Table-Top Roleplay Game System



Written by Jimmy Clephane





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Introduction

WHAT IS DUNGEON RUNE?

is a Dungeon Rune table-top roleplaying game system for running games of exploration and adventure in which players take the roles of travellers moving through a vast and diverse fantasy world on a journey of discovery. Along the way they will encounter all sorts of strange people, animals and monsters. With a bit of quick thinking and a roll of the die, outcomes will be decided and new directions will be revealed, friendships will be made and lost, battles will be fought and every step of the way, characters will grow stronger and - with any luck - a little bit wiser.

WHAT IS AN RPG?

RPGs – or Role-Playing Games – are a storytelling experience where each player takes the role of one member of an ensemble cast. Each player has a Character they decide the actions of, trying their best to think what that character might do in any situation. Your character could be someone like you or someone very different. You could be playing as a strong fighter, a cunning rogue, a powerful magician or perhaps a humble healer. Then, through their eyes you will then encounter people and places very different to the real world.

There is one other kind of player in a Role-Playing Game. This player is called the Game Master, and it is their role to describe the world the characters are in and to play the parts of everyone your character meets along the way.

The Game Master reads through and/or plans out the adventure you are playing before you start and helps to guide you through it. A role-playing game can vary in length from a single session of a couple of hours, to an ongoing game played over many sessions as you see your characters grow and develop. At the beginning of each game, the Game Master will recap the events of the last game and set the scene for the one ahead, then it's over to you to decide what happens next!

Always remember though, while you are the one deciding what they do and do not do, you are not your character. Try to think what *they* would do.

How do you win an RPG? If you make it through, with a tale or two to tell of your adventures, then everyone – the Game Master included – has won!

Understanding the Dice

During a game, the outcome of certain events will be determined with a roll of the dice ... seven dice to be specific. To play Dungeon Rune you will need a standard set of seven Polyhedral Dice. These can be bought from most game shops and they include a 4-sided, 6sided, 8-sided, 10-sided, 12-sided and 20-sided die. They also include a second 10-sided die, though you will notice that this one goes up in 10s rather than 1s. Throughout the rules for Dungeon Rune you will see notations like this "roll 2d6" ... this means to roll a 6-sided dice twice and add the total together. Sometimes you may have a modifier to a roll, such as "1d8 + 2" ... this means to roll the 8sided die then add 2 to the result. If you need to roll 1d10 then note that most 10-sided dice have a 0 to indicate a roll of 10 ... However! ... if you need to roll 1d100, roll both the 10-sided dice and, in this case, the 0s count as zero. So, for example, a roll of 20 and 3 is 23 total, and a roll of 90 and 0 is 90 total.

GETTING STARTED

Ready to give it a go? Great! First things first, decide who will be your Game Master. This player should then read through the adventure you are planning to play, making a few notes about key events, so that they have a good understanding of what is in store for you. Everyone else then needs to create a Character. Have a check of the next chapter to see how you do that.

Once you have your adventure and your characters ready to go, it's time to sit down and get started. Everyone should ideally have a notepad and pencil, their character sheet and a set of dice (although dice can always be shared by a group).

Some groups find it helpful to have a grid or map with mini-figures to help visualise the layout of a room or the formation of the group during gameplay. If you want to try this, make sure to have minis for your characters ready to go, and make sure your Game Master has minis for the people, animal and monsters too!

If you don't have mini-figures but would still like to map out a location, you can also use standard game tokens, just make sure to keep track of which is which. You can pause you game at any point and pick it up again later. Make sure, if you do this, to note down any key information about location and layout of the characters so that you can set it up again next time.

CHARACTER CREATION

Your character is your avatar in the game world. Playing the role of them, you make decisions and choose directions to explore and interact with the world. To help you with this, there are a few options to make to define the person you are playing as ...

SPECIES

First things first, you need to pick which species you are playing as. There are three options available to choose from

HUMANS are, as the name suggests, humans. They are between 1.5m and 2m tall and a comfortable mix of athletic and dextrous.

ELVES look very similar to humans although they are often far taller and very thin in the body and the face. They are inherently dextrous although often not as strong.

