(cover page)

The Brew System

a role-playing game engine
for any setting

by Ilthit

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Introduction

Brew is a tabletop roleplaying game system that is designed to be adaptable to many different settings.

It does not come with a default setting. Instead, you will apply one, creating your own character classes or ancestries, refining your magic system if desired, defining what special abilities are available for the people who inhabit your world, and what restrictions they might operate under. The system will provide the mechanics.

It is intended to be free for all to use and adapt, including for commercial purposes.

There are examples of gameplay throughout, which use theoretical settings, as well as quick sample settings and character sheets.

Note that the base rules presented here are designed for unenhanced humans, so the damage and healing rules, for example, may not suit a game where taking damage is a daily occurrence. But that's where your setting and your specific game design comes in! Your heroes can be enhanced with special abilities called Tricks or gain more bonuses from their Ancestries or Character Classes. They can be wearing mundane or magical armor that allows them to soak damage. And if even that is not enough, there

are alternate rules provided for faster healing for action-packed adventures.

The Brew system is also designed to rely on character build more than swingy dice rolls, while retaining the possibility of a disastrous or especially lucky result. That is one of its core tenets—the other being adaptability and relative simplicity. My intention was also to make a system that is intuitive and quick to play, without getting bogged down in too many traits and spells, while retaining the option to develop the characters and personalize them further as they grow and learn.

Happy gaming!

Note

This system was written in bits and pieces over a year by just one person and has not been extensively playtested. Any comments or suggestions would be welcome, and you are more than welcome to change any rule that doesn't work for your table.

Gameplay

Role-Playing

If you've made it here, you probably know what a table-top roleplaing game is, but just in case: It is a game in which some players assume roles as characters with certain features and skills, and (often) one player is assigned as the gamemaster in charge of adjudicating the rules and (usually) controlling the rest of the fictional world in which the characters move. It's often called collaborative storytelling, which is apt—the action happens mainly in the imagination, and the story develops based on the decisions made by the player characters.

Brew is a classic system in that it also is designed to be played with a gamemaster, and the character sheets have skill lists, which contribute to the result of the die rolls. Brew characters have a list of Attributes, which define their natural advantages such as Charisma or Speed, and Skills, which are their learned abilities, such as carpentry or animal handling. Depending on the setting, they may also have Magic Skills, and can wear armor or wield weapons which have their own statistics.

Skill Rolls

To attempt something difficult or risky, you roll a die.

In the Brew system, skill rolls are made with a single six-sided die (1d6). The result is added to the character's relevant Attribute + Skill total (values that are found on the character sheet), and judged against a *difficulty,* a number set by the gamemaster depending on the task. The roll must be above or equal to the difficulty.

The lowest difficulty is 6—a task that offers no challenge to an expert, but might not work out if your talents don't lie in that direction. (Remember, the die roll is added to an existing skill pool—you don't need to roll a 6 in order to succeed.) In most cases it does not make sense to even roll for any task with a lower difficulty than that, and most rolls will have a minimum difficulty 8 or higher. However, if the roll total meets a higher threshold than required, the success is improved on.

Typical Difficulty Thresholds

Easy	6
Challenging	8
Expert level	10

| Feeling lucky? | 16 |
| Teamwork or God-tier | 18 or above |

In some skill rolls there is a standard bonus for meeting a higher threshold. The two examples baked into the basic system are combat damage (meeting a higher threshold on an attack roll deals one extra point of damage) and healing (meeting higher threshold on Medicine or Healing rolls regains more health points). Otherwise this can be left to the gamemaster's discretion.

If a penalty or stacked penalties mean that the character has 0 or negative points in an Attribute + Skill pool, the attempt is an automatic fail. You do not get to roll.

On the other hand, it is possible that the Attribute + Skill pool is equal to or greater than the difficulty set for the task, in which case it is an automatic success. The character can still roll a die as well; in some cases meeting a higher difficulty will get an extra effect on top of a success.

If the relevant Skill is missing, add only the Attribute. If your character has any bonuses through Tricks or other effects, add those points to the pool.

The absolute maximum of points a character can have in their Attribute + Skill total is 10 (both attributes and skills are capped at 5), so combined with the best possible roll (6) that makes 16 the maximum difficulty it is possible to beat without bonuses. The gamemaster could assign an even higher difficulty for a task that multiple people can work on

in turns to collect enough points to succeed (more on that below). Otherwise, the gamemaster can just say the task is impossible, and not allow a roll.

Skill rolls should also work out better when the total score meets a higher threshold. The specific advantage is up to the gamemaster, unless already specified (such as in the case of Medicine and Healing rolls).

> **Example:** Shaggy Pete wants to lasso a wild horse, which the gamemaster decides is difficulty 8. Pete's player rolls a 1d6 and gets a 6, then adds his Precision (Attribute) and Animal Handling (Skill) points to their result, 2 and 3 respectively, for a point total of 11, which is a success. Since the result was of a higher threshold, the gamemaster determines his skill with the lasso impresses the onlookers and gives him a +2 boost on his next Charisma or Interaction roll with them.

Resolve Points

If the roll was a failure, but the result of the roll (not counting the Skill + Attribute pool) was more than 1, it is possible to reroll it by using a Resolve point (see the *Character Creation* section). The maximum Resolve points a character can have is 5, with the amount refreshed after the character gets a minimum of 5 hours of rest. Typically only player characters have Resolve points, though a

gamemaster might decide to give this ability to NPCs and enemies as well for tougher play.

It is not possible to use Resolve to roll for things that happen during downtime (an extended period of rest or summarized action). However, training in downtime will gain you temporary extra Resolve points on the skill that you trained. More on this below in the Bullet Time, Story Time & Downtime section.

Chance Rolls

Risk more, gain more. With the gamemaster's permission, the player whose roll succeeded can roll 1d6 on top of their usual roll to increase their total score to reach a higher threshold and gain an advantage, which should be agreed on before the roll takes place. This is useful in some cases where meeting a higher threshold gives you an advantage. However, if the dice comes up as 1-3, then whatever the result of the first roll, the action fails. If it comes up as 4-6, you can add the points to your point total. Chance rolls should be reserved for high stakes situations (see Bullet Time, Story Time & Downtime below) and cannot be rerolled even by spending Resolve.

Magic Rolls

Magic rolls work in much the same way, with the difference being that a magic effect cannot be rolled for with just the

Attribute; at least one dot in the relevant field of magic is required. See more below in the Magic section.

Contested Rolls

In an contested roll (also called an opposed roll), two characters (usually a character and a non-player character controlled by the gamemaster) both roll their 1d6 and add their Attribute + Skill pool, plus any bonuses and minus any penalties, after which the results are compared. Instead of a set difficulty, the characters simply try to beat each other's scores. Examples of this would be a high-speed chase (a series of opposed rolls), a baking contest, or combat.

Depending on the circumstances, it is possible to use a different Attribute + Skill pool than the one your opponent is using. For example, to make a delicate sugar sculpture, one might use Precision (Attribute) + Performance (Skill) vs. your opponent's hearty meat pie, Wits + Craft. The gamemaster will have final say on whether your skill combination is suitable for the situation.

Collaborative Rolls

Collaborative rolls are possible in some tasks. The types of collaborative rolls are:

Consecutive: Each character rolls in turn to accomplish another piece of a continuous task. The

gamemaster may decree a limit of tries per time period, and/or a number of tries after which the task has failed, if not accomplished. *Example:* Breaking through a heavy door by force.

Concurrent: The characters work together to achieve an effect. This usually involves only one try, aka one skill roll per person attempting the task. *Example:* Sorting colorful buttons into single-color piles as quickly as possible.

In both cases, players choose which character's Attribute + Skill points are going to be used as base, and then both roll 1d6, and add the results of both rolls to the point pool. They cannot use both characters' Attribute + Skill pools.

