Diesel Empire, v11.1.0-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*.

Give your character *two* **Attributes.** You can use our examples or create your own.

Your character can have duplicate Attributes, which does increase its effects.

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 Elven *Silohain*, humans have a significant presence in every kingdom and of all the Gods-touched species, humans are probably the majority, and they are easily the species with the most influence today.

The human ruled *North Kingdom* and the *Southern Kingdoms* have been the center of world power since the *Grand Ascendant Kingdoms* of humans, elves, and orcs defeated the *Fae* nearly 6,000 years ago.

Attributes:

- **Social Dominance** - All major cities in the world 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 industries are controlled by humans, modern devices and equipment are generally designed for humans.

Elves

Dogmatic. Magical. Ancient. Elves were the first species to be Gods-touched more than 200,000 years ago. They founded the first schools of science, magic, and philosophy, and these founding texts still form the fundamentals of modern academia.

Magic became a central tenet of elven societies nearly 100,000 years ago, and which is assumed to be the reason for their extended lifespans. The complete mastery of magic allowed the elves to rule virtually unopposed for 90,000 years, unifying and maintaining order among all of the younger Gods-touched species, until the Fae nearly wiped all civilized societies in the *Ascendancy Wars.*

The Elves still maintain a huge amount of influence as a founder of the Grand Ascendant Kingdoms, and as the stewards of the most powerful magical relics and creatures in the world.

Attributes:

- **Magically Attuned** - Elves are naturally attuned to magic and are able to naturally sense magical energies, perceiving magic in a way similar to a sense of smell. This also makes it easier for elves to cast complex spells as they have an added dimension of control.
- **Long Lives** - Elves live a long time (*500-800* years or *longer*), which gives them a level of historical wisdom, but makes it much harder for elves to manage the *immediate* future.

Orc

Expansive. Powerful. Stubborn. Orcs evolved throughout the plains and steppes of the Eastern Expanse, where they continue to maintain *total* control. They were Gods-touched alongside humans, around 100,000 years ago. Second only to humans, orcs are a major presence in every major kingdom outside the Silohain.

Though orcs helped to defeat the Fae and found the Grand Ascendant Kingdoms, orc Kings were denied *Ascension* by *A'sholk's Prophecy*, and orc kingdoms would eventually leave the Ascendancy.

Civil war and hardened tribalism have kept orc societies from attaining the same level of power as their human and elven counterparts, but orcs as a whole have maintained significant influence and presence in the world.

Attributes:

- **Resilient** - Orcs are famous for their ability to survive.
- **Family First** - 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. **As an orc, who is your family?**

Halflings

Patient. Diplomatic. Friendly. Halflings are the demi-Fae who were born during the Ascendancy Wars, nearly 8,000 years ago.

Though there are no major halfling nations, halflings have kept their Fae ancestors from obliterating the world for thousands of years by maintaining a peace with The Veil and the Fae. By all accounts, the Fae only tolerate the existence of this world because of their half-cousins.

The Fae nature of the halflings means that they care very little for worldly power or wealth, preferring to spend their lives in pursuit of joyful fulfillment as explorers, artists, and teachers.

Attributes:

- **Short** - Halflings are short, never growing much taller than four feet. This also makes them slightly lighter and weaker than the average human.
- **Demi-Fae** - Halflings *usually* look like smaller humans or elves 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.

Dwarves

Productive. Generous. Loyal. Evolving to Gods-touched from deep within the mountains of the *Essian* Range, the dwarves have formed largely isolated, but peaceful societies in the last 12,000 years, even integrating the outcast *Lorrash* and *Koto Harrain* orcs into dwarven societies.

Though dwarves defended themselves from the Fae, their isolated societies kept them from being too deeply involved in the Ascendancy Wars.

Dwarves have a special kinship with saurians, whose medicines and ingenuity helped to stop the Firehand Plague, which nearly wiped out the dwarves 2,000 years ago.

This friendship exists today, as the saurian-founded *Huxlon Republic* was the first world power to recognize the *Dwarven Compact* as a legitimate nation, a move also supported by *Bonethorne Port*, which has allowed the *Compact* to grow into an extremely powerful industrial nation.

