

QUICK START REFERENCE GUIDE

THE WORLD

Shortly after the end of the Great War, rifts opened to an exciting and empty world. Countries chartered trading companies to manage the new frontier. Twenty years pass. Now, you are one of the mercenary Rifters, wandering the developing land and taking on strange and interesting jobs.

CHARACTER CREATION

Assign 10 skill points
Pick your Attitude. Note:
Your starting resolve
Your passive traits
Your attitude actions
Your starting weapons

USING YOUR SKILLS

Skills represent things you are good at. A roll of 7 succeeds.
Rank 0 (Untrained) – 1d8
Rank 1 – 1d10
Rank 2 – 2d6
Rank 3 – 2d8
Rank 4 – Skill Ability
Skill abilities are powerful and can be used once per resupply.

FULL SKILL LIST

- Budding Naturalist
- City Slicker
- Company Policy Wizard
- Homing Pigeon Instinct
- Newspaper Junkie
- Went to the Academy
- Actual Mechanical Engineer
- Ad Hoc Mechanical Engineer
- Greasemonkey
- Hotshot Aeronaut
- Leadfoot Operator
- Regular Boy Scout
- Dogged Determination
- Field Anatomist
- Musclehead
- Part Time Shadow
- Particing Mentalist
- Twinkletoe

Deliberate

Long range offense
30 Resolve
Piercing Fire
Firearm Mastery
Down the Sights [2AP]
+MDTC Model 13 Rifle

Daring

Highly mobile flanking
45 Resolve
Spray & Pray
Run & Gun [3AP]
Sprint [1AP]
+MDTC Model 8 SMG

Bold

Durable and up close
60 Resolve
Meatshield
Scary Yelling [2AP]
Meatshield [1AP]
+Sullivan 668 Shotgun

Resolute

Sturdy area denial
45 Resolve
Suppressive Fire
Deploy Cover [1AP]
Covering Fire [2AP]
+Sullivan 870 HMG

Cunning

Indirect team support
30 Resolve
Battlefield Commander
Shout Order [2AP]
Nudge [2AP]
"Duck!" [2AP]

Calculated

Explosive area effects
30 Resolve
Custom Blend
Bring the Fireworks
To the Teeth
Shaped Charge [2AP]
+Sullivan 1402 Impact
+MDTC Antipersonnel

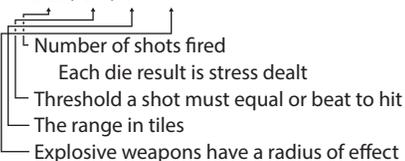
*All start with an MDTC Model 4 Pistol

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

READING WEAPON BLOCKS

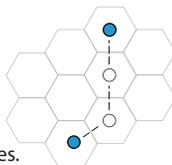
"Standard" MDTC Model 4 Pistol

3d6 / 5+ / 6t



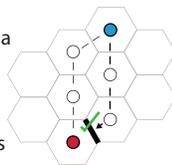
THE GRID

Combat takes place on a hexagonal grid of tiles. Position within a tile does not matter. Distance is measured in number of tiles.



COVER

A target under cover from a source of stress (a shooter or the center of a blast radius) takes ½ damage from that source. Modifiers are limited to ¼x and 4x.



ACTIONS

Roll off to determine turn order. Characters have 3 action points to spend on their turn. You can only make one attack per turn. If you reach 0 resolve, you are overcome until the end of combat, then return to 1/3 max.

Fire Firearm (Attack) [2AP]

Roll shots, check shots versus threshold, assign shots to valid targets, apply any multipliers, deal stress to targets

Use Explosive (Attack) [2AP]

Pick impact point, roll dice, check dice versus threshold, apply multipliers, assign stress to all targets in radius

Move [1AP]

Move up to two tiles

Crouch Down [2AP]

You have cover in all directions. If you have real cover too, you take no stress

Flee [2AP]

Immediately leave the combat

Hold Fire (Attack) [3AP]

Fire at the first valid target to move

Interact [1AP]

Use an item, hand something off, etc

THROUGH THE RIFT

Dieselpunk Action Adventure RPG

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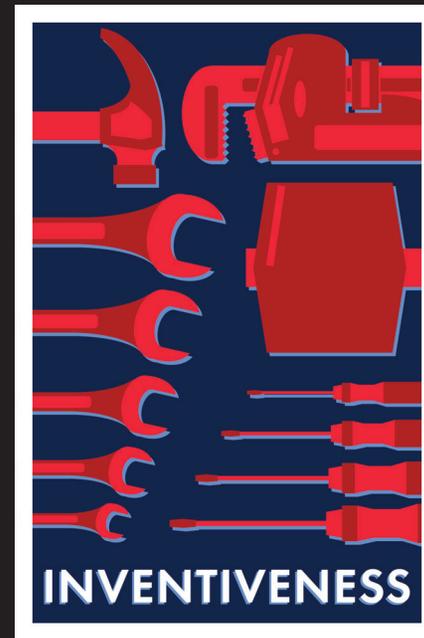
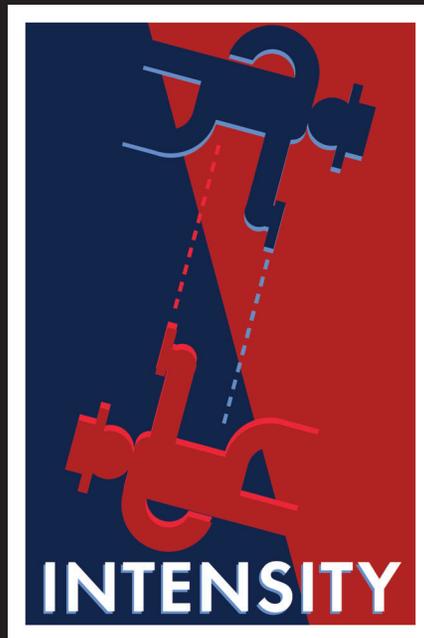
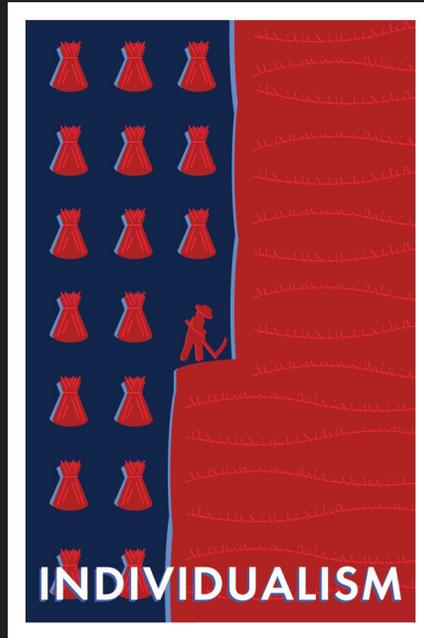
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1 INTRODUCTION

In 1893, Frederick Jackson Turner published his "Frontier Thesis." The thesis suggested that the key components of American identity were a direct result of the existence of the frontier in the early United States. As Americans expanded westward, the traditional systems and practices that existed in Europe were scoured away, and the attributes now associated with American identity – egalitarianism, inventiveness, disregard of hierarchy, and a propensity towards violence – became intensified. The ever-present existence of a yet unexplored region of the country was a unifying inspiration for a large segment of the population.

Turner published his thesis at a key transition. In 1890, the census department had declared they would no longer keep track of the frontier of the United States, as there was not enough left to be appreciable. The west had been won. It was at this time, Turner observed, Americans would have to reflect on how their culture would evolve without the unifying presence of the frontier. What was next for the culture of the country?