Example: Shaggy Pete and Marlo the Monk take turns chiseling through the bars on the window of their cell. This is a consecutive collaboration. Shaggy Pete's Power (Attribute) + Craft (Skill) is 2 + 2 = 4, which is more than Marlo's, so they choose to add 4 to their rolls. The difficulty to completely saw through the grid is set at 10, with one roll allowed for every 15 minutes spent. Pete rolls 3 and Marlo rolls 5, to a total of 12, a success in just 30 minutes of work.

Bullet Time, Story Time & Downtime

Bullet Time is a period of focused action, whether combat, a chase, or a tense negotiation. This is distinguished from Story Time, which is standard roleplay, or Downtime, which involves rest and recovery and other summarized action between stories.

In **Bullet Time**, things are happening quickly with intense focus. Here you have to roll for actions that might otherwise be automatic successes, but at the same time, this is the only time when you have the possibility to use a Chance Roll (see above in the *Skill Rolls* section).

In Bullet Time, it is often useful to figure out the order in which every character acts, aka turns. When turns are called, the order is determined by the characters' Speed scores, with ties broken by rolling 1d6 for each tied character. The same order then repeats for each round of actions.

However, note that when two characters are in combat, they roll at the same time, since combat is made up of contested (opposed) rolls (see above in the *Skill Rolls* section). Therefore a clean duel would not require turns. However, if you have multiple opponents or several pairs of combatants, turns may come into play again. For example, if Marlo and Pete are fighting Cranky Ted at the saloon, and the order of turns is Marlo, Pete, Ted, then Ted will have to engage Marlo first and Pete second.

As an alternative, turns may not be called at all, and instead characters in Bullet Time declare their actions and all act at once. The results of the actions are adjudicated by the gamemaster, and once those actions are resolved, new actions can be declared. This might work best with experienced players and a flexible type of gameplay.

Story Time is when players are interacting with each other and NPCs or performing tasks with no time pressure, and this is played out in real time. They may be investigating a crime scene, trying to navigate a busy city street, or hackling with a merchant. It is distinguished from Bullet Time in that there is no time pressure or an immediate and intense danger. Skill rolls can still be made, but will not involve Resolve Points or Chance Rolls (unless you decide to allow them; as always, it's whatever works best for your table).

In Story Time, an optional rule is available: Bonuses and penalties from the character's *state of mind* may be applied to skill rolls. This mechanic is optional; you may decide not to include it in your game if you want more streamlined gameplay. state of mind can be deduced from circumstances or declared by the player, but need to be approved by the gamemaster. The gamemaster also has final say in whether the bonus or penalty applies to a particular roll.

> **Relaxed:** Gain a +2 bonus on skills requiring focus and stress resistance, and gain a penalty on perception rolls related to perceiving danger.

Normal: No bonuses, no penalties.

Alert: Gain a +2 bonus on rolls related to perceiving danger and thinking on your feet, and gain a penalty on tasks involving focus.

Downtime is summarized action or rest. Players can declare actions to take during downtime, such as building a birdhouse or going gambling in a casino, and roll for the results of those actions, but it is not possible to use Resolve to reroll these actions.

During an extended period of Downtime, a character can also choose to *train* a skill. This has two functions:

First, if the player wants to purchase a skill point but has not practiced the relevant skill during gameplay, training in downtime will justify the purchase.

Second, training a skill for at least three days will gain the character an extra Resolve point to use during Story Time; one that can *only* be used to reroll dice *in that skill*. These extra Resolve points are capped at 3 (requiring nine days of training). These are added on top of the usual five points of Resolve, which are not tied to any particular skill.

Load, Movement & Transport

The character sheet includes a space for equipment, but equipment lists should only be things that are relevant or you want to remember you have, split by what you have on you and what you may have accessible or at home. Items that can be assumed do not have to be listed, though the gamemaster will have to allow any suddenly declared item in the middle of a scene.

Load

The amount of weight a character is carrying—define whether you want to move light or be laden. If light, put a tick on the list next to the equipment you have on you, and consult with GM if this is allowed. Also make a note of any visible weapons. If laden, same, but with -2 penalties to Speed and Precision.

As a rule of thumb, characters with a Power score of 1-2 can carry 15 kg without being laden; a Power score of 3-4, 20 kg; and with a Power score of 5, 30 kg.

Travel

Many existing roleplaying games have handy, detailed charts available for travel distances and speed for various vehicles. A few examples are provided here, but it is also

possible to eyeball the distance during play in a looser, story-focused game, or for very crunchy situations, use a calculator such as the GIGAcalculator.[1]

Example Travel Times:
- Carriages, carts, wagons: 5-8 km/h, depending on the carriage and road quality. 90 km/day on a good road.
- On foot: 1-2 km/h in terrain, 2-3 km/h on difficult roads or paths, and 4-5 km/h on a good road.
- 5 miles/day over rough terrain, 10 on bad roads, and 20 miles on good roads.
- Horseback: 7 km/h over reasonable distances. 45 km/day; after that distance, the horse must rest.

Note that exhaustion will come into play when characters spend all day travelling, and these speeds are not sustainable for the whole day without stopping without incurring penalties. Ideally, any full day of travel should be capped with a full night's rest. Jumping right into action upon arrival should come with suitable penalties.

How far a character can move within a short time period depends on their Speed score. When contested with other characters or creatures, it is a simple comparison of Speed

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1 Link to GIGACalculator, free to use online: https://www.gigacalculator.com/calculators/average-speed-calculator.php

vs. Speed (see rules on chases in *Contested Rolls*), adding on any bonuses and penalties.

Crunchy option: When there is a specific time limit, there should also be a roll: Speed + 1d6/2 = how many metres per 3 seconds the character can move, rounded up. The pool here, depending on Speed score, is between 1 and 6 m. This is suitable for short distance sprints more than a sustained run. For that, calculate Speed + Power + 1d6 and divide the result by 2 to show how many km per hour the character can run. This also should lead to exhaustion within an hour of running. See Exhaustion rules in the section on *Sustenance & Deprivation*.

So, for examples:

- Speed 3 + 1d6 result of 3, divided by 2 and rounded up = 5m in 3 seconds, 10m in 6 seconds, and 15m in 9 seconds.
- Speed 3 + Power 3 + 1d6 result of 3, all divided by 2 and rounded up = 5km/h.

Combat

Combat is composed of contested rolls, in which each party rolls at the same time, and the person with the higher total score succeeds. In two-person combat, therefore, there is no need to roll for turns, though this may be advisable when there are multiple opponents involved in the fight. See above in the *Bullet Time, Story Time & Downtime* section above.

Due to the fixed HP maximum, the basic system's combat rules make for short and brutal fights. Alternatives are suggested below for more combat-oriented games.

Close combat attacks are usually either Power + Melee or Precision + Melee contested rolls depending on the method or weapon used. The defending roll can be either combination, or use a different Attribute + Skill combination if it seems appropriate. For example, Wits can be used to defend if you want to say you saw the attack coming, and the declared attack is one that relies on going unnoticed, like tripping your opponent or going for a sucker punch. Like with all skill rolls, use what makes the most sense.

Ranged combat attacks that use simple or improvised items, such as throwing a rock or a bottle, are made with Precision + Athletics to hit a target. For heavy objects, the roll would be Power + Athletics. "Heavy" is also subjective to the character, and can be adjudicated by the gamemaster.

The effective range for causing damage with simple small projectile weapons is Power x 10m, and for heavy, Power x 2m.

Ranged attacks are also contested, but a success simply means dodging the projectile. You can choose to take the hit and instantly fire back with your own ranged weapon; otherwise dodging is the whole of your action that round. A successful attack goes directly into damage (determined by weapon/attack type) unless the character has a special defense Trick. Some damage is absorbed by armor if the character is wearing any, and the amount of damage absorbed depends on the armor's statistics.

Note that if a projectile is thrown at an unmoving object or a person who cannot see the attack coming, the roll is not contested. In this case, a small or medium projectile has an effective range of Precision x 5m for a result of 8 points, and Precision x 10m for a result of 10 or more. For heavy objects, the effective range would be Power x 2 for a result of 8, and Power x 5 for a result of 10 or more.