Attributes:

- **Resilient** - Dwarves have a strong constitution due to their mountainous roots.
- **Short** - Dwarves are usually only about four feet tall, and never taller than five feet.

- **Muscular** - Though shorter, dwarves have a very *dense* musculature which makes them as strong and as heavy as an average human.
- **Clan Affiliation** - Dwarves are strongly tied to their clans, and are fiercely loyal, and will do what they can to help fellow clan members. **As a dwarf, what is your Clan?**

Saurians

Strange. Respected. Isolated. This species is relatively young, Gods-touched only 80,000 years ago, but during that time saurians have been able to achieve the same level of scientific and philosophical achievements as the ancient elves. For the last two centuries, saurian scientists have been a part of every major technological advancement.

Saurians, like the dwarves, were not badly affected by the Ascendency Wars, which allowed them to create a stable and thriving civilization in the swamps of the Southern Expanse.

The saurians also have a long-standing relationship with the dwarves. After saurian doctors saved the dwarves from the Firehand Plague, dwarven experts and materials helped the saurians raise their empire from swamps and muddy coasts.

While the *Ascendant Kingdoms* of the North Kingdom, Southern Kingdoms, and Silohain are the *de facto* ruling kingdoms, the saurian-founded Huxlon Republic is probably the second *richest* nation on the planet, surpassed only by its ally, *Bonethorne Port*.

Attributes:
- **Abstract Thinker** - Saurians have a unique brain structure and thought process.
- **Cold Blooded** - Saurians require less food to survive (preferring large, infrequent meals), but they also are unable to *naturally* regulate their body temperature and sudden temperature changes can be *harmful*.
- **Amphibious** - Saurians are able to *safely* breath underwater for a little under fifteen minutes and roughly twenty minutes in an *emergency*.

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 200,000 years. Their history is as long as the elves, but goblins have never held any significant power. Instead, they have quietly co-existed in the margins with humans, elves, and orcs, living in peaceful, isolated, communities.

Goblins have begun to see a renaissance in the last few centuries. While many kingdoms still use goblin labor, modern manufacturing has replaced this need, and many goblins have begun to explore both the world and their history.

Several *key* archaeological and scientific discoveries in the past century have been made by goblins, whose infamous stubbornness has driven them further than any other explorer or researcher.

Attributes:
- **Small** - Goblins are small, never exceeding more than three feet. This makes them much lighter, but also much weaker than the average human.
- **Stubborn Survivors** - Goblins can survive on miniscule amounts of food and water in very extreme conditions.
- **Extreme Immunities** - Goblins *can* get sick and are weakened by infectious diseases, poisons, and *radiation*, but only *very old* Goblins (80 years or more) actually *die* from these causes. Sadly this has made Goblins a favored subject for magical and scientific experimentation, both *voluntary* and *involuntary*.

Step 4: Trades and Traits

Trades represent your character's *general* ability and expertise while a Trade's *Traits* describe your character's capabilities in *specific* areas.

You need to pick a *Background* for each of your character's Trades. The *Background* for a Trade simply describes *how* your character developed their abilities and gained their experience.

You get *eight points* to spend on your character's **Trades** and the Trade's **Traits**.

- **Pick *one starting* Trade for *free*. *Additional* Trades cost *one* point each.** Once you have a Trade, you can spend points in its *Traits*.
- **Traits start at rank *zero* and each rank costs *one point*.** You cannot start with **more than *three* ranks** in a Trait.

Trades

The Trades listed below are *not* exhaustive and just act as a general *guideline*. New Trades, Specializations, and Backgrounds can be added to this list, as long as the GM approves.

Scholar

Knowledge, both old and new, has been key to unlocking the modern world. While professors teach advanced skills to thousands of eager students, field scholars do the work of adding to and advancing the boundaries of science, philosophy, and history.

Traits

- **Secret**
- **Knowledge**
- **Applied Research**
- **Culture**

Backgrounds: *University, State-Sponsored, Kings Bound, Independent, Corporate.*

Special Operations

A relatively new field of military training that has become increasingly more important in the post *Grand War* era, where smaller, specialized, units proved to be more effective than entire battalions.

