill to detect an approaching threat in time. When examining an area, the GM can give you a positive modifier if your description of where you are searching is very precise, or even let you succeed without a roll.

SURVIVAL (WITS)

Year Zero Engine games often take place in harsh and dangerous environments. Roll for Survival 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. Read more in Chapter 6.

HEALING (EMPATHY)

In many YZE games, your PC risks getting hurt. This is when the Healing skill is useful. It can be used to get a broken character back on their feet, or even save their life if they suffered a critical injury. Read more on page 22.

INSIGHT (EMPATHY)

This skill represents the ability to read other people and see through lies. Roll for Insight to assess an NPC's mood. If you succeed, the GM must reveal the NPC's current, most powerful emotion – hate, fear, contempt, love, etc. If you roll several successes, you can also determine if an NPC is lying – but not exactly what they are lying about or what the truth is. The Insight skill can also be used in opposed rolls to resist Persuasion (below).

PERSUASION (EMPATHY)

Sometimes, you can make things go your way without resorting to violence. Instead, you trick or convince your opponents without drawing your weapon. For this, you use the Persuasion skill. If your opponent is actively trying to resist you, it's an opposed roll against their Insight. If not, it's a straight roll.

Before you roll, you must state the stakes of the roll – what you want to achieve. What you ask of your opponent must be within reason. No NPC will agree to do anything you want or act directly against their own interests, no matter how good your roll is. Conversely, you don't need to roll for simple requests that your opponent has no reason to resist. The GM has the final say on when Persuasion rolls can or need to be used.

BEING PERSUADED: Generally, Persuasion is only used against NPCs, not PCs. When NPCs or other PCs try to talk you into something, it's up to you how you react.

INTERROGATION: When you interrogate a prisoner to gain information, roll against their Stamina instead of their Insight. You get a +1 modifier to your roll for your opponent being held captive. As opposed to normal persuasion, interrogation can be used against PCs – actually forcing you to disclose information whether you as a player want to or not.

PERSUADING A GROUP: When you want to Persuade a whole group, you usually address the group's leader or spokesperson.

NEGOTIATING POSITION

Your chances of Persuading someone are affected by your negotiating position. Each of the following factors gives you +1 modifier to the roll:

- ✦ **Your request doesn't cost your opponent anything.**
- ✦ **Your opponent has suffered damage or stress.**
- ✦ **Your opponent is in custody or held captive by you.**
- ✦ **You have helped your opponent previously.**
- ✦ **You present your case very well (determined by the GM).**

Each of the following factors gives you a –1 modifier to the roll:

- ✦ **Your opponent must take a serious risk or make a sacrifice to help you.**
- ✦ **Your opponent has nothing to gain by helping you.**
- ✦ **You are held captive by your opponent.**
- ✦ **You are having trouble hearing or understanding each other.**

SPECIALTIES

While attributes and skills give you the broad strokes of your competency, specialties represent specific areas of expertise. Specialties are unique tricks and talents that give you an edge and keep your adversaries guessing.

You typically start the game with just one or a few specialties, with your choice limited by your archetype. You can learn more specialties during the game (page 7), without being limited by your archetype.

This section includes a limited number of general specialties, as the selection of specialties in a specific game are closely tailored to its setting and theme. The specialties listed here should be considered

examples only.

TIERED SPECIALTIES

In most YZE games, specialties are not rated - you either have them or you don't. Some games, however, have specialties tiered in ranks - usually three. Each rank gives you additional bonuses or effects. Tiered specialties give the game more complexity and "crunch." Low-crunch games don't even need specialties at all.

BODYGUARD

If someone within Short range of you is hit by an attack, you can dive in to take the hit. Roll for Mobility. 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.

FIELD SURGEON

You know the delicate art of stopping a wound from bleeding or treating grave injuries. You get a +1 modifier to Healing 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 Observation using Empathy instead of Wits to detect an approaching threat.

HARDENED

Your maximum Resolve score is increased by 1. You can take this specialty up to three times.

HARD HITTER

You get a +1 modification to Melee Combat 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 roll twice and choose the result you want.

LUCKY

No matter what horrible situations you end up in, you always seem to make it out unscathed. When you suffer a critical injury, 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 Persuasion using Strength instead of Empathy when you threaten someone.

MERCILESS

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

MUSICIAN

You get a +1 modifier to all Persuasion rolls in situations where singing or playing an instrument is helpful. The GM has final say.

WILLPOWER SPECIALTIES

Some Year Zero Engine games include specialties that require Willpower Points to use (page 30). Such specialties are typically reserved for specific archetypes or character classes.

PACK MULE

Your carry limit is increased by +2.

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, you can get back on your feet immediately. Roll for Stamina. You cannot push the roll. For every success you roll, you get one point of Health or Resolve back (or attribute point, if using attribute damage). You can only use this specialty once while broken, and it has no effect against critical injuries.

SNIPER

You get a +1 modifier to Marksmanship rolls when firing a single shot (not full auto) at Long range or more, from a hidden position.

TOUGH

Your maximum Health score is increased by 1. You can take this specialty up to three times.

TRUE GRIT

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

WEAPON SPECIALIST

You're an expert at using a certain type of weapon. When you use this type of weapon, you get a +1 modifier. You can choose this specialty several times, once for each weapon type. You can be a specialist at fighting unarmed.

MAGIC SPECIALTIES

In YZE games that include magic, each discipline of magic is typically a specialty of its own. Such specialties of magic are usually tiered (page 13) and use Willpower Points (page 30).

4. 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 where your characters happen to find themselves fighting for their lives.

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 Mobility when you move into the zone. Failure means you manage to get into the zone, but you fall down.

DIMLY LIT: The zone is dimly lit. Observation rolls in the zone get a -2 modifier. Ranged attacks into the zone also suffer a -2 modifier, 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 adjacent table.

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

ROUNDS & INITIATIVE

Combat is played out in rounds, each roughly 5–10 seconds long. When combat begins, the first step is to determine who has the initiative. Do this before anyone rolls dice for an action.

DRAWING INITIATIVE

Grab ten cards, numbered 1 through 10. A suit of any normal deck of cards works fine if you remove the

face cards and count the ace as 1.

Each player taking part in the conflict, either voluntarily or involuntarily, draws a card and the GM draws one card for each NPC (or group). This is called drawing the initiative. The number on the card determines the order in which you act in the conflict. Participants act in order from lowest to highest number,

beginning with card #1, until everyone has taken their turn. Place your initiative card by your character sheet, so everyone can see in which order you all act. The GM places their initiative card(s) 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 initiative is only done once, at the start of the first round.

SURPRISE

If you initiate combat with an attack that the GM deems fully surprising, you get to choose any initiative you want instead of drawing a random card. All other combatants – including others on your side – draw initiative normally. Also see Ambushes (page 17).

EXCHANGING INITIATIVE

During a fight, you can exchange your initiative card – and thus your initiative – with another player character or NPC, whose turn has not yet come up in the current round (if such a character exists). This must be declared on your turn, before you perform any action.

The other character cannot resist this exchange, and must take their turn immediately. A character is not allowed to immediately exchange their initiative when just given a new one. They may, however, exchange this new initiative in the following Round.

HIDDEN INITIATIVE

As an alternative rule to create more uncertainty, you can keep initiative cards secret. The GM then calls out initiative numbers, starting at #1, and each combatant shows their card and performs their actions once their number comes up. In this variant, the initiative must be drawn again at the start of each round.

YOUR TURN

The point in the initiative order at which you act is called your turn. The phrase “your next turn” means the next upcoming point in the initiative order at which you normally act, whether that happens to be in

the current round or the next round (if your turn in the current Round has already passed). The phrase “your previous turn” means your latest previous point in the initiative order, whether it was in the current round or the previous round.

NPC INITIATIVE

For a group of NPCs with identical stats, the GM can, if they want, draw one initiative card for the group instead of one per individual. All the NPCs in that group act at the same point in the round order. In what order they act individually within the group is up to the GM.

MARK YOUR ACTIONS

Because helping and reactive actions occur out of turn, it can be hard to keep track of how many actions the combatants have performed. 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. All actions are refreshed at the start of each round.

SLOW & FAST ACTIONS

On your turn, you can perform one slow action and one fast action, or two fast actions. See the lists of typical slow and fast actions on page 16.

FREE ACTIONS: Dropping to the ground or shouting a few words are called free actions – they don’t count toward your two actions for the round, but you can only do them on your own turn.

DESCRIBE YOUR ACTIONS

When it’s your turn to act, simply state which actions you wish to perform and roll dice if needed to see if you are successful. Some actions will give your opponent the opportunity to perform a reactive action that breaks the turn order.

HELPING OTHERS

If you wish to help another player character or NPC perform an action (page 11), it costs you one action of the same kind (slow or fast). You must state you are trying to help someone before any dice are rolled. Helping others occurs out of turn, i.e. it breaks the initiative order in the round.

SLOW ACTIONS

ACTION	PREREQUISITE	SKILL
Crawl	You are prone	—
Close combat attack	—	Melee
Shoot ranged weapon	Ranged weapon	Marksmanship
Reload	Firearm	—
First aid	Broken or dying victim	Healing
Persuade	Your opponent can hear you	Persuasion

FAST ACTIONS

FAST ACTION	PREREQUISITE	SKILL
Run	No Engaged enemy	Mobility (in cluttered zone)
Move through door/hatch	—	—
Get up	You are prone	—
Draw weapon	—	—
Block attack	Attacked in close combat	Melee
Grapple attack	You've grappled an opponent	Melee
Retreat	Engaged enemy	Mobility
Aim	Ranged weapon	—
Seek cover	Cover in same zone	—
Enter/exit vehicle	Vehicle	—
Start engine	Vehicle	—
Grab the wheel	Vehicle	—
Drive	Vehicle	Mobility
Use item	Varies	Varies

MOVEMENT

To move during combat, you can spend a fast action to move 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 move, unless it's into a Cluttered zone.

CRAWLING: Moving while prone, i.e. crawling, is 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 (page 17).

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 (page 21).

CHASES: In chases, on foot or using vehicles, movement is also managed differently. See page 27.

VEHICLES: Movement for vehicles is handled with special rules. Read more on page 26.

RETREAT

If you have an active enemy at Engaged range and there is no barrier between you, you must make a Mobility roll to move away from your adversary. If you fail, you still move but your enemy gets an immediate, free close combat attack against you. The free attack occurs out of turn order and it doesn't count toward their actions in the round. You cannot block it.

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 sneak up on someone undetected and perform an attack, it is called a sneak attack. First you make a Stealth roll. Moving close enough to attack in melee combat (Engaged range) gives you a -2 modifier. If you fail, the enemy notices you - draw initiative.

If you succeed, your attack counts as surprising, which means that you can choose any initiative card you want. For a close combat sneak attack, you also get a +3 modifier, and the target cannot block the attack. Sneak attacks are always performed individually, by one attacker against one target.

AMBUSH: A special kind of sneak attack is an ambush - lying in wait for an enemy and attacking as it passes by. In this case, each victim makes an Observation roll to spot the ambush, with a -2 modifier if the attackers are well prepared. All those who fail get the bottom cards (counting from #10 and up), randomly drawn.

CLOSE COMBAT

When you attack in close combat, use the Melee skill. Close combat happens at Engaged range from your target. There can be no barrier between you and your target. If there is, you must first cross the barrier. Cover has no effect against close combat attacks.

DAMAGE: If your roll succeeds, you hit your adversary and inflict your weapon's base damage rating on them. Each extra success will increase the damage by 1.

STANCE: If you are prone, your close combat attacks get a -2 modifier. Getting up is a fast action. Close combat attacks against a prone target get a +2 modifier.

DEFENSELESS TARGET: If you attack a defenseless or unaware target, you get a +3 modifier. This is not further increased if the target is prone.

SPECIAL ATTACKS

In close combat, you might want to achieve a different result than simply hurting your opponent. This must be declared before you roll any dice, and it can only be done if you fight unarmed.

- ✦ You wrestle a hand-held item from your opponent's grasp. You can keep the item or throw it into an adjacent zone as part of the attack.
- ✦ You trip your opponent to the ground.
- ✦ You push your opponent to Short range.
- ✦ You pin your enemy in a tight clinch. See Grappling, below.