GOBLINS are short and stocky and often quite gruff in their manner. They are very strong and athletic although they are often more clumsy with dayto-day tasks.

ABILITY SCORES AND MODIFIERS

Ability scores are static based on the species you wish to play. Pick from the following and note your ability scores

Attribute	Human	Elf	Goblin
Strength	12	10	16
Dexterity	12	16	10
Constitution	10	12	14
Intelligence	14	11	12
Wisdom	11	12	11
Charisma	16	14	12

Modifiers are calculated as the score minus ten, divided by two and rounded down. As the scores are static, the modifiers are as follows ...

Attribute	Human	Elf	Goblin
Strength	+1	+0	+3
Dexterity	+1	+3	+0
Constitution	+0	+1	+2
Intelligence	+2	+0	+1
Wisdom	+0	+1	+0
Charisma	+3	+2	+1

CLASS

As an adventurer, your character has honed their skills with a particular role in mind during travel and combat. This is known as their class. There are four routes to choose from ...

Class	Description
Fighter	A trained warrior with a knowledge of combat and conflict.
Healer	A surgeon with a knowledge of herbs and treatments.
Magician	A student of the mystic arts with a knowledge of the arcane.
Rogue	A wily and sly individual with a knowledge of stealth and surprise.

SKILLS

Skills define your character's ability to perform particular types of task. You have 20 points to apply and may do so with any distribution you like. Class Skills (noted below with a *) cost 1 point per level. Cross-Class Skills cost 2 points per level. You must divide your points between a minimum of 5 skills.

Skill				
Academia		*	*	
Brawn	*			
Deduction			*	
Finesse	*			*
Healing		*		
Intuition	*		*	*
Nature	*	*		
Persuasion		*	*	*
Stealth				*

SKILLSET EXAMPLE

A fighter could have 3 points to Brawn, 1 to Deduction, 4 to Finesse, 2 to Intuition, 3 to Nature and 3 to Stealth

Brawn, Finesse, Intuition and Nature are all class skills so they would cost 3 + 4 + 2 + 3 = 12

Deduction and Stealth are cross-class skills so they would cost (1 * 2) + (3 * 2) = 8

12 from class skills and 8 from crossclass skills makes the total of 20 for a new character.

ABOUT THE SKILLS

- Academia ... this covers the reading and studying of text books and histories. It includes everything from magic and science to history and religion.
- Brawn ... this covers strenuous physical activity, lifting heavy objects, climbing high peaks and running long distances.
- Deduction ... this covers everything from problem solving to investigation and following clues and trails.
- Finesse ... dancing, juggling, acrobatics, sleight of hand, everything that requires a flick of the wrist or a nimble movement.
- Healing ... this includes first aid, the preparation of remedies and the application of treatment for injury or illness.
- **Intuition** ... this includes an insightfulness and a perception and awareness of the world around and the people in it.
- Nature ... this covers everything from handling animals and hunting prey to following tracks and surviving in the wilderness and wastes.
- Persuasion ... this includes convincing other people, deceiving them or, if it comes to it, straight up intimidation and manipulation.
- **Stealth** ... this covers everything from hiding to moving quietly and avoiding being seen.

FEATS

Feats are special abilities that may help your character during the game. This could be anything from quicker attacks to skill with certain weapons or the ability to move and fight in armour. You gain a set of feats based on your species and class and then may choose two more as you wish for your character.

SPECIES FEATS

Species	Included Feats
Human	Power Shot
	Weapon Proficiency:
	Ranged
	Weapons
	Weapon
	Proficiency:
	Heavy Ranged Weapons
	Weapon
	Proficiency:
	Melee Weapons
Elf	Critical Strike
	Weapon Proficiency: Ranged Weapons
	Weapon Proficiency: Melee Weapons
	Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed Attacks
Goblin	Armour Proficiency
	Weapon Proficiency: Heavy Ranged Weapons
	Weapon Proficiency: Melee Weapons
	Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed Attacks

CLASS FEATS

Class	Included Feats	
Fighter	Power Attack	
Healer	Item Proficiency: Surgeon's Bag	
Magician	Lucky	
Rogue	Rapid Shot	

ABOUT THE FEATS

In total there are 14 feats that can be chosen from. Your remaining 2 choices may be for any that are not included with your class, there are no prerequisites.