This setting takes the approach of speculating in the opposite direction: what if there was more frontier? How might American culture have evolved if the characteristics and traits associated with American identity had continued to exaggerate? Rather than the nation reflecting and evolving in a new direction, what if the values of egalitarianism, individuality, and violence continued to magnify; the pace, intensity, and fervor building until the entire society threatened to tear itself apart with sheer magnitude of belief in one's own capability? A world where everyone knows that they can achieve anything by wanting it badly enough and working hard enough – a world where everyone has their own version of the American dream and will do anything to see it realized.



2 THE WORLD THROUGH THE RIFT

Shortly after the end of the Great War, rifts opened around the world. The rifts are small, stable connections leading to a wholly new world, rife with potential for exploration and exploitation.

Nervous about competing for territorial acquisition, nations of the world establish charters, allowing trading companies to manage the territory on the other side of the rifts. Although a worldwide phenomenon, this publication focuses on the area managed by the Manifest Destiny Trading Company, the organization chartered by the United States. While the Company worked to manage the administration, hordes of adventurers, entrepreneurs, thrill seekers, idealists, homesteaders, explorers, scientists, and more poured through the rift in pursuit of the new frontier.

In the twenty years since the opening and discovery of the rifts, the other side has developed dramatically. Outset City has sprung up adjacent to the rift, serving as a jumping off point, administrative hub, and processing center for the exotic materials and resources found on the other side. The Manifest Destiny Trading Company looms largest here, exerting their influence in all aspects of life.

Rail lines snake outward through the wilderness, linking the various mines, lumber camps, farming settlements, factories, idealistic communities, and natural wonders back to the central hub of Outset City. Remoteness is not determined by distance but instead by proximity to a rail line. Civilization follows the lines.

Between the wandering rail lines, the wilderness can be overwhelmingly desolate. Small pockets of development are dwarfed by the immensity of the natural landscape, still too remote to exploit on a large scale. Adventurers known as Rifters take on odd jobs, venturing to the edges of the frontier in service of those who can pay. Incredible sights and alien creatures, the stuff of campfire tall tales, wait to be discovered past every hill.

Players take on the role of these Rifters. Unsatisfied with some aspects of the former lives, these bold or foolhardy individuals wander the hazy border between civilization and the wilds, putting themselves in danger and walking where few have ever been before in the pursuit of meaning, glory, riches, knowledge, peace, or something their own.

Through the Rift is designed to help you play action filled games about exploring the frontier, meeting wild characters, and being caught in the moves of powerful organizations. Along the way, you might learn something about what it means to be on your own in a strange new world and rely on your newfound partners.

These pages contain advice for running a game that help to maintain the tone and feel baked into the setting. There are naturally exceptions to these guidelines, but their broad application can help you to present your players with engaging and consistent gameplay decisions

COMBAT IS AN OBSTACLE

Not a goal. In general, combat arises when foes get in the way of the characters accomplishing a task, or trying to escape after successfully completing a task. It is rare for the explicit goal of the characters to be the eradication of enemies, but instead it is to reach something guarded by these enemies.

So, it would be much more common for the characters to be asked to recover the goods stolen by a group of bandits than to wipe out the bandit camp. The resultant gameplay will be the same (shooting their way into the bandit camp and back out) but the tone of the adventure is different.

THINGS GENERALLY WORK

But complications arise. Characters are at the same time underdogs and heroic figures. This is not a setting about punishing a lack of investigation or forethought. Instead, expression of character actions fall on a spectrum from 'what I wanted to have happen' to 'what I wanted to have happen but has now resulted in a strange new mess.'

In general, the player's actions succeed. It is the degree of this success that varies. In the case of skill rolls, a successful roll represents flawless execution. A failed skill roll still works (in a sense), but results in complications. There are should rarely be situations where the players are told 'that didn't work.' Instead, the more typical response might be 'that worked, but...'

Introducing complications is a technique for you to maintain tension and complexity, but rarely if ever to punish the characters.

BAD GUYS ARE BAD

Irredeemably so. The turn to combat is a significant component of the game, and it is important to give players an opportunity to capitalize on their capabilities, without getting trapped in attempting to ethically justify their actions. Enemies shoot first and are not usually open to negotiation.

This is rarely a setting appropriate for moral ambiguity on the part of enemies. With the exception of recurring named foes, enemies are faceless and nameless pieces on the board, obstacles in the way of the characters' goals.

OBJECTIVES ARE CLEAR

Players should not usually be left wondering what to do. While the specific execution of the tasks is very broad, goals on the medium and large scales should be very clear.

That is not to say that players should be discouraged from going off the path - only that there should always be a path for them to fall back to.

TENSION CYCLES UP AND DOWN

The gameplay should very clearly cycle from the very intense to more calm and introspective. When things are happening - they should *happen*. Action sequences are fervent and filled with events and goings-on. Rest sequences are demonstrably slower and gentler in pace. Action scenes are expression of the things on the character sheet, Introspective scenes are time for player to reflect on recent events and learn more about their characters.

Action sequences might include combats, high stakes negotiations, being out on the town, or a dangerous scene of exploration. Introspective sequences might arise as the party settles down for the night, during travel from one place to another, or when they find themselves with downtime.

CHARACTERS ARE EARNST

Non-player characters run into throughout the course of the game are honest. They might be evasive or vague as dictated by their personal motivations, but when they say something, they stick to it. This rarely a setting about constantly questioning who is lying and for what reason.

Encounter design is a fluid and personal process based around managing your group's expectations, pacing, narrative, and other such factors. In the process of planning your encounters, these guidelines can serve as a helpful reference for the design intent of many important mechanics.

SKILL-BASED ENCOUNTERS

Skill encounters are opportunities for your players to use lateral thinking to work out solutions together. By synergizing their broad skillsets and discussing the range of options available to them, they can strategize novel and memorable approaches to the obstacles they face.

PASSIVE / ACTIVE / REACTIVE SKILLS

Skills have three forms of expression, and it is ideal to make use of all three over the course of gameplay. Players pick skills because they find them interesting, and they want to be able to make the most of their choices. All skills can be used in any of the three ways, but each family has a specific significant specialty.

Passive skills (mostly focused in the knowledge category) are best recognized by feeding players with high ranks bonus information about the problem or scenario. Take note of players' skills, and when it comes time to grant a nugget of information, mention that they learned it as a consequence of their skill choice.

Active skills (largely in the knowhow category) are primarily utilized in the form of the skill abilities. Active skills are best rewarded through the presentation of skill-based encounters, where players can make use of their skill abilities in creative and interesting ways.

Acknowledge reactive skills (mostly in the capabilities category) by remembering to ask for their rolls in moments of action of crisis. Reactive skills are sudden reflexes or bursts of strength or desperate maneuvers that arise with drama.

REWARD SYNERGY

When making use of skill abilities, take notice of players working together. Using multiple skill abilities is a big commitment and, when cleverly done, should be rewarded with relative success.

WHEN ALL YOU HAVE IS A HAMMER

Skill abilities are intentionally very broad and flexible, allowing for a high degree of creativity. That said, they still have specific focuses where they can shine. It is often the first instinct of players to attempt to rationalize their best skill as the solution to any problem. Be sure that, while you are rewarding lateral thinking, don't let skills stray outside their own specialties and give every skill a chance to shine.

OPEN ENDED ANSWERS

It's useful to not design a skill encounter with a particular solution in mind. Create a challenge with discrete conditions, and when it comes to finding answers, remain open. As your players discuss options and develop their approach, weigh its plausibility, cleverness, and degree of execution, and use that to judge success.

COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

Combat encounters are opportunities for players to utilize their attitude and play the tactical game. These guidelines can help you understand some of the principles that went into attitude design, and produce more balanced and interesting combats.

STRESS PER ROUND

All of the player weapons are balanced to deal roughly 7 stress per round, with Daring and Calculated players doing 125% and Deliberate players doing 150% under ideal conditions.

