

Diesel Empire, v1.6.0-alpha

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Creating Characters

Step 1: Attributes

Attributes are the traits that have a strong influence over your character, like *agile, strong, precise, small, creative, technical, wise, impulsive, beautiful, confident, witty, stubborn, brave, determined*, and *cowardly* are all examples of Attributes.

- **Give your character two Attributes.** You can use our examples or create your own.
- **Your character can have duplicate Attributes**, which just means that it has a bigger impact on their lives, for better or worse.

Step 2: Species

Pick your character's species. Your choice will give your character additional Attributes.

Species: Human

Prolific. Over-confident. Stubborn. Except for the elves' Silohain, humans have a significant presence in every kingdom, and are in control of the two largest kingdoms in the world, the Northern Kingdom and the Unified South Kingdoms (USK). Of all the sentient species, humans are probably the majority.

The main reason for this proliferation is that humans seem to have evolved from more than two dozen different regions across the known world, appearing about ten thousand years ago with the orcs.

Attributes:

- **Social Dominance** - All major cities in the world are willing to accept the human North Gilder as currency, and almost everyone in these cities can, at least crudely, communicate in the common human language of *Northword*. Also, since most of the industrial centers are human and humans control a large portion of the economy, most modern devices and equipment are designed around humans.

Species: Orc

Expansive. Powerful. Stubborn. Orcs developed throughout the plains and steppes of the Eastern Expanse, where they continue to maintain total control. They appeared alongside humans, ten thousand years ago. Second only to humans, orcs are a major presence in every major kingdom outside the elven Silohain, but until recently, their populations were largely segregated.

Hardened tribalism keeps the orc nations divided and allows elven and human nations to maintain global dominance, but orc societies have been much faster in adapting to modern advances, which is beginning to become a significant economic advantage.

Attributes:

- **Strong** - Orcs are born strong, naturally on par with a well trained human athlete.
- **Hard to Kill** - Orcs are famously difficult to kill.

- **Family First - Who is your family?** This concept is a central tenet of all orc nations. Orcs are *driven* to advance the interests of their *own* family before the interests of anyone else, including themselves and other *individuals* of a family.

Species: Elves

Dogmatic. Magical. Ancient. An elven kingdom has held world influence for the last fifteen thousand years, but the unified Elven Nations under the Silohain has been in a slow decline for the last four thousand years.

Elves were the first species to “Know with the mind of the Gods” nearly thirty millenia ago and founded the first schools of science, magic, and philosophy. The elven calendar is still the world standard. As elves developed, magic became a central tenet of their societies, and their lifespans began to extend as a result.

In the modern era, this has made it hard for elves to adapt. Elven magic, while still incredibly powerful, is being outmatched by the more useful and less obtuse magics and sciences being exported by Bonethorne Port and the Huxlon Republic.

Attributes:

- **Magically Attuned** - Elves are naturally attuned to magic.
- **Magical Senses** - Elves are able to naturally sense magical energies, perceiving magic in a way similar to a sense of smell.
- **Long Lives** - Elves live a long time (800 years or more), which gives them a level of historical wisdom, but makes it much harder to imagine the *immediate* future.
- **Homeland - Where is your home?** Elves have a *deep* connection to their home, which can have a *literal* effect on an elf's physical and emotional state. For example, studies on elves who have made their home in Bonethorne Port are aging nearly twice as fast as Silohain elves, but they seem to be much more adept at navigating modern societies.

Species: Dwarves

Productive. Generous. Loyal. Evolving from deep within the mountains of the Essian Range, dwarves were largely isolated but maintained a relative peace with their neighbors for twelve thousand years.

Dwarves have a special kinship with the saurian's Huxlon Republic to the south. Saurian medicines and ingenuity help to stop the Firehand Plague, which nearly wiped out the dwarves two thousand years ago.

In the last two centuries, rapidly increasing demands for the rare minerals in the Essian Range have pushed the dwarves onto the world stage, and their expertise in working with stone and earthworks has created a global demand for dwarven professionals.

The Dwarven Compact was formed a hundred years ago as a way for the dwarven clans and their long-time allies, to collectively, and *responsibly*, benefit from the region's *vast* mineral wealth, and the Compact has become one of the fastest developing nations in the world.