In the case of a **complex ranged weapon**, the attack is usually made with Precision + Craft, provided the character knows how to use that weapon. See notes in the *Choose Skills* section.

It is possible to attack in a way that is specifically designed to circumvent armor, such as trying to strike unprotected areas, but that comes with a penalty -2 to the attack roll. This is called a *targeted attack*, and if successful, will deal damage as if the character wasn't wearing armor.

If the successful attack roll total was 2 points higher than the losing roll, add 1 point of damage.

It is also possible to choose to "pull your punch", and not cause actual damage with a successful attack, or hold back from a killing blow even though you could have done enough damage to kill. Note that since your opponent will be increasingly incapacitated as he takes damage, there is no need to kill them just to win. The conflict will end when they are no longer able to fight.

Grappling someone down is also a Melee attack, and can be either Precision or Power, but keeping the other person down requires simple Power vs. Power opposed rolls for every time the other person attempts to get up, with the grappled person rolling at a disadvantage.

Example: Though friends, Shaggy Pete and Marlo the Monk get into a disagreement over a game of loaded dice, and a shouting match ends in punches being thrown. Shaggy Pete rolls Power+Melee, 2 + 3 + 1d6, trying to land an artless upper cut right into Marlo's chin. Marlo dodges to the side, using Precision+Melee, 2 + 2 + 1d6. Pete rolls a 2 (to a total of 7), Marlo 1 (a total of 5), and so the punch lands, and Pete deals damage with an added point of damage, since he scored 2 points higher than Marlo.

Combat damage depends on the type of attack.

For unarmed combat, Damage equals the attacker's Power or Precision score, whichever was used in the attack, divided by half and rounded down, but is a minimum of 1 for a successful attack. This can be boosted by or defended against with Tricks.

For armed combat, the damage is determined by the weapon. A general rule would be that a handheld blunt weapon would do damage equal to the attacking attribute (whether Power or Precision), whereas a simple bladed handheld weapon would do damage equal to half of the attack roll's score. Since characters only have 10 HP, this makes for brutal fights.

> **Example:** Shaggy Pete's punch lands, and his player says Pete does not pull the punch, so the damage equals half his Power score + 1, which makes 2. Marlo the Monk, however, is wearing a thick leather fur cap that protects his face from bruising and soaks 1 damage, so he only takes 1.

Had Pete used his belt knife for the attack, the damage would have been (Power 2 + Melee 3 + roll 2) / 2 = 3.5, rounded down to 3, minus 1 point of damage soaked, plus 1 damage added, ending with 3.

Attack type	Roll	Damage
Unarmed	Power or Precision + Melee	Half of the attack's Attribute rounded down
Blunt weapon	Power or Precision + Melee	The attack's Attribute
Simple bladed weapon	Power or Precision + Melee	Half of the attack roll's total score rounded down
Simple projectile	Precision + Athletics	The attack's Attribute (provided the projectile is hard and intended to hurt)
Complex handheld weapon	Power or Precision + Melee, depends on weapon	Depends on weapon stats
Complex ranged weapon	Precision + Craft	Depends on weapon stats

Examples of weapon attacks

Weapon	Attack Roll	Effective Range	Damage
Composite bow	Precision + Craft (Bow)	Medium & long	Half the attack roll result rounded down
Handgun	Precision + Craft (Firearms)	Close & medium	Attack roll result
Broadsword	Power + Melee	Close	Attack roll result
Knife	Precision + Melee	Close	Half of the attack roll result rounded down

In addition to armor, fantastical combat-oriented games might want to add other things than armor that provide the ability to soak damage. This could be a Trick, or added as an advantage to ancestries and/or character classes, or even just added on the character sheet at a standard maximum that can be increased by XP (though this system does not currently provide a standard XP cost for this hypothetical soak tracker).

What if the type of attack is such that, had it landed, it would have avoided the armor and killed a person instantly? What if Pete had said he was going to try to stick his knife in Marlo's eye, and succeeded? How does that not kill him instantly just because he is wearing headgear, if the attack was still a success?

There are a couple of ways the gamemaster might choose to resolve this.

Option 1: Roll first, describe the attack later. Easy, but limits players' choices.

Option 2: (brutal mode) Logic overrules mechanics. If the attack chosen is deadly and successful, it will cause instant death or disable the opponent, whichever is desired or makes more sense. Note that in this case it will be a targeted attack and take a -2 penalty on the attack roll.

Fighting multiple opponents resolves as follows: In a single round, you can only attack one person, unless you have a Trick, Ancestry trait or weapon that allows for more. You will also roll simultaneous defending rolls against everyone who is attacking you in the same round, but cannot deal damage to those extra combatants. Those additional defense rolls will all be rolled at a -2 penalty per additional attacker. Fighting three people, then, means that you can engage one (contested attack roll, and may deal damage),

and roll to defend only at the other two attackers, with a -4 penalty against both additional attacks.

Magical combat is likewise composed of contested rolls. In addition, magic users can use Healing to instantly heal damage they themselves take before they suffer penalties from damage—essentially using Healing to instantly soak damage. Any other kind of magic roll (including healing others) would take an action to complete.

Defending against magical attacks when you don't have magic yourself is a flat Power or Precision roll.

If you choose to take the hit and neither defend, dodge or fight back when attacked, your character can make any other kind of skill roll in the same instance. This cannot be prevented from going off, since it is happening at the exact same time as the attack. It also means that you will take the incoming weapon damage. You might, for example, choose to throw a rope ladder down, which you can use to make your escape in the next round.

Movement in combat depends on your genre, whether your fighters are humanoids, space-ships or weasels. The basic setup is that you have three distances with their separate roles: **close range, mid-range,** and **long range.** Close range is for hand-to-hand combat and attacks with short-range weapons like daggers and short swords. Mid-range would be for spears or lances. Long range would require a ranged weapon. You can step from close range to mid-range or from mid-range to long range instead of engaging in a fight to get into a better position.

If an attack has already been made, moving from one range to another can be taken as a defending roll—you do not deal damage if you win the contested roll and are able to move further away. To move from close range to mid-range or vice versa would be considered taking the hit, aka you will not be able to defend against incoming damage.

Pursuing a fleeing opponent turns it into a chase. Once a character has disengaged from a fight in the above way, or is running away for other reasons, it turns into a series of contested Speed rolls. (Speed does not affect the above disengaging rules.) The gamemaster can determine how many rolls can be made before the subject is either caught or gets away, but I recommend capping it at five. Every additional Speed roll, both the chaser and the chased make a Power roll against a difficulty of 6. If it fails, they subtract 2 from their Speed roll result as they are getting tired.

Exhaustion from a fight is also a good rule to apply when a duel or a fight drags on without damage being dealt by either side: After POW x rounds, substract 2 from effective attacks and defenses every round until the opponents are no longer able to fight.

Damage

Health is expressed on a 0-10 scale, unless a Flaw or injury caps a character's Health at a lower number, or a Trick or a magical effect extends it beyond that. Once Health drops to 5, the character will get a -2 penalty on all rolls using Power,

Precision or Speed, and -1 on rolls using Perception, Wits or Charisma. When it drops to 3 or below, the penalties are -4 and -2. If this means they have 0 or negative points in their Attribute + Skill pool, any attempt to use that skill is an automatic fail.

If Health drops to 0, the character falls into unconsciousness and, without proper medical care, will die within *days* equal to their Power score. If the amount of damage they receive drops their Health to below 0, they die within a number of *hours* equal to their Power score, unless stabilized by a successful Medicine roll, after which you can treat them the same as if they had fallen to Health 0 (see below the section on Healing). If the damage drops them to -5 or lower, they die instantly.