MAXIMUM RESOLVE

Attitudes have a maximum resolve of 30 to 60, but the abilities of the Daring, Bold, and Resolute attitudes can effectively increase that quite a bit.

COVER

Be liberal in distribution of units of cover. Long range weapons work for 8 tiles, while short range must be within 4. Use the cover layout to create opportunities for flanking and multiple possible routes/defensible positions

APPROPRIATE ENEMIES

Rather than singular large enemies, the system works best with swarms of hapless goons. Make their abilities unique and apparent. Player weapons are often 'swifty,' meaning they miss fairly often but hit very hard, but enemy weapons should be weak and consistent.

5.1 CHARACTER GENERATION

IDENTITY

A character's identity has no mechanical bearing, but serves as the basis for roleplaying and for further decisions about gameplay expression.

Why did your character come through the rift?
What obligations did they have to make to get through and get started?
Who might they want to become?
How do they handle themselves in social situations?

SKILLS [PAGE 7]

Skill are the method by which you demonstrate your knowledge, knowhow, and capabilities. You use your skills in creating plans with your team to solve challenges you encounter out in the world.

You start with **10 skill points** to assign to the breadth of skills as you see fit. The 4th point in any skill grants a powerful ability, but there are benefits to generalizing as well.

WEAPONS [PAGE 13]

By default, all attitudes start with a "Standard" MDTC Model 4 Pistol (3d6 / 5+ / 6t) and another suggested weapon, but any two standard weapons may be chosen.

ATTITUDE [PAGE 14]

Attitude determines how you handle yourself – your typical role - in combat situations. Attitude determines the suite of specialized **abilities, traits, and maximum resolve** you have.

There are **6 attitudes to choose from**, each focusing in varying degrees on inflicting stress, taking stress, and manipulating the encounter.

5.2 CHARACTER PROGRESSION

Level 1

Select attitude, recieve traits, attitude actions, maximum resolve, starting weapons
Allocate 10 skills

Level 2

Select a feat

Level 3

Allocate 6 more skills

Level 4

Recieve your 4th level attitude traits
OR
Select a second attitude and recieve that attitude's traits and actions in addition to your own. Use the higher maximum resolve of the two

Level 5

Select a second feat

Level 6

Allocate 6 more skills

Level 7

Recieve 7th level attitude traits or actions
OR
If you picked a second attitude, recieve one of the attitude's 4th level traits

5.3 LEVELING UP

Typically, leveling is done as milestones are reached over the course of gameplay. A good rule of thumb is a new level should be reached after a corresponding number of sessions have passed. (A session, in this case, can be thought of as four hours once a week. Adjust accordingly.)

For example, the first session will start at level one. After two more sessions, the characters will reach second level. Three sessions following that, the chracters will reach third level, and so on.

Skills represent the variety of things you are good at and allow you to use what you have practiced and learned to express your intent upon the world. They are loosely grouped into three categories - Knowledge, Knowhow, and Capabilities.

Broadly, Knowledge skills represent information you intellectually possess, Knowhow represents things you have practiced and mastered, and Capabilities represent the possible limits of your mind and body.

Skills can be used in three ways.

Passively, you might receive extra information about the situation due to your level of expertise.

Actively, you might use an ability or make a roll to determine your success in making something happen.

Reactively, you might be asked to make a roll in response to something inflicted upon your character.

7.1 SKILL RANKS

Skill have ranks. Each rank unlocked grants either better dice or a special ability.

- Rank 0 (Untrained) – 1d8
- Rank 1 – 1d10
- Rank 2 – 2d6
- Rank 3 – 2d8
- Rank 4 – Skill Ability

When you need to roll for a skill, you roll the highest dice you have unlocked.

Generally, if you roll a 7 or higher, it is a success. Truly exceptional situations might require a higher roll.

You only need to roll when there is a risk of failure and consequences for doing so. Trivial tasks do not require rolls.

7.2 SKILL ABILITIES

Skill abilities are very powerful ways of interacting with the world indicating mastery of your specific expertise. They do not require rolls and, within reason, always succeed.

Skill abilities can only be used once per resupply. Resupply generally occurs in civilization, but the GM will let you know when it occurs.

As such, they are very powerful, but their use must be managed. By synergizing two or more skill abilities together, you and your party can accomplish incredible feats. Discuss how you might use your abilities, and how they might connect with your teammates' to come up with a plan.

When a skill ability asks you to track down, identify, recall, or locate something, this is an opportunity to help define the world. Tell the GM what you'd like to be true about the world and they will work to accommodate what it is you "remember."

For example, if you were confronted with a cliff and no way to scale it, you might decide to use the Budding Naturalist Skill "Linnaeusian Enthusiast" to say "Ah, I know the exotic Rope Vine grows in this area - I'll track down one and use it as a ladder." The GM takes note of the existence of Rope Vine, and you scale the cliff. You'll be able to use the ability again once you return to a settlement.

KNOWLEDGE

BUDDING NATURIST

You've studied the natural world extensively. You are familiar with a wide variety of animals, plants, and even minerals, and you are quick to identify them in the frontier.

Linnaeusian Enthusiast

Once per resupply, you can use your botanical knowledge to identify a useful plant.

CITY SLICKER

You've completely at home in urban settings. You know streets, you know people, and you know how to negotiate both of those things to help you reach your goals.

It's right around the corner

Once per resupply, you can use your civic mastery to identify a local urban landmark - such as a shop, park, or public center.

COMPANY POLICY WIZARD

The Manifest Destiny Trading Company has a rule, regulation, or procedure for every situation. This information spans dozens of manuals and thousands of pages, and you've read it all.

Paragraph B, Subsection 12, Section 6

Once per resupply, you can use your legal and procedural expertise to recall an arcane section of Company lore.

HOMING PIGEON INSTINCT

You're a seasoned outdoorsperson, at ease wandering the wilderness. You know all the major landmarks and how to find the minor ones, as well as how to travel between them.

Chase the Horizon

Once per resupply, you can use your rural mastery to identify a local frontier landmark, such as a stream, canyon, or cave.

NEWSPAPER JUNKIE

You spend an inordinate amount of time poring through dozens of publications in an effort to keep to date with current events and who's who, and you know how to leverage this information.

Rumormonger

Once per resupply, you can use your gossip collection to recall a current event or location of a notable person.

WENT TO THE ACADEMY

You've been properly educated in an institution. You remember all that stuff they taught you - math, history, philosophy, and so on, and you can recall this knowledge as you need it.

Right here in the book

Once per resupply, you can use your encyclopedic knowledge to recall a useful fact from the history of the frontier.

KNOWHOW

ACTUAL MECHANICAL ENGINEER

You know the equations, charts, and diagrams that explain how machines work. You know how to keep machines working by the book, and you know how to tweak them as a result.

Strain Hardened

Once per resupply, you can permanently alter the functioning of a machine - for example, strengthening or overclocking it.

AD HOC MECHANICAL ENGINEER

You've spent your life around machines. You don't need to know why it works, only that it does. You can do things with a bit of wire and scrap metal others only dream of.

Percussive Maintenance

Once per resupply, you can temporarily repair anything with improvised or found materials.

GREASEMONKEY

You've spent as much time disassembling engines as using them. Whether it's fixing broken components or tweaking them for more performance, you're the vehicular expert.

That'll buff right out

Once per resupply, you can alter the behavior of a vehicle - for example, supercharging, repairing, or disabling it.

HOTSHOT AERONAUT

The sky is your second home, and piloting second nature. You're master of all flying vehicles, performing feats of aerial acrobatics that leave others gaping in awe.

Wild Blue Yonder

You possess a flying vehicle large enough to transport you and your group such as a bushplane or small dirigible

LEADFOOT OPERATOR

You're the most comfortable behind the wheel. As soon as you're in any driver's seat, you know what to do to. Speed, agility, maneuvering, you and the vehicle dance together.