Attributes:

- **Short** - Dwarves are usually only about four feet tall, and never taller than five feet.
- **Muscular** - Though shorter, dwarves have a very dense musculature and have the same strength and weight as an average human.
- **Resilient** - Dwarves naturally have the same endurance as a human athlete.
- **Clan Affiliation - What is your Clan?** Dwarves are strongly tied to their clans, and are fiercely loyal. Dwarves from the same clan will always recognize each other and will immediately trust each other.

Species: Halflings

Patient. Diplomatic. Friendly. Halflings are the demi-Fae who were born in the elve's Third Era of Magic ("The Awakening"), eight thousand years ago.

Though there is no major halfling nation, halflings have kept their Fae ancestors from obliterating the world. Halflings have spent thousands of years maintaining peace with the Veil and its nameless and unspeakably powerful denizens. By all accounts, the Fae only tolerate the existence of this world because of their half-cousins.

Halflings care very little for the power or wealth offered by this world, preferring to spend their lives in pursuit of joyful fulfillment. While this has mostly resulted in large communities of halflings living simple lives as farmers, many halflings have become renowned artists and explorers.

Attributes:

- **Short** - Halflings are short, never growing much taller than four feet. This also makes them slightly lighter and weaker than the average human.
- **Grounded** - Halflings are famously calm and composed.
- **Demi-Fae** - Halflings *usually* look like smaller humans, but halflings have a wide range of vestigial physical traits that come from their Fae ancestry. They are also able to sense the presence of other Fae and demi-Fae as a natural intuition.

Species: Goblins

Curious. Ancient. Underestimated. Goblin labor helped to build the First World and the Ancient World, and they were witnesses to every great fall for the last thirty thousand years. Their history is as long as the elves, but goblins have never held any significant power. Instead they have been subjugated by the elves, humans, and orcs several times throughout the species' development.

Goblins have begun to see a renaissance in the last few centuries. While many nations still use goblin labor, modern manufacturing has replaced this need, and many goblins have begun to explore both the world and their history. Most of the key archaeological and historical discoveries in the past century have been made by goblins, as well as monumental achievements in geology and biology.

Attributes:

- **Small** - Goblins are famously small, never exceeding more than three feet. This also makes them much lighter and weaker than the average human.
- **Stubborn Survivors** - Goblins can survive on miniscule amounts of food and water in very extreme conditions.
- **Numerous** - Goblins can be found in *every* corner of the world and some have incredibly large extended families.
- **Extreme Immunities** - Goblins *can* get sick and are weakened by infectious diseases, poisons, and *radiation*, but only *very old* Goblins (60 years or more) actually *die* from these causes. Sadly this has made Goblins a favored target for magical and scientific experimentation.

Species: Saurians

Strange. Respected. Isolated. Before Bonethorne Port, the saurian-controlled *Huxlon Empire* led the world in science. Their ingenuity allowed them to build a thriving civilization hidden by their ancestral swamps in the Southern Expanse.

The species is relatively young, only eight thousand years, but during that time they were able to achieve the same level of scientific and philosophical development as the ancient elves in relative isolation.

The saurians have also had a long-standing alliance with the dwarves. Without dwarven experts and materials, the saurians would not have been able to build their civilization.

In the modern era, the *Huxlon Republic* continues to be a scientific and academic powerhouse, but the Republic has taken several political risks in the last century to increase its political influence, most notably by being the first nation to recognize the sovereignty of Bonethorne Port, and by being the first to sponsor the Dwarven Compact. As a result, the Republic is now the third largest economy in the world, trailing behind the North Kingdom and Bonethorne Port.

Attributes:

- **Abstract Thinker** - Saurians are some of the most coveted thinkers in the world thanks to their unique and unusual brain structure.
- **Reclusive** - Saurians rarely have any cause or desire to *leave* the swamplands of the Southern Expanse, so seeing a saurian anywhere else is *highly* unusual.
- **Amphibious** - Saurians are able to *safely* breath underwater for a little under fifteen minutes and roughly twenty minutes in an *emergency*.

Step 3: Trades and Skills

Trades represent your character's general ability and knowledge, while **Skills** represent their active experience in a specific field. A character with the *Diplomat Trade* knows how to broker a deal, but a character with the *Negotiate Skill* has *actually* helped kingdoms sign deals.