Traits

- **Special Warfare** - Training in unconventional combat methods that emphasize fast strikes against strategic targets.
- **Stealth** - The ability to stay undetected throughout an operation.
- **Intelligence** - The skills needed to both observe and collect tactical data, and to find solutions from tactical data.
- **Coercion** - The art of making very *direct* and *convincing* suggestions.

Backgrounds: *Military, Private Contractor, Special Intelligence Office, Oath Bound.*

Bounty Hunter

This ancient trade has become more important as the Grand Kingdoms have begun to lose their influence to dozens of younger nations and kingdoms. Extra-judicial authorities like bounty hunters are willing to take the risk of crossing borders to drag back fugitives of Kings and states.

Traits

- **Close Combat** - Combat training for extremely close quarters. *Generally* used for defense since bounties usually have to be taken *alive*.
- **Survival** - The ability to survive in harsh environments for a long time.
- **Tracking** - Finding a bounty thorough investigation, observation, and interviews.

- **Conversation** - The ability to ask the *right* question at the *right* time, without scaring or pissing off anyone.

Background: *State Sponsored, Private Contractor, Kings Bound, Honor Written.*

Field Engineer

The world is rapidly modernizing and industrializing and there is an enormous demand for experts who can be on the *ground* to help build and maintain very complex technical systems.

Traits
- **Jury Rig** - Not everything is available in the field, so sometimes you need to improvise.
- **Engineer** - The ability to design and build effective solutions to a problem.
- **Research** - Advanced scientific and technical knowledge.
- **Project Management** - The mundane ability to lead a team, negotiate pricing, and securing supplies, while sticking to a deadline.

Background: *Academics, Military, Corporate, State Sponsored.*

Fixer

Kings and Princes are no longer the sole arbiters of power, and individuals who can creatively wield the law and leverage political capital are rapidly building their influence in the shadows.

Traits
- **Back Channel**
- **Negotiation**
- **Geo-Politics**
- **Manipulation**

Background: *Special Intelligence, Corporate Lobbyist, Independent Contractor.*

Field Medicine

The world has always been deadly, but modern medical techniques and medicines have made it possible to actually survive the dangers of the world without a seasoned Anatomancer or Necromancer.

Traits
- **Emergency Care**
- **Surgery**
- **Pharmaceutical**
- **Pathology**

Background: *Military, State Sponsored, Church Sponsored.*

Ranger

While the world is rapidly modernizing, vast parts of the world are still completely untamed. Old World rangers are still in high demand guiding caravans through the Eastern Expanses and the Northern Orc Ordarhauden.

Traits
- **Hunting**
- **Stealth**
- **Survival**
- **Intuition**

Background: *Freelancer, Military, State Sponsored.*

Soldier

Professional soldiers have become much more prominent in the few decades since the *Grand War*. The art of war is constantly changing now, and only the most dedicated warriors will be able to survive and win the coming wars.

Traits

- **Combat Training**
- **Endurance**
- **Logistics**
- **Tactics**

Background: *Mercenary, Kings Bound, National Military, Militia.*

Spy

In the modern world espionage has become much more important and much more complicated. The Ascendant Kingdoms are now as vulnerable to a well-placed spy as any other kingdom or state, and the most terrifying conflicts today are fought and won through stolen secrets.

Tactics

- **Espionage** - The myriad of skills needed to plan and execute various covert operations ranging from stealing secrets, to infiltration, to sabotage.
- **Evasion** - The ability to stay hidden (usually while in plain sight) and quell any suspicions about your presence.
- **Intelligence** - The knowledge needed to collect and use data to successfully complete an operation.
- **Interrogation** - The art of getting information from other beings through various methods including torture, blackmail, and bribery.

Background: *State, Kings Bound.*

Thief

Eleven *trillion* North Guilders in the global economy. The world is so rich now that it would be a crime *not* to steal. While Guilders are still a popular option, the *newly* wealthy are willing to pay for other *luxuries*, and ambitious corporations are starting to pay for stolen *secrets*.