Internal Combustion Aficionado

You have possess a ground vehicle large enough to transport you and your group, such as an offroad truck or mororized home.

REGULAR BOY SCOUT

The great outdoors is your domain. You know all the knots, backpacking techniques, campsite strategies, and so on. Wilderness survival is your speciality, and you'll be comfortable doing it.

I've got a badge for this

Once per resupply, you can use your wilderness knowledge to assemble a survival construct - such as a crane, camp, or trench.

CAPABILITIES

DOGGED DETERMINATION

You possess incredible endurance and obstinate suttbornness. You've got a crazy pain tolerance and just don't know when to quit.

Back to Back Marathon Champion

Once per resupply, you can grit your teeth and endure something beyond normal limits.

FIELD ANATOMIST

You've looked at the medical texts and have mastered the study and repair of meat-based life. You're great at stiches, splints, and tonics.

Loosely Hippocratic

Once per resupply, you can roll up your sleeves and perform a lifesaving maneuver on a person or beast.

MUSCLEHEAD

You're strong and athletic. You're brawny and beefy. Your muscles have muscles. When you squat down to pick something up, everyone pauses to take notice.

Mountain Mover

Once per resupply, you can crack your knuckles and perform a feat of great strength.

PART TIME SHADOW

You're incredibly slippery and often hard to find. People often lose track of you, and you keep finding your way into places you shouldn't be.

Operative 74

Once per resupply, you can seem to fade away and slip inside somewhere unnoticed.

TWINKLETOED

You're nimble and agile. You're quick, you've got great reflexes, and you're flexible. You can't remember the last time you tripped and fell.

All in the wrist

Once per resupply, you can perform a feat of superhuman reflexes.

PRACTICING MENTALIST

You've got a knack for catching small details and observations that might slip by other people. You never forget a face, date, or birthday.

Photographic Memory

Once per resupply, you can tap your forehead and perfectly recall a tiny but critical detail.

12.1 TURNS

A turn is one player's actions.
A round is a complete cycle of all player's turns.

To determine turn order, each participant rolls 1d20. Higher numbers act first, with ties rolling off.

12.2 THE GRID

Any number of units maybe occupy a single tile at the same time. Position within a tile does not matter.

Line of sight is measured in a straight line between the centers of the source and target tile. You cannot see through buildings and other large obstacles.

Distance is measured by counting the number of tiles along the shortest path.

11.3 STRESS AND RESOLVE

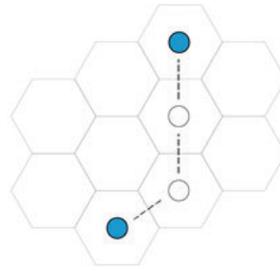
Characters have a maximum resolve. Attacks reduce a character's resolve by inflicting stress. When a character's resolve is reduced to 0, they are overcome and cannot act for the remainder of the encounter. At the end of the encounter, an ally can stabilize them, returning them to 1/3 of their maximum resolve.

Many effects ½ or double the total stress. These effects are multiplicative, to a minimum of ¼ and a maximum of 4x. When this results in a fraction, always round down to a minimum of 1.

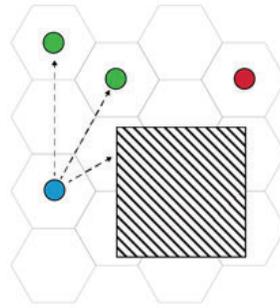
11.4 COVER

A target under cover from a source of stress (a shooter or the center of a blast radius) takes ½ damage from that source until the start of their next turn.

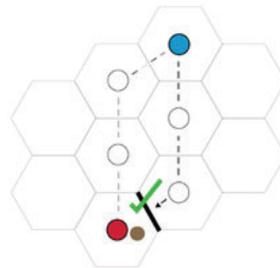
To determine if the target is under cover, trace the shortest line of tiles from the source to the target. If this line passes through a unit of cover, the target is considered to have the effects of the cover. In the event the shortest line is ambiguous, the target is still considered to have the effects of the cover.



Measuring Distance



Line of Sight



Being Under Cover

Actions are things you do on your turn. On your turn, you have 3 action points to spend. Some actions require multiple action points. Action points may be spent in any order and in any valid combination.

You are only able to make one attack per turn. Other actions can be taken any number of times, up to your maximum number of action points.

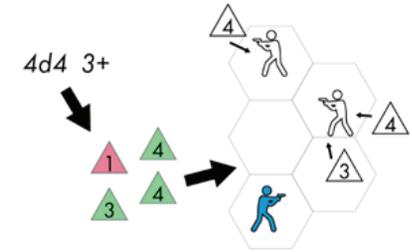
12.1 BASIC ACTIONS

Fire Firearm (Attack) [2AP]

- 1 - Roll the number of dice associated with your firearm.
- 2 - Check each die separately against the threshold value. A result equal or higher is a success. (The stress inflicted (on a success) is equal to the rolled value)
- 3 - Assign each die to a valid target. You may choose the same target more than once.
- 4 - Apply any valid multipliers to the stress values.
- 5 - Reduce the resolve of the target by the final stress values.

Use Explosive (Attack) [2AP]

- 1 - Pick the impact point of your explosive
- 2 - Roll the number of dice associated with your explosive
- 3 - Check each die separately against the threshold value. A result equal or higher is a success. (The stress inflicted (on a success) is equal to the rolled value)
- 4 - Apply any valid multipliers to the stress values.
- 5 - Reduce the resolve of all targets within the radius by the final stress values.



Firing a Weapon

Move [1AP]

Move up to two tiles.

Crouch Down [2AP]

Until the start of your next turn, you are treated as if you have cover in all directions. If a shot would have already been halved due to being behind existing cover, it is instead reduced to zero.

Flee [2AP]

Immediately leave the combat. This will likely begin a skill challenge to escape.

Hold Fire (Attack) [3AP]

Ready yourself, firing your firearm at the first valid target to move, until the start of your next turn.

Interact [1AP]

Use an item, hand something off, use any of your skills, etc

It's a dangerous world out there, and sometimes you have to shoot your way out. Most combat encounters will be resolved through the use of weapons. Characters can have two weapons at the ready at any given time.

13.1 READING A WEAPON BLOCK

Weapons have 3 or 4 statistics that determine their behavior in combat. All of the weapons on this page are roughly balanced to each other, but some synergize with attitude traits more effectively.

The Dice

The number of dice determines the shots fired. The size determines the stress inflicted.

The Threshold

In order to hit with a shot, the die must be equal to or greater than this value. Weapons with a low threshold hit more consistently, usually at the cost of stress infliction.

The Range

The maximum number of tiles away that you can attempt to hit. Weapons with shorter range tend to hit harder.

The Radius

Used by explosive weapons, this indicates the area of effect of the blast.