- You get **eight points** to spend on Skill ranks.
- **The rank of the Trade is based on the total value of the Trade's Skills.** If a character has *three Professional Skills* in a Trade, then the rank of the Trade would be *Expert*.
- Your character **can** have *multiple* Trades.

Rank Chart

Ranks	Value	Description
Untrained	0	You have no training beyond <i>fiction</i> and <i>documentaries</i> .
Trained	1	You have worked in the field, but never on your own.
Professional	2	You are able to handle routine challenges without any problem.
Expert	4	You are a leader in the field and others rely on your abilities when there is a disaster.
Veteran	8	You are a pioneer in the field.
Master	16	You are a legend and a leader in this field.

Starting Trade Resources

For each **point** you spend in a **Trade**, pick and describe *one* item from the *Trade Resource* list as one of your character's starting resources.

Trade and Skill List

Trade: Assassin

Stalking and murdering a target without getting caught.

Skills:

- **Murder (Diamond)** - Killing through unconventional means.

- **Escape (Club)** - The ability to escape without being detected.
- **Access (Club)** - The ability to reach a target without being detected.
- **Alertness (Spade)** - Being aware of danger and opportunities.
- **Manipulation (Heart)** - Guiding someone towards a truth, real or imagined.

Trade Resources: Advanced electronics, watch contact, political contact, high-end concealed weapon, safe-house, criminal contact, advanced surveillance tools, advanced security tools.

Trade: Diplomat

The ability to negotiate firm agreements despite cultural and political challenges.

Skills:

- **Negotiate (Heart)** - The ability to create compromise and agreement.
- **Control (Club)** - Being able to maintain confidence and authority.
- **Culture (Spade)** - The ability to hold a dignified and intelligent conversation in several languages.
- **Intelligence (Spade)** - Gathering and analyzing important details and secrets.
- **Motives (Heart)** - Reading and understanding someone's desires and fears.

Trade Resources: Political contact, criminal contact, political favor, profitable investment, academic contact, foreign contact, foreign influence.

Trade: Engineer

The practical application of scientific properties to create complex systems.

Skills:

- **Invention (Club)** - Designing new systems, compounds, and materials.
- **Material (Diamond)** - Working with natural and synthetic compounds.
- **Practical (Spade)** - Repairing and maintaining complex systems.
- **Scientific (Spade)** - An advanced academic understanding of the physical and chemical processes in a system.
- **Supply (Heart)** - Being able to find the components needed for a system, and getting the best price.

Trade Resources: Academic contact, workshop, advanced electronic, laboratory, political contact, advanced tool kit.

Trade: Fixer

The creative application of law and politics in the pursuit of power.

Skills:

- **Back-Channel (Spade)** - Collecting and understanding exploitable secrets.
- **Intimidate (Heart)** - The ability to gain control through fear.
- **Perseverance (Diamond)** - The will to survive no matter the cost.
- **Power (Club)** - Exerting political power for gain.
- **Rule (Heart)** - The ability to gather and maintain control.

Trade Resources: Political contact, criminal contact, political favor, profitable investment, criminal influence, foreign contact, safe-house.

Trade: Medical

Using modern medical techniques and medicines to heal others.

Skills:

- **Diagnosis (Spade)** - Finding the cause of an ailment.
- **EMT (Club)** - Healing trauma in emergency situations.
- **Medicine (Spade)** - The practical application of herbalism and pharmaceuticals.
- **Psychology (Heart)** - Understanding the underlying mental or emotional trauma.
- **Surgery (Diamond)** - The art of healing extreme trauma.

Trade Resources: Trauma kit, advanced medical equipment, advanced pharmaceuticals, medical contact, lab access, university access, hospital access.

Trade: Outlaw

Operating in the shadow side of a kingdom and how to thrive in that darkness.

Skills:

- **Fighting (Club)** - Improvised methods of combat.
- **Respect (Spade)** - The knowledge needed to gain and *keep* power.
- **Muscle (Diamond)** - Physical capability.
- **Hustling (Heart)** - The ability to gather information and resources.
- **Intimidation (Heart)** - Coercion through force.

Trade Resources: Criminal influence, criminal investment, illegal weapon, illegal pharmaceuticals, political contact, foreign contact.

Trade: Ranger

The training needed to survive and live in a hostile environment for extended periods.