Health points	Effect
10	Full health
5 or below	-2 on Power, Precision and Speed rolls -1 on Perception, Wits and Charisma rolls
3 or below	-4 on Power, Precision and Speed rolls -2 on Perception, Wits and Charisma rolls
0	Unconscious; requires medical care to revive; without medical care will die within days equal to Power score

Health points	Effect
0 to -4	Unconscious; requires medical care to revive; without medical care will die within hours equal to Power score
-5 or below	Instant death

For combat oriented games, you may choose to ignore the penalties up to when the character reaches 0 and falls unconscious, or half the effect per threshold reached (for example, on 3 or below the character has -2 and -1 penalties instead of -4 and -2).

Lasting injuries: At any point, a player can choose to absorb up to 5 damage by taking a *lasting injury*. The gamemaster must approve of this and it must suit the type of damage the character is receiving. These will be *specific, limiting* injuries that hamper the character and must be roleplayed, and may be converted into penalties for certain rolls, on gamemaster's discretion.

It is suggested that the number of lasting injuries is capped at 3 before it is no longer an option. Also, taking a lasting injury can never raise Health to more than the character's maximum -5 (meaning that normally the cap would be 5, unless Tricks apply), nor can it recover health that was lost earlier in a different incident.

Example: Jenny the cheerleader has been hit by a car driven by a homicidal maniac in a mask on Halloween night, sustaining 4 damage. Her health, already weak from several knife fights with eerily crazed former friends, drops to -1. In order for Jenny to be able to drag herself to safety, the player chooses that she sustains a lasting injury instead. The gamemaster allows Jenny to get a broken and dislocated arm and recover 5 health points. Her Health is now at 4. She is conscious and can move about, but she will not be able to use her left arm.

Optional rule: Permanent injuries. The gamemaster may also decide to allow taking a *permanent injury* in order to regain more health points, or only allow regaining health points if the injury is permanent, such as loss of an eye in a non-magical low tech environment. In an environment where magical healing is available, the permanent injury would have to be somehow magically bound to never be healed, otherwise it will only count as a lasting injury.

Although there are no rules included here for sustaining mental and emotional trauma, which some games do track, there is nothing stopping you from creating a separate Health bar for mental stress, and using the lasting injuries rule for symptoms of trauma. It's your game!

Healing

Healing in the base Brew system is not easy. If you want to play a combat-oriented game where the characters get up again the next day after a big fight fresh as daisies, I suggest the following simplified healing mechanic:

Simplified healing for combat-oriented games

Medicine skill roll	On a total of 6, heal 2 points of damage per day per injured character. On a total of 8, heal 4 points of damage.
Magical Healing roll	On a total of 6, heal 4 points of damage per Healing roll. On a total of 8, heal 6 points of damage.
Two hours of rest	Heal half of the damage sustained, rounded up.
Full eight hours of rest	Heal all damage, including lasting injuries, and clear all effects of illness or poisoning.

In the above system, lasting injuries cannot be healed with Medicine or Healing rolls, and a character with a lasting

injury is capped at Health 8 (or their total health points minus 2) until they have had their full eight hours.

That's it for the simplified system for good old-fashioned fantasy fighting games. But if you want more realistic healing rules for your story, with the real threat of injury and death hanging over the characters and consequences for violence, these are available below.

If a character takes damage but her health never drops below 1, she will begin to heal the next day at a rate of one health point per day, or two per day if she continues to receive medical care during that time.

Characters whose Health drops to 0 can only begin to recover within days equal to 10 minus their Power score, provided they receive daily medical attention. This is called a *stabilization period*. If they are left without care, they will die within a number of days equal to their Power score. If their health fell below 0 (but not -5 or below, which is instant death), convert that to hours.

In either case, a successful stabilization roll (Medicine, difficulty 6) will bring them to Health 1, at which they will remain until the stabilization period is over. After that, they will begin to recover 1HP per day (or 2HP with daily medical attention).

During the stabilization period, the character will not be able to make any skill rolls, and may not be able to move or speak at all, as suits the game and the type of injury. If your game is a murder drama that depends on the injured character being unable to communicate, rule accordingly. The point is to tell a story, after all.

The Medicine roll to stabilize a mortally wounded character can only be attempted once per day per caregiver. If the wounded character is in a hospital, it can be assumed they remain successfully stabilized unless they sustain more damage. If they are in a party trekking through the wilderness and the first attempted Medicine toll fails, other party members can take turns to try a Medicine roll until one succeeds.

Missing a day of medical care means that the stabilization period is extended by a day. Remember: Missing a number of days in a row that is equal to their Power score means the character will die.

However, scoring high on a Medicine roll (8 or higher) may shorten the stabilization period or, outside of the period, heal one additional point.

Be realistic about how long it will take to tend to wounds or poison, and adjudicate difficulty for the roll based on the circumstances, such as if they are traveling, sleeping rough, or using inadequate tools, as seems fit. The standard difficulty (indoors, resting, with access to a first aid kit or equivalent) is 6.

Example: Bertha the Brute gets pummeled in the wrestling rink and gains potential brain damage, and is rushed to a hospital at Health -2. She has Power 4, and receives expert medical attention within two hours, so she is stabilized at Health 1. Her stabilization period is 6 days, after which she spends another two days in the hospital, gaining 2 points of

health each day. She leaves the hospital after eight days at Health 5, still encumbered (penalties to skill rolls) but on her way to recovery.

Lasting injuries (see above in the *Damage* section) take 30 points of healing to heal. This runs concurrent with normal healing, and can similarly be accelerated by expert medical care to 2 points per day. You may want to start a separate tracker on the character sheet whenever your character sustains a lasting injury.

> **Example:** Jenny the cheerleader successfully collapses a burning house on top of the killers and escapes the night of horror and carnage, and is taken to a hospital to recover at Health 4 and with a broken and dislocated arm (a lasting injury). With their expert medical care, she is back at Health 8 in two days, and is released from the hospital with her arm in a cast. Two days later, even without receiving further medical care, she is back to full Health – but she won't be throwing any teammates around with that arm anytime soon. She recovered 6 Health points and, concurrently, 6 points of healing on her lasting injury, but her arm will take another 24 days to heal fully. However, if she has daily checkups with a trained medical professional, her arm will be fine within 12 days, ready for that big game.

Any new damage sustained during the healing period will be treated as usual, just set your tracker back by the new amount of damage. This damage is likewise applied to the lasting injury. So, if you have 10 points of health and 12 points left to heal on your lasting injury, and you take 2 damage, you will have 8 points of health and need to heal another 14 points before ridding yourself of the lasting injury.

Health Points	Healing
1 or above	1 point per day; 2 points for each day successful medical attention is received.
0	Enter a stabilization period for a number of days equal to 10 minus the character's Power score. If the character receives medical treatment every day for that period of time, they will revive on the last day with Health 1. Without medical care, they will die within days equal to their Power score.
-1 to -4	Same as at 0, except that without medical care, the character will die within hours equal to their Power score.
Lasting injuries	Require 30 points of healing to be cleared.

Magical Healing is another matter.

Though most Magic rolls are open to interpretation, for Healing, it is recommended to use a standard difficulty of 6 to recover 2 points of Health. If the roll result, including any bonuses, is 8 or higher, recover 4 points instead; if it is 12 or higher, recover 8 points (though never above the character's maximum). The gamemaster may also allow a full heal if a Chance Roll is used and comes up a 6 (see Skill Rolls and Bullet Time, Story Time & Downtime above).

Example: Xuan Fengyin is trying to heal a deep cut in her patient's leg. She has 3 points in Healing, and since she is a Cultivator, the Attribute she uses for the point pool is Perception, in which she has 3. As this already meets the standard difficulty for magical healing, it is an automatic success. Xuan Fengyin's player decides to roll 1d6 anyway for a chance to increase the result. The roll comes up a 2, to a total of 7, so no extra points of health are restored. Xuan Fengyin also uses up one mana slot doing this (see the section on Magic).

Illness

There are too many illnesses to cover here, but each should be represented with a mechanic that makes sense to how that particular illness operates.

A character can resist an illness by rolling their Power + Survival against a difficulty that reflects how infectious the illness is.

