

A playing card-based role playing game (RPG) system.

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Introduction

These are the instructions for a new version of an old game. The idea was to create a Role Playing Game (RPG) with as few necessary supplies/pieces (fewer things to buy and carry with you). The game is much more simple than most RPGs, requiring no Dungeon Master (DM), and only **2 decks of cards, these instructions, pencil and paper, and a placeholder for each character**. While these instructions may seem long for players new to RPG systems, they are significantly shorter than the instructions for most RPGs - some of which are printed in numerous 100+ page volumes.

Many of the ideas in this game are **intentionally generic** to allow for expansion and alteration. In fact, this manual is published under a Creative Commons license (see License below) so that anyone can copy and modify the rules to fit their needs. All I ask is that you share it with others (and give credit to those that came before you).

If you have an idea for an alternate rule or a completely different theme: try it out, write it down, and share it! New abilities, items, quirks, and more are always welcome.

What you will need

Here's the great part, all you need is two standard playing card decks (52 cards each, no jokers) - well, that's not exactly true, you will also need some paper and a pencil (trust me, don't use pen), these instructions, and something to mark where your characters are (small figures, or maybe a few coins or stones). If you wish, you can use some pennies to mark where chests are, or certain other items, etc. While the game is complex, it is intended to be played just about anywhere with minimal supplies.

Time

If this is your first time playing you will need some time to get used to the rules (although players who have played any common table-top RPG should take little time to figure things out). Character creation can take anywhere **from 5 to 30 minutes** depending on how involved and creative you get (and we recommend spending a lot of time here). Each game session will take anywhere from **one to two hours**, with each room varying in length greatly.

License

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General Mechanics

Since the focus of this game is to be able to be played with just 2 decks of cards, pencil and paper, and a placeholder for your character(s) there are some changes to traditional game mechanics. For example, instead of using dice - as many RPGs do - the game uses an **Action Deck** of all 52 cards which will be flipped – we'll refer to this simply as “**Flipping**” in many places in the instructions (although if you wish to use D13 dice, go ahead, but that will change the odds). For non-player characters (NPCs) most actions will be decided by the characters attributes and/or Flipping.

This game is intended for 2 to 6 players, but it could easily be played solo (or by one person playing as multiple characters) - or by 7 or 8 people (although you may need a third deck).

Setting Up the Decks

In order to set up the decks to play, choose a deck and remove all face cards from it, putting them in a separate pile; this side pile of face cards will be your **Enemy Deck**. The remainder of the numbered cards from this first deck will be your **Room Deck**. The other (still complete) deck of cards will be your **Action Deck**. So to recap, you should have three decks: a 12-card “Enemy” deck with just face cards, a 40-card “Room” deck (no face cards), and a 52-card “Action” deck.

Shuffling

For the most part these instructions will tell you when to shuffle, but here are those times: shuffle all decks at the start of a game session. Shuffle both the Enemy and Room decks before laying out any room (and in between rooms). Shuffle the Action deck when it gets low (about ¼ remaining is a good point).

Card Values

In general, card values for each deck will be the amount shown on the card. Of course, for face cards and Aces this changes. **Aces always have a value of 1**. Face cards have no specific value in the Enemy deck (see the Enemies table later in this document), but in the Action deck they will typically have values of **11 for Jacks, 12 for Queens, and 13 for Kings** – any deviations will be pointed out.

Mathematical Equations

Any time you are required to calculate something and you come up with a fraction, **you always round down**, no matter what the case may be. For example, the calculation for how many spots a character can move is the **Ability Level (aLv)** for Move divided by 4 plus one. If your level for Move was 7, this calculation would be:

$$\text{Movement} = (7 / 4) + 1 = 2.75$$

...which would be rounded down to 2.

Creating a Character

As with most Role Playing Games (RPGs), you will be creating the character that you play with. This character will be unique to you, and will “live on” past the end of any one game session - that is, you will use this same character each time you play, improving their skills and building them up. Of course, you can always create a new character and start over, or play as more than one!

There is a Character Sheet later in this document that you can use to record all of your information -

we recommend that you use a pencil as many things on it will change often!

When creating your character it will be important to note that the actions your character takes in the game are based almost entirely on **Abilities** which you gain through this creation process (and through Leveling Up during the course of the game). You should refer to the Abilities table later in this document when creating your character so that you can make informed decisions.