- **Armour Proficiency** ... Your may wear armour
- Power Attack ... As a bonus action you may roll once more for damage after a successful melee attack
- **Flurry** ... As a bonus action after a melee attack you may make another melee attack
- Critical Strike ... As a bonus action you may give yourself advantage on a melee attack action
- Power Shot ... As a bonus action you may roll once more for damage after a successful ranged attack
- Rapid Shot ... As a bonus action after a ranged attack you may make another ranged attack
- **Sniper Shot** ... As a bonus action you may give yourself advantage on a ranged attack action
- Weapon Proficiency: Ranged Weapons ... You may use light ranged weapons

- Weapon Proficiency: Heavy Ranged Weapons ... You may use heavy ranged weapons
- Weapon Proficiency: Melee Weapons ... You may use melee weapons
- Weapon Proficiency: Unarmed Attacks ... You may make melee attacks without a weapon
- Item Proficiency: Surgeon's Bag ... You may use a surgeon's bag
- Item Proficiency: Trackers Kit ... You may use a tracker's kit
- **Lucky** ... Three times per day you may re-roll any Ability Check, Skill Check or Attack Roll

MONEY

During games, characters may find, win, earn and spend money on food, board, equipment and services. The base unit of money is Silver Pennies (sp) with One Silver Pence (1sp) being the smallest unit and, as such, the cheapest anything could be.

Some common costs are ...

Amount	Item
1 sp	A loaf of bread
5 sp	A cold meal
10 sp	A hot meal
50 sp	A room in a tavern
100 sp	A horse
500 sp	Four horses and a guide
1,000 sp	Eight horses and a cart
5,000 sp	A skilled worker
10,000 sp	A small house
50,000 sp	A medium house
$100,\!000 \mathrm{\ sp}$	A large house
500,000 sp	A castle
1,000,000 sp	A private island

STARTING EQUIPMENT

Various equipment is available throughout the game and may be found or procured when visiting towns or fighting enemies. As a minimum however, an adventurer begins with the following basic equipment ...

- Travelling Clothes
- A Backpack
- 6 Torches
- A Flint and Steel
- A Bedroll
- 200sp Starting Money

Fighters start with the following additional items

• Either a Short Sword or a Battle Axe

Healers start with the following additional items

A Surgeon's Bag and a Dagger

Magicians start with the following additional items

A Magic Staff and a Dagger

Rogues start with the following additional items

Either a Short Bow or a Crossbow

HIT POINTS

Hit Points denote how much damage your character can take before falling unconscious. Your character's maximum hit points are set by their species as follows ...

Class	Maximum Hit Points
Human	35
Elf	37
Goblin	40

ARMOUR CLASS

Your character's armour class denotes how easy / hard they are to hit with an attack. It is calculated as 10 + your dexterity modifier. Additional points can be gained if your character finds or buys armour (different armour types specify the bonuses they give and whether they may be worn / used with other armour too).

ATTACKING

When a character attacks an enemy or vice versa, roll a d20 and add the attack modifier to the result. If the total is greater than or equal to the defender's Armour Class then the attack is successful.

For a successful attack, damage should be rolled according to the weapon used and the total is then taken away from the defender's Hit Points.

If a character or enemy's Hit Points drop to 0 then they fall unconscious. If they continue to be attacked or to take damage and their Hit Points drop to -20, they are dead.

Weapon	Use
Dagger	Melee, +2 to hit, 1d4 damage
Short Bow	Ranged, +2 to hit, 1d6 damage, range 50 m
Crossbow	Heavy Ranged, +4 to hit, 1d8 damage, range 25 m
Short Sword	Melee, +4 to hit, 1d6 damage
Battle Axe	Melee, +2 to hit, 1d8 damage
Unarmed Attack	Melee, Dexterity Modifier to hit, 1d4 + Strength Modifier damage (minimum of

HEALING

A character with a Surgeon's Bag and proficiency to use it may prepare a healing balm as an action then apply it as a later action (performed over two successive rounds if desired). Use of the balm stops any poison effect and restores 1d6 + the Healing score of the character that prepared it.