Traits

- **The Art** - Taking without alerting, which includes lockpicking, pickpocketing, and the craft of bypassing conventional, magical, and electronic security systems.
- **The Escape** - Evading capture, even in the rare cases where things go *right*.
- **The Connection** - Knowing who to phone when you need to get paid, or find out who betrayed you in the last job.
- **The Talk** - Persuading without alerting through half-truths, misdirection, and sometimes just well-dressed *honesty*.

Background: *Street Rat, Corporate Shill, Ex-Spy Narc, Professional.*

Driver

You know how to transport goods with a truck and a lot of moxie. You represent the beating heart of modern capitalism, and while you are likely under paid, you are in high demand.

- **The Road** - A deep understanding of driving, navigation, and handling all the road hazards between you and your destination.
- **Grit** - Fight, survive, improvise, and endure all the unexpected challenges that stand between you and your destination.
- **Street Wisdom** - You know the secrets and inner workings of the cities on your route.
- **The People** - You know all of the right people and the right things to say to make your ride as easy as possible.

Background: *Corporate, Military, State-Sponsored, The King's Road Guild*

Magical Trades

Magical Trades are similar to normal trades, but almost all Magical Trades have *Trade* or *Attribute prerequisites* that must be fulfilled.

Elemental

The ability to channel and embody the primal forces of nature. This is likely the oldest and most primal kind of magic but it requires an innate understanding of the energies at work and is *significantly* harder to *control*.

Attribute Prerequisites: *Magically Attuned*

Traits

- **Conjure** - The rites needed to summon natural elements.
- **Protection** - Spells used to protect a target from natural hazards. Most commonly used to protect explorers from cold or heat, or firefighters from fire.
- **Attunement** - The ability to establish an innate connection with the natural environment, allowing you to perceive the state of an area, along with any disruptions or changes.
- **Manipulation** - The ability to manipulate and shape existing elements.

Background: *Wild, Kings Bound, Academic, State Naturalist*

Alchemical

The manipulation of base materials through the use of magic. Innovations in this art birthed the Industrial Revolution: the first primitive diesel fuels were made by saurian alchemists. Today, alchemists are leading the way in creating new materials, such as plastics, but *stable* components have always been the most lucrative, but also the most *elusive*.

Trade Prerequisite: *Scholar.*

Traits

- **Deconstruction**
- **Distillation**
- **Analysis**
- **Transformation**

Background: *Industrial, Natural, Corporate, Research and Development.*

Mecharcana

This art is less than a century old, but it has had a *massive* impact on society. It is a derivative form of *Alchemy*, drawing from that art's *transformative* rites. While a Mecharanaist is not able to create *new* materials, their ability to shape and bind extremely intricate components has led to the major technological leap in the last few decades.

Attribute Prerequisites: *Abstract Thinker*
Trade Prerequisites: *Engineer*

Traits

- **Shape** - Creating complex forms from existing materials. Shaping is how early researchers developed the first microcircuits.
- **Bind** - Fusing two surfaces together, even if they are made of different materials. This does not always create a very strong bond, but it is permanent.
- **Schematic** - The ability to *visualize*, but not necessarily *understand*, all of the components and materials of an object, even while it is in operation.
- **Imbue** - Allows you to imbue magic effects on an object. Depending on the rite and the materials, the spell may not last for very long.

Background: *Analysis, Shape Material, Weld Materials, Imbue Properties.*

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* art, and generally does not require rites or materials, but rites do make the casting *safer* and significantly more accurate.

Attribute Prerequisites: *Magically Attuned, Intuitive.*

Traits

- **Precognition**
- **Astral Projection**
- **Remote Viewing**
- **Alternate Realities**

Backgrounds:

Anatomancy

A modern School, derived from the art of *Necromancy*, allows for the manipulation of living tissue. This is a highly disciplined and tightly regulated School, and while this school is renowned for tremendous contributions to medical science, rogue Anatomancers are among the most feared criminals on the planet.

Trade Prerequisite: *Field Medicine.*

Traits

- **Transfuse Flesh**
- **Shape Flesh**
- **Read Blood**
- **Mend Flesh**

Background:

Illusionary

This School is derived from the banned *Domination* School, but follows the same principles of mental control and psychic manipulation in order to create convincing illusions. These traits have been heavily blunted to fit the *Higher Orders of Conduct*, but the School is still extremely powerful.