Skills:

- **Endurance (Diamond)** - Physical and mental fortitude.
- **Hunting (Club)** - Seeking, stalking and killing a target.
- **Instinct (Heart)** - A sense for finding things out of balance.
- **Survival (Spade)** - Skills for living in harsh environments.
- **Awareness (Spade)** - Paying attention to the environment.

Trade Resources: Survival pack, hunting weapon, advanced survival equipment, cabin in the wild, Fae contact, GPS access.

Trade: Scholar

The art of pursuing and processing new knowledge through methodical research and careful study.

Skills:

- **Secrets (Club)** - Lost and forbidden knowledge.
- **Research (Spade)** - Discovering new knowledge.
- **Genius (Heart)** - Attempting to find solutions from unrelated facts.
- **Foundations (Diamond)** - General knowledge of all academic pursuits.

Trade Resources: University access, academic contact, research grant, political contact, lab access, Fae contact.

Trade: Spy

Gathering information about a target through covert observation, or more aggressive means like bribery, and torture.

Skills:

- **Clandestine (Club)** - The art of keeping secrets and staying undetected.
- **Coercion (Heart)** - Convincing a target to perform a given action.
- **Interrogation (Heart)** - Extracting the truth from a target.
- **Observation (Spade)** - The ability to detect important details.
- **Intelligence (Diamond)** - The ability to discern hidden secrets from collected research and observation.

Trade Resources: Political contact, criminal contact, foreign contact, foreign influence, safe house, advanced electronics, high-level political access, Fae contact, advanced surveillance tools, advanced security tools.

Trade: Thief

The art and craft of stealing through careful and patient observation, followed by complete improvisation when the plan completely falls apart.

Skills:

- **Fast-Talk (Heart)** - The ability to convince through confusion.
- **Fencing (Heart)** - The art of selling illegal products for the best price.
- **Security (Spade)** - The training needed to setup and bypass secure systems.
- **Stealing (Club)** - The art of taking something in secret.
- **Stealth (Diamond)** - Discipline required to be undetectable.

Trade Resources: Political contact, criminal contact, safe house, advanced electronics, advanced surveillance tools, advanced security tools, high-end vehicle.

Trade: Soldier

The tactical knowledge needed to maneuver a battlefield and the combat training needed to win a fight.

Skills:

- **Combat Training (Club)** - The ability to fight and kill in open combat.
- **PT (Diamond)** - Physical training needed to navigate and endure combat.
- **Tactics (Spade)** - Using strategy to subvert and defeat an enemy.
- **Composure (Heart)** - The ability to maintain focus while under fire.
- **Alertness (Spade)** - Being aware of all the dangers and advantages of a location.

Trade Resources: Military contact, military-grade weapon, watch contact, military-grade armor, advanced tactical equipment, illegal explosives, safehouse.

Trade: Watch

The abilities needed to administer the laws and protect order in a city, using force if necessary.

Skills:

- **Authority (Heart)** - Using trust and respect to maintain control.
- **Investigation (Diamond)** - The ability to draw sound conclusions from evidence.
- **Law (Spade)** - The knowledge needed to enforce and apply the law.
- **Special Tactics (Club)** - Close-combat training in urban settings with civilians.
- **Streetwise (Spade)** - Understanding a city, including its secrets and dangers.
- **Vigilance (Diamond)** - Paying careful attention to the details.

Trade Resources: Watch contact, watch-grade weapon, military contact, political contact, watch-grade armor, tactical equipment, watch lab access, safehouse.

Magical School List

Magical Schools function exactly like any other *Trade*, but some have *prerequisites* that you must fulfill, and instead of *Skills*, Magical Schools have *Arcana*.

School: Ritual

The basic practice of reciting a spell and the completion of a rite. The more potent the outcome, the more complex, time-consuming, and dangerous the rite. This is an ancient School that is incredibly common, but it forms the basis for all modern magic.

Arcana

- **Creation (Club)** - Creating and undoing beings and objects.
- **Spellcraft (Spade)** - The ability to craft new spells and rituals.
- **Truth (Heart)** - The rites needed to see objective reality. This Arcana has destroyed countless practitioners, but it is widely employed for precision measurements.
- **Order (Diamond)** - The practice of manipulating natural law.

School Resources: Reagents contact, rare reagents, rites book, academic contact, safehouse, arcana library, university access.

School: Elemental

The ability to channel and embody the primal forces of nature. This art is older than Ritual magic and does not require any rites (though rites exist), but it requires an innate understanding of the energies at work and is *significantly* harder to *control*.