GRAPPLING: If you successfully grapple your opponent, 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 Melee 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.

DIVING BLOW: If you, in a single round, first move into Engaged range of an enemy and then attack them with an unarmed blow, you get a +2 modifier to the attack. This is called a diving blow. If the attack hits, you inflict damage normally, and both you and the target fall prone. If the attack fails, only you fall to the ground.

BLOCKING

When an enemy attacks you in close combat, you can roll for Melee to block their attack to avoid being hit. This is a fast action. You must declare that you are attempting to block the attack before the attacker rolls for their strike. This effectively turns the attack into an opposed roll (page 11). Every success you roll eliminates one from the attacker's roll. Excess successes have no effect.

BLOCKING UNARMED: If you are unarmed, you can only block unarmed attacks from other humanoids. 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.

ACTIONS: Blocking breaks the turn order, but it does count against your two available actions in the round (one slow and one fast). For every block you perform, you get one less action when it is your turn, and once you have used both your actions during the round for blocks, you can no longer block further attacks. All actions are refreshed at the beginning of each new round. You can save unused actions to block later in the round, but never from one round to the next.

CLOSE COMBAT MODIFIERS

FACTOR	MODIFIER
Attacker prone	−2
Target prone	+2
Defenseless target	+3

FACTOR	MODIFIER
Diving blow	+2

RANGED COMBAT

To attack someone with a hand-held ranged weapon, roll for Marksmanship, except for thrown weapons, which use Mobility. To draw a weapon is a fast action, while firing a weapon is a slow action.

DAMAGE: If your attack succeeds, you hit your target and inflict your weapon's base damage rating on them. Each extra success increases the damage by 1.

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 $+2$ modifier to the attack. Firing at a small object, such a hatch or a hand-held item, gives a -2 modifier.

UNSEEN TARGET: If you can't see your target (because of darkness or cover) but still have a good idea of where they are, you can still fire, but with a -2 modifier.

AIMED FIRE

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.

TELESCOPIC SIGHT: If your weapon has a telescopic sight, you can aim as a slow action and get a further $+1$ bonus (for a total of $+3$). Note that you cannot slow aim and fire in the same round.

RANGED FIRE MODIFIERS

FACTOR	MODIFIER
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

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 every bullet, handle ammunition via supply rolls (page 7), or use the more extensive ammo dice system (see the sidebar on page 19). 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, depend on the level of complexity you want. A basic version follows below. For more complex rules, see the sidebar for ammo dice.

BASIC AUTOFIRE: A burst of auto fire counts as a normal ranged attack, but if you hit, you may immediately make another attack against the same target or a different one. If you hit again, you may make a third attack. Even if this also hits, you don’t get more attacks. After all attacks are resolved, you must make a supply roll (page 7) for ammunition.

AMMO DICE

If you want more detail and complexity for managing firearms, you can use the ammo dice system. Ammo dice are always D6s, and should have a separate color from base dice. In this system, all firearms have a rate of fire (RoF) rating, from 2 for a typical pistol to 5 or 6 for full-auto weapons. You can add as many ammo dice to your attack as you like, from zero up to RoF or the number of rounds left in the magazine minus one, whichever is lower. For example, if you have three rounds left, you can add up to two ammo dice. If you have only one round left, you cannot add any ammo dice to our roll. In this case, or if you choose to use no ammo dice, only one (1) round of ammunition is used in the attack. Rolling a 6 on an ammo die is a success just like with a D6 base die,

but successes on ammo dice do not contribute to hitting your target. Instead, if your attack hits (checking only the base dice), each success your ammo dice can be used to either increase the damage by one step or to trigger an additional hit on the same target or on a secondary target in the same zone. Each additional hit inflicts base damage and the damage is increased by one for each further success you spend on it. After your roll, you sum up the D6 digits on all of your ammo dice, then add one (1) to the result. This sum is the total amount of ammunition you have spent on the attack. If the sum on your ammo dice is equal to or more than the number of rounds you have left in the magazine, your magazine is completely emptied.

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 Marksmanship 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 until you break it, or any of the following occurs:

- ✦ You perform any action other than overwatch fire.
- ✦ You are attacked in close combat.
- ✦ You suffer damage.

WEAPONS

Using a weapon will greatly improve your effectiveness in combat. The table below describes 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 any bonus base dice you get when using the weapon. This bonus can be reduced by damage or by pushing rolls (page 9). If the bonus is reduced to zero, the weapon breaks and needs to be repaired using the Crafting skill.

DAMAGE: Indicates your base damage rating, i.e. how many points of damage your opponent suffers if your attack is successful. If you roll extra successes, you deal additional damage.

RANGE: Indicates the maximum range category at which the weapon can be used.

WEIGHT: Indicates how many regular items the weapon counts as in the inventory list.

OTHER RATINGS

In some YZE games, weapons have additional ratings. Examples are listed below:

✦ **CRIT THRESHOLD:** If you inflict damage equal to or in excess of the Crit threshold in a single attack, you inflict a critical injury (page 21) on the target, even if they are not broken by the damage.

✦ **CRIT DIE:** In some YZE systems, the weapon indicates which die roll to roll to determine which critical injury is inflicted.

✦ **RATE OF FIRE:** This rating is used for the ammo dice rules for firearms (page 19).

WEAPONS

WEAPON	GRIP	BONUS	DAMAGE	RANGE	WEIGHT
Unarmed	—	—	1	Engaged	—
Blunt instrument	1H	+1	1	Engaged	1
Knife	1H	+1	2	Engaged	½
Club	1H	+2	1	Engaged	1
Sword	1H	+2	2	Engaged	1
Battleaxe	2H	+2	3	Engaged	2
Spear	1H	+1	2	Short	1
Rock	1H	—	1	Medium	¼
Sling	1H	+1	1	Medium	½
Bow	2H	+1	1	Long	1
Pistol	1H	+2	2	Medium	½
Rifle	2H	+2	2	Long	1

DAMAGE & STRESS

Damage and stress to characters is managed differently in different versions of the YZE. It can reduce your Health and Resolve scores, directly reduce your attributes, or give you conditions (page 21).

SUFFERING DAMAGE & STRESS

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

- ♦ **PUSHING:** How pushing rolls can inflict damage and stress is described on page 9. Armor has no effect against damage from pushing.
- ♦ **ATTACKS:** Whenever you attack someone in combat, you inflict damage equal to the base damage rating of the weapon, plus one additional point of damage for each extra success rolled beyond the first. The same goes for damage from explosions, fire, etc.
- ♦ **STRESSFUL SITUATIONS:** When your PC is subjected to fear or a stressful situation, the GM determines the potential stress inflicted (see the table on page 20). You then make an Insight roll (not an action) – each success rolled eliminates one point of potential stress. You can push the roll, but at the risk of suffering even more stress if you get any on the re-roll.

ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE

In some YZE games, damage is inflicted directly on your core attributes. When pushing a roll, you suffer damage to the attribute rolled for. Only base dice from the attribute count, not from skills. Physical attacks typically reduce your Strength, but some phenomena can target the other attributes as well. In a game using attribute damage, “damage” means damage to Strength unless otherwise specified. Games with attribute damage don’t use the term “stress” – instead, stressful situations inflict damage to your Wits.

STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

FACTOR	STRESS
Being threatened with violence	1
Seeing a friendly character suffer a lethal critical injury	1
Seeing something unnatural	1
Seeing a friendly character die	2
Being interrogated	2
Facing a frightening supernatural being	2
Witnessing a massacre	3
Being tortured	3
Witnessing a horrible supernatural event	3

BODY ARMOR

Body armor can protect you from damage. 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. In a dice pool YZE game, this is a numerical value. In a step dice system, this is a rating from A to D just like attributes and skills (page 5).

When you suffer damage from a physical attack, roll a number of base dice equal to the armor rating (dice pool) or two base dice corresponding to the armor rating (step dice). Every success you roll decreases the damage by one. This roll does not count as an action and cannot be pushed.

DEGRADING ARMOR: If any damage penetrates your armor, its armor rating is decreased – every bane you rolled reduces the armor rating by one step. If the armor absorbs all the damage, any banes rolled have no effect. Armor can be repaired by using the Crafting skill.

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/D
Wooden Door	4/C
Tree Trunk	5/C
Wooden Wall	6/B
Stone Wall	8/A

CONDITIONS

Some YZE games manage damage and trauma via conditions. Typically, these are divided into the three physical conditions and three mental conditions:

- ✦ **PHYSICAL CONDITIONS:** Exhausted, Battered, Wounded
- ✦ **MENTAL CONDITIONS:** Angry, Scared, Disheartened

GETTING CONDITIONS

You can get conditions by pushing a dice roll (page 9). When pushing a roll for Strength or Agility, you get a physical condition of your choice. When pushing a roll for Wits or Empathy, you get a mental condition of your choice.

DAMAGE & STRESS: Damage from external attacks gives you one physical condition of your choice for each point of damage. Stressful situations give you a number of mental conditions equal to the amount of potential stress (page 20), reduced by one for each success on an Insight roll.

EFFECTS OF CONDITIONS

Each physical condition you have gives you a -1 modifier to skills rolls using Strength or Agility, while each mental condition gives you -1 to rolls for Wits or Empathy. When you already have three conditions of the same type and acquire a fourth one, you become broken and sustain a critical injury of the relevant type (page 21).

BROKEN

In most YZE games, your PC can be broken by damage or stress. Being broken basically means you are taken out of action, and you might risk even lethal injuries. When broken, you can't perform any actions or roll for any skills.

GETTING BROKEN

How you get broken depends on the specific damage system used:

- ✦ **HEALTH & RESOLVE:** In a system using Health and Resolve (page 5), you are broken if either of these scores are reduced to zero by damage or stress.
- ✦ **ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE:** In a system using attribute damage, you are broken if any attribute is reduced to zero.
- ✦ **CONDITIONS:** In a system using conditions (page 21), you are broken when you have suffered a set number of physical or mental conditions.

MORE DAMAGE

You can't go below zero in Health, Resolve, or any attribute. If you suffer further damage, you may suffer an additional critical injury however.

RECOVERY

Being broken is not fatal in itself – only critical injuries (page 21) can actually kill you. There are two ways to recover after being broken, assuming you're not dead.

GETTING HELP: Someone can help you recover by using the Healing skill. This is a slow action. If the roll is successful, you immediately heal damage or stress equal to the number of successes rolled. The Healing roll only has this effect on a broken victim.

ON YOUR OWN: If no one is around to help you, you automatically heal one point of damage or stress after one Shift has passed.

NOT BROKEN? If you are not broken, you heal one point of damage or stress per shift. This assumes that you are not starving, dehydrated, or hypothermic (page 25). You can heal damage and stress at the same time.

BROKEN NPCS

NPCs can be broken in the same ways as PCs. An NPC can use Healing on 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 who is broken by damage simply dies.

CRITICAL INJURIES

Critical injuries are dangerous, even lethal, injuries to your body or mind. The way you suffer critical injuries varies between YZE games. Here are some examples:

- ♦ You suffer a physical critical injury when your Health is reduced to zero, and a mental critical injury when your Resolve is reduced to zero
- ♦ You suffer a physical critical injury when your Strength is reduced to zero, and a mental critical injury when your Wits is reduced to zero.
- ♦ You suffer a physical critical injury when you are broken by physical conditions, and a mental critical injury when you are broken by mental conditions.
- ♦ You suffer a physical critical injury when an attack against you inflicts damage equal to or in excess of the Crit threshold of the weapon.
- ♦ You suffer a physical critical injury when an attack against you rolls two or more successes.

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.

ROLLING FOR THE CRIT

When you suffer a critical injury, roll on a table to see what it is. Sample tables for physical and mental critical injuries can be found on page 22 and 23. In some YZE games, the weapon used determines which dice to roll to determine the critical injury.

DEATH

Physical critical injuries can be lethal. If you suffer such an injury, you must make a death save when the listed time limit has passed – one round, stretch, or shift. If the time limit is round, make the roll on your next turn. The death save is not an action in itself.

A death save is a roll for Stamina. If a death save fails, you die. If you succeed, you linger on, but you must make another death save when the listed amount of time has passed again.