Once infected with a standard illness, roll 1D6. Subtract the result from 10, then subtract the character's Power score, to find out how many days the illness will last. The number subtracted from is up to the gamemaster's discretion and should reflect the usual way the illness operates.

Likewise, when ill, penalties are applied to rolls as suits the illness. A person who is violently ill from food that has gone bad, for example, could take a penalty of -2 on all Power rolls.

In case of a magical illness or curse, the current Mana pool could be used instead of Power for these rolls, if the affected character is a magic user.

Sustenance & Deprivation

Food and Drink

NOTE: This section may be triggering for individuals with eating disorders or history thereof. If you or your player is vulnerable, choose safety first and skip this section entirely, or resume at the portion on Sleep.

Characters, unless they have a special Trick or magical solution for hunger and thirst, or are not humanoid and have different species needs, must eat and drink every day. If they don't, they will start to take damage and eventually die.

How realistically you want to play this, or if you want to include these mechanics at all, is up to you—but please check that everyone at the table is cool with the direction you take on this.

That being said, the standard rule is:

- On no food whatsoever, lose 2 health points per week.
- On meager food, lose 1 health point per week.
- On no drink whatsoever, lose 3 health points per day.

- On meager water, lose 1 health point per day.

Once the characters are eating and drinking again, they will begin to recover at normal rates from starvation, and at double the rate for dehydration (dehydration damage only).

It is not possible to avoid deprivation damage by taking a lasting injury. Also, it is not possible to fully heal this damage magically or with medical attention unless the character is also eating and drinking.

A character who falls to Health 0 or below due to dehydration or starvation will permanently lose one point of their maximum Health, to represent the damage this has done to their bodies. So, if they had a maximum Health of 10 before, they now have a maximum Health of 9. In settings with magical healing, this rule can be ignored.

Sleep

Excluding Tricks or magic, as well as characters of species other than human, characters should get a minimum of 5 hours of sleep every day-night cycle. If they don't, there will be penalties.

Easy mode: If the character gets no sleep at all in a 24 hour period, roll Power at a difficulty 5 on the second day to stay awake. On the third day, roll again, but even on a success you take a -2 to all skill rolls for the rest of the day. After the third day, your character will fall asleep. You may prefer this system for the sake of simplicity.

Hard mode: Use this if you want more realism or if sleep deprivation is a major theme or component of your story, as it may be if you are running a survival horror adventure, for example. In this mode, characters begin to take cumulative penalties to skill rolls on their second day without sufficient sleep. To resist the effects of lack of sleep, make a Power + Survival roll against difficulty 8 on the second day. On a success, you stave off the effect for a day, and will begin the third day as if it was the second.

If you are getting no sleep at all, you also have to make a Power roll against the difficulty of 5 every day after the second day of penalties in order to stay awake. Starting on the second day, the character takes -1 penalty on all rolls using Precision or Charisma, and -2 on rolls using Perception or Wits. After the third day, the penalties are -2 and -4. After that, the character will be too exhausted to make skill rolls. On day 5, they begin to take damage to their Health at the rate of 1 per day until they either sleep or fall unconscious at Health 1, after which they will begin to heal at normal rates.

Penalties on less than 5 hours of sleep per day-night cycle: Starting the second day, the character takes a -1 penalty on Precision, Perception and Wits. After the third day, the penalties expand to include Power and Charisma. After day 5, all skill rolls are at -2.

Exhaustion

If a character is exhausted due to physical exertion or another effect not covered here, use the standard penalty of -2 on all skills. If the character persists in strenuous activity, up the penalty to -3, then -4, after which the character is too exhausted to continue and will fall unconscious.

Extreme Weather Conditions

If the characters are traveling through extreme heat or cold and have to deal with the effects of hypothermia or overheating, they will suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls, and make a Power + Survival check (without penalty) every five hours or take one point of damage. This means more than a warm day, but heat exceeding 40C or below -40C for normal humans, and assuming the character can't take breaks from the weather. The difficulty for the roll is 10 minus the character's Power score.

This damage can be healed the same way any other kind of damage.

If the characters have equipment to stave off the weather conditions, such as shade and water for heat, or special warm clothing for extreme cold, the penalties on other skill rolls still stand, but they get +2 on their Power + Survival roll.

Example: Bertha the Brute has been left off the tour bus in the middle of the desert by her vengeful fellow wrestlers. She has Power 4 and Survival 3, but no water or shade. The sun is beating down as she walks down the highway, waiting for a car to come by, but the day stretches and no cars come. After five hours, she rolls a 1d6 and gets a 3, which gets her a total of 10, which is more than the target number 6 (10-4). She's fine, she's hardy, but it's hot enough that it makes it hard to think, and she's trudging on slowly. A truck finally trundles down the dusty road. She sticks up her thumb, rolling Charisma 4 + Interaction 2 to look like good company. She rolls 1d6 and gets 2. With a score total of 8, minus the -2 penalty, the roll is 6, which is the minimum for an easy success. It's up to the gamemaster to decide if this is enough to convince the driver to pull over.

Characters

To create a character, you first choose the character's Concept, Ancestry (if any) and Class (if any). Then, you will spend points out of a predetermined point pool to the character's various available Attributes, Skills and Specialties, and Magic (if applicable), and choose the character's Tricks, and Flaws.

Thesewill be marked into the character sheet, which you can also copy into a notebook as plain statistics. The gamemaster and player can then discuss what equipment or resources they have access to.

Ancestry may only be relevant in some settings, and can also be a Class instead. The Class describes your character's background and gives her certain bonuses and penalties. A game can also include both Ancestries and Classes.

Both Ancestries and Character Classes come with a Trick and a Flaw, meaning that a starting character in a game that uses ancestries would typically start with two of each.

Point Buying Statistics

To create your character, you receive:

- 10 points for Attributes
- 10 points for Skills, including Profession
- 5 points to Magic, or as extra free points, if your setting includes magic but your character does not use it
- 5 free points to assign where you will.

Each Attribute begins at 1; points are used to raise it above that number. Skills begin at 0.

So, for example, you would use 2 points to raise your attribute Power to 3, but using 2 points on the skill Interaction would only raise that skill to 2.

Both Attributes and Skills have a maximum score of 5. Some bonuses can permanently raise this score higher than that number.

If you want to start play with more highly powered characters, award them extra free points at character creation.

Choose Character Class and/or Ancestry

This is where your worldbuilding really comes into play. What Classes does it make sense for your world to have? Does it make sense to also have Ancestries? If all your player characters are human, for example, then you only need Classes.

A **Class** could be the character's particular skill-set that is not strictly their profession, or the archetype they fall into, which come with certain advantages or disadvantages. The idea behind having Classes is to diversify your team's advantages. A team made up of different Classes will have a more well-rounded set of skills, but also the classes help prompt the imagination of the players and create the kind of characters that suit the setting and type of story you have in mind. For a heist-focused game, a Class could be "hitter" or "mastermind", for example; for a regency romance, it could be "rake" or "society matron".

The gamemaster and player can work together to customize a class for them, provided it does not give an undue advantage. The player can also eventually purchase a new class with experience points later in the game (see *Character Progression*). If it suits the story, a character may also switch from one class to another—after a discussion with the gamemaster. Whether class features travel over depends on the class, the game, and the features. A *Servant to a Martial God* (see sample Classes in the *Appendices*) who loses his faith will lose the god-given Resolve and armor of faith, and may switch to a *Rogue Warrior* class instead.

Ancestry here does not refer to where your people originate from but to the species of your character. If your game setting involves elves and goblins, aliens or ghosts, talking cats or snake-human hybrids, creating these species as ancestries for the players to choose from can diversify their skill pools and setbacks. This can also be renamed to suit your setting and needs. For example, being a ghost has

nothing to do with your original birth, so maybe in a game of ghosts this would be called your "form"!

The examples provided in the Appendices are in no way canonical to the system - Classes and Ancestries are a part of the setting, which is for you to create.