Once prepared, the balm must be used by a character with Surgeon's Bag proficiency however it does not need to be the same character that prepared it.

Hit Points may also be restored by resting. Characters may rest anywhere where there is no threat of attack or arrest. A rest takes 8 hours and restores a character to their full Hit Points.

A character's Hit Points may not increase beyond their original maximum regardless of how many healing balms or rests they have.

MAGIC SPELLS

Magicians may use their staves to cast spells during their adventures. Some of these may be helpful during investigations and travel, some allow for an attack or a defence during combat. All magicians learn a base set of spells, however they may also learn or create new ones as they travel too.

Some spells, such as Fire Bolt, have an immediate effect that ends within the casting time. Others, such as Illusion, where no end point is specified, continue until the Magician casting it:

- Decides for it to end
- Moves out of range
- Falls unconscious
- Drops or loses their staff

FIRE BOLT

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 10m

Effect ... A dart of fire shoots from your staff towards an enemy or object. Items are automatically hit by this spell. If hit, an enemy or item is set on fire and will continue to take damage automatically each round until an action is used to extinguish it.

For an enemy ... magical, +4 to hit, 1d8 damage, range 10m

FREEZE

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 10m

Effect ... A dart of ice shoots from your staff towards an enemy or object. Items are automatically hit by this spell. If hit, an enemy or item is frozen and cannot move or be opened until a Normal Brawn Skill Check breaks the ice.

For an enemy ... magical, +4 to hit, 1d8 damage, range 10m

For an object ... the item is frozen

ILLUSION

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... Within Sight

Effect ... You cause an image to appear in a space you can see. The image must be flat and no larger than a 2m in height or width. If objects or characters come into contact with it they pass through it with no ill effect.

LIGHT

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 25m

Effect ... A bright light is emitted from your staff and illuminates a circle up to 25m around you as if the area were lit by daylight.

Lock

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... Touch

Effect ... Placing your staff against a door or box you cause it to become magically locked. A DC 15 Strength Check is then necessary to force the lock open. Once opened, the spell is dispelled from the object until cast again.

MESSAGE

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 100m

Effect ... You telepathically transmit a message of no more than 15 words to an ally within range. The recipient hears the message as if you had spoken it next to them however no sound is heard by any bystander.

POISON

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... Touch

Effect ... By touching your staff against an item of food or drink, you may cause it to become poisonous to any who consume it. Casting this spell against an enemy, they must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution Check or become Poisoned. Once poisoned by this spell's effect, a creature takes 1d6 damage every minute until they are healed or they die.

PURIFY

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... Touch

Effect ... By touching your staff against an item of food or drink that was poisoned, you may cause it to become poison free to any who consume it.

SHOCK

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 10m

Effect ... A dart of electricity shoots from your staff towards an enemy or object. Items are automatically hit by this spell. If hit, an enemy or item is electrocuted and will take double damage if wearing metal armour or standing in water.

For an enemy ... magical, +4 to hit, 1d8 damage, range 10m

SHOUT

Casting Time ... 1 Action

Range ... 200m

Effect ... Your staff begins to glow as your voice increases in volume so that you may be heard up to 200m away through any other noise or commotion.

PLAYING A GAME

Types of Players and Characters

During a game, one player should be selected to take the role of Game Master. The Game Master (or GM) is responsible for describing the world the characters are moving through and playing the parts of any non-player characters, creatures and monsters they encounter.

The Game Master should familiarise themselves with the maps and locations for the game and have all stat blocks for non-player characters and other encounters available to them during play.

At the start of the game, the Game Master describes the initial location as well as any people and options available to the characters. It is then over to the other players to describe what their characters do, where they go and what they say.

Together, the Game Master and other players then recount the story of the travel and adventure of the characters through the fantasy world.

Games may run for as long as those playing want them to. At the end of a session a game can be "paused" ready for the next session, at which the Game Master should recap the events of the last game ready for the story to resume.

ABILITY CHECKS

During the story, a player may describe their character as doing something particularly strenuous, either physically or mentally. At these moments, the Game Master may call for an Ability Check.

In this case, the player should roll a d20 and add their Ability Modifier for the named Ability to the result, giving the total to the Game Master.

A few examples ...