STABILIZING CRITS: To stabilize a lethal critical injury and save your life, one or more Healing rolls must be made. Medical gear can give positive modifiers to the roll.

The Healing roll takes the same amount of time to perform as the time limit of your critical injury. If the roll succeeds, the time limit of your crit is increased by one category (e.g., from round to stretch). When a crit with a time limit of a shift is successfully treated, you no longer risk dying and you don't need to make any further death saves. If the Healing roll fails, trying again is allowed – but only after another death save has been made.

BROKEN: If you are both broken and have sustained a lethal critical injury, two separate Healing 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 KILL: Note that some critical injuries will kill you outright. If you gain any of these, your character dies immediately. No death save is allowed.

HEALING CRITS

Each critical injury has a specific effect that you suffer during the healing time indicated, which is measured in days. If you have several crits, they will heal simultaneously. If an injury is listed as permanent, it will never heal.

SKILL MODIFIERS: Skill roll modifiers due to critical injuries are cumulative, and apply even if you don't have the skill.

CARE: If someone tends to you for a shift per day during the process of healing a critical injury and makes a Healing roll, that day counts double.

DAMAGE: Note that you can heal all of your damage, but still suffer the effects of a critical injury.

OTHER TYPES OF 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.

CRITICAL INJURIES - PHYSICAL

D66	INJURY	LETHAL	TIMELIMIT	EFFECTS	HEALING TIME
11	Winded	No	—	None.	—
12	Stunned	No	—	None.	—
13	Crippling pain	No	—	None.	—
14	Sprained ankle	No	—	Mobility –2 and movement is a slow action until a Healing roll is made.	—
15	Blood in eyes	No	—	Observation and Marksmanship –2 until a Healing roll is made.	—
16	Concussion	No	—	Mobility –2.	D6
21	Severed ear	No	—	Observation –2.	D6
22	Broken toes	No	—	Movement becomes a slow action.	D6
23	Broken hand	No	—	Hand cannot be used.	D6
24	Knocked out teeth	No	—	Persuasion –2.	D6
25	Impaled thigh	No	—	Movement becomes a slow action.	2D6
26	Slashed shoulder	No	—	Arm cannot be used.	D6
31	Broken nose	No	—	Persuasion and Observation –1.	D6
32	Crotch hit	No	—	One point of damage for every Mobility or Melee roll made.	D6
33	Broken ribs	No	—	Mobility and Observation –2.	2D6
34	Gouged eye	No	—	Marksmanship and Observation –2.	2D6
35	Busted kneecap	No	—	Movement becomes a slow action.	2D6
36	Broken arm	No	—	Arm cannot be used.	2D6
41	Broken leg	No	—	Movement becomes a slow action.	2D6
42	Crushed foot	No	—	Movement becomes a slow action.	3D6
43	Crushed elbow	No	—	Arm cannot be used.	3D6
44	Punctured lung	Yes	Shift	Stamina and Mobility –2.	D6
45	Bleeding gut	Yes	Shift	One point of damage for every Mobility or Melee roll made.	D6
46	Ruptured intestines	Yes	Shift	Disease with virulence 6.	2D6
51	Busted kidney	Yes	Day	Mobility –2 and movement is a slow action.	2D6
52	Severed arm artery	Yes –1	Stretch	Arm cannot be used.	D6
53	Severed leg artery	Yes –1	Stretch	Movement becomes a slow action.	D6
54	Severed arm	Yes –1	Shift	Arm cannot be used.	Permanent
55	Severed leg	Yes –1	Shift	Movement becomes a slow action.	Permanent
56	Cracked spine	No	—	Paralyzed from the neck down. If no Healing roll is made in time, the effect is permanent.	3D6
61	Ruptured jugular	Yes –1	Round	Stamina –1.	2D6
62	Ruptured aorta	Yes –2	Round	Stamina –2.	3D6
63	Disemboweled	Yes	—	Instant death.	—
64	Crushed skull	Yes	—	Your story ends here.	—

D66	INJURY	LETHAL	TIMELIMIT	EFFECTS	HEALING TIME
65	Pierced head	Yes	—	You die immediately.	—
66	Impaled heart	Yes	—	Your heart beats for the last time.	—

CRITICAL INJURIES - MENTAL

D66	TRAUMA	EFFECTS	HEALING TIME
11-16	Trembling	Modifier –1 on all Agility-based rolls.	D6
21	White hair	None.	Permanent
22-24	Anxious	Modifier –1 on all Wits-based rolls.	D6
25-31	Sullen	Modifier –1 on all Empathy-based rolls.	D6
32-35	Nightmares	Make an Insight 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		

suffer one point of stress / 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 stress / damage to Agility.	3D6
46-51	Claustrophobic	Every stretch in a confined environment, you suffer one point of stress / damage to Wits.	

2D6 |

52	Mythomaniac	You cannot stop yourself from lying about everything. The effect needs to be roleplayed.	2D6
53-54	Paranoia	You are certain that someone is out to get you. The effect needs to be roleplayed.	2D6
55	Delusion		

item doesn't exist. | 3D6 |

56	Hallucinations	Make an Insight 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		

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.	—

OTHER HAZARDS

DARKNESS

In complete darkness, you have no choice but to feel your way around. To run in complete darkness requires a successful Mobility roll, and you take one point of damage if you fail.

You can attack opponents at Engaged range normally in darkness, but with a –2 modifier. At Short range, you must roll for Observation successfully (no action) to be able to attack the target, also with a –2 modifier. You cannot hit targets at Medium range or more in total darkness.

FIRE

When exposed to fire, roll for its intensity. In the dice pool system, fires typically range from 3 to 9. In the step dice system, fire intensities range from D to A, and you roll two base dice of the corresponding type.

EFFECT: For every success rolled for the fire, you suffer one point of damage. If you take damage, you catch fire and continue to burn. When burning, you suffer another attack each round, on your turn. The intensity increases by one step 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 Mobility roll (slow action). Using a blanket or similar object gives a +2 modifier.

CRITS: Fire doesn't cause normal critical injuries. Instead, if you are broken by fire damage, or suffer fire damage when already broken, you must make a death save on your turn every round until you die or you are saved by a Healing roll.

EXPLOSIONS

The force of an explosion is measured by its blast power. For each person within Short range of the blast (i.e., in the same zone), roll for the blast power. See the table on page 24, which also indicates the base damage rating of the explosion. The roll cannot be pushed.

EFFECT: If one or more successes are rolled, the target is hit by the blast and suffers the base damage. The damage done is increased by one for each additional success rolled beyond the first. Victims at Engaged range from the detonation suffer one extra point of damage (a minimum of one point).

EFFECT RADIUS: Powerful charges can harm victims even at Medium range (i.e., adjacent zones) if nothing blocks the blast. The blast power is then reduced by 6 (dice pool system) or two steps (step dice system).

BLAST POWER

DICE POOL	STEP DICE	BASE DAMAGE
12	A	4

DICE POOL	STEP DICE	BASE DAMAGE
9	B	3
6	C	2
3	D	1

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 Mobility – each success rolled reduces the damage done by one.

DROWNING

All PCs are assumed to know how to swim. If you end up in water, you need to make a Stamina roll every stretch to stay afloat. If you wear metal armor, you sink. Under water, you need to make a Stamina 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 stretch.

POISON

Poisons are measured by its toxicity. A weak poison has toxicity 3 (D in the step dice system), a strong poison has toxicity 6 (C), and an extremely potent poison can have toxicity 9 (B) or even more. If you ingest poison, make an opposed roll for Stamina against the toxicity (two base dice of the corresponding type in the step dice system). If you fail the roll, you suffer its effect below. Antidotes can halt the effect of a poison.

LETHAL POISON: You take one point of damage on your turn each round until you are broken, at which point you roll again to resist the poison. If you fail, you die.

PARALYZING POISON: You cannot move or perform any actions for one stretch.

SLEEPING POISON: You fall asleep, unable to wake up for a shift.

DISEASE

When exposed to a dangerous contagion or infection, make an opposed roll for Stamina against the virulence rating of the disease. This is called an infection roll. A typical disease has a virulence of 6 (C in the step dice system, roll two base dice of the corresponding type), but there are diseases with much higher virulence.

If you fail the roll, you fall ill, which means you suffer one point of damage and cannot heal damage. Make another infection roll once per day. Each failed roll means you suffer another point of damage. If

you are broken by damage while sick, you die after another day if you're not given aid (below) before then.

As soon as you succeed at an infection roll, you are no longer ill. Stop rolling infection rolls and heal your damage normally.

HEALING: 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 Healing skill with a +2 modifier.

COLD

When the cold is bitter and you don't have adequate clothes or shelter (GM's discretion), you must roll for Stamina at regular intervals. The colder it is, the more frequently you need to roll. A chilly fall day requires a roll per day - in winter, you might have to roll once every shift or even every stretch in extreme conditions. Extra protection, like a blanket, can give a bonus to your roll.

If you fail, you become hypothermic and suffer one point of damage and one point of stress (damage to Strength and Wits). You also cannot heal naturally. You must keep rolling for Stamina at the same interval, suffering more damage and stress each time you fail. If you are broken while hypothermic, you die the next time you need to roll. Only after you have warmed up, if only by a campfire, are you able to heal again.

STARVATION

You must eat a ration of food at least once every day. After a day without food, you starve. When starving, you don't heal damage (Strength) normally. You heal stress (other attributes) normally. You also suffer one point of damage per week. If you are broken while Starving, you die after another week without food. As soon as you have eaten, you are no longer starving.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

You need to sleep for at least one shift each day. After one day without sleep, you cannot heal stress (damage to Wits). If you are broken by stress (damage to Wits) while sleep deprived, you collapse and sleep for at least one shift, and are unable to wake up during that time. As soon as you have slept for at least a shift, you are no longer sleep deprived.

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: Mounts allow you to move faster in combat than on foot. When making a move action,

make a Mobility roll – for each success, you may move an additional zone. Mounts generally can't move into Cramped zones at all. In Cluttered zones, they can only move one zone per action.

MOVE: When you are on horseback and make a Mobility 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 mount can suffer damage, just like you, through attacks or by pushing rolls when you are using the animal's attribute score. Animals recover damage just like PCs. 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.

VEHICLES

In modern setting games, vehicles can play a big role. Driving under normal circumstances requires no dice roll but more advanced maneuvers require a Mobility roll (some YZE games have a Driving skill).

Getting into or out of a vehicle is typically a slow action. Getting on or off a motorcycle or bicycle is a fast action. Starting a vehicle is typically a fast action. A few typical vehicles are listed in the table on page 26.

VEHICLE ATTRIBUTES

PASSENGERS: The number of people that can ride in the vehicle, in addition to the driver.

MANEUVERABILITY: A modifier to all skill rolls with this vehicle. Fast and agile vehicles have higher scores than slow and heavy ones.

HULL: How much damage the vehicle can take before becoming wrecked.

ARMOR: The armor rating of the vehicle.

TRAVEL SPEED: Indicates the speed of the vehicle on-road / offroad per shift of driving. Read more on page 41.

TYPICAL VEHICLES

VEHICLE	PASSENGERS	MANEUVERABILITY	HULL	ARMOR	TRAVEL SPEED
---------	------------	-----------------	------	-------	--------------

Car

4

+1

4

3

10/1

Truck

3

—

8

3

8/1

Motorcycle

1

+2

2

—

9/2

Dirtbike

1

+2

2

—

6/4

Pickup Truck

3

+1

3

4

9/4

Armored Personnel Carrier

8

—

8

8

8/6

Battle Tank

—

—

10

12

7/6

Helicopter

5

+3

5

2

40/40

VEHICLES IN COMBAT

PASSENGERS: The driver and passengers in a vehicle can be hit

When operating a vehicle in combat, you can move one zone with a fast action just like on foot, and you can move farther by rolling for a vehicle maneuver, modified by the Maneuverability of the vehicle. For each success, you move one additional zone.

by component damage to a vehicle. If they are visible, they can also be targeted directly by a ranged

attack. In a ground car, this counts as cover with an armor rating equal to that of the vehicle.

AERIAL VEHICLES

RAMMING: Most vehicles can be used as weapons. It counts

Aerial vehicles are handled in much the same way as ground vehicles, with some exceptions:

as a close combat attack but is rolled for with a driving skill roll. The base damage rating of the attack equals your vehicle's Hull rating divided by two, rounded up.