Attribute Prerequisite: *Empathy.*

Traits

- **Vivid Hallucination**
- **Read Thoughts**
- **Illusion**
- **Suggestion**

Background:

Step 5: Starting Point

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

- **Income** from their *Trades*. The average income is *12,000G* per year, but the character probably earns about *24,000G-36,000G* per year for their considerable abilities.
- **Essential possessions** that they have gained as a part of their *lifestyle* and *hobbies*.
- **Friends and family** that still have an impact on their life.

Playing the Game

The Deck

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

The Check

The GM can call for a *Check* whenever the *outcome* of a character's action could have a *significant* impact on the story. A *Check* would be appropriate if the character is trying to lie to *save a life*, but is not needed if they are just lying to get into a *club*.

The GM can also call for a Check if any of the players *Attributes* have an impact on the story. An *honest* character *lying* to get into a club might require a Check.

The GM decides what *action* will be Checked, and the results determine the *outcome*.

The GM can ask for several Checks for a single act, if it is very complicated or risky. A character trying to jump a car over a canyon might need to make *three* Checks: one to get enough speed, one to line up with the ramp, and one to stick the landing.

Step 1: Setup the Check

The GM picks the Trade that the character will use to face the Check and **the player draws *one* card for their hand**. If the GM thinks that there is a relevant *Trait* in the Trade, the player **draws *one* additional** card for *each* rank in the Trait.

The player can try to redraw their hand. If the GM thinks that there is **an *Attribute* that applies to the Check**, **the player can** *discard* their hand and **draw *one* card** for the Attribute, **plus *one* additional card for any *duplicates***.

If there are no Trades or Attributes

If there are no more cards left to draw, shuffle the discard pile to create a **new deck**.

Step 2: Establish the Stakes

The *player* reviews their hand and **picks a *Path***, which determines *how* their character will approach the Check. The player then **narrates the outcome they *want*** based on the chosen **Path** and **Trade**.

Suit	Path
Club	**Daring.** Taking a risk on an extreme solution.

Spade	**Resolve.** Overcoming a challenge through strength and determination.	
Diamond	**Expertise.** Appling skill and experience to accomplish a task.	
Heart	**Influence.** Settling conflict by invoking emotional reactions.	

The player can choose *any* Path, as long as it makes sense in their narration. A character could use *Daring* to tell a lie so *outrageous* that everyone is too *shocked* to verify the truth, or use *Expertise* to *hide* a lie in obscure knowledge, but they could not use *Influence* to convince a *car* to start working.

Step 3: Consequences

The player then plays a card from their hand, and the outcome is determined by the **type** of card played and **whether it matches the *suit* of the chosen Path**:

Off Suit	Matching	Outcome
Pip Card	--	**Failure. The GM narrates the *Consequence* of the chosen Path** that can *partially* or *completely negate* the player's outcome based on the amount of **risk** the character is taking.
Royal Card	Pip Card	**Compromise.** The player's outcome remains **unchanged**, but **the GM narrates the Consequence of the chosen Path** as a **side-effect**. This Consequence **cannot** *negate* the player's outcome, so a successful *lie* is still *believed*, but it might *offend* someone. **If a character is not taking a big risk or they are very prepared**, the GM can decide that this outcome has *no* side-effects.
Ace	Royal Card	**Success.** The player's outcome is **unchanged**.
Joker	Ace or Joker	**Ace.** The player's outcome is **unchanged**, and they have the **option** of **narrating the *Ace* of the chosen Path as a side-effect**.

Trauma affects the outcome. Trauma penalties **worsen** the outcome, so a *minus two* Trauma penalty, will reduce a *Success* to a *Failure*. **Trauma has no effect if an *Ace* or *Joker* is played.**

Once the outcome is resolved, all of the cards on the table and in the player's hand are discarded, and the story continues.