Step 1: Choose a Race

Each race will have certain abilities that they are better at, and some that they are not so good at. There may also be special abilities available only to certain races. You will want to choose your race keeping in mind what type of character you want to be (for example, a strong warrior versus a powerful wizard).

See the **Race Core Ability Levels** table in your scenario document to see all of the options.

Your race may grant you some additional abilities, be sure to add those to your character sheet! Note that the ability prerequisites do not apply to abilities gained automatically from your race!

Step 2: Choose a Class

Your class indicates what focus your character has taken in life - have they studied the martial arts, or focused on magic? Are they athletic? Are they a leader? Choosing your class will help define what abilities you are good at (similar to your race).

See the **Class Core Ability Levels** table in your scenario to see all of the options.

Your class may grant you some additional abilities, be sure to add those to your character sheet! Note that the ability prerequisites do not apply to abilities gained automatically from your class!

Step 3: Add up Core Ability Points

All core abilities start at 1 point.

After selecting your race and class you can determine your starting values for all **Core abilities** (Lift, Think, Balance, Move, and Lead). Add or subtract the values based on your race and class. You may have some abilities that have a negative value, but you should change all of these to **one** after you finish tallying things up. In other words, **the minimum value for any ability is one (1)**.

Step 4: Choose a Quirk

This step is **optional, but highly recommended!**

This step allows you a lot of freedom: develop a short backstory for your character - where did they come from? Why are they here? Then think of some quirk that they have, maybe they are terrified of the dark, or have a peg leg. Perhaps they were raised by wolves. You can go completely wild here.

In any case, once you have thought of their quirk, you need to work it into the game mechanics. There is a table later in this document of some Example Quirk Effects that you can use, but it's more likely that you will want to create your own. Be creative and think about how your character would really behave. For example, the penalty for a quirk could be that your character is extremely friendly (or naive) and must approach each enemy before they are willing to attack them. The bonus for that quirk may be that your character gets a -3 target for any defensive ability while adjacent to an enemy.

Note that any quirk must have both a bonus AND a penalty within the game mechanics!

Step 5: Draw for Ability Bonuses

Now that you have your base character, you need to specify how good they are in certain abilities. This step adds some uniqueness and randomness to your character's abilities, and can give you a big boost in certain areas. For each character, flip over the top 3 Action cards, look at the values and use the middle value, this is how many points you get to add to your core abilities. You can split these points in any way you like, adding some to each core ability or putting them all in one ability.

For example, you might flip over a 2, a 5, and a 6. You get to add 5 points to your core abilities.

If you draw two cards that are the same (and one different), then the value you get is the duplicate one. If you **draw three cards that are the same**, then lucky you, you get that value plus 2!

Step 6: Add an Ability

In addition to any abilities you gain from your race or class, each player may then pick **one additional ability** for their character. You can choose one from the **Abilities** table in your scenario, or make one up – just make sure that it fits in the game mechanics!

*Note that you **MUST** meet the prerequisites for any ability gained at this step!*

Step 7: Determine Other Attributes

At this point you are ready to calculate your characters maximum Hit Points (max HP) and their starting Movement speed (you'll see how to use these values later). To do so, simple use the following formulas, replacing the ability names with their level:

Max HP = Lift x Think + 3

Movement = (Move / 4) + 1

Initiative = Move + (Lead x 2)

Lastly, don't forget to give your character a name!

Setting Up a Session

Each time you play the game you will need to select a quest and an environment to play in. This step is only done once per game session and is done after Character Creation (or first if you are using characters from a previous game session).

Choose a Quest

The first step to setting up your game session is to choose a quest for your character(s). You can either select one specifically, or you can choose one at random. If using a random selection, flip a card from the Action deck: A-3 = Big Boss, 4-6 = Survival, 7-9 = Trapped, 10-12 = Treasure Hunt. On a king (13), flip another card to determine the quest and you get to start the quest with one extra item (see **Before You Start** below). Note that you can only get *one* extra item, if the next card is also a king, simply flip another card.

There are a limited number of pre-defined quests you can embark upon, but take some time to customize them with a little personal flair! Remember, the idea is to have fun, so make the quest something interesting (versus the somewhat generic terms used below). You can always make up a new quest idea!