- A Rogue may wish to run up a sheer hill or cliff edge to get a better view, this would be a Dexterity Check.
- A Magician may be trying to convince someone to let them in to look for a magic item, this would be a Charisma Check.
- A Healer may be trying to understand a set of instructions for preparing a potion, this would be an Intelligence Check.
- A Fighter may be trying to force open a door by barging into it, this would be a Strength Check.

In any such case, the result must be the same or greater than the Difficulty Challenge (or DC) of the task at hand.

The Game Master will decide the exact number based on the situation however as a general guide, you can use the following list ...

- Simple (DC 5)
- Easy (DC 10)
- Normal (DC 15)
- Hard (DC 20)
- Expert (DC 25)
- Impossible (DC 30)

Remember, an Ability Check should only be made where there is a possibility of Success and also a possibility of Failure. If a character could easily complete a task (such as walking down a path) then no check is needed. Likewise, if a character could never possibly complete a task (such as flying) then no check is needed.

SKILL CHECKS

Similar to Ability Checks, a Skill Check will come up when a Character is attempting to complete a task where there is a possibility of success and a possibility of failure. Skill Checks should be performed where the task at hand could be achieved using a learned skill.

A few examples ...

- A Rogue may wish to track an animal through the forest. This would be a Nature Check.
- A Magician may wish to learn a spell from an old book in a strange or archaic language. This would be an Academia Check.
- A Healer may be trying to discern whether their patient is being honest. This would be an Intuition Check.
- A Fighter may be trying to haggle for a better price at a tavern. This would be a Persuasion Check.

In this case, the Game Master will say what difficulty the Skill Check is and the player should then roll a dice accordingly. If the roll is the same or less than the Character's level in that skill then they succeed.

- Simple (roll a d4)
- Easy (roll a d6)
- Normal (roll a d8)
- Hard (roll a d10)
- Expert (roll a d12)
- Impossible (roll a d20)

ABILITY OR SKILL?

In some cases, it can be argued that a check could be either an Ability Check or a Skill Check. For example, forcing a door could be a Strength Check or a Brawn Check. Likewise, convincing someone could be a Charisma Check or a Persuasion Check. In these cases, it is ultimately up to the Game Master to decide which to use.

When choosing one or the other though, remember that a Skill Check is binary, either it succeeds or it fails. Whereas an Ability Check can be tiered, with higher results leading to a greater or fuller success (e.g.

understanding more, pushing harder or getting a greater discount).

COMPETITIVE SKILL CHECKS

If a skill is being used to counter another active skill (e.g. using Nature to track someone hiding using their Stealth skill, or using Brawn vs. Brawn in a tug of war or an arm wrestling competition), the difficulty is set by the level of the opponent.

A character attempting to avoid being tracked must roll their Stealth check based on the highest awareness of their opponents. 0-1 Nature is Simple Stealth, 2 Nature is Easy Stealth, 3 Nature is Normal Stealth, 4 Nature is Hard Stealth, 5 Nature is Expert Stealth and 6+ Nature is Impossible Stealth.

Likewise, a character attempting to track someone hiding rolls Nature based on the Stealth of their opponent. 0-1 Stealth is Simple Nature, 2 Stealth is Easy Nature, 3 Stealth is Normal Nature, 4 Stealth is Hard Nature, 5 Stealth is Expert Nature and 6+ Stealth is Impossible Nature.

Unconsciousness and Death

During the game, a Character may lose Hit Points as a result of combat, poisoning or dangerous activities. If their Hit Points drop to 0, they are then unconscious. At this point, they do not necessarily take any further damage however they cannot do anything until they are healed to at least 1 Hit Point again.

If a Character's Hit Points drop to -20 then they are dead and their player may make a new character to play as.

Damage and healing may be actively applied to an unconscious character, modifying their hit points accordingly. Any attacks made on an unconscious creature gain Advantage on the roll.

MOVEMENT AND ACTIONS

During gameplay, if combat begins or if a task becomes time-sensitive, players should begin describing their Character's decisions in a series or 6 second blocks known as Rounds.

There are three parts to any Round ...

- Movement
- Action
- Bonus Action

These sections may be described / enacted in any order.