DAMAGE TO VEHICLES Vehicles suffer damage just like people. When a vehicle has suffered damage equal to or in excess of its Hull rating, it is wrecked. This means that the vehicle is inoperable – you'll need to keep going on foot. **ARMOR:** Most vehicles have an armor rating. Vehicle armor

works just like body armor (page 20). **COMPONENT DAMAGE:** If a vehicle suffers damage equal to

half its full Hull rating or more in a single hit, it suffers component damage. See the table on page 27. A component hit from a melee attack against a vehicle is always rolled with a D6.

ALTITUDE: At all times, you must keep track of the altitude of

the vehicle, measured in zones. When moving a zone, you can either move vertically or horizontally, but not both. **CRASHES:** If an aerial vehicle is wrecked, it crashes violently

to the ground. All people inside suffer D3 points of falling damage plus one for each zone of altitude, mitigated by the vehicle's armor rating. You can also brace yourself for the hit by rolling Mobility – each success reduces the damage by one.

REPAIRS Repairing damage to a vehicle requires one or several Crafting rolls. One roll can be made per shift. Only one person can roll to repair, but others can help. Each success removes one point of damage. If the vehicle was wrecked, it is no longer considered wrecked once one point of damage has been repaired.

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COMPONENT DAMAGE: If the engine or a mounted weapon

has been disabled due to a critical hit, repairing it typically

requires a Crafting roll, in addition to any roll for repairing hull damage. The work takes one shift.

CRITICAL VEHICLE DAMAGE

D66

D6

DAMAGE

EFFECTS

1

11-13

1

Ricochet

The attack bounces off the vehicle and strikes another random target in the same zone, inflicting the same damage to it.

2

14-16

2

Skid

The vehicle skids severely. The driver must make an immediate skill roll (not an action) – failure means that the driver loses their next turn, and is unable to perform any actions.

3

21-23

3

Windshield Shattered

The windshield of the vehicle is shattered, reducing the Maneuverability of the vehicle one step.

4

24-26

4

Driver Hit

The driver is hit and suffers damage equal to the damage inflicted on the vehicle.

5

31-33

5

Passenger Hit

A random passenger is hit and suffers damage equal to the damage inflicted on the vehicle, and a critical injury. Re-roll if no passengers are present.

6

34-36

6

Wheel Blown

A wheel or thruster on the vehicle is blown out, giving a -2 modifier to all driving skill rolls.

7

41-43

—

Severe Spin

The attack rocks the vehicle. The driver must make an immediate skill roll (not an action) – failure means that the vehicle crashes and is automatically wrecked. Each passenger then suffers D3 points of falling damage (page 24) plus one for each zone of altitude, mitigated by the vehicle's armor.

8

44-46

—

Fuel Fire

The vehicle catches fire. The vehicle and everyone inside is exposed to intensity 6 (C) fire.

9

51-53

—

Weapon Disabled

A random weapon mounted on the vehicle is disabled. Re-roll if no weapons are present.

10

54-56

Massive Crash

The vehicle careens out of control and crashes violently. It is automatically wrecked, and each passenger suffers D6 points of falling damage plus one for each zone of altitude, mitigated by the vehicle's armor.

11

61-63

Engine Disabled

The engine is disabled, and the vehicle can't continue. An aerial vehicle can make a controlled landing, losing one zone of altitude per round.

12

64-66

Explosion

The vehicle explodes in a ball of flame. Everyone inside is exposed to a blast power 9 (B) explosion, and the vehicle is destroyed beyond repair.

CHASES

The rules so far in this chapter mainly deal with a fight between two parties. A different type of confrontation is the chase. Chases can be on foot or use vehicles.

STARTING THE CHASE A chase can either start directly from a roleplaying situation, or it can follow directly after combat if someone runs off. In either case, the GM declares that a chase is now in progress and decides the starting range between the participants, using the table on page 15 as a reference, up to a maximum of Long range. Distances in a chase are measured only in range categories (not zones). Most chases are between just two parties – the pursuer and their prey. For guidelines on using multiple participants, see the sidebar on page 28.

RESOLUTION Chases are played out in rounds like combat, but no initiative is drawn and normal actions are not performed. Instead, each participant gets one maneuver each round, chosen in secret and then revealed, while the GM randomly generates obstacles to place in their way. Obstacles can be rolled up using the tables on page 29. The following procedure is used each round of the chase:

1. 2. 3. 4.

Each participant selects a maneuver, in secret. The GM randomly generates an obstacle and reveals it. The pursuer and prey both reveal their maneuver. Maneuvers are resolved, with the prey going first and

the pursuer last.

A PC or NPC is allowed to cancel a planned maneuver, but no other maneuver may be chosen instead – the participant simply does nothing in the round. **RUNNERS vs VEHICLES** If one participant in a chase is running while the other is in a vehicle, the chase rules work normally – just use the applicable skill for each participant. In a bustling street environment, it's not necessarily faster to be driving, but the driver will be more protected. However, in a more open environment where the greater speed of a vehicle comes into play, the participant in a vehicle gets a +2 modifier to all Pursue/Flee rolls in a chase against an opponent on foot.

CHASE MANEUVERS In each round of a chase, each participant can perform one maneuver, all described below. The maneuvers are chosen secretly – either using cards or by just writing them on a piece of paper.

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Maneuvers require skill rolls. These rolls can be affected by the chase obstacle revealed by the GM before the maneuver is resolved. Skills and other factors used for vehicles are indicated in [brackets].

PURSUE/FLEE: You simply run or drive as fast as you can. Roll Mobility [Driving, if your game has that skill]. For each success rolled, the distance to the other participant decreases (if the pursuer) or increases (if the prey) by one range category. ♦ If the range exceeds Extreme after both maneuvers in the round are resolved, the chase is over. ♦ If the range is Engaged (or less) after both maneuvers are resolved, the pursuer may immediately make a close combat attack [ramming attack for vehicles]. The range stays at Engaged. ♦ If the range would go below Engaged, and the pursuer declines to attack as per above, they can either stay at Engaged range or overtake the prey, and now become the prey themselves, at a distance defined by the number of excess (one excess = Short range, etc.). This latter option will typically only be viable in some sort of race situation. **HIDE:** You quickly duck into a side alley or hide behind some-

thing. This maneuver can only be done by the prey, and never at Short range or less. If the range is Medium, you get a –2 modifier. If the range is Extreme, you get a +2 modifier. Make an opposed roll for Stealth [Driving] against the pursuer's Observation. If you win the roll, the chase is over, or you can make a sneak attack against the pursuer at a range of your choosing. **BLOCK:** You knock things over behind you, trying to create obstacles for the pursuer. This maneuver can only be done by the prey. Roll for Force [Driving]. If you succeed, you move one range category away from the pursuer, and the pursuer must also roll Force [Driving] before resolving their own maneuver. If that roll fails, their maneuver is canceled. **CUT OFF:** You try to find a shortcut and cut off the prey. This maneuver can only be done by the pursuer. Make an opposed Mobility [Driving] roll. If the range is Long or Extreme, you get a –2 modifier. If you win the roll, the distance to the prey is immediately reduced to Engaged, and an immediate close combat/ramming attack can be made as per above. If you lose or roll a tie, the distance is increased to Extreme. If the distance was already Extreme, the chase is over.

M U L T I P L E P A R T I C I P A N T S If there are more than two participants in a chase, there are two ways to resolve it. The simplest way is to divide the participants into two sides. Only the slowest person/vehicle on each side – the one with the lowest skill level after the Maneuverability modifier (free choice on a tie)

– performs maneuvers and rolls dice, except for the Stand and Shoot maneuver, which all participants on the side can perform. A more complex way to resolve chases with multiple participants is to let each perform maneuvers separately. You will then need to keep track of the relative distances between each participant. A sheet of paper indicating range bands can be useful for this. In this model, the Pursue/Flee maneuver will move you forward relative to all other participants in the chase. For all other maneuvers, you must indicate which other participant you wish to target, and all limitations refer to your position relative to the target. You count as pursuer in relation to all participants in front of you, and as prey in relation to all participants behind you.

CHASE OBSTACLES Each round, after the participants have secretly chosen their maneuvers, the GM randomly generates a chase obstacle. There are two tables for chase obstacles on the following pages – for foot chases and one for ground vehicle chases. You may need to adapt these to the setting of your game. The obstacles provide flavor for the chase and can also affect the maneuvers chosen by the participants in different ways. The GM is free to adapt the obstacles to the situation at hand, or even choose to create obstacles freely as needed.

FIRING FROM VEHICLES Passengers can make ranged attacks from a vehicle in a chase, and these attacks are performed immediately after the driver's maneuver is resolved. However, such attacks get a –2 modifier if the driver performs any maneuver except Stand and Shoot. Advanced military and police vehicles can have mounted weapons with targeting systems. Such weapons can be fired by a gunner without a penalty even when the driver does not Stand and Shoot. Some very advanced vehicles even have automated targeting systems with their own Marksmanship skill and can fire at the driver's command (no action), eliminating the need for a gunner.

STAND AND SHOOT: You take a breath to aim your weapon

and fire. This is conducted as a normal ranged weapon attack. **OTHER:** You do something not covered by any other maneuver. Typically, this means no movement relative to the other participant during the Round. The GM has final say.

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FOOT CHASE OBSTACLES D10

OBSTACLE

1

DEAD END: If the prey has chosen to Pursue/Flee, Hide, or Block, the maneuver fails automatically.

2

FOOD STALL: A food stall or market stand blocks the way. If the prey has chosen to Flee, Hide, or Block, they must first make a Force roll (no action) to crash through the glass. If it fails, the maneuver is canceled, and the prey suffers D3 points of damage.

3

VEHICLE/CART: A car or cart pulls in and blocks the way. This gives a +2 modifier to Pursue/Flee and Stand and Shoot maneuvers, but

4

CROWD: The crowds of people making their way along the street provide cover for the prey. A Hide maneuver gets a +2 modifier, and

–2 to Cut Off.

even if the prey doesn't Hide, the pursuer must roll Observation (no action). If it fails, their maneuver for the round fails automatically. Any failed Stand and Shoot maneuver means a bystander is hit.

5

MONKS: A throng of robed, chanting monks blocks the road. The prey must roll Persuasion (no action) to convince them to move. Success gives a +2 modifier to any Hide maneuver. A failed roll means that the prey's maneuver fails automatically.

6

GUARDS/POLICE: A pair of guards or police try to block the chase, weapons drawn. This gives a –2 modifier to Pursue/Flee, Hide and Stand and Shoot. Anyone who performs the Stand and Shoot maneuver will be attacked by the guards.

7

OLD MAN: An old man grabs at the pursuer and starts chattering away, clearly after money. The pursuer must give the man some money or push him away with Force. If it fails, their maneuver for the round fails automatically.

8

GARBAGE: There is garbage and debris all over the street, making the ground slippery. Any Pursue/Flee maneuvers get a –2 modifier

9

OPEN SPACE: The chasers suddenly find themselves in an open space, the crowds clearing for a moment. This gives a +2 modifier to Stand and Shoot but –2 to Hide.

10

THUGS: D6 street thugs block the road, threatening violence. The prey must roll Persuasion (no action) to be allowed to pass. A failed roll means that the thugs attack – the chosen maneuver fails automatically and one thug attacks in close combat. If the Persuasion roll succeeds, the thugs will attack the pursuer instead.

this round, while Block gets +2.

VEHICLE CHASE O B S T A C L E S D10

OBSTACLE

1

Dead End: If the prey has chosen to Pursue/Flee, Hide, or Block, the maneuver fails automatically.

2

Downpour: A sudden downpour makes it difficult to see and the pavement slippery. The Pursue/Flee maneuver gets a disadvantage, but Hide gets an advantage.

3

Vehicle/Cart: A car or cart pulls in and blocks the way. This gives an advantage to the Block maneuver, but a disadvantage to Pursue/ Flee, and any failed such maneuver inflicts D3 points of damage to the driver's vehicle.

4

Red Lights: The traffic lights by a pedestrian crossing turn red, and a throng of people cross the street. This gives an advantage to the Cut Off maneuver, but a disadvantage to Pursue/Flee and Stand and Shoot. Any such failed maneuver will result in collateral damage.