Category	Generic Description	Notes
Treasure Hunt	Ooooh, shiny. Remember that special thing the princess always asked for? Well, we know it's in a chest around here somewhere. Find it for her!	Keep track of how many rooms you go through. An Ace in a room is a special chest and an enemy is always defending it (so draw one for this spot). After successfully opening the chest (just like normal), you must see if your item is in it: draw one card from the Action deck, if the card is 6 or lower this item is a fake and your quest continues (find the next special chest). Once you find the shiny item, you need to go back through the same number of rooms (minus 1 for the one you are in) to get out! Don't forget that ONE of you has to survive with the item!
		BONUS: After completing, each character receives an Adrenaline Boost item to add to their inventory for use on the next game session and 5 x Level experience.
Trapped	We're trapped, and the only way out is to collect a pair of hidden keys somewhere in the area. When you see a key, grab it and hold on, you'll need it to escape.	You need to collect two keys in order to complete the quest, find a room with an Ace (a key); go to the spot with the Ace to collect it (add it to your inventory), this is a free action. Once TWO keys are collected, the next room will be the last room. Both keys are required to exit this room. That is, both keys must be at the exit spot at the same time, if a player with a key dies, another player may collect the key from the spot the dead player is on. You do not need to kill all enemies.
		BONUS: After completing, each character receives +3 Levels in Move and 5 x Level experience points.
Survival	There are enemies everywhere, and you have to defeat them all! Hold out as long as you can.	Flip a card from the Room deck to determine number of rooms: $\# \text{ Rooms} = (14 - \text{Flip}) / 2$ (Rounded down) For this quest, the exit of each room will be barricaded until all enemies in the room are defeated (and the room is completely revealed).
		BONUS: After completing, each character receives +3 Levels in

		Lift and 5 x Level experience points.
Big Boss	Uh oh, they look tough. You'll need to defeat two bosses (one minor and one major) in order to make it through this ordeal.	<p>An Ace in a room is a Boss, the first to appear is a Minor Boss, the second is the Major Boss. Minor Bosses are simply a regular enemy (Flip from the Enemy deck) with all suit bonuses for that enemy type (see Enemies).</p> <p>The Major Boss is tough (high HP), uses a ranged attack when farther than away and a melee attack within the same spot. All damage is pretty high. They can also heal, move, and possibly use other abilities. Check your scenario to see what they can do specifically.</p> <p>When the Major Boss is revealed do not turn over any other enemies (and existing enemies will flee immediately).</p> <p>You must defeat both Bosses, but you can run from either (when you leave the room they regain full strength). If you run, the next Ace you see is the boss you ran from.</p> <p>The quest is completed as soon as the Major Boss is defeated (no need to exit the room).</p> <p>BONUS: After completing, each character gains +1 Level in any attacking ability; +1 Level in any defending or healing ability; and 5 x Level experience points.</p>

- In all cases above, the Level used in bonuses is the final character level after all experience outside of the bonus has been applied.
- For the Boss Quest, the Level used in attacks is always the Average Player Level.

Choose the Environment

The next step in setting up your playing session is to choose the environment you will be completing this quest in. Again, while there may seem to be a limited number of choices, you should be creative and make a story out of your game. That is the essence of the Role Playing Game (RPG). Each playing session will either take place **inside or outside**, these are the only two options. Consider personalizing the quest by saying that it takes place in an enemy castle or a river valley.

Your scenario may specify whether the session takes place indoors or outdoors, but if you want to randomize it you can. To randomly determine the setting for your quest, **flip the top card from the Room deck**: red means outside, black means inside.

The difference between interior quests and exterior is the lighting conditions. For interior campaigns each room may or may not be lit - and thus you may or may not be able to see the enemies and other things in the room beyond the spot you are on. See the section on **Room/Space Layout** to learn how this is decided.

Exterior environments will either be light or dark depending on whether it is day time or night time - and there is a **day/night cycle** which determines this. At the beginning of the quest you must flip a card from the top of the Room deck: a red card means you will start at day break, a black card will indicate starting at night. Each day (or night) lasts for 1 space, thus upon entering the second space the day/night cycle flips - that is, if it was day, it becomes night. Repeat this process for each additional exterior space you enter.