Attribute Prerequisites:

Magically Attuned

Arcana

- **Fire (Club)** - Controlling the transformational properties of fire.
- **Air (Spade)** - Manipulating the air, which surrounds and witnesses all things.
- **Water (Heart)** - Channeling the restorative and destructive elements of water.
- **Earth (Diamond)** - Harnessing the grounding and protective wisdom of the earth.

School Resources: Fae contact, elemental familiar, rites book, academic contact, safehouse, arcana library, university access.

School: Alchemical

The transformation of base materials into exotic compounds through the use of magic. The more powerful effects require the use of extreme rites, but the lesser effects can happen through simple incantations. This is considered one of the *Classical Schools*.

Trade Prerequisites:

Professional Engineer

Arcana

- **Transformation (Club)** - The founding rites of the School, which allows for the creation of new compounds from *base* elements.
- **Analysis (Spade)** - The rites to divine the nature of a compound, like its composition and how it was created.
- **Dissolution (Heart)** - The skill to break compounds down to base components.
- **Blending (Diamond)** - The rites need to combine *complex* compounds into *stable* materials. This does not always create *useful* combinations, but modern *plastics* were created through these rites.

School Resources: Fae contact, academic contact, rare elements, rites book, academic contact, lab access, safehouse, university access.

School: Mechanarcana

This School blends mechanics with alchemy to create incredibly complex systems. The more powerful effects require difficult rites, but lesser effects only need simple incantations. This Art is less than a century old, but it has had a *massive* impact on society.

Attribute Prerequisites:

Abstract Thinker

Trade Prerequisites:

Professional Engineer

Arcana

- **Binding (Diamond)** - This art to create a permanent bond between two objects. This does not create any *new* compounds, and the bond is not always very strong.
- **Machine Nature (Heart)** - This allows the engineer to fully visualize and understand the internal workings of a device.
- **Shaping (Club)** - The ability to shape *stable* materials into intricate shapes of any size. This Art is often used to shape the copper circuits of modern devices.
- **Infusion (Spade)** - Allows the infusion of magical energies into a compound. Most often this is used to create batteries and Anatomancer surgical tools.

School Resources: Workshop, advanced tools, rare elements, rites book, academic contact, lab access, university access, advanced electronics.

School: Divination

This Art allows the wielder to open their minds to visions from other realms. It can be used to peer into parts of our own reality, or even other *existences* and futures. This is an *embodied* school, and requires no rites, but rites do make the casting *safer*.

Attribute Prerequisites:

Magically Attuned, Intuitive

Arcana

- **Precognition (Club)** - The ability to see into *all* possible futures. Often a team of researchers are employed to help narrow the possibilities.
- **Outsider (Spade)** - The training needed to see outside of our realm of existence. This does not grant *comprehension*, just the ability to see.

- **Prophecy (Heart)** - The ability to try to *set* a destiny for a subject. This is most often paired with *Precognition*, since it is easier to set a subject on an *existing* course as opposed to creating an entire *destiny*.
- **Viewing (Diamond)** - This allows a wielder to see into *this* realm of reality, provided they are able to create some *connection* to their location.

School Resources: Rites book, academic contact, safehouse, arcana library, political contact, university access, Fae contact.

School: Anatomancy

A modern School, derived from the art of *Necromancy*, allows for the manipulation of living tissue. This is a highly disciplined school requiring *many* rites, but many *commercial* tools have been developed for these purposes.

Trade Prerequisites:

- *Expert Medicine*

Arcana

- **Mend Flesh (Spade)** - The ability to mend flesh and bone back together, but the caster still needs to understand how the tissue *should* be mended.
- **Sense Blood (Heart)** - This allows the wielder to sense the blood in the patient, and allows them to get a sense of the *state* of the blood, which helps for diagnoses.
- **Shape Flesh (Club)** - This Arcana allows the caster to *reshape* flesh and bone, which is used to heal scars or resolve complications from traditional surgeries.
- **Give Life (Diamond)** - Allows the mage to give some of their own life energies, or the life energies of a willing subject. Many goblins make their living selling their energies to cure rich patients of diseases.

School Resources: Advanced medical equipment, advanced pharmaceuticals, advanced alchemical compounds, medical contact, lab access, university access, hospital access.