5

Patrol Car: A police patrol car joins the fray, sirens blaring. This gives a disadvantage to Pursue/Flee, Hide, and Stand and Shoot. Anyone who performs the Stand and Shoot maneuver will be fired upon by the police.

6

Freeway: The vehicles move onto a wide freeway with multiple lanes, the traffic clearing for a moment. This gives an advantage to Pursue/Flee and Stand and Shoot, but a disadvantage to Hide and Block.

7

Roadworks: A major roadworks is up ahead. It gives an advantage to the Hide, Block, and Cut Off maneuvers, but a disadvantage to Pursue/Flee and Stand and Shoot. A failed Pursue/Flee roll will inflict D3 points of damage to the vehicle.

8

Cyclists: A group of dozens of cyclists are making their way along the streets, forming a noisy, clanking, almost impenetrable barrier. This gives an advantage to the Block maneuver, but a disadvantage to Pursue/Flee and Stand and Shoot. Any such failed maneuver will result in collateral damage.

9

Truck: A massive truck blocks the way. This gives an advantage to the Cut Off maneuver, but a

disadvantage to Pursue/Flee. A failed Pursue/Flee roll will inflict D6 points of damage to the vehicle.

10

Alleyway: The chase enters a narrow alley. Passing through unscathed requires a separate skill roll (no action) before any maneuver is resolved – failure means the vehicle is wrecked and the chase is over. The driver can choose to cancel their maneuver and navigate the alley slowly and carefully (no roll required).

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5. MAGIC

What most people call magic is a catch-all term for forces at work behind the veil of the world, beyond what the common folk understand or dare perceive. Magic is a wild and unreliable force that can manifest itself in many ways. There are no schools of magic, instead knowledge is transferred from master to apprentice in a number of broad categories, called disciplines. There are seven disciplines in this SRD. Three of these are for druidic magic – Awareness, Healing, and Shapeshifting – while four are for sorcery: Blood Magic, Death Magic, Elementalism, and Symbolism. Every discipline is linked to a tiered specialty (page 13), that is a prerequisite to be able to cast spells within each discipline.

LEARNING MAGIC To learn a new discipline, or increase your rank in a discipline you already know, you should find a master with a higher rank than you in the magic specialty and who is ready to share their secrets with you. This can require both persuasion and substantial compensation. Without a teacher, the cost in XP for increasing the rank in a magical specialty or learning a new one is tripled.

SPELLS

Your attempts to use magic to impose your will on the world are called spells. A large number of spells are described later in this chapter.

SPELL RANKS All spells in this chapter are rated in ranks ranging from 1 to 3. There can be spells of even higher rank. As a magic user, you can cast all spells that are at a rank equal to or lower than your rank in the related magical talent.

Casting a spell requires a great deal of mental exertion and requires that you spend one or more Willpower Points (WP). You typically accumulate WP by pushing dice rolls (page 9), but some YZE games can introduce other ways to gain WP. The more WP you spend, the more powerful the effect of the spell is. **POWER LEVEL:** The number of Willpower Points you spend

when you cast a spell is called its base power level. Dice rolls and other factors can further modify the power level. **ROLLING DICE:** Unlike skills, you can never fail at casting a spell. Instead, you roll a number of base dice (D6s) equal to the number of Willpower Points you spend. If you roll one or several successes

(sixes), the spell is overcharged, and if you roll one or several banes (ones) you suffer some sort of magic mishap. You cannot push this roll. **OVERCHARGING:** When you cast a spell, every success you roll increases its power level by one. For example, if you spend 2 WP to cast a spell and roll two successes, its power level is increased to 4. **MAGIC MISHAP:** If you roll one or several banes when you cast a spell, you have unleashed powerful forces but are unable to control them and you suffer a magic mishap. Roll D66 on the table on the next page. **SAFE CASTING:** If you cast a spell at a lower rank than your

talent rank for the discipline, you may opt to roll one less die for every point of difference. This reduces the risk of a magic mishap, but also makes the spell less likely to overcharge. If the result is zero dice or less, don't roll at all – the spell simply works as intended.

CHANCE CASTING: If you really want to, you can cast a spell at one rank above the rank of your magical talent. However, this comes at a great risk, as you will automatically suffer a random magic mishap in this case. You can never cast a spell that is two ranks or more above your talent rank.

RANGE: Every spell has a range, which denotes the maximum

CASTING A SPELL

DURATION: Every spell has a duration. Immediate means that

Casting a spell is generally a slow action in combat, but there are also so-called power words that are fast actions. Another type of spell are rituals that take a longer time to cast (see the sidebar on page 31). Whether or not a spell is a power word or ritual is detailed under each spell.

the effect is instantaneous and does not last.

distance at which it can be cast. The range Personal means the spell only affects yourself.

WILLPOWER POINTS: Casting a spell requires at least one Willpower Point. This applies even if it does not explicitly say so in the description of the spell.

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MAGIC MISHAP S D12

EFFECT

1

The magic makes you unable to sleep for D6 days.

2

Your spell drains your energy, inflicting one point of stress.

3

Your magic hurts your body and you suffer one point of damage.

4

The spell triggers a magical disease with a virulence of 2D6. You and everyone within Engaged range of you for the next shift are exposed to the contagion.

5

The spell also affects a friend or other unintended victim. A healing or helping spell affects an enemy alongside the intended target.

6

Your magic permanently alters your appearance. The GM decides how.

7

The spell blinds you. You act as in total darkness for the next full day.

8

The spell ravages your mind. Immediately roll for a mental critical injury.

9

The force of the magic breaks bones in your body. Immediately roll for a physical critical injury.

10

Your magic attracts a demon from another dimension. The demon appears within the next shift and will create all kinds of trouble.

11

The spell backfires. An offensive spell affects you instead of your intended target. A protective or healing spell wounds instead of healing. A shapeshift goes horribly wrong and you become a dumb animal. A summoned undead, demon, or illusion turns against you. The GM specifies the details.

12

Your magic rips open a rift to another dimension, and a demon pulls you over to the other side. Time to make a new character. Your old character will come back as an NPC after D66 days but will be... changed.

RITUALS Some complicated spells can't be cast as an action in combat, as they require more time and preparation. A typical ritual takes a shift of time to perform. Rituals often have other prerequisites, such as ingredients that must be used to perform the ritual.

GENERAL SPELLS

The magic disciplines differ, but there are certain effects and spells that all sorcerers and druids can use if skilled enough. These are called general spells. They also come in ranks, but you can use any magic discipline to cast them.

MAGICAL SEAL ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Shift Using this spell, you protect a person or a location (no bigger than a human) from magic. The power level of any spells cast against that person or place during the Quarter Day is decreased by the power level of the Magical Seal. **GRIMOIRES** You don't need your spells written down to cast them, but it makes it easier to get it right. Grimoires are highly sought-after artifacts among sorcerers. If you cast a spell from a book or a scroll, its rank is considered one step lower than usual. In combat, you must spend a fast action readying your grimoire before you can cast the spell.

NPCS & SPELLCASTING NPCs don't have pools of Willpower Points. Instead, when an NPC casts a spell, the GM may simply choose a base power level up to the caster's rank in the magic discipline used. Roll normally to determine any overcharging or magic mishap.

SENSE MAGIC ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate As a sorcerer or druid, you automatically sense whenever someone uses magic within Short range or if an item you hold is charged with magical power. If you want to know more about what kind of magic is involved, you must cast the Sense Magic spell. Using this spell is also required to detect Obscured magic (see below) – your power level must then be equal to or higher than the power level of the Obscure Magic spell.

DISPEL MAGIC ♦ RANK 2, POWER WORD ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can interfere with the spells cast by other magic users. This spell is reactive and breaks the initiative order of combat in the round (page 15). You decrease the power level of your opponent's spell with the power level of your Dispel. If the result is zero or less, your opponent's spell has no effect at

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all. You must both roll for overcharge and mishaps, as with any other spell. You must decide how many WP you spend on your Dispel before you both roll.

OBSCURE MAGIC ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate If you want to cast a spell unnoticed, you must Obscure your magic. This requires one extra Willpower Point that does not count toward the power level of the spell. Obscuring magic does not count as an action in itself. To detect your Obscured spell, another magic user must actively survey the area by casting Sense Magic.

BIND MAGIC ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Varies Skilled sorcerers and druids can Bind spells to dead objects to create magical traps or powerful magical artifacts. You cast the spell like any other and choose how many Willpower Points to spend, but you must also spend extra WP to bind your spell to an object instead of unleashing its power immediately. Rituals cannot be Bound. Roll for any overcharge and mishap when the spell is Bound. The extra WP do affect this roll, but don't count toward the Power Level. If you spend one additional WP, the magic lingers for one day, or until the spell is triggered. If you spend two additional WP, the magic lingers forever, but dissipates when the spell is triggered. Spending five additional WP binds the spell to the object forever and it can be triggered once

per day, at a cost in WP equal to the Power Level. You can bind the spell in whatever manner you wish. You decide how the spell is triggered. Common methods include a certain phrase being uttered or that the object is opened, broken or thrown to the ground. Once the spell is triggered, it has the same effect as if it had been cast normally.

TRANSFER ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can use this spell to steal Willpower Points from others or to give your WP to someone else. The base cost to cast the spell is one WP, and you can then take or give as many WP as you want. If your target opposes the spell, it is not so easy – in this case, you can Transfer no more WP than the power level of the spell. The WP used to cast Transfer are spent and are not transferred.

AWARENESS

Druids who practice Awareness can see what others cannot see, hear what others cannot hear. They can see what has happened in the past and sense what will happen in the future.

LIGHTBRINGER ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** One stretch per power level You summon a bright light that dispels all shadows within Short range, i.e., in the same zone as you.

TRUE SIGHT ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Extreme ♦ **DURATION:** Round You can enhance your vision to be unnaturally sharp, and see details at Extreme range as if you stood right next to the object in question. True Sight also lets you see in darkness, through smoke and fog, and automatically see through any kind of disguise or shapeshift. You must have a clear line of sight to whatever you want to look at.

WORDS ON THE WIND ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Extreme ♦ **DURATION:** One stretch per power level You can enhance your hearing magically and hear specific sounds up to Extreme range as clearly as if you stood right where they emanate from. You must see the place to which you direct your hearing.

FARSIGHT ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Varies ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You can let your inner eye wander across vast distances, over oceans and land, mountains, and valleys, and see what is happening there right now. Farsight does not help you find a place – you must know where it is located to be able to see it. Power level 1 lets you view a place at Long range. Power level 2 reaches about 10 kilometers. Further away requires power level 3. Viewing a location that you haven't been to before increases the required power level by two. Your visions are often fragmented and cryptic – the GM decides exactly what you can see.

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TRUE PATH ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate This spell can guide you to the right path when you face a difficult decision. Once you have cast the spell, the GM must tell you which decision or choice she believes is the wisest.

VISIONS OF THE PAST ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You can see events that have transpired in the past at the location where you are, even if those events are no longer remembered by any living being. Power level 1 lets you see one day back in time, power level 2 one year into the past,

and power level 3 lets you see hundreds of years back. Your visions are often fragmented and cryptic - the GM decides exactly what you can see.

DIVINATION ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Stretch Performing a ritual, you can see visions of the future. You ask the GM questions about yourself or someone else present. The GM answers as best she can. The answer must be brief, and is often ambiguous and cryptic. The answer can also come in the form of a sign of happiness, or a foreboding sign of ill fortune.

INTUITION ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can ask a short “yes” or “no” question about anything in the world. The GM must answer “yes,” “no,” or “maybe.” They cannot lie. The GM can choose “maybe” even if they know the answer, but believes that the true answer may disrupt the game. Note that true or false is not an objective fact, but is defined by who is asking the question.

TELEPATHY ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Stretch You can read the surface thoughts of another person for a few minutes. Digging deeper for memories is harder, and requires power level 2 or even more, depending on how fresh the memory is. You can also use this spell to send your own thoughts

to another person. In that case, the range of the spell is Long if you know the target well. By sending thoughts of pain and suffering, you can inflict stress (damage to Wits or Empathy, if using attribute damage) equal to the power level. This spell has no effect on monsters.