13.2 EXPLOSIVES

Highland "Lightning Strike" Grenade

1d12 / 6+ / 6t / r0

Sullivan 1402 Impact Grenade

2d4 / 2+ / 6t / r0

Weaver 1934 v2 Fragmentation Grenade

2d4 / 3+ / 6t / r1

MDTC Antipersonnel Grenade

2d6 / 5+ / 6t / r1

Kelly FC-11 Concussion Grenade

1d6 / 5+ / 6t / r2

MDTC Riot Control Grenade

1d4 / 3+ / 6t / r2

13.3 FIREARMS

Kelly SR-19 Rifle

1d20 / 12+ / 8t

Weaver 1937 Repeating Rifle

2d12 / 9+ / 8t

"Outset Special" MDTC Model 13 Rifle

2d10 / 7+ / 8t

Highland "Cyclone" Heavy Machine Gun

4d4 / 3+ / 8t

Sullivan 870 Heavy Machine Gun

3d4 / 2+ / 8t

Highland "Landslide" Shotgun

2d8 / 4+ / 4t

Sullivan 668 Shotgun

2d6 / 2+ / 4t

Kelly MR-22 Submachine Gun

3d8 / 6+ / 4t

Weaver 1939 Submachine Gun

4d8 / 7+ / 4t

MDTC Model 8 Submachine Gun

4d6 / 5+ / 4t

"Standard" MDTC Model 4 Pistol

3d6 / 5+ / 6t

Deft Labs "Point and Shoot"

1d10 / 1+ / 4t

Deft Labs "Obliterator"

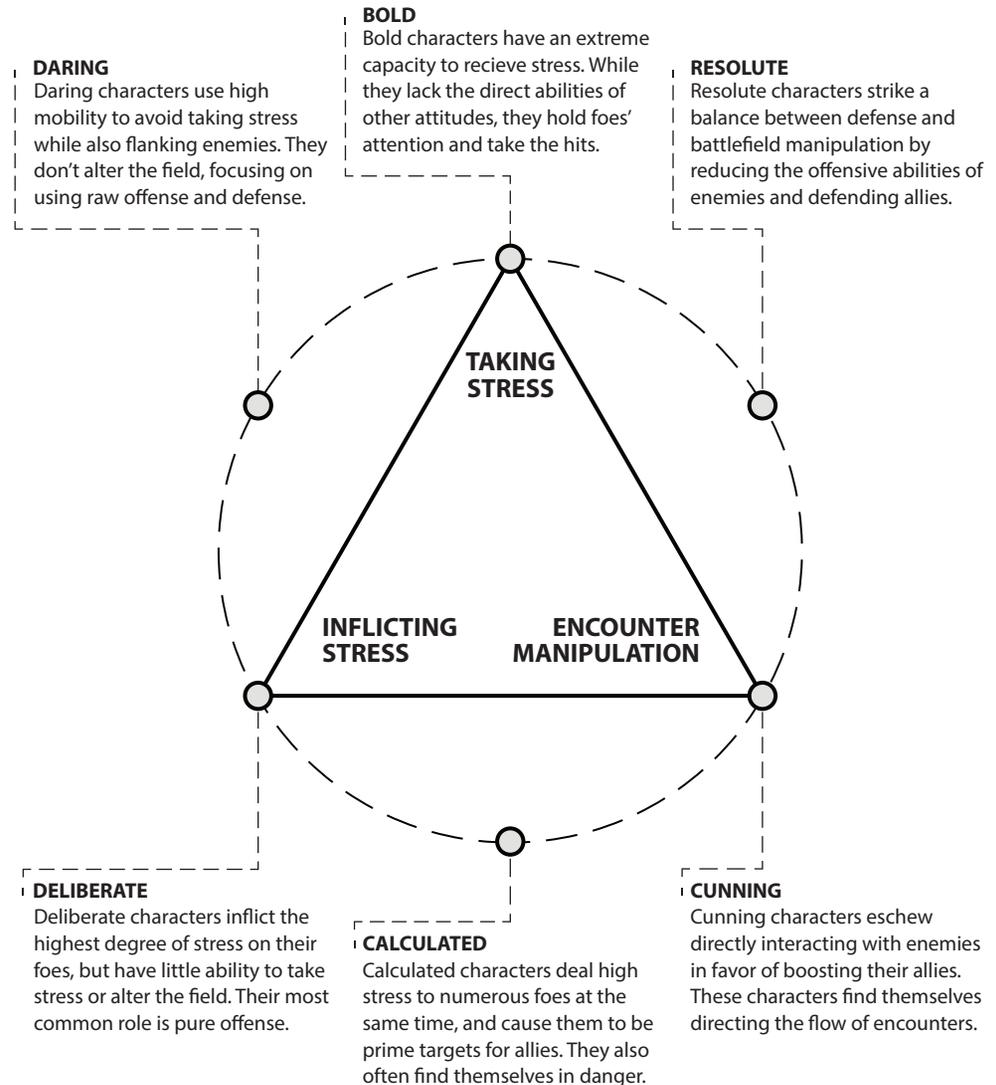
1d100 / 96+ / 6t

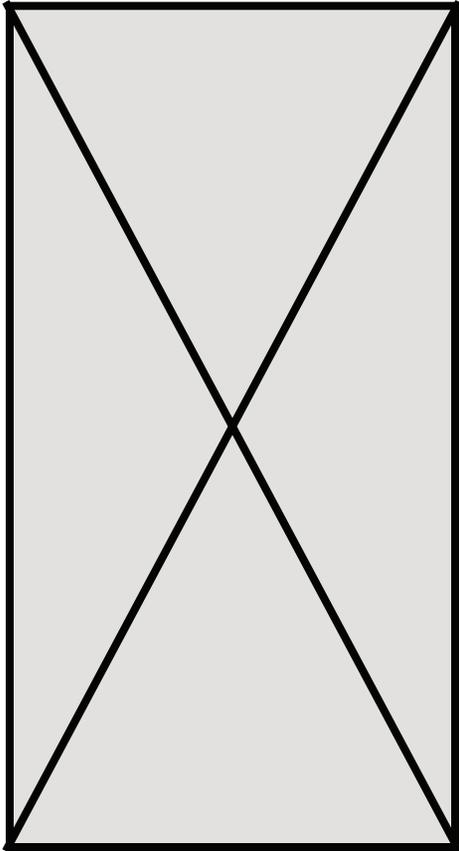
Deft Labs "Digital Peashooters"

1d0 / 1+ / 8t

Attitude determines how you handle yourself in combat situations. Your selection determines the suite of abilities and traits you use to resolve fights. There are six attitudes that can be selected. Each attitude has a different focus, and by diversifying, powerful synergies result.

The six attitudes represent differing mastery in three important aspects of resolving combat: inflicting stress, taking stress, and manipulating the encounter. There is an attitude specializing in each of these three approaches, as well as three attitudes representing hybrid capabilities.





A deliberate character approaches combat in a precise, efficient manner. They have an unparalleled capability to dish out firepower, using a small number of accurate and incredibly powerful shots to defeat their opponents.

Deliberate characters inflict the most stress of any attitude, but lack the resolve and support effects of other attitudes. They take advantage of careful positioning to enable striking multiple targets with individual shots, further increasing their effective firepower. Their traits are most suited for weapons that fire few hard-hitting shots.

A player playing a deliberate character is primarily responsible for sheer stress output. They will spend most of their combats engaging opponents from a distance. They synergize well with other attitudes that can further increase their firepower or can provide some much needed defense.

DELIBERATE PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

30 Resolve

"Outset Special" MDTC Model 13 Rifle
2d10 / 7+ / 8t

Actions

Down the Sights [2AP]

The next shot you make that hits inflicts 4x as much stress.

This allows you to sacrifice a shot now to deal tremendous stress later. It only affects individual shots, not the entire volley from a firearm. A missed shot does not remove the multiplier.

Traits

Firearm Mastery

When firing your weapon, you may roll one additional die and drop the lowest result.

If your weapon has two shots roll three dice, drop the lowest, and then assign the remaining two if they hit. This trait results in tremendous consistency and allows the deliberate player to use weapons too unreliable for other attitudes - typically firearms with few large dice.

Piercing Fire

If a target of your firearm is in a direct line with you, your hits penetrate, dealing ½ stress to another target in a tile behind. (The extra target must still be within range)

With long range and no support capabilities, a deliberate character can achieve a lot of success by simply standing still and firing. This ability encourages movement and repositioning with additional stress infliction.