Step 4: Basic Resources

In addition to the starting resources from your *Trades*, describe your character's:

- **The income** from their *Trades*.
- **The basic modern conveniences they own** as a part of their *lifestyle*.
- **The basic tools** they have gathered through their *hobbies* or *pursuits*.

Playing the Game

The Deck

You'll need a regular 52-card **Poker deck**, *with both Jokers*.

The Hand

At the beginning of each game, the GM deals *five* cards to each player. **The GM does *not* get a hand.**

Players can never have more than *five* cards in their hand.

The Check

All actions taken by a character are always successful. If the character leaps across a chasm, seduces the traitor, or discovers The Cure, they always *succeed*, unless a *Check* is called.

The GM can call a *Check* whenever the actions of a character have a *significant* impact on the plot. The outcome of the *Check* determines if an action is *successful*.

Step 1: Pick a Skill or Trade

When a *Check* is called the player picks one of their character's *Skill or Trade* that is the most appropriate for the action their character is attempting. This determines the *suit* and helps the GM decide the *difficulty* of the *Check*.

Skills provide a suit to the Check, but only apply to specific situations. The *Fast Talk Skill* will not help a character bypass a lock, but it will help them *lie* and the *suit* of the *Check* is set to *Hearts*.

Trades provide no suit for a Check, but can be applied to many situations. The *Thief Trade* gives a character all the training they need to *steal*, from *lying* to *lockpicking*, but the *Check* will have *no suit*.

Step 2: Determine Difficulty

The GM sets the *Difficulty of the Check*, based on the *rank* of the *Skill or Trade* that the character is using and the *action* the character is attempting to perform.

Difficulty		Target
Routine	A simple action that still requires focus and effort.	1
Hard	An action that is familiar to the character, but still difficult.	2
Severe	An action that the character has only attempted in emergencies.	4
Extreme	An act that has rarely been attempted <i>anywhere</i> .	8
Impossible	A feat that is <i>completely beyond</i> a character's ability.	Joker

The GM can increase or decrease the *Difficulty level* if the character has any *Attributes* that could affect the *Check*.

If the character is at the *Impaired Trauma level*, increase the *Difficulty level* by *one*.

Step 3: Play Cards or Draw

Play Cards

The player can play any number of cards from their hand. To *succeed* they need to play enough cards to *match* or *exceed* the *Target value* of the *Difficulty*.

The value of a card depends on its *type*:

Type	Value
Numbered (2-10)	½
Royals (Jack, King, Queen)	1
Aces	2
Jokers	8

Double the value of the card if it has the *same suit* as the *Check*.

Once the outcome of the *Check* has been determined, discard all of the cards in play.

The Draw

Instead of playing cards from their hand, a player can draw and play *one card* from the deck.

Whether or not a character succeeds, the card is discarded and the game continues.

Impossible Checks

If the difficulty is *Impossible*, the player can only succeed if a *Joker* is played, but they must also narrate *how* their character succeeds. The GM can help the player fit this scene into the story.

Special Checks

GM Checks

The GM is free to call for Checks against their own characters. Since the GM does *not* have a hand, the *success* or *failure* of their characters depend entirely on *The Draw*.

Equipment Checks

If it is *unclear* if a character would reasonably have an essential piece of equipment, the GM can ask for an *equipment* Check. On a *success*, the character finds the equipment they need.

Recovering Cards

The only way to restore lost cards is if a character takes the time to *rest*. The player narrates how their character attempts to rest, and the GM decides how many cards the player can recover.

Rest	Recovery
Pause. Enough time to eat a quick meal, take a few long deep breaths and stretch, or pack and badge a wound.	1 Card
Break. Stopping to have a good meal, take a nap in a hole, or stitch up wounds and allow the painkillers to do their job.	2 Cards
Sleep. The gold standard of rest, but the hardest to find. A deep, full REM sleep, with <i>no interruptions</i> .	4 Cards

The GM can change this amount if the character has any **Attributes** that could affect recovery.

Trauma Levels

Whenever a character is **injured**, the GM decides if the injury is severe enough to increase a character's *Trauma level*, and the number of levels a character gains. *Psychological* damage can also inflict Trauma.