Humans, Elves and Goblins can each move 10m per round. If they choose to, they may Dash as their Action for that round and double this distance to 20m.

All available Actions are as follows ...

- Attack (melee or ranged)
- Use an ability (e.g. pull yourself up onto a ledge with a strength check)
- Use a skill (e.g. hide with stealth or treating an injury using a Surgeon's Bag)
- Cast a Spell
- Dash (move another 10m)
- Help (give another character advantage on the roll for their action)
- Ready an Action (for a given trigger)

A readied action happens the given trigger, chosen by the player, happens. A readied action must happen if the trigger occurs before the Character's next turn regardless of whether they would have changed their mind since.

An example of a readied action might be "I will stab whoever comes through that door next as soon as I can see them"

In this case, the trigger is: as soon as someone comes through the door and is visible to the character. Once this happens, the player for that character should roll an attack and, if successful, damage.

Possible Bonus Actions may be described in Feats or Magic Spells and can be used accordingly.

In a fight between a character with a ranged weapon and another with a melee weapon, once the combatants are within 2m of each other the melee combatant gains advantage on their attack as their opponent is not defending against it with a melee weapon of their own.

Initiative

If gameplay enters combat, both sides should roll for Initiative to determine who goes first. Initiative is rolled as 1d10 for each side (players should take it in turns for each combat encounter). In the event of a tie, the players go first.

Rounds then alternate between allies and foes, with the individual characters taking their turns based on the initial proximity order from their opponents.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

Sometimes an Ability Check, Skill Check or Attack Roll may be more or less likely to happen. Examples include: another character used the Help Action to assist, or perhaps the Character knows this particular place well.

In these instances, the Game Master will say to roll with Advantage or with Disadvantage. For either case, the roll should be made twice. For Advantage, the better outcome is used. For Disadvantage, the worse outcome is used.

OPTIONAL RULES

ROLLING FOR ABILITY SCORES

Once you have the hang of playing Dungeon Rune, try rolling for your Ability Scores rather than using the pre-set blocks. To do this, roll 4d6 and discard the lowest number. Now add the other three together, this gives you the main score. Do this five more times and note down all of your Ability Scores. Next, for each one you need to work out the modifier. To do this, subtract 10 from the Score, divide by 2 and then round down. The result could be anywhere from -4 to +4 and this is the Ability Modifier.

Individual Initiative

When combat begins, for a more varied experience try having each player roll a d20, then have the GM roll for each group of enemies. Either write a list or use Initiative Tracker cards / tokens to play combat each in turn from highest to lowest.

CRITICAL SUCCESS AND FAILURE

When rolling to attack, if the number of the d20 is either 1 or 20 (either extreme) this is sometimes called a Critical (or Natural) roll. A Natural-20 / Critical Success means that your character did the best they possibly could. As an optional rule, this can be rewarded by rolling twice for the damage dealt. The flip side of this though is that a Natural-1 / Critical Failure means that your character did the worst they possibly could. If you are playing this optional rule, in this case you should roll a Dexterity Check. If you get less than 10 then your character doesn't just miss but falls over and takes 1d4 damage from the fall.

FALL (AND OTHER SPECIAL) DAMAGE

In a normal game, if a character falls from a great height they can be considered to have died from the impact (as such, it is generally advisable to avoid long drops!)

As an optional extra rule though, if a character falls from a rooftop or off a cliff or any other height, work out how far they have fallen and roll 1d4 for every 2m. Add this up and the total is the damage they take from the landing.

Likewise, any time a character might take a small amount of damage from a physical encounter - such as running into a wall, having a door slammed in their face or tripping and falling – roll 1d4 for each strike and the character takes this as damage from the encounter.

WRITING YOUR OWN RULES

Dungeon Rune is designed and written to be extended and grown. Everyone is encouraged to write their own species, skills, feats, spells, items, games and worlds for it as well as any additional rules that you think could enhance a game.

Why not try adding a system of character levels with increases to hit points and skills each time characters level up? Or maybe add magical items or a whole other kind of weapon or attack? The only limit really is your own imagination!

Whatever you come up with, make sure to discuss it with your own group and agree on how you will play it. Write up your ideas and share them with friends. Build worlds and then explore them. Above all though, have fun!