HEALING

The true calling of the druid is to further nature’s cause and to heal its wounds wherever they appear. Thus, the Healing discipline is the most common among druids, and druids focused on this discipline are often popular among adventurers.

CLEANSE SPIRIT ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can focus the forces of nature to enlighten dark souls. You immediately heal an amount of Resolve (Wits or Empathy, if the game uses attribute damage) equal to the power level. You cannot heal yourself.

HEALING HANDS ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can heal an amount of Health (Strength or Agility, if the game uses attribute damage) by laying your hands on the wounded. You immediately heal a number of points equal to the power level. This spell does not affect critical injuries. You cannot heal yourself.

NATURE’S CURE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate You heal a sickness or cure the effects of poison in yourself or someone else. The power level of your spell must be equal to or higher than the virulence or toxicity rating (page 25) divided by 3 (rounded down) if using the dice pool system. In the step dice system, the power level must be 1 for virulence / toxicity D, 2 for C, 3 for B, and 4 for A.

BANISH DEMON ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate This spell inflicts damage equal to the power level on a demon. This includes demons that do not suffer damage from physical weapons.

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MEND WOUNDS ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can use magic to heal broken bones and bleeding wounds. This spell immediately heals a critical injury. A lethal injury requires power level 2. Lost limbs cannot be regrown, however.

PURGE UNDEAD ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate This spell inflicts damage equal to the Power Level on one undead target.

RESURRECTION ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can channel nature's forces to resurrect a dead person – not as undead, but truly alive. The more time that has passed since the target died, the more difficult it is. Within the same shift requires power level 1, within a full day requires power level 2, and within a week requires power level 3. If over a week has passed, the body is too decomposed to be Resurrected. A person brought back to life loses one point of Empathy permanently, as having seen the world beyond the veil will change their outlook on life forever.

SERENITY ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You spread harmony and serenity around you with this spell, which helps you in social conflicts. The victim of the spell will do what you want, without a roll to Persuade them. The spell can only be used against living humanoids.

WEATHERMASTER ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Extreme ♦ **DURATION:** Shift You are so in tune with the forces of nature that you can summon a drastic weather shift in the area where you are. A minor shift, from cloudy to rain or from dead calm to a light breeze, requires power level 1. Unusual weather phenomena that still stay within what is apt for the season – a snowstorm in winter, blazing heat in the summer, or hard winds and lashing rains in the fall – require power level 2. To summon completely

unnatural weather, such as a snowstorm in the summer or a heatwave in the middle of winter, requires power level 3.

SHAPESHIFTING

Druids are closely connected to nature, and the shapeshifters are even more so in their aspiration to be one with nature. Shapeshifting means taking the form of an animal. While there are Druids who have truly mastered this art, there is a broad spectrum of spells in the Shapeshifting discipline that all relate to animals and their aspects in different ways.

ANIMAL SPEECH ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch This spell allows you to speak with a mammal. You can ask a number of questions equal to the power level of the spell. The animal can tell you what it has seen, heard, or smelled – but they do not perceive the world as humanoids do, so their answers are often hard to interpret. The main advantage is that they never lie.

CAT'S PAW ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can meld your mind with the spirit of the cat, and move without a sound. You can cast this spell instead of rolling Stealth, and you will succeed automatically. Each power level counts as one success.

HAWK'S EYE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Extreme ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You can meld your mind with that of a hawk and gain its inhuman sight. You can see the details of anything within Extreme range, everything from horizon to horizon. You see all details and can identify specific people.

BEASTMASTER ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You can bend animals, both wild and tame, to your will. The animal can, for example, break off an attack, track down an enemy, run to where

you want it to and deliver a message, allow you to ride on it, or even attack your opponents.

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You cannot control an animal with a Strength higher than twice the power level. The power level must be one step higher if the animal is agitated, scared or in combat. If you force an animal to act in a way that is outside its normal behavior – like make it perform tricks, for example – the power level needs to be one step higher. You can only control one animal at a time. This spell cannot be used against monsters.

BEAR'S CLAW ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can strike your enemy with the force of a great bear. You hit automatically and cause damage equal to the power level. The attack cannot be parried or dodged, but armor has normal effect.

DEER'S DASH ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can run with the speed of a deer for a short distance. This spell allows you to move (fast action) as an animal (page 25) with a positive modifier to the Mobility roll equal to the power level. Casting this spell does not count as an action in itself. Roll for overcharge/mishap right before you actually move.

ANIMAL FORM ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can shapeshift completely, and take the form of an animal. You cannot choose an animal with a Strength higher than twice the power level. You get the Strength and Agility of the animal while you are in animal form. The downside is that you lose your ability to speak and a part of your mental capacity, with the consequence that your Wits and Empathy drop to 1 each while in animal form. You also get access to the animal's natural attacks. Shifting back to your normal form requires that you cast the spell again.

PRIMAL SOUL ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Long ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You can awaken primal emotions in the minds of others. The power level must be equal to or higher than the victim's current Wits score. For example, you can bring out the rage of a boar, the laziness of a cat or the timidity of a sparrow. Exactly how the victim reacts is up to the GM. If you want to affect the mood of

a crowd in a more general way, a small crowd requires a power level of 2, a big crowd requires 3, and a whole village 4.

BLOOD MAGIC

Blood magic derives its power from life itself and its liquid essence – blood.

FIREWALKER ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Shift You can make yourself completely immune to heat and cold (page 25). You take no damage from fire.

STIR BLOOD ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch Using this spell, you stir your victim's blood and bring out strong emotions such as lust, fear or rage. The victim must give in to these emotions in some way – exactly how depends on the individual and the situation. The GM determines the details. The spell has no effect in combat and cannot be used against monsters.

BIND DEMON ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Shift This spell allows you to bend demonic

creatures from other worlds to your will. The demon can resist the spell with a successful Insight roll with a negative modifier equal to the power level. Keep in mind that demons rarely react well to magicians' attempts to Bind them, so be ready for any consequences.

BLOOD BOND ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can transfer blood, and the inherent energy of it, to or from another being of the same kind as yourself. You can transfer a number of Health or Resolve points (or attribute points, if using the dice pool system) equal to the power level to or from the target. The starting score cannot be surpassed. Points lost in this way can be recovered normally. An unwilling victim can make an Insight roll, with a negative modifier equal to the power level, to resist the spell. The spell can be used to get a broken person up on their feet, but it has no effect on critical injuries.

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IMMOLATE ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can heat up your victim's blood to the point where they literally burst into flames. The spell inflicts damage equal to the power level and then sets the target on fire with an intensity (page 24) equal to twice the power level. If using the step dice system, the intensity is D for power level 1, C for power level 2, B for 3, and A for power level 4 or above. Armor does not protect against this spell.

BLOOD CHANNELING ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ **DURATION:** Round This spell concentrates the energy of the sorcerer's own blood. You gain a number of Willpower Points equal to twice the power level. The effect is temporary, however. Your newly won Willpower Points must be used in the next round, or they are lost. If you use a living sacrifice as an ingredient for your spell, it must be sacrificed before you cast the spell. A small animal is enough.

BLOOD CURSE ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Unlimited ♦ **DURATION:** One shift per power level You place a blood curse on your victim, who must be a living humanoid. You must know your victim's name and know where they are, at least approximately. The victim suffers damage or stress (any attribute, if using attribute damage). The amount of damage equals the power level and the victim takes one point of damage per shift until the full effect is reached. During this time, no natural healing is possible.

BIND SOUL ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Varies Through this ritual, you can extract a victim's soul from his blood and capture it in a vessel of some kind (such as a mirror, a jewel, or a weapon). Your victim must make an Insight roll with a negative modification equal to the power level. If the roll fails, the victim is bound to the vessel for a shift. Making the effect last one full day requires power level 2 or higher, and if you want the victim to remain in the vessel forever – or up to a time of your choosing – it requires power level 3. You can specify a condition that must be filled to free the soul. The victim can be freed by a Dispel Magic (page 31). While the soul is bound, the body is unconscious and can be killed or possessed by another restless spirit.

DEATH MAGIC

Death magic draws its power from dead or dying beings, from rot and decay. Practitioners of death magic, known as necromancers, can also steal power from living things by twisting and tainting them,

which is the reason for much of the hate and fear these black arts stir up. The necromancers see themselves as seekers of truth, as pioneers and explorers of the true nature of life and death.

BEFOUL ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can let death and decay seep into food. You can Befoul a ration of food per power level making it unfit for consumption. The food turns into a poison with a toxicity equal to the lower level multiplied by 3 in the dice pool system. In the step dice system, power level 1 gives toxicity D, power level toxicity C, etc.

CHILL OF THE GRAVE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: One round per power level You let the unrelenting cold of death seep into your victim. The victim becomes cold (page 25), immediately suffering one point of damage and one point of stress (damage to Strength and Wits) as a result. The victim continues to suffer one point of damage and stress each round, until the total amount of damage and stress each equal the power level. The spell has no effect on monsters.

CONTAMINATE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can create horrid contagions with which to torment your enemies. Your victim, who must be a living humanoid, contracts a disease with a virulence equal to the power level multiplied by 3 in the dice pool system. In the step dice system, power level 1 gives virulence D, power level virulence C, etc.

GHOULISH GLARE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate Your murky appearance instills unease and fear in your victim. They suffer stress (damage to Empathy if using attribute damage) equal to the power level. This spell can only be used against living humanoids.

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HAND OF DOOM ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can claw your way to your victim's heart magically and squeeze the life from them. This spell inflicts damage equal to the power level. You can extend the range to Medium if you spend an extra Willpower Point (this does not count towards the power level). This spell can only be used against living humanoids.

RAISE THE DEAD ♦ RANK 2, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Shift The main task of Death Magic is awakening the dead. In its simplest form, this ritual is used to reanimate one dead humanoid or animal, which will become a rank 1 undead. For each power level beyond the first, you can reanimate one more undead, or increase the rank of all undead raised by the spell by one. A ritual with power level 2 can raise two undead of rank 1, power level 3 can raise two undead of rank 2, and so on. A rank 1 undead has little to no mental capacity, but will obey simple commands and can use weapons and simple tools. The undead has the same Strength it did in life, Agility is decreased by one (no lower than 1), and it has no Wits or Empathy. Skills based on Strength and Agility are retained. A rank 2 undead can be enhanced in one of the following ways: ♦ **STRONGER:** The Strength score increases by 1. This effect can be chosen several times for undead of higher ranks. ♦ **SMARTER:** The undead regains some of its lost mental capacity, in the form of both Wits and Empathy and skills associated with these attributes. All the scores are lowered by one (no lower than 1). The undead can answer questions about its life both before and after death, but it often has an unclear sense of time and can be very forgetful. It obeys its maker and can perform slightly more advanced tasks. ♦ **DURABLE:** The duration of the spell is doubled. This effect can be chosen several times for undead of higher levels.

tim's remains are reasonably intact you can speak directly with the corpse, otherwise you hear the dead as a disembodied host voice in your head. This spell cannot be used against undead.

STEAL LIFE ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can suck the life from living plants and animals around you. You gain a number of Willpower Points equal to twice the power level. The ritual can only be used in an environment where there is vegetation and so cannot be used indoors or on a rocky mountain side. When you perform the ritual, all people, animals and plants within Short range – in the same zone as you – die.

TERROR ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate You can instill a horrible, unbearable fear in your victim, whose mind is flooded by images of their own aging and death. The victim suffers stress (damage to both Wits and Empathy) equal to the power level. This spell only works on living humanoids.

ELEMENTALISM

Elemental magic is the art of manipulating the very building blocks of existence, the four basic elements earth, wind, water, and fire.

COMBUSTION ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate

A rank 3 undead gets two of the effects above. A rank 4 undead gets three effects, a rank 5 gets four effects, and so on.

Manipulating the element of fire, you make any non-living object suddenly burst into flame. If used against a held item, the target must drop the item or suffer one point of damage. If used against clothes or armor, the victim suffers the effects of fire with an intensity (page 24) equal to twice the power level. If using the step dice system, the intensity is D for power level 1, C for power level 2, B for 3, and A for power level 4 or above.