When creating Classes or Ancestries, consider whether you want them to be equally advantageous, or if some provide better benefits than others. My examples include similar levels of bonuses and penalties, but it could be that in your world it's just better to be, say, a goblin tinkerer than a human rogue.

Your character may switch classes if it suits the events of the game. Multiclassing may also be possible but is very costly—purchased with XP—and should be reflected by what has happened in the story. How and why did they gain this new class? Did they put in the work to earn their new *unique Trick? Note also that even multiclassing does not stack bonuses. If you already got +2 Melee from your first class, and your second would afford you +2 in Melee as well, you gain nothing. However if the new class offers +2 on Stealth and your old one doesn't, then you can add those points.

Note: A standard Class gives the character two extra points on two different specific skills, one free Specialty defined by the class, and one extra Trick unique to the class, and optionally also a Flaw.

A standard ancestry defines what Trick and Flaw the character gets at character creation, and gives +2 to one attribute and -1 on another.

See *Appendices* for examples.

Ancestries can also define whether a character is *Small*, *Medium*, or *Large*. Mechanically, this means the following:

Small: Creatures will roll 2d6 and take the *highest* result when hiding, and roll 2d6 and take the *lowest* result when on rolls involving handling large objects (as compared to their medium-sized companions).

Medium: No modifiers apply.

Large: Creatures will roll 2d6 and take the *lowest* result when hiding, and roll 2d6 and take the *highest* result on rolls involving handling large objects (as compared to their medium-sized companions).

Choose Attributes

When assigning points, remember that Attributes start at 1, and points are assigned to raise them above 1. No character can have 0 points in any Attribute.

The Attributes are:

Power (strength and endurance)

Precision (dexterity, aim & fine motor skills)

Speed (while not riding or driving; your physical reaction and movement speed)

Perception (the five senses & alertness)

Wits (intelligence & wisdom)

Charisma (natural ability to persuade or affect others)

Interpret these as you will.

Choose Skills

There are only ten skills in the basic system; for your own brew, you can add as many as makes sense to you. Note that more granularity in skills means more XP needs to be spent later to continue improving them, so you might want to be more free-handed with XP during game-play than the basic rules suggest.

It is also possible to have fewer skills than these. A gamemaster might bar the use of the Profession skill (see below), or use Profession to cover all or some of the other skills. This might be useful in a simple, fast-paced barebones game.

The skills are:

Athletics

Animal Handling

Craft

Interaction

Investigation

Medicine

Melee

Performance

Stealth

Survival

+ Profession (see below)

The maximum score in a skill is 5. The number of points should also reflect an approximation of their level of expertise.

Profession is essentially a Skill and is rolled the same way as any other Skill, but it is a special one: This comprises practically everything that you would do for your profession. If your character is a pig farmer, this involves knowledge of pig diseases and the meat market. In questions related to your profession you can roll that skill, even if another (such as Animal Handling or Medicine) would have applied as well.

The Profession skill can be split into several professions, as many as there are dots in the skill, but then the dots are

split among the different professions when adding them to a skill roll score total. If the character has more points in the skill than he has professions, he must assign those points to a given profession.

So, if your character has Profession 3 and is both a farmer and a chemist, he can assign two points to farming and one to chemistry. Then he would get one skill point to add to a chemistry roll, for example Precision 3 + Profession (chemistry) 1 + 1d6 to make a specific chemical component, and Power 3 + Profession (farming) 2 + 1d6 to hoist a pig.

A chosen profession is NOT a specialty (see below), but a specialty can be applied to a profession. For example, a character could have a Profession 2 (Farmer) (Specialty: Pigs).

At character creation, a player can choose one free *specialty* to add to any skill, including Profession. It can be as broad as Martial Arts or as specific as Watch Repair for Japanese Models Manufactured Before 1990, as you like and gamemaster allows. When a character has a specialty in a skill, and the action they are attempting is related to their specialty, they get to roll 2d6 and take the highest result.

If the player chooses not to specialize in any skill, they can instead get 2 extra points to spend on skills at character creation. To purchase a second specialty, you pay double the points for that skill and advance it to a minimum of 2.

The maximum number of specialties at character creation is two. Specialties can also be purchased later with XP, paying double what you would pay for a normal skill

advance (see below the section on *Character Progression*), provided the gamemaster agrees, but the hard maximum of specialties is three.

> **Example:** For her character Shania, the player chooses Medicine 3 with the free specialty (Geriatric Care), and Performance 2 with second specialty (Pop Musician), which costs 4 points. She started with the standard 10 points to assign to skills, so she now has three points left to spread among all the other skills. She may also choose to spend some of her five free points on skills.

If Shania is called to help an elderly person who has fallen and broken a bone, she gets to roll 2d6 and take the highest, then add 3 + the relevant attribute score in order to help that person be comfortable and get the best care they can. However if she is called to help with a child with a dicky tummy, she would roll just the usual 1d6.

If Shania had chosen the Profession "Nurse", then that Profession skill would replace the Medicine skill when suitable. But Medicine is a skill that can also be held by people who do not pursue it as a profession, and so it makes sense to have it as an option, as in the case of Shania, who has a history of working as a carer for her elderly grandparents. Yes, it means you may have a nurse with 0 in Medicine, but her Profession roll would take the place of Medicine, and she could still roll it just as if it was Medicine, including for the purposes of healing damage. She would,

on top of that, also get to roll Profession for other tasks that she would have gained through nursing.

Optional rule: Best at Thing

Note: Credit for this rule goes to N. Libicki, who suggested the basic idea.

This rule is optional and better suited for some genres of stories than others.

When *Best at Thing* applies, in every generation, there is only one person who is Best At a specific Thing. At character creation, you can choose to give your character the potential to eventually be the best, but in order to truly become the best, you also have to advance that skill to 5.

If achieved, anything you attempt to do with that skill will be an automatic success, provided the gamemaster agrees that it is possible at all. The downside is that all your other skills will then be permanently capped at 4.

The gamemaster can also bar this option entirely for a particular skill, or exclude some skills, saying that this generation already has someone who is Best At a particular skill. For contested rolls, such as combat or a contest, failure will still be an option, but you gain a +5 bonus.

Choose Magic

The Brew system is designed to work for both magical and non-magical settings. If your setting uses magic, but the player characters are not necessarily magical, you can choose to give player characters 5 additional free points to use at character creation either on either magic or any other skill or attribute. In a world where your opponents break the laws of nature, the non-magic-using characters can probably use the boost.

Mana

Magic use is also limited by how much magical power, of mana, the character has to use. The number of mana slots is equal to the number of points the character has in magical skills overall. So, if a character has 3 points in Healing and 2 points in Odds, she will have 5 mana slots to use, and she can choose to use them on whichever type of magic she has access to.

There are a few options the gamemaster may choose from for replenishing mana slots:

Daily refresh: Recover all mana slots every dawn or at sunset. This is particularly appropriate if your world's magic is linked to the solar cycle.

Two hour recovery: A used mana slot will refresh two hours after it was used. It could also be four or ten hours, depending on how magically charged your world is.

Ritual refresh: Recovering mana requires the successful completion of a given ritual. Which roll this would be depends on your setting's magical philosophy and practices. A typical example would be Wits+Craft (for a ceremony that requires contemplation) or Precision+Craft (for a ceremony that must be conducted exactly right), but could also be Wits+Athletics (if the ritual is primarily physical).

There are seven fields of magic.

Transfiguration (turning one thing to another, or changing aspects of it to something else)

Healing (healing wounds, illnesses and injuries; see the *Healing* section)

Destruction (includes martial magic as well as destroying or deconstructing physical objects)

Illusion (creating false visions and sounds, including disguises; may involve evoking emotions)

Scrying (prophecy and far-seeing/hearing)

Odds (upping your luck or diminishing someone else's)

Movement (including adding to one's Speed, flying, and stopping motion)

Rolling these magical skills functions much the same way as regular Skills. Any specific spell the character wishes to cast collects its point pool from the Attribute that suits their type of magic (such as Precision or Wits for a ceremonial magician) and one of these fields.