Trauma Levels

Hurt	The character feels the pain, but it is easy to ignore.
Strained	The pain is hard to ignore, but the character can still focus.
Impaired	The trauma is now <i>debilitating</i> . Increase the Difficulty for all Checks by one.
Incapacitated	The character has succumbed to their trauma and is either barely functioning or unconscious .
Crossroads	The character is at a pivotal moment in their story.

If a character is about to suffer **Trauma from an injury**, the player can make *one Check* for each level of Trauma the injury will inflict. **Each success removes one level of Trauma** from the injury.

Crossroads

When a character reaches a *Crossroads*, the player must decide if their character's story is going to continue.

If the player wants to **continue**, they must narrate how the character is able to survive, and the GM creates a *new Attribute* based on the character's injuries.

If the player *does not* want to continue, they must narrate how their character exits the story. This does not have to be a *death scene*, but they are no longer part of the story.

The player *always* gets a choice when deciding a Crossroads, even if an injury is *grievous*. There is **no limit** to the number of Crossroads a character can endure.

Treating Trauma

When a character's injuries are treated, the GM decides how many levels of Trauma are recovered based on the character's *injuries* and the kind of *treatment* they receive.

Characters who are only *Hurt* or *Strained* can recover with some *rest* and *basic aid*.

Impaired or *Incapacitated* characters will need *professional* medical assistance.

Characters who survive their *Crossroads* will require *significant* medical care.

Weapons And Armor

Weapons

Weapons will list the *types* of injuries it can inflict, along with how many Trauma levels each injury causes. The Trauma level is just a baseline and the GM can change this value.

Difficulty Ratings

When a player makes their Checks to reduce the Trauma inflicted by the weapon, this is the baseline *Difficulty* level.

Attribute Modifiers

For hand weapons, a character's Attributes might increase the amount of *Trauma* a weapon inflicts.

Weapon	Injury Type	Difficulty	Trauma
Fists. Still the most popular fallback, especially with orcs and dwarves.	Blunt	Routine	1+Attributes
Combat Knife. The classic.	Cut	Routine	1+Attributes
	Stab	Hard	2+Attributes
Long Sword. The mainstay weapon of the Elven Nations.	Cut	Routine	4+Attributes
	Stab	Hard	4+Attributes
Spear. Also widely used by the Elven Nations.	Blunt	Routine	2+Attributes
	Stab	Severe	5+Attributes
Longbow. Aside from magic, this is the main ranged weapon of the Elven Nations.	Piercing	Severe	4
9mm Pistol. Most civilian pistols.	Gunshot	Hard	4
.45 ACP Pistol. Heavier firepower, but popular in civilian markets.	Gunshot	Severe	3
5.56mm Combat Rifle. The kind of rifles favored by human armies.	Gunshot	Hard	5
7.62mm Combat Rifle. These rifles are favored by the militaries of the Orc Nations, but also by Bonethorne Port.	Gunshot	Severe	5
30.06 Sniper/Hunting Rifle. Used in both civilian and military arenas.	Gunshot	Severe	6
14.7mm Sniper Rifle. An anti-vehicle class of weapon used in many militaries.	Gunshot	Extreme	7
Hand Grenade. Now a common part of military equipment.	Explosive	Extreme	6

Armor

Protection Rating

An armor's **protection rating** is *subtracted* from any Trauma that a character suffers. This is a baseline rating, and the GM might change this rating based on what is attacking the armor and the condition of the armor.

Armor	Protection
Leather. Basic stuff that a lot of survivalists still wear.	1
Half-Plate. Steel chest armor that some orcs still use.	2
Elven Half-Plate. Magically enhanced steel chest armor.	3
Class IIa Kevlar. The kind of protection commonly given to watch members in major cities.	2
Class IIa KevFlex. Magically strengthened Kevlar, which makes it light enough to be woven into plain clothes. Worn by special watch.	2
Combat Armor. Laminate cloth with a light steel plate backing. This is what is used by most militaries due to its low cost and acceptable protection.	2
KevFlex Combat Armor. Heavy KevFlex with ceramic inserts, which is rarely fielded by any military beyond Bonethorne Port and the Huxlon Republic.	5

Feedback

Thanks for picking up this game and taking a look! If you played in one of my playtests then *very extra* special thank you! *Diesel Empire* is in very early development, and I would absolutely love your feedback if you have any, especially if you decide to take this home and play it with your friends as the GM! Please send any feedback to jlee@uptoolategames.com.