Before You Start

Stamina

Now that the session is set up, each player should be dealt 5 cards **face down** from the Action deck to

fill their **Stamina** – **players may NOT look at these cards!** Players can use these cards when they feel they need to excel at a particular action that requires a target to be hit. Think of this pile as the amount of extra energy your character has to perform certain actions – and it can easily run out. You can read about using Stamina cards to attack, defend, and perform other actions in the various sections later in this document.

You can receive more Stamina cards in two ways:

- After exiting any space (room or exterior area), each player may draw one Stamina card.
- Use an item (or ability if there is one) which allows you to draw a Stamina card.
- Do nothing on a turn – no attacks, no defending, no aiming, no items... nothing. If you do nothing, you can draw one Stamina card.

In all cases, when drawing a Stamina card, the player should draw it from the Action deck and add it to the **bottom** of their Stamina pile.

Note that you can only have a **maximum of 5 Stamina cards** in your pile, unless you have an ability that says otherwise – do not draw past this, even if something tells you to draw another card.

Starting Items

In addition to any items left over in your inventory from the previous game session, when a party starts out on a quest each player will be given **two items** to help them out. Each player should flip two cards from the Action deck to determine their first starting item. In addition, each player will receive one **healing item** - this should be whatever the lowest level healing item is (not a full HP restore or revive-from-death potion).

Each P52 scenario will have its own starting item table, **this is just a guide** for those scenarios.

Card Sum	Item
2-5	Mildly useful item, maybe a torch?
6-10	Reasonably useful item, maybe a lock pick or two?
11-15	Good item, maybe some armor or a weapon?
16-19	Very useful item, maybe something magical?
20-23	Rare and useful item, maybe something to restore a <i>lot</i> of health?
25-26	Player may choose any one of the items above, then draws again for another item. <i>Note that this only works once, stop at three items total!</i>

You can read about these and other items in the **Chest Items** table within the scenario.

Playing a Session

This section will describe the rules for general play, but remember, this is a Role Playing Game, and you can always get creative!

General Steps

This section is intended to give you an overview of the flow of the game. Refer to the sections below for more detailed instructions.

After completing the pre-play setup (see **Session Setup** above) your party will set out on their quest. The general steps are these:

1. Shuffle Room and Enemy decks (separately)
2. Determine the size and details of the next room
3. Lay out the room
4. Enter the room and make your way through it defeating enemies and gathering items (eventually getting to the exit)
5. Exit the room and determine experience (and level up if necessary)
6. Repeat all steps until the quest is complete or all players are dead

The playing session ends either when your quest has been completed or all party members (characters) are defeated. After finishing a quest, you should sort out any remaining experience or bonuses from the quest and do any necessary leveling up (see Leveling Up later in this document).

Using a Session Log

When you start a new game session you may want to consider using a session log to track what happens. There is a Session Log example sheet toward the end of this document that you can use, or create your own with all of the information you need. The idea is to track the quest being undertaken, the location, the players, and what happens. Most often this means what enemies you encounter and how they are dealt with. Doing this will help when assessing experience points after each room (and at the end of the session).

Room/Space Layout

To begin a new room (or “space” for exterior quests) start by flipping over the top two or three cards of your Room deck (3 cards for 4+ characters) and add the values together. Make sure you have shuffled since the previous room! The sum of the values determines the number of “spots” in the room (each spot is a card and represents a small area of the space). **If this is an interior quest**, flip another card to determine if the room is lit or not: red means it is lit, black means the room is pitch black. **If this is an exterior quest** the space is lit during the day and dark at night (be sure to keep track of your day/night cycle).

Now take the Room deck and lay cards from it **face down** beginning in front of your player pieces; the first card you lay down will be where your characters will start (in other words you may choose where you will enter the room). Lay down as many cards as were determined above – you can configure

them in any pattern you like, but they must all be connected (no diagonal connections, and no “islands”). All of the cards should be oriented in the same manner, and should be laid out so the edges all match. In other words, you cannot put a card half way between two other cards. Look at the **Example Layouts** further down to see what this looks like.

You should rotate who lays out each room, and they get the final say!