The difference between magical fields and regular skills is that a character who has no points in a field of magic cannot cast magic of that type simply by rolling an Attribute.

Example: Xuan Fengyin has come across a raging river and needs to get to the other side. She has no points in Movement or Transfiguration, and her 2 points in Healing aren't any help here. Alas, the healer must either construct a bridge the old-fashioned way or trot along the riverside until she gets to a suitable crossing point, or use a spell derived from Odds (which she does have one point in) for a fortuitous coincidence to help her along.

What specific spell effects are available for the characters depends on the world you want to build for them. A gamemaster can also allow a player to come up with their own spell effects, but adjudicate their content and power level as suits the setting.

A gamemaster may also be tempted to add more fields of magic, but I would advise against it, unless you really can't fit it under the seven above. Adding granulation and complexity means spending more points for less power. For example, is your character's focus love spells and only love spells? Give him points in Illusion (to convince someone this other person is the One) and Odds (hey, maybe she is!).

While this magic system is designed to be unspecific to allow a variety of effects curtailed only by the player's imagination and the gamemaster's discretion, you may well want your setting to be more specific about what effects exactly the character has access to. In this case, you can create spell lists that correspond to each point of a magic in a particular field. With a new point in that field of magic, the player can choose a set number of new spells or effects.

So, for example, with one point in Illusion, Magica the Magnificent could have access to 3 effects such as inducing infatuation, inducing fear, or displaying a static image in the air. When she gains a second dot, she can choose three more effects from a list of more powerful spells, such as creating a moving illusory image or obscuring someone's vision. The specifics would be entirely up to the setting.

Examples of possible effects of *Destruction* on 1 point, if you're going for a spell list:

- Ignite - Lights something on fire.
- Minor Burst - Destroy something small; must be inanimate.

- Find Fault - Aim a strike at the right point of a person or a thing to cause harm; in battle this means an extra 2HP of damage done, and can be declared after a successful attack roll.
- Split - Break something small neatly in half; must be inanimate.
- Dig - Digs a hole about two feet deep in the ground or in natural stone.

Choose Tricks and Flaws

Tricks and Flaws give your character specific advantages and disadvantages in the game. They can either cause a simple effect, or be expressed as a point bonus or penalty on specific kinds of rolls.

If Ancestries apply, they usually define the starting Trick and Flaw. If the game is not using Ancestries, they may choose one each freely. I suggest providing a list of appropriate Tricks and Flaws when creating your own setting.

Character classes typically also afford one extra Trick. You can also purchase one—only one—extra Trick at character creation, and it costs all 5 of your free points. Tricks may be gained later through gameplay through whatever methods the gamemaster sees fit, and cost 10 XP. The gamemaster may apply an upper limit to tricks to avoid too much complexity.

Tricks: Tricks give the character a particular advantage. For example, your Undergroundling character can purchase an extra Trick "Tough Skin" to counteract their ancestry's Flaw of "Weakness to Sunlight", or your professor of philosophy has a particular knack of "Winning Arguments", which give her an advantage on those situations. Tricks can be as simple as a point bonus to certain rolls, or a more complex advantage. You can come up with as many tricks for your setting as you like, or even allow players to come up with their own, which the gamemaster will have to approve.

Flaws: Conversely, Flaws should give the character a disadvantage. They can be supernatural, physical, or mental. For example, Marlo the Monk belongs to a setting with no magic, but has the flaw "Superstitious", which gives him a -2 penalty on all applicable rolls when things get spooky.

Character Sheet (Text Version)

Name:
Player:
Character Class:
Ancestry:

Attributes

Power   Precision Speed Perception Wits   Charisma

Skills
Profession:

Athletics	**Medicine**
Animal Handling	**Melee**
Craft -	**Performance**
Interaction	**Stealth**
Investigation	**Survival**

Magic

Transfiguration	**Scrying**
Healing	**Odds**
Destruction	**Movement**
Illusion	***Mana*** / **(total/current)**

Bonus Tally:
Penalty Tally:

Tricks

-
-
-

Flaws

-
-
-

Health

Current: Total:

Resolve Points

Current: Total:

Experience Points

Equipment

-   •
-   •
-   •

Backstory:

Notes:

Character Progression

Experience Points

Experience points (XP) is gained through the character's progression in the game, but the goalposts the gamemaster sets for XP can be highly individual, or further informed by the setting. If you want to run a fast campaign that still allows the player characters to grow, give them more XP. If you expect your campaign to run for a good long time still, be stingy. Playing a super-powered character is not actually that much fun, so set that possibility suitably far into the future.

One suggested method of gaining XP is to award it when the character overcomes a significant obstacle or achieves a long-term goal. Emotional breakthroughs can count just as well as any plot advancement or defeated enemies.

Using Experience Points

There are no levels in this system. Instead, gaining XP allows you to buy more points to assign to skills or attributes and advance that way.

XP could be awarded at the end of an adventure or tallied at the end of each session as they accumulate. The player

can then see how much she has and whether she can, or wants to, use it for a suitable advancement.

The rule is that in order to use XP to advance a particular skill or attribute, the character must have exercised that skill or attribute. If they wish to add a specialty or a trick, they should be able to explain how they came by it.

Raise attribute	3 x existing score
Add a new skill	5
Gain a skill point	2 x existing score
Gain a new specialty	4 x existing skill score
Add a new field of magic	10
Gain a magic point	2 x existing score
Add a Trick	10
Add a character class	50

Capping Stats

You could be creating a progression-based game, in which case you might want to allow characters to theoretically max out every skill and attribute and gather every Trick

allowed, but to keep things more interesting even late into a campaign, I would suggest that some caps are added.

You could, for example, ban raising attributes entirely, cap Tricks at three, or only allow characters to raise five skills to the maximum, capping the rest at 4 and 3 as suits their build. This would ensure that even in the final stretch, your party would have some diversity of skills to display.

Character Regression

This rule is optional.

We all have our ups and downs. If you wish to play the same character for a different campaign, without losing their history, but they got a little too good the last time and need to up the challenge without upgrading the environment, and they've had some peaceful times now and got a little out of practice… then player and gamemaster can agree to reduce the character's skills and advances before start of play.

The easy way would be to revert back to the original statistics, but it may be more interesting if instead you agree on specific points reductions, and the player can pick and choose which of their skills, attributes or tricks to drop. Perhaps the character lost Power and Melee getting out of practice of daily adventuring, but kept up her study of Odds magic, and so still has that at a higher level. Maybe she went back to her pig farm, and the player can even add points to her Profession skill. They can also lose their Character Class

or gain a different one. It's all about how the intervening time was spent.

The Brew System In Short

Character creation

Apply Ancestry (if applicable) and Character Class.

Assign 10 points to Attributes, 10 points to Skills, 5 points to Magic or add 5 free points, then apply 5 free points where you will.

Take 1 Trick and 1 Flaw. Free points can be used to buy extra Tricks and Specialties.

Ancestries and character classes

Customisable by setting, a standard ancestry defines what Trick and Flaw the character gets at character creation, and gives +2 to one attribute and -1 on another.

A standard character class gives the character two extra points on two different specific Skills, one free Specialty defined by the class, and one extra Trick unique to the class.

Tricks and Flaws

Customisable by setting. There is no standard for these, but examples will be provided. They may be locked to specific ancestries or character classes.

Skill Rolls

Combine the appropriate Attribute + Skill scores and add 1d6. The GM sets the threshold for success.

Meeting one threshold higher than required is a perfect success; meeting a threshold two times higher is an astounding success.

Having a Specialty in a skill (such as "woodworking" in the Craft skill) lets you roll with advantage: take 2d6 instead of 1d6 and take the higher result in rolls related to that field.

Rerolls

On a failure, you can spend Resolve points (5, regained after a 5-hour rest) to reroll.

On any success, you can make a Chance Roll (1d6) to try and meet a higher threshold: on a result of 4-6 the number can be added to the result, but on 1-3 the success turns into a failure.

Rerolls are only allowed in Bullet Time (or at gamemaster's discretion).