LEVEL 4

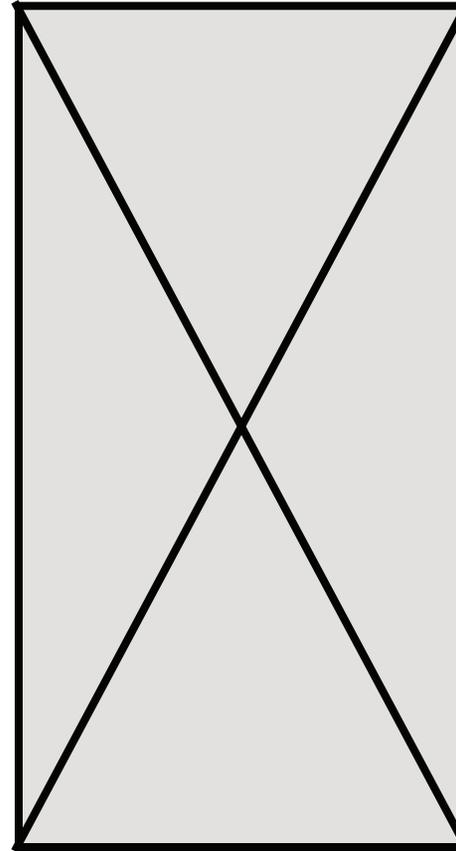
Improved Firearm Mastery

When firing, you may roll two additional dice and drop the lowest two results.

LEVEL 7

Thread the Needle

You ignore the effects of cover when calculating stress you inflict.



A daring character handles fights with speed and intensity. They use their agility to close distances on the battlefield and unleash a flurry of shots to take down their foes.

Daring characters inflict high stress and have high defensive capabilities, but do not make use of any status effects. They use their great speed and the defense attached to that movement to out flank entrenched opponents, inflicting stress and negating the effects of cover. Their traits are most suited for weapons that use many mid-sized dice.

A player playing a daring character is primarily responsible for maneuvering and flanking. They will spend most of their combats moving across the battlefield to get around opponents cover. They synergize well with other attitudes that can apply frontal pressure, forcing enemies into cover that can later be flanked.

DARING PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

45 Resolve

MDTC Model 8 Submachine Gun
4d6 / 5+ / 4t

Actions

Run & Gun (Attack) [3AP]

Move 2 tiles. Fire your firearm. You take ½ stress until the start of your next turn.

The daring abilities allow for two different ways to move and shoot. This ability allows the daring player to move a regular distance, shoot, and mitigate the damage taken up close.

Sprint [1AP]

Move 4 tiles. You may only use this ability once per turn.

By sprinting, the daring player can close a large distance and still have actions remaining to fire their weapon, at the cost of the bonus defense.

Traits

Spray & Pray

When firing your weapon, you may reroll a result of 1 or 2 once per die.

Rerolling 1s and 2s increases consistency and is best suited for weapons that use numerous medium or small dice.

LEVEL 4

Improved Spray & Pray

When firing your weapon, you may now reroll a miss once per die.

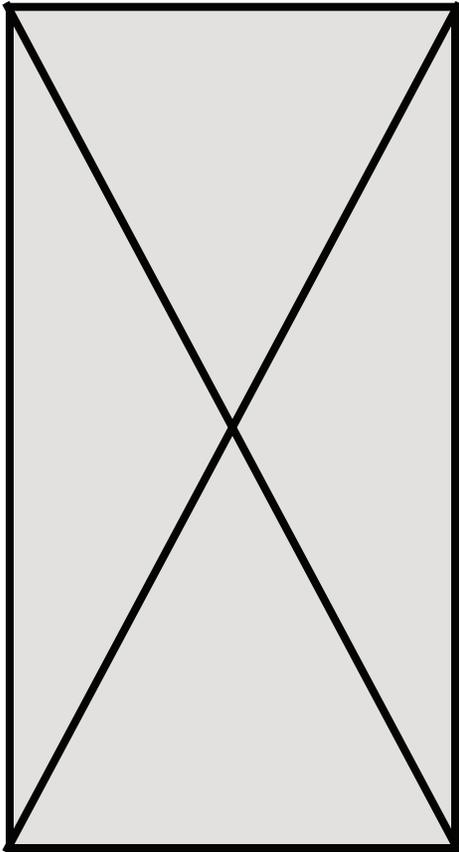
Killer Calves

Your Run & Gun and Sprint abilities now allow you to move 3 and 5 tiles, respectively.

LEVEL 7

Dodge Roll [1AP]

Move 1 tile. Prevent all stress you take this turn. You may use this ability at any point between the start of your turn and the start of your next turn.



A bold character bursts into combat commanding attention and shrugging off heavy fire. They have an incredible capacity for absorbing stress and use their massive bulk to tower over foes and lock them down, creating openings for allies to strike.

Bold characters have the highest resolve and defense of any attitude, but lack the offensive capabilities of other attitudes. They rush right into the heart of the fight, shaping the flow of combat by controlling enemy movement and targeting. Their traits are most suited for weapons that consistently hit - often small dice.

A player playing a bold character is the best suited for being a frontline distraction. They stop their allies from losing resolve by mitigating and absorbing it themselves. They synergize well with other attitudes that can lack defense and can take advantage of the offensive opportunities.

BOLD PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

60 Resolve

Sullivan 668 Shotgun

2d6 / 2+ / 4t

Actions

Scary Yelling (Attack) [2AP]

Fire your firearm. Anyone you hit is Taunted and can only attack you until the start of your next turn.

Bold characters want enemies to target them so that they can take advantage of their durability. This ability forces them to do so. Since damage is not a priority, weapons that consistently hit are ideal fits.

Massive Presence [1AP]

Loom large over your foes. Enemies in your tile are overwhelmed and cannot move until the start of your next turn.

When wading into the thick of battle, you need enemies on top of you to use Meatshield. This ability prevents them from slipping away.

Traits

Meatshield

If there is an enemy in your tile, you are considered to have cover in all directions.

This trait incentivizes being right in the thick of the action and grants a degree of safety while attempting to command the attention of foes.

LEVEL 4

Improved Meatshield

The cover effects of meatshield now apply to allies as well.

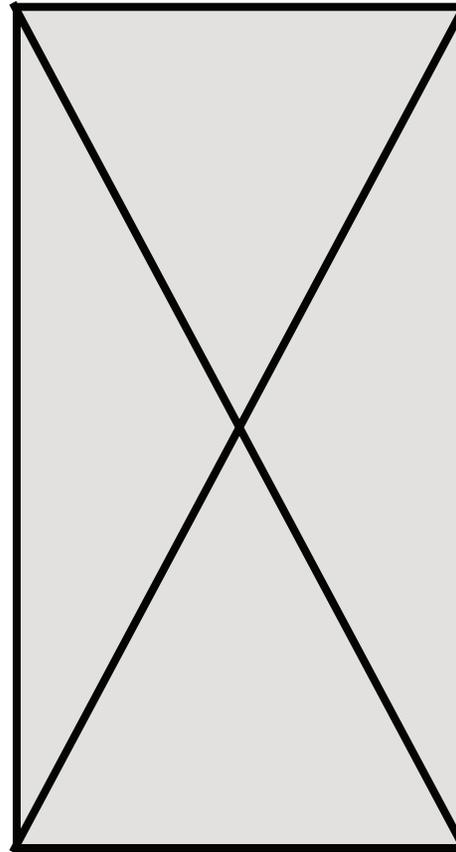
Heightened Durability

Increase your maximum Resolve by 15.

LEVEL 7

Bullet Sponge

You innately take 1/2 stress. (It still can't be reduced to less than 1/4)



A resolute character approaches combat with steady determination. They set up a fortified position and command the battlefield with unleashing withering fire on unprepared foes.