Consequences

Path	Consequences
Daring Resolve	**Danger.** The threats to your character *rise*. This might cause them to lose something important, fall into more peril, or even suffer actual *trauma*, but the effects happen *immediately*, and sometimes without *warning*.
Expertise Influence	**Complications.** A mistake, error, or misunderstanding that creates more *problems*. This might affect your character *immediately*, but some complications take time to become *genuine* threats. **This fault might also be *hidden*:** a loose bolt, unreliable data, secret suspicious, or unknown agendas.

The GM should *write down* any long-term Consequences so that they can be referenced later. **The GM should call a Check** anytime a lingering Consequence becomes significant.

Aces

Path	Aces
Daring	**Lucky.** *One* in a *million*.
Resolve	**Judgement.** A *definitive* act creates an *irreversible* impact.
Expertise	**Mastery.** Something *unique* or *exceptional* is achieved.
Influence	**Impact.** The encounter leaves a *deep* and *lasting* impression.

Magic Checks

Magic Checks use the same rules as *normal* Checks, but there are a few things that can affect *consequences* of a Magic Check.

Magic is the manipulation of the natural order. Spells that go with the natural order tend to be *less risky* to cast. Spells that *heal* wounds are easier to cast than spells that *cause* wounds (flesh wants to stay *intact*), but on the same token, spells that *remove diseases* are more difficult than spells that *cause wounds*, because a broken bone is a *possibility*, but *Stage Four Cancer* does not simply *disappear*.

The higher the risk, the more *dangerous* the Consequences. Most often this results in a corruption of the spell effect, which can have a serious effect on the caster or their environment.

Practitioners shape their magical effects by using well-practiced *rites* or *rituals* to pull energy from *local space-time*, and *alternate realities*. The risks of casting a spell come from *regulating* and *controlling* this energy over a *fixed* amount of time. *Any* effect is possible with *unlimited* casting time, but most mages have to work on a *deadline*.

- **Rites** are the most basic and most common spell casting method. They generally produce the *weakest* effects, but they can produce effects in just a few minutes, or even *seconds*. *Extreme* effects are *possible*, but *riskier*, and the *faster* a mage casts a rite, the *less control* they have over the energies.
- **Rituals** are the *oldest* form of spell casting, and are the easiest and most stable way to cast a spell, but rituals can take *hours, days,* or even *years* to complete. These spells *slowly* draw energy over time, creating an effect that *grows* in strength. The *longer* a ritual is performed, the *lower* the risk, and the more *powerful* the effect.
- **Sacrifices**, either *material* or *living*, are used with rites and rituals to make a spell easier to cast by providing an *instant* source of energy that can be consumed. The effectiveness of a sacrifice is based on its personal *value* to the caster. A raw diamond is a good sacrifice because it is dense, old matter, but a character's *heirloom wedding band* is a more *substantial* sacrifice since it contains a *shaped probability path* and *collapsed alternate realities*.
- **Foci or totems** make a spell *easier* to cast by providing "shortcuts" for the caster, but they are always tied to a single rite, or a set of rites that have extremely *similar* effects. While this limits their use, foci and totems are *reusable*. Foci and totems are often used in conjunction with *simple* rites to ensure consistent and sustainable effects: ER Anatomancers will use *foci* to simply *stabilize* patients, so that they live long enough to survive surgery.

Magic requires *intent* and *devotion*. Mages have to *commit* to a spell ("*The Promise*") before the effect can be shaped. As a result, **the *consequences* from a failed spell *usually* involves *losing control* of the energy driving the spell**, which can result in dangerous side-effects for either the *character or* their immediate *surroundings*, including *other people*. For spells with *limited* effects, this might just result in a loud noise, a terrible smell, or harmless *imperceivable* effects, but failed spells have also *torn reality*, *altered local time*, and driven practitioners to *madness*.

Magical Duration

Spells simply require *concentration* to maintain an effect, so if a character *succeeds* their Check, **they can maintain a spell for as long as they are able to *focus* on the effect**.

If the conditions of a spell change, another Check might be required. While a character could hold on to a spell indefinitely, *consistency* is the key. If the character needs to change their focus or becomes distracted, the player will need to make *another* Check to maintain their spell.

Special Checks
Combat Checks

Violent conflict is handled with a regular Check, though the Consequences will probably be more *immediate*.