SPEAK TO THE DEAD

SUNDER

♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Stretch

♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate

You can speak with the dead. You must be within Short range of where the victim died or lies buried. You must know the victim's name. You can speak with the dead for a few minutes and ask a few simple questions. The GM decides what the dead can and will answer – the dead aren't always cooperative. If the vic-

Breaking the invisible bonds holding physical matter together, you split apart any object. Using this spell, you can break any non-living and non-magical object. For each power level, the item loses one point of gear bonus (page 11) or suffers ten points of damage. Armor has no effect.

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SUFFOCATE

FLIGHT

♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: One round per power level

♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Round

Commanding the element of wind, you suffocate a victim by literally pulling the air out of their lungs. The target suffers one point of damage at the start of each subsequent round, for a number of rounds equal to the power level. Armor has no effect. If the victim is broken by the effect of the spell, they die after D6 rounds unless saved with a Healing roll. While under the effect of the spell, the victim cannot talk or scream.

Controlling the air around you, you create a small whirlwind that propels you into the air. Using the spell, you can fly for one round, moving two zones instead of one per move action. The casting of the spell doesn't count as an action in itself. For each additional power level, you can fly for an additional round or bring another person with you.

WATER BREATHING ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Stretch You grant yourself or a creature you touch the ability to breath water as if it was air, eliminating the danger of drowning. Each power level increases the number of creatures you can affect by one or increases the duration by one stretch. These extra effects can be combined.

HEAT OF THE MOMENT ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ DURATION: Immediate By calling forth the element of fire in the heart of another living being, you cause your victim to be overcome by anger and rage. Make an opposed roll with a number of base dice equal to twice the power level against the Insight skill of the victim (in the step dice system roll two level D base dice for power level 1, two C dice for power level 2, etc). You cannot push the roll. If you win, the victim goes berserk and must immediately attack everyone in Short range and keep fighting until they are broken, or all enemies have fled or are broken. No effect against monsters or creatures that lack Wits.

ROCK STORM ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate Manipulating the element of Earth, you hurl stones and rocks at an enemy in combat. The damage from your attack is equal to the power level. Armor works normally.

PARCH ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ DURATION: Immediate Controlling the element of water, you draw the fluids out of a living victim. They immediately suffer damage (to Agility, if using the attribute damage) equal to the power level. Armor has no effect.

FIREBALL ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Long ♦ DURATION: Immediate You hurl a ball of fire which explodes upon hitting the target, incinerating a large area. The main target of your attack suffers damage equal to the power level. Also, everyone within Short range of the main target (in the same zone) suffers the effects of fire with an intensity (page 24) equal to twice the power level. If using the step dice system, the intensity is D for power level 1, C for power level 2, B for 3, and A for power level 4 or above.

STONESKIN ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Personal ♦ DURATION: Stretch Manipulating the element of Earth, you

cover your body with a layer of living stone, protecting you against damage. You receive an armor rating equal to twice the power level (using step dice, power level 1 gives armor rating D, power level 2 gives armor rating C, etc).

TORNADO ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate Forcing air into a spin, you unleash a powerful whirlwind. Your target is pummeled and suffers damage equal to the power level (blunt trauma). You can distribute the damage to

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several targets in the same zone. Also, everyone in the target zone must make a Force roll to stay standing. Flying creatures must make the same roll to stay in the air.

FLOOD WAVE ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate Forcing any nearby source of water or snow to do your bidding, you unleash a flood wave or small avalanche against your victims. The targets suffer a total amount of damage equal to the power level – you can distribute the damage as you see fit. All victims who take damage are thrown to the ground.

SYMBOLISM

The discipline of Symbolism uses runes, esoteric signs and symbols that reflect the underlying patterns of the world. It takes advantage of the forces unleashed by a broad spectrum of laws that are stretched, broken or twisted by the influence of these symbols. The signs of Symbolism can be carved, drawn, or simply formed in the air by the hands of a sorcerer. In any case, the sorcerer needs at least one free hand. Draw or Carve: Symbolism requires no ingredients apart from the symbols themselves. If they are carved or drawn in any way, the power level is increased by one. Drawing a symbol takes a few minutes and cannot be done in the heat of battle. Carving a symbol into stone takes one shift or more. The Sorcerer decides when the symbol is activated. Even a drawn or carved symbol only works once.

ENTICE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate The symbol lures the victim, who must make an Insight roll with a negative modifier equal to the power level. If the roll fails, the victim must move to within Engaged range of the symbol, spending all their normal actions to do so. When the victim reaches the symbol, or if the symbol is moved, the effect is broken. No effect on monsters.

HORRIFY ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate

PARALYZE ♦ RANK 1 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Immediate The hypnotizing power of the symbol mesmerizes your opponent. At power level 1, the victim loses their fast action in the round, or in the next round if they have already used it. At power level 2, they lose their slow action. At power level 3, they lose both actions, and at power level 4, they also lose any bonus actions from talents. The spell has no effect on monsters.

BLIND ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ DURATION: Shift The victim must make an Insight roll with a negative modifier equal to the power level. If the roll fails, the symbol blinds the victim. The effect of this blindness is the same as for being in total darkness (page 24). On victims without Wits, such as animals,

the effect is automatic, but the spell has no effect on monsters.

ILLUSION ♦ RANK 2 ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ **DURATION:** Stretch You make the victim see or hear something that isn't there, or hide something that otherwise would be seen. A small item requires a power level of 1, while an object of humanoid size requires power level 2, and an illusion the size of a house requires power level 3. Only one person is affected. The victim can see through the illusion with an Insight roll, but gets a negative modifier equal to the power level. This spell has no effect on monsters.

MIND TRICK ♦ RANK 2, POWER WORD ♦ RANGE: Medium ♦ **DURATION:** Round You can force an NPC to refrain from an action they would otherwise have performed. It must be a minor action, something you can forget by being absent-minded. An example could be that a guard lets a PC pass without confirming who they are or that someone leaves their keys on a table. The spell cannot be used in combat.

The symbol awakens a deep fear in the victim, who suffers stress (damage to Wits) equal to the power level. No effect on monsters.

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PUPPETEER ♦ RANK 3 ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** Round You can take complete control of your victim's actions. The victim must make an Insight roll with a negative modifier equal to the power level. If the roll fails, the victim becomes a puppet without control of their own body. This control only lasts until the victim's next ordinary turn, and covers one fast and one slow action. The victim cannot perform reactive actions or bonus actions from talents before the Puppeteer's actions are performed. The spell has no effect on monsters.

POWER RUNE ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Engaged ♦ **DURATION:** Immediate You can charge a symbol with power. The symbol must be drawn on or carved into an object, which is then charged with

a number of Willpower Points equal to the power level. You can use the symbol later to cast spells, emptying its stored Willpower Points. You don't need to Bind magic to use this spell. Other sorcerers skilled in the art of runes can use your Power Runes if they can access them, so keep them to yourself!

PORTAL ♦ RANK 3, RITUAL ♦ RANGE: Short ♦ **DURATION:** One shift per power level This powerful ritual tears a hole in the veil between worlds and opens a path between them. This is a very risky undertaking, since you run the risk of running into all sorts of demons and other malevolent creatures on the other side - perhaps you can use them for your own purposes, but it is just as likely they will attempt to use you for their own. Or perhaps devour you. The spell Bind Demon (page 35) is very useful here. The details are up to the GM. Another use for this spell is creating a new Portal on the other side, which can lead you anywhere you want.

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6. TRAVEL

In many YZE games, the world is a dangerous place and safe havens are few and far between. To survive, you need to keep moving. Traveling, whether on foot or by vehicle, can be a key part of your game.

41, but you may want to invent others specific to your game setting. The terrain types affect travel speed as well as the difficulty of driving, foraging, and hunting. **ROADS:** Several major roads are marked on the travel map.

Traveling along a major road is generally faster – but you also increase the risk of encounters. Only main roads count as roads for game purposes, even if the countryside is crisscrossed with tracks or even small dirt roads.

TRAVEL MAPS

To regulate journeys, a travel map is used. A travel map is typically divided into hexagons, which are used to measure distances and govern movement. One hexagon is 10 kilometers across. Some YZE games use travel maps with square grids instead of hexagons.

RIVERS: Rivers are also not a type of terrain in themselves,

but can be used for traveling. Fords and bridges can be used to pass over a river. If there are none, you need a raft or boat to cross a river, or you must swim across it. Read more about journeys on lakes and rivers below.

TERRAIN TYPES A travel map is divided into different terrain types. A few typical terrain types are summarized in the table on page **TERRAIN**

ROAD

OPEN

WOODS

HILLS

MOUNTAINS

LAKE/RIVER

SWAMP

RUINS

Speed*

×1

×1

×½

×½

×1/3

×1 ×¼ ×½ **Driving +3 +1 -1 0 -1 +2 -1 0 Foraging As terrain -1 +1 0 -2 - -1 -2 Hunting As terrain +1 +1 0 -1 0 0 -1 Encounter Distance Long***

Extreme

Medium

Long

Long

Extreme

Long

Medium

*Applies only to off-road driving. For marching and on-road driving, the speed factor is always ×1.

Requires boat or amphibious vehicle. *Minimum distance, use only for roads through woods or ruins.

TASKS

At the start of every shift, each member of the traveling party must decide what they will do for most of that shift. You cannot perform more than one task in the same shift, including marching. The only exception to this is that one PC may keep watch while marching. Some tasks can be performed by several of the characters at the same time. For other tasks, a single character must be chosen. The various tasks are summarized below, and explained in detail over the course of the coming pages. **Marching:** Walking on foot to progress on the travel map. Can be combined with keeping watch, for one character only.

DRIVING: Maneuvering a vehicle on land, water or in the air to progress on the travel map. Passengers can keep watch, rest, or sleep while you drive. **GATHERING:** Collecting wood or grain to produce alcohol fuel. Must be done on foot. **KEEPING WATCH:** Scouting for enemies and other encounters. Only one character can perform this task. Can be combined with marching. **FORAGING:** Looking for edible plants and herbs. Must be done on foot.

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HUNTING: Tracking and killing animals for food. Must be

FISHING: Requires a river or a lake.

the way – because of an encounter or something else – you will not be able to travel the entire distance during the shift. The GM has the final word on how many hexes of movement you lose when stopping for an encounter.

MAKING CAMP: Only one character can roll for making camp,

FORCED MARCH

but others can help.

You can march for two of the four shifts of the day without problem. If you need to, you can push yourselves and march for a third shift in a single day. This requires that each of you make a Stamina roll (in addition to any roll for heavy rain). Failure means that you are unable to march during the shift – instead, you must rest or sleep. If your Stamina roll succeeds, you can choose to leave any stragglers behind and split up the group, or you can stay and wait for them. If you are in a real rush, you can even attempt to march for a fourth shift in the day. In that case, you must roll for Stamina again as outlined above, but the roll gets a –2 modifier.

done on foot.

COOKING: Requires a kitchen or a campfire (which can be set as a part of making camp). **RESTING:** Can be done in a moving vehicle, as long as you're not driving or keeping watch. **SLEEPING:** You need to sleep at least one shift per day (page 25). Can be done in a moving vehicle, as long as you're not driving or keeping watch.

WEATHER The GM decides the current weather when the game starts, and then rolls a D6 at the start of each shift (or less often if they prefer). On a bane, the weather changes one step toward rain. On a success, the weather changes one step toward fair. ♦ **HEAVY RAIN/SNOW:** Limits visibility to Long in the morning and day shifts, and to Short during the evening and night. Gives a –1 modifier to all ranged attacks. Requires a Stamina roll for marching (page 42) and gives a –2 modifier to skill rolls for driving. A heavy rain will only last one shift – then the weather automatically shifts to cloudy. ♦ **CLOUDY:** Cloud cover reduces visibility during the evening and night shifts of the day to Medium. ♦ **FAIR WEATHER:** Maximum visibility in the evening and night shifts is Long.

MARCHING

Under good circumstances, you can march two hexes per shift on a road or in open terrain. Off-road in any terrain type except open, you can march one hex per shift.

N A V I G A T I O N When moving off-road through a hex with no road in it, no matter if you are marching or driving, one person in your group must make a Survival roll to enter a new hex. If the roll fails, you enter another hex than the one intended. Roll any die – on an even roll, you enter the hex to the right of the target hex, and on an odd roll, the hex to the left.