Resolute characters are high good defensive capabilities and can utilize a range of useful status effects. They deploy cover at will and use their traits to lock down the field, discouraging enemy movement and preventing stress. Their traits are most suited for weapons that consistently strike - typically numerous small dice.

A player playing a resolute character prevents allies from taking stress by both reducing how much is taken and reducing how much is dealt. They spend their fights establishing a position and laying down suppressive fire - either at a single target or over the whole field. They synergize with other attitudes that need a defensive boost to strike effectively.

RESOLUTE PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

45 Resolve

Sullivan 870 Heavy Machine Gun

3d4 / 2+ / 8t

Actions

Deploy Cover [1AP]

Put down an omnidirectional shield in your tile. This shield provides cover in all directions. You must pick up the shield to redeploy.

Placing a shield down allows for better selection of a position for watching over the battlefield. The cover is also usable by allies.

Pick Up Cover [0AP]

Pick up your shield, allowing you to place it elsewhere.

Covering Fire (Attack) [2AP]

Set up your gun to sweep the battlefield. The first time any valid target moves until the start of your next turn, deal a 1 stress shot against them.

Since stress is not a priority, the resolute character can sacrifice firing at a specific target to discourage movement across their full range.

Traits

Suppressive Fire

An enemy hit by your firearm deals ½ stress until the start of your next turn.

Resolute characters protect their allies by reducing enemy stress output across the board. This trait is best suited for consistent weapons that fire many shots.

LEVEL 4

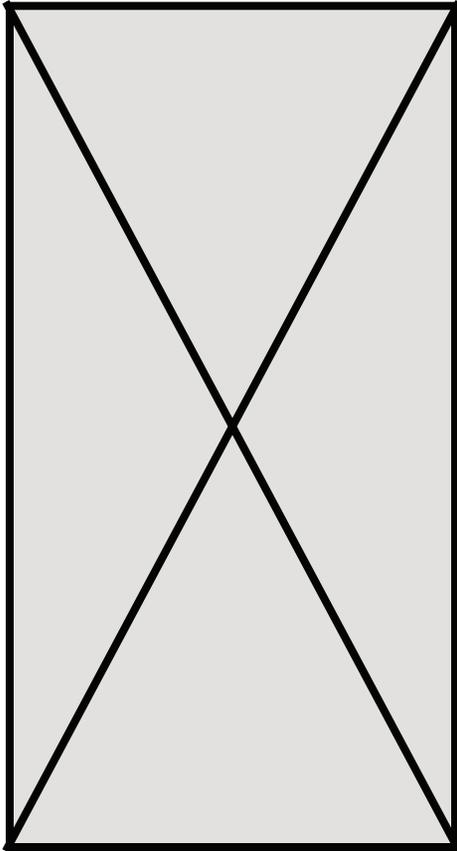
Walking Fortress

You now carry two shields, allowing you to Deploy Cover twice at a time.

LEVEL 7

Lockdown [3AP]

Unleash a withering hail of fire over the battlefield. Enemies within range are overwhelmed and unable to move until the start of your next turn.



A cunning character eschews typical firearm usage in favor of commanding their allies. They wait for opportunities to arise throughout the flow of the combat, intervening to support their allies, keeping them doing what they do best.

Cunning characters have the strongest capacity to manipulate the battlefield and a suite of support action, but lack durability and firepower. They skrit the edges of the fight, seeking chances to decisively respond and execute a powerful combo. They rarely fire a weapon themselves, preferring to leave the dirty work to their allies.

A player playing a cunning character supports the entire allied team. They prevent allies from losing resolve, give them extra actions to exploit, and turn misses into hits. They take any functional team and fill in the gaps, acting where needed to turn a good team into a great team.

CUNNING PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

30 Resolve

Actions

Shout Order [2AP]

Grant an ally within 6t 1 extra action point.

Sometimes an ally needs just one more action to pull off a clever combo or devastating move. Here you can sacrifice two of your action points to help them pull it off.

Nudge [2AP]

Treat the firearm roll of an ally within 6t as if it was 2 higher.

This ability lets you turn an ally's narrow miss into a hit, or a decent hit into an incredible one.

"Duck!" [2AP]

Prevent all damage an ally within 6t would take this turn.

Your allies often find themselves in a bad spot, and you can act on an enemy turn to help them find their way through.

Traits

Battlefield Commander

You can spend action points on cunning attitude actions at any time between the start of your turn and the start of your next turn.

Many of your abilities are reactive, responding to the changing conditions of all your allies and enemies acting. This trait lets you use your attitude actions on other turns, giving you the flexibility you need to effectively react.

LEVEL 4

Constant Vigilance

You now have 1 extra action point that may not be spent on your own turn.

LEVEL 7

Tactical Reposition [2AP]

You and each of your allies within 6t may move 1t.

CALCULATED PROGRESSION

LEVEL 1

30 Resolve

Sullivan 1402 Impact Grenade

2d4 / 2+ / 6t / r2

MDTC Antipersonnel Grenade

2d6 / 5+ / 6t / r1

Actions

Shaped Charge [2AP]

Destroy all cover adjacent to a tile within 6t.

Taking an action to destroy cover can greatly increase the stress inflicted over future turns.

Traits

Custom Blend

Enemies hit by your explosive attacks are stunned and lose one action point until the start of your next turn.

Greatly restricts enemy turns - forcing choices between firing, moving, and using cover.

Bring the Fireworks

When a die rolled for an explosive or firearm attack displays the maximum value, you may roll one additional die and add it to the result of the first die.

This trait causes your dice to 'explode,' possibly resulting in large sudden bursts of stress.

To the Teeth

You may carry and use 1 additional weapon.

LEVEL 4

Improved Fireworks

Bring the Fireworks is no longer limited to one additional die. Any die displaying the maximum value explodes and is added.

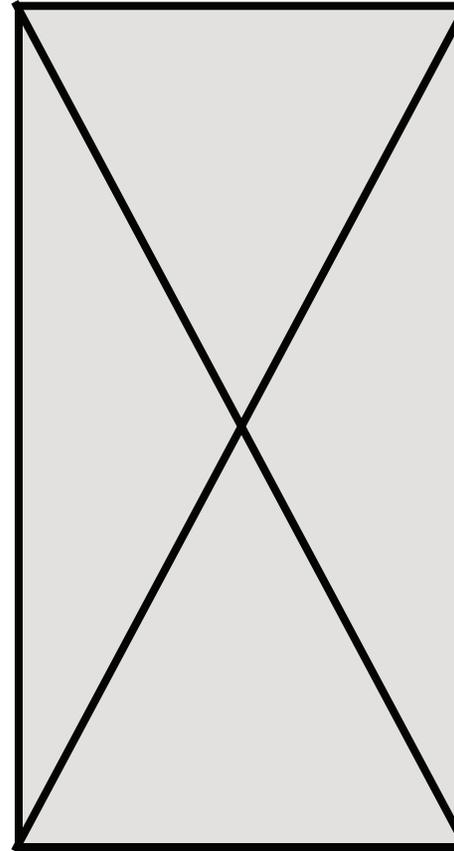
The Sound of Thunder

When you fire an explosive weapon, you may now remove one unit of cover adjacent to the impact site.

LEVEL 7

Pocket Mortar [3AP]

Destroy any number of units of cover within 3t of a point you choose within 6t.



A calculating character bursts out onto the battlefield to unleash destruction. They toss explosives with carefully considered accuracy, preventing their enemies from acting and denying them places to hide.

Calculating characters have strong offensive capabilities and great capability to manipulate the battlefield, but lack defensive abilities. They inflict stress across entire areas and can remove cover. Their traits are uniquely able to influence explosive weapons, making them ideally suited for the role.