If the *order* of combatants needs to be established, **the GM decides the order** based on the *scene* and each character's *capabilities*. **If a player wants to act *earlier***, they can make a *Check* to change their position in a fight.

Contested Checks

If a player wants to make a Check against *another player*, a regular Check is used, but the scene is not considered *fully* resolved until *both* players get a chance to make a Check, and **the GM does narrate any *side-effects*** until *both* players finish their Checks. **Aces** are narrated as part of each character's turn.

The player who requested the Check *initially* goes *first* and , and any timing conflicts are resolved by the GM.

Background Checks

A player can ask to see if their character's *background* can help out their character. This might be calling in favors, getting better equipment, or even finding important contacts.

Equipment Checks

Sometimes the *character* is better qualified than the *player* to pick their equipment. If it is *unclear* if a character has an essential piece of equipment, the player can ask for an *Equipment* Check, which determines if the *character* thought to bring the equipment.

This is a *normal* Check, but any *consequences* from the outcome are narrated as a *flashback*, which *can* have an effect on the *current* scene.

Injuries

Whenever a character is hurt, the GM decides if the wound is severe enough to increase their *Injury* level. *Psychological* damage can *also* inflict Injuries.

Injury Level		Check Penalty
Hurn	The character has minor injuries that are only annoying.	0
Strained	The pain makes it hard to focus, but the character can still function.	-1 Expertise -1 Influence
Impaired	The trauma is now *debilitating*, but the character is still conscious.	-1 All Checks
Incapacitated	The character has succumbed to their trauma and is **barely able to function**.	-2 All Checks
Crossroads	**The character is at a pivotal moment in their story.** They may *not* be **dead**, but they are certainly ***unconscious***.	-

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 being treated, a Check can be made using the Check penalty of the *patient*. If the medical provider *Succeeds* or at least *Compromises*, then **one *level*** of Injury is healed.

If injuries are left *untreated*, the GM can ask for a Check to see if the Injuries get *worse*.

Weapons And Armor

Weapons

Strength **is the number of injury levels a character suffers if they are hit with this weapon.** The GM can change this value depending on the situation: *glancing* hits should be *less* severe.

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

Weapon	Strength
Fists. Still the most popular fallback, especially with orcs and dwarves.	0+Attributes
Combat Knife. The classic.	1+Attributes
Long Sword. The mainstay weapon of the Silohain.	2+Attributes
Spear. Also widely used by the Silohain.	3
Longbow. Aside from magic, this is the main ranged weapon of the Silohain.	3
9mm Pistol. Most civilian pistols.	2
.45 ACP Pistol. Heavier firepower, but sometimes harder to manage. Very popular in civilian markets.	3
5.56mm Combat Rifle. The kind of rifles favored by armies of the Ascendancy.	3
7.62mm Combat Rifle. These heavier rifles are favored by the militaries of the orc nations, but also by Bonethorne Port and the Dwarven Compact.	4
30.06 Sniper/Hunting Rifle. Used in both civilian and military arenas.	4
14.7mm Sniper Rifle. An anti-vehicle class of weapon used in many militaries.	5
Hand Grenade. Now a common part of military equipment.	5

Armor

Strength reduces **the amount of injury the character is about to suffer.** If the **weapon Strength** *matches* or *surpasses* armor Strength, then **subtract *one*** from the Strength of the armor.

Armor	Strength
Ballistic Leather. Synthetically strengthened leather that a lot of survivalists wear.	1
Half-Plate. Steel chest armor that some kingdoms still field.	2
Elven Half-Plate. Magically enhanced steel armor which is as light as aluminum.	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 members.	2
Combat Armor. Stiff laminate cloth with a steel plate backing. This is what is used by most militaries due to its low cost.	3
KevFlex Infantry Armor. Light and flexible KevFlex with ceramic inserts, which is rarely fielded by any military beyond Bonethorne Port and the Huxlon Republic.	3
KevFlex Combat Armor. Heavy KevFlex with ceramic inserts, which is rarely fielded even by Bonethorne Port and the Huxlon Republic due to its weight and cost.	4

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**.