DRIVING

All characters in a modern setting are assumed to be able to drive any civilian vehicle under normal circumstances. The vehicle list on page indicates maximum travel speeds, in 10-kilometer hexes per shift. Two separate rates are given, one for traveling off-road and one for traveling on-road. If the listed speed for off-road travel is a dash (-) the vehicle cannot be driven off-road at all. Normally, you will choose on-road or off-road driving for a full shift, but the GM can allow splitting a shift in half, at their discretion. ENCOUNTERS: As for marching, short breaks are included in

WEATHER: In heavy rain, each PC needs to make a Stamina

roll to march – if you fail, your base movement for this shift is reduced by one hex (which can mean you don't move at all). If some PCs succeed and others fail, you need to decide whether to leave stragglers behind or wait for them. DARKNESS: Marching off-road at night requires a Survival

roll. Only one person rolls for the entire group. Failure means that you cannot find your way, and no progress is made during this shift. ENCOUNTERS: Short breaks are included in the travel speeds

in the list, but if you stop for more than a few minutes along

the travel speeds for vehicles, but if you stop for more than a few minutes, you will not be able to travel the entire distance. The GM has the final word on how many hexes of movement you lose when stopping for an encounter.

TERRAIN When driving off-road, difficult terrain can reduce your speed. A terrain speed factor of $\times\frac{1}{2}$ in a hex means that you need to spend two hexes of movement to drive into it, a speed factor of $\times\frac{1}{3}$ means you need to spend three hexes of movement, etc. You will sometimes need to accumulate movement over multiple shifts to move into a hex. When driving on-road, the terrain has no effect.

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DRIVING AT NIGHT

FUEL

Driving off-road at night halves the effective travel speed, rounding fractions up.

Vehicles need fuel to operate. The lists in chapter 5 indicate each vehicle's fuel capacity (in liters) and fuel consumption (in liters per hex driven). Off-road, the fuel consumption is doubled.

MISHAPS At the start of each shift you drive, you must make a skill roll for driving, modified for terrain type. If you drive off-road into a new terrain type during a shift, you need to make an additional roll. In heavy rain, you get a -2 modifier. If you fail, you suffer a mishap – make a roll on the table on page 43. Typically, a mishap occurs about halfway into the movement of the shift – the GM decides the exact hex.

MOUNTS During travel, you can only ride for two shifts per day. To ride for a third shift, you need to make a Mobility roll. If you fail, your mount goes lame and becomes incapacitated. A mount needs at least one shift of rest per day.

DRIVING MISH A P S 2D6

MISHAP

EFFECT

2

Broken Axle

The vehicle becomes inoperable, needing a shift of repairs and a successful Crafting roll before it can continue.

3

Roadkill

The vehicle hits a random animal (roll on the hunting table). The animal is killed (and can be used for food), but also inflicts damage on the vehicle front equal to half its hit capacity (rounding up).

4

Busted Gearbox

The vehicle cannot move any further. Fixing the problem requires a Crafting roll and shift of work.

5

Dirty Fuel

The engine stops due to dirt or water in the fuel. All of the fuel in the tank needs to be drained and the vehicle refueled before it can continue.

6

Bogged Down

The vehicle gets stuck and moves no further this shift. Getting loose requires a Force roll or help from another vehicle. One attempt per shift can be made.

7

Wrong Turn

The driver makes a wrong turn somewhere and needs to turn around and go back. One hex of movement is lost this shift.

8

Roadblock

The road ahead is blocked by debris, a landslide, or fallen trees. The driver must choose a different hex to move into, or remove the obstacle (Force roll, taking one shift).

9

Engine Overheated

The vehicle must stop for the rest of the shift.

10

Blown Tire

The vehicle cannot move any further. Fixing the problem requires a Crafting roll with a +2 modifier. One attempt per shift can be made.

11

Crash

The vehicle crashes into a tree, rock, or barricade, and suffers damage equal to its travel speed rating.

12

Engine Blown

The vehicle becomes wrecked (page 26).

KEEPING WATCH

During every shift, you can designate one character in your group who is responsible for scouting for threats and enemies. The lookout can keep watch and march at the same time. A lookout is useful during every shift, even after you make camp. You don't need to have a lookout, but without one you have no chance of spotting threats before they are upon you. During journeys, the lookout makes a passive Observation roll (cannot be pushed) when the GM indicates that the group is approaching an encounter. The distance between the lookout and the encounter depends on the terrain that you are traveling in. See the table on page 41. If the roll is successful, your lookout spots the other group before you are spotted yourselves. You can then decide whether to show yourselves, back off, or set up an ambush. If your Observation roll fails, the other group spots you first.

BACKING OFF: If you back off from an encounter without

being spotted, you can circle around it, off-road. This will cost you an additional hex of off-road movement (modified by terrain), before you can continue forward. **VEHICLES:** If you travel on or in a motor vehicle and the

group you encounter is on foot, you get a -2 modifier to the Observation roll to spot the encounter. If you are on foot while the encountered group is motorized, you get a +2 modifier to the roll. If both groups are in vehicles, roll normally.

FORAGING

If you are running out of provisions, you can spend a shift looking for edible plants or drinkable water in your current hex. To forage, first choose whether you are looking for food or water. Then make a Survival roll, modified by the terrain type.

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When foraging for food, success means that you find a number of rations of raw food equal to the number of successes you rolled. You can eat raw plants, but you will then need to make a sickness roll against virulence 3 (D) to resist food poisoning. Only one character can forage for food or water in the same hex during the same shift, but others can help the roll (page 11). For each shift you forage again in the same hex, you get a –1 cumulative modifier. This modifier is reset after a week, except in wintertime.

HUNTING

FISHING If you are in a hexagon next to a river, lake, or ocean, you can fish. You can fish from a moving boat. To fish, you need fishing gear and a Survival roll. Success means you gain a number of rations of (domestic) food equal to the number of you rolled, once the fish has been cleaned out and cooked (page 45). You can eat raw fish, but you will then need to make a sickness roll against virulence 6 (C) to resist food poisoning. Only one character can roll for fishing in the same hex during the same shift, but others can help the roll. For each shift you fish again in the same hex, you get a –1 cumulative modifier. This modifier is reset after a day.

Another way to find food during a journey is to hunt in your current hex. First roll for Survival, modified for the terrain type. Success means that you have tracked some kind of prey. Roll on a hunting table based on the game setting to see what type of animal it is. You'll find an example of a hunting table on page 44. If you roll multiple successes, you manage to track several prey – roll once for each, and then choose which one to hunt. To kill a prey you have tracked, you must first make an Observation roll to move into position without alerting the animal. Second, you must make a ranged attack against the animal. If your attack inflicts damage equal to or in excess of the Health rating of the animal, or if you score a critical hit, the animal is killed. If not, it's only wounded and escapes. You usually only get one shot. The hunting table indicates how many rations of (domestic) food that your prey yields, once the meat has been cut and cooked (page 45). You can eat raw meat, but you will then need to make a sickness roll against virulence 6 (C) to resist food poisoning. Only one character can roll for hunting in the same hex during the same shift, but others can help the roll. For each shift you hunt again in the same hex, you get a –1 cumulative modifier. This modifier is reset after a week.

FIRE: Setting a campfire is included in making camp. This is required to be able to cook food at the camp and it will protect you against cold weather. You can opt to not start a fire, as the smoke will give away your position to anyone within visual range of it. When sleeping for a shift without a fire (or other heat source), you must all roll Stamina to resist cold (page 25), except in very warm weather.

TRAPPING: Certain animals can be caught using simple

STANDING GUARD: Even while you are in your camp, you

snare. Using a snare, you don't need to shoot the animal in order to catch it. Instead, you just make another Survival roll after having tracked the animal – if successful, the animal is caught.

would be wise to have a sentry stay awake to keep watch. You need to choose who stands guard during the night, and let this person sleep during some other shift (usually the evening).

MAKING CAMP

When the journey of the day is over, it's time to make camp. Finding a good location for a camp, making a fire, and preparing a place to sleep takes a whole shift – usually the evening. Only one character rolls to make camp, but others can help with the roll. Make a Survival roll. If your roll succeeds, you find a sheltered place to spend the night, where you can all find cover from incoming fire and rest up before the next day's journey. If your roll fails, you set up camp to rest and sleep anyway, but the GM makes a hidden roll on the mishap table (page 45). Re-roll if the mishap is not applicable to the situation. The GM can spring this mishap on you anytime while you are in the camp.

BARE GROUND: It is possible to sleep in the wilderness with-

SAMPLE HUNTI N G TA B L E D6

ANIMAL

HEALTH

TRAPPING

FOOD

1

Grouse

1

No

1

2

Rabbit

1

Yes

1

3

Fox

1

Yes

D3

4

Deer

2

No

2D6

5

Boar

3

No

2D6×2

6

Moose

5

No

2D6×4

out making camp – you simply find a suitable tree to sleep under. You save the time it takes to make camp, but everyone in the group must make a Survival roll to find a good spot to sleep. Failure means you don't sleep at all. Since you don't have a fire to keep the cold away, you all also suffer the effects of cold (page 25).

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CAMP MISHAP S D10

MISHAP

EFFECT

1

Food Spoiled

Your food has rotted or been infected by insects. Half the rations you are carrying are spoiled.

2

Flooding

Heavy rainfall (page 42) starts in the middle of the night. The camp is flooded and everything gets soaking wet. All characters must roll for Stamina to resist cold (page 25), and no one gets any sleep.

3

Fire Dies

The firewood is wet, and your campfire goes out. Except in warm weather, everyone must roll for Stamina to resist cold.

4

Fire!

The flames from your campfire spread out of control. If you have a tent, it's destroyed. Each character suffers the effects of fire with intensity D, and must make a Mobility roll to save their gear. Failure means that one piece of equipment (GM's discretion) is lost in the fire.

5

Ants

Your camp sits right in the middle of an ant road. You each suffer one point of stress (damage to Empathy) and no one gets any sleep here.

6

Lice

A randomly selected character has caught lice. It itches horribly, and they get a rash all over their body. The victim suffers one point of stress (damage to Empathy) each day and cannot sleep this day. A successful Healing roll stops the effect.

7

Mosquito Swarm

A large swarm of mosquitoes attacks the camp, driving everyone crazy. Roll two D6 for each character - for each success rolled, the character suffers one point of stress (damage to Empathy).

8

Savage Animal

A starving wolf, dog, boar or even a bear attacks the camp.

9

Lost Gear

A randomly selected character has lost a piece of gear. The GM decides what was lost, and if it can be found.

10

Broken Gear

An item belonging to a randomly selected character is broken. The GM decides what item it is. The item can be repaired with a Crafting roll.

COOKING

Cooking meat, fish or vegetables that you have caught or foraged in the wild requires a campfire or a kitchen of some sort. By a campfire, you can cook up to a dozen daily rations of food in a shift. This includes cutting meat, gutting and cleaning fish, etc. You can cook in the same shift as another character makes camp. Roll for Survival. No matter if you succeed or not, your rations of raw plants, meat, or fish are turned into edible food. However, if you fail, anyone who eats the food must make a sickness roll to resist food poisoning (virulence 3/D for plants, 6/C for meat or fish). This can be a hidden roll made by the GM.

RESTING

Resting by the campfire is a good opportunity to recover from damage (page 21). If your rest is interrupted by something dramatic, like combat or other similar activity, your activity during the shift no longer counts as rest.

SLEEPING

You need to sleep at least one shift per day (usually during the night). If your sleep is interrupted by something dramatic, like combat or other similar activity, your activity during the shift no longer counts as sleep.

EXPLORING

When you stop at a location to explore it, your journey is interrupted. Exploring can take anything from a shift up to several days or even weeks. Sometimes, you might have to take a break to rest or sleep while exploring. You cannot rest or sleep if you explore for more than half of the shift.

WATER TRAVEL

If you have access to a boat or raft, you can cross a river without using a bridge or a ford. You can also travel along a river, across a lake or on an ocean. Sea travel works just like driving on land. Passengers on a boat can rest or even sleep, as long as they don't keep watch, fish or perform some other action.

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Last update: **2023/04/07 18:53**