A player playing a calculating character bombards the foes through combat, taking advantage of their aptitude for explosives to inflict stress and deny enemies their actions. In fortified areas they can destroy cover to create openings for allies. They synergize well with attitudes that can provide defense while they reorder the field as they see fit.

As you wander the frontier and gain in notoriety and strength, you have time to spend improving yourself as well. Talents are powerful customization options you gain as you level, representing unique and significant aspects of your character's growth.

Talents grant a variety of effects, from social boons, to permanent new effects, new actions, extra abilities, or ways of gathering information about the world.

22.1 LIST OF TALENTS

ANIMAL FRIEND

You've adopted an animal companion, such as a dog or horse. It can do things to assist you in your encounters, such as running items between characters, carrying equipment, or distracting your enemies.

Dog

15 Resolve, 3 AP
Move [1AP] – 3 tiles
Crouch [2AP]
Distract [2AP] – Stun one enemy within 1 tile

ARCHITECT

You've been taking notes on building design and are intimately familiar with typical layouts.

After spending a length time inside a building, you can ask the GM for a rough sketch of the layout of the interior to plan your approach.

BACK ALLEY TOURIST

You have picked up some street smarts, getting comfortable in the shadier parts of urban living. You can find all the right people to get things done or what you need, no questions asked.

Dirty Shot [1AP]

Suppress an enemy within 6t.

BANDIT BUSTER

Over the course of your travels, you have become an expert at breaking up bandit rings. If you spend a few minutes observing a bandit, you can ask the GM for its statistic block.

BIG GAME HUNTER

Over the course of your travels, you have become an expert at hunting wildlife. If you spend a few minutes observing an animal, you can ask the GM for its statistic block.

COMBAT ENGINEER

Over the course of your travels, you have become an expert at destroying combat machines. If you spend a few minutes observing an enemy machine, you can ask the GM for its statistic block.

HIT THE ROAD

You have put together enough scratch to secure your own transportation.

You have reliable access to a ground vehicle large enough to carry you and your equipment.

IMPLAUSIBLY WELL GROOMED

While it never really caught your attention before, your teammates have pointed out you never seem to get dirty or be uncomfortable. Even spending weeks out in the desert, you seem to walk out spotless and feeling refreshed.

Taking a beating isn't even that much of a problem for you. When you run out of resolve and become overcome, at the end of the combat you shrug it off and instead return to 2/3 resolve.

LIGHTFOOT

Tired of how noisy all the fighting can be, you have decided to keep things quieter.

You don't make any noise while moving and all of your firearms are much quieter.

MANNA FROM THE HEAVENS

You have made some connections to a variety of pilots and aeronauts over the course of your adventure.

Once per resupply, you can call in a favor over the radio to have a small package airdropped on your location.

NO TRUCE WITH THE FURIES

You can handle an incredible amount of your chosen vice.

As a result of your near constant state of addlement, you cannot be Stunned.

POLYGLOT

While everyone in the frontier speaks a scattering of languages, you've taken it to the next level, becoming fluent in many tongues.

You can shout out an insult in your foe's chosen tongue with incredible eloquence, provoking intense anger.

Surprisingly Biting Insult [1AP]

Taunt an enemy within 6t.

PROFESSIONAL

Over the course of your adventures, you have achieved notoriety for something you can make or do.

You can earn a decent living with this profession, which might be performing, lecturing, crafting, cooking or something similar, and other enthusiasts may recognize you.

PUGILIST

You have been keeping in shape traveling the frontier, and you picked up a few tricks for fighting unarmed.

Grapple [1AP]

Overwhelm an enemy within 0t.

Haymaker [2AP] (Attack)

2d6 / 2+ / 0t

QUICK DRAW

You keep your weapons and equipment at the ready, instantly responding at the first sign of a violent engagement.

At the beginning of a combat encounter, you always act first. If two characters have this talent, they roll off for first and second – and so on.

SMOOTH SIDEARM

You have spent your off time practicing with your sidearm and have polished your firing into a fluid, elegant motion.

Firing a pistol now only takes 1 action point. [You still can only make one attack per round]

THOUSAND FACES

You have been carefully observing outfits and mannerisms of peoples and groups you encounter throughout the frontier.

You now have an incredible knack for assembling disguises and blending in, passing casual observation in most subterfuge situations.

23.1 STATUS EFFECTS

Many traits and actions cause status effects. Most status effects last until the start of the inflictor's next turn.

A character can be affected by any number of status effects, but the 1/4x to 4x multiplier limit always applies. Always round down, to a minimum value of 1.

IN COVER

Take ½ stress from any shot that passes through adjacent cover

SUPPRESSED

Deal ½ stress

STUNNED

Lose 1 Action Point

TAUNTED

Can only attempt to attack the target that taunted you

OVERWHELMED

Incapable of moving

23.2 GLOSSARY

ACTION

That thing you do. Expression of intent upon the world. Costs action points.

ACTION POINT

Currency for using actions. Receive 3 on each of your turns.

ATTACK

A family of actions that allow you to hurt your opponents. Only one attack may be made on each of your turns.

ATTITUDE

Your typical role combat situations. Determines the suite of specialized abilities, traits, and maximum resolve available to you.

FIREARM

A weapon that makes 1 or more shots. Shots equaling or exceeding the threshold are successes and may be assigned to targets.

LINE OF SIGHT

Measured from center to center of tiles, required for valid targeting.

RESUPPLY

An event of unspecified time, typically occurring in civilization, that allows you to regain usage of your skill abilities. The GM will let you know when this occurs.

ROUND

The complete cycle of all participant's turns.

SHOT

A single die rolled as a part of firing a firearm. When a shot equals or exceeds the weapon's threshold, it deals stress equal to the value.

SKILL

Something you know, know how to do, or are capable of. Used to interact with world when the stakes are high.

SKILL ABILITY

A very powerful but limited usage means of influencing the game world. You can use these to fundamentally alter the world to solve problems as you encounter them.

STATUS EFFECT

An ongoing condition afflicting (or benefiting) a target. Most status effects last until the start of the inflictor's next turn.

SOURCE

The point of origin for the purposes of determining valid targeting and cover. For a firearm, this is the shooter. For an explosive, this is the impact point.

TARGET

The character or thing that is in danger of being hit by an attack.

TILE

A hexagonal subdivision of the battlefield. Range is calculated by counting tiles from source to target.

TURN

The division of time where a player gets to take their actions by spending action points.

Character Name:

Player Name:

Level:

Sessions: ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

INVENTORY

SKILLS

a 7 typically succeeds

	1d8	1d10	2d6	2d8	Ability
Budding Naturalist	○	○	○	○	○
City Slicker	○	○	○	○	○
Company Policy Wizard	○	○	○	○	○
Homing Pigeon Instinct	○	○	○	○	○
Newspaper Junkie	○	○	○	○	○
Went to the Academy	○	○	○	○	○
Actual Mechanical Engineer	○	○	○	○	○
Ad Hoc Mechanical Engineer	○	○	○	○	○
Greasemonkey	○	○	○	○	○
Hotshot Aeronaut	○	○	○	○	○
Leadfoot Operator	○	○	○	○	○
Regular Boy Scout	○	○	○	○	○
Dogged Determination	○	○	○	○	○
Field Anatomist	○	○	○	○	○
Musclehead	○	○	○	○	○
Part Time Shadow	○	○	○	○	○
Particing Mentalist	○	○	○	○	○
Twinkletoe	○	○	○	○	○

SKILL ABILITIES

one use per resupply

ATTITUDE

RESOLVE

WEAPONS

BASIC ACTIONS

Fire Firearm (Attack) [2AP]	Flee [2AP]
Use Explosive (Attack) [2AP]	Interact [1AP]
Move [1AP]	Hold Fire (Attack) [3AP]
Crouch Down [2AP]	

ATTITUDE ACTIONS

TRAITS

TALENTS