Time

Split into Story Time (standard roleplay), Bullet Time (high intensity time-pressed situations), and Downtime (summarized periods).

Turns can be called in Bullet Time based on character Speed score, with ties broken with rolls, but this is optional. Otherwise all characters act at once, and the order is adjudicated based on their declared intentions.

Combat

Combat is made up of opposed rolls. Scoring 2 points higher than your opponent allows you to add 1 extra point of damage. Otherwise, damage is determined by weapon or attack type, and can be soaked by armor, Ancestry traits, magic, or Tricks.

Damage

Characters have 10 Hit Points maximum. In the base system, when a character drops to 5 HP, they get a -2 penalty on Power, Precision or Speed rolls, and -1 on Perception, Wits or Charisma. At 3 or below, the penalties are -4 and -2. At 0 HP, the character is knocked out and will die within days equal to their Power score.

If the amount of damage they receive drops their Health to below 0, they die within a number of hours

equal to their Power score. At -5 or lower, they die instantly.

Gamemasters can choose to ignore the penalty rule for combat-heavy games.

Healing

Characters heal at a rate of 1 HP per day, or 2 per day with a successful daily Medicine roll.

Magical healing with a minimum success (6) heals 2 HP, and at 8, one threshold higher, 4 HP. This can be done multiple times depending on available Mana. There are alternate fast healing rules for combat oriented games.

Magic

Magic is split into different fields, which are rolled like skills. Using magic costs Mana points; options are offered for Mana refresh that suit your setting.

Character progression

Experience points are awarded by milestone and used to purchase upgrades on attributes, skills or magic, or on new Tricks and Specialties, according to set XP costs. There are no character levels.

Settings

Creating a Setting

Things to Consider

Genre

What genre is your story, or what type of game are you making? This will influence everything.

For example, a high-powered fantasy game will probably want to apply Ancestries and Tricks, and use the fast healing option, pay attention to a unique magic system, and have set XP reward goals. A moody noir game might have no magic and realistic healing and damage, but apply specific kinds of period-accurate weapons and focus character classes on creating genre-typical characters, and reward XP for acting or achieving story beats.

Checklist

1. Think of a concept and genre, and consider what the goals of the game are and how to reach them.

2. Create ancestries and character classes, if desired.

3. Create a list of Tricks and Flaws for the characters to choose from, if desired.

4. Consider damage and healing, and which system will make a more satisfying game. Also consider adding options for soaking damage.

5. Make additions or changes to the skills list - note that more granularity in skills means more points should be awarded for them at character creation.

6. If your setting uses magic, consider if you want to create spell lists or leave interpretation up to the player and GM. Consider how Mana is refreshed.

7. Create weapons stats and armor suitable for your setting. Create a list of special items the characters might have at their disposal.

8. Create sample characters.

9. Create opponents, NPCs and monsters, if that is suitable for your setting. Otherwise, consider what kind of challenges you can cook up for the characters.

10.Consider creating sample environments. Consider if your world has special flora and fauna.

11.Add your own flair. Can you think of a mechanic that would really lock the game to your intended genre and mood? Perhaps the ingenues in your

Regency romance game must unlock specific achievements to advance in society, or your stranded spacefarers need to readjust their stats every time they go through another wormhole on their search for home.

12. Write it all up!

Appendices

Sample Tricks & Flaws

Tricks

A Thousand Masks

Your character is gifted at dissimulation, whether acting, lying, or grifting. Add +2 to any roll involving these kinds of tasks (usually with Performance or Interaction). In addition, once a session the character can ignore a 1-3 result on a Chance Roll involving these skill actions, meaning they can try for a higher success without the risk of failure.

Lucky

If you hit a 6, roll again and add the result of both rolls to your points total.

Flaws

Thin Face

Your character is easily embarrassed. When a situation is potentially embarrassing during Story Time or Bullet Time, you or the gamemaster can call for a Wits + Performance roll against a difficulty of 8 or the character will either react aggressively, walk out of the situation, or roll everything at a -2 penalty until the end of the scene, or until the end of Bullet Time if that applies.

Unlucky

When the stakes are particularly high, the gamemaster may ask your character to roll 1d6. If the result is 1-3, your action will fail catastrophically no matter what other statistics you have.

Sample Character Classes

A Servant to a Martial God

Trained since a young age in the art of war, each of these warriors believe they have a duty to serve their god and their faith.

Gain two extra points on Melee, and two extra points on either Power or Stealth. Choose a free specialty on either Craft (Weaponsmithing) or Interaction (Politics or Command).

Get a free Resolve Roll when your character believes they are acting to fulfill their personal destiny or their god's will.

Unique Trick: Cloak of the God's Favour. Calling upon their god in battle, the servant can envelop himself in the god's protecion, and soak two HP worth of damage so long as they are actively engaged in fighting. If they stop attacking and go on the defensive, the Cloak will fall off.

Unique Flaw: Bound to the God. Leaving the religious organization or rebelling against it makes you anathema to your still-loyal brothers and sisters, who will be honor-bound to challenge you when they meet you until you have made restitution. If you choose to leave the organization but keep your faith, you retain all class features. If you lose your faith, you lose your free Resolve Roll and Unique Trick.

Rogue Warrior

Outside of society if not law, this fighter may have been trained for something in the past or learned it the rough way. They know many people, but don't have many friends.

Gain 2 extra points in Melee, and in either Power or Precision. Choose a free specialty on either Survival (Criminal Underworld) or Performance (Conmanship).

Get the free Trick Lucky: If you hit a 6, roll again and add the result of both rolls to your total.

Unique Trick: Know People Who Know People. Roll Charisma + Interaction or Wits + Interaction when interacting with a criminal or underworld non-player character to find out the location of someone else who falls into that category. A success of 8 or more should yield more specifi information.

Unique Flaw: Old Enemies. Whenever you roll a social interaction, including the class's Unique Trick, also roll an additional d6. If that roll is a 1, it generates an encounter with someone of your own level who has beef with you. It is up to the gamemaster when and how that encounter occurs.

Sample Ancestries

A standard ancestry defines what Trick and Flaw the character gets at character creation, and gives +2 to one attribute and -1 on another.

Human

These numerous and industrious creatures live in communities in almost any environment, in groups ranging from ten in the wilderness to tens of thousands in cities. The player probably is one.

+1 to any chosen Attribute.

Trick: Free choice of one trick from the list that is not exclusive to a different ancestry.

Flaw: Free choice of one flaw from the list that is not exclusive to a different ancestry.

Size: Medium.

Elf

These small humanoids usually avoid direct contact with human society, though some have created parasitic or mutually beneficial systems with them. When they do decide to make friends with humans, it is almost always with a magic-user.

+2 Perception

-1 Power

Trick: Magical Affinity. All elves gain one free point in Illusion, and can sense magical activity without having to roll for it.

Flaw: Bound by Their Word. It is extremely difficult for an elf to break a promise or a vow, and to do so risks permanent damage. Roll 1d6 and add the elf's Power or Wits, whichever is highest, against a difficulty of 8. On a success, they take 5 points of health damage, which cannot be healed through magic (but the healing can be helped along by non-magical medicine). On a failure, they still take the damage but also lose a point of Power or Wits, whichever is highest. The only way to recover it is to buy it back with XP. Note, however, that Attributes can never fall lower than 1.

Size: Small.

Undergroundling

These cave-dwellers can live anywhere underground, but prefer natural locations such as forests and mountains. In old cities, they can be found living in the earlier layers of the city, which have since then been built over.

+2 Power

-1 Charisma

Trick: Dark Sight. Undergroundlings have a secondary sensory system that allows them to navigate effortlessly in total darkness, though they cannot perceive color without light.

Flaw: Weakness to Sunlight. An undergroundling's eyes can't handle bright light and their skin burns easily. To walk around in daylight, an undergroundling must wear protection over their eyes and cover themselves completely, or lose 1 health point if they are exposed for more than an hour.

Size: Medium.