Determining the Exit

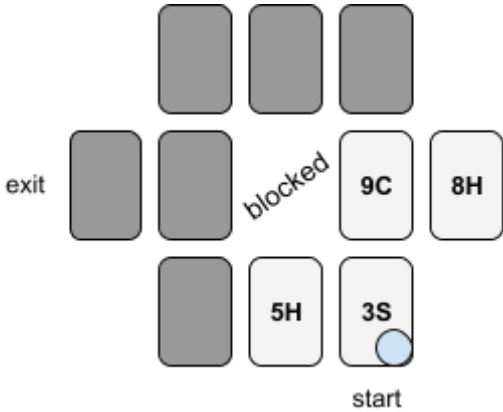
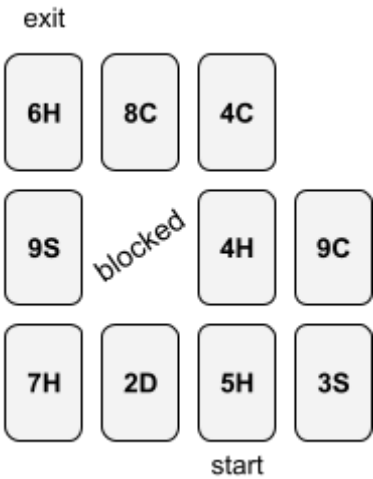
The exit for any room is determined by first flipping another card from your Room deck: a 2-4 indicates the exit is to the left of the starting side, a 5-7 indicates it is across from the starting side, and a 8-10 indicates it is to the right of the starting side. The actual exit spot (think: where the door is) will be the furthest card away from the starting spot – or furthest to the left of the start if the exit is across from the entrance.

If you flip an Ace the exit is barricaded and you must defeat all enemies in the room before the door/path will open (at which point you may exit that way and proceed as usual). This means you must **reveal the entire room** before the exit will open.

Note that you may want to mark the entrance and exit in each room, perhaps with coins?

Example Layouts

Here are two possible layouts for reference:

Example 1	Example 2
Dark room; exit card flip was a 3; player is on 3S	All revealed (end of room); exit card flip was a 7
	

Note that the layout does not need to be symmetrical, but all cards must be connected!

Revealing the Room

If the room/space is lit, characters can see farther into the area. If the room/space is **not lit**, then it is pitch black, and characters can only see the spots directly around them.

When a player moves to a new spot, (a face down card) then will always be able to see that spot, so you should turn the layout card over to reveal what is there. You can read about how players move in the **Player Movement** section below.

If the space is lit, then when a new spot is revealed, any spot in that character's line of sight **within 2 spots** is also revealed. This includes diagonal spots, but within 2 moves.

If the space is not lit, then when a new spot is revealed, only the spot that character is on and spots one move away are revealed. This does NOT include diagonal spots.

Here are two examples:

Example 1 A lit room; character moves from 7H to 6D	Example 2 A dark room; character moves from 7H to 6D

Note that “blocked” spots stop your line of sight!

Any time a spot is revealed you need to determine what each spot is. Use the **Room/Space Layout** table below to find the card and then take the appropriate action below:

- For **enemy spots**, turn over the top card from the Enemy deck and place it on the spot. Remember that the enemy may be able to move, so do not replace the card on that spot, but instead place the enemy card on top of the spot. You may want to **record the enemy in your Session Log**. See the Enemies table for more information.
- For **multi-enemy spots**, use the same directions as above, but flip over multiple enemy cards (they will all start on the same spot).
- *If you are in danger of running out of enemy cards, place any multi-enemy spots first. If you do run out of enemy cards then there are no more enemies in that room... lucky you!*
- For **item chests** you do not need to do anything special, but remember that the chest can only be opened once, thus after the item is retrieved - or destroyed - the spot is simply empty. You may want to mark unopened chests with a coin?

Lastly, note that any spot not taken up by a card (that is, anywhere that you have **not** placed a card in the layout) is considered impenetrable and visually impairing. In other words, you can't see through those areas and you can't attack through those areas. In the example layouts above the "blocked" area is an example of this. That area is completely blocked, thus any enemy on the "6H" spot cannot *attack* any player on the "5H" spot - and vice versa, but note that the enemy *does know you are there*, and will still move to get you. See the **Line of Sight** section later for more on how and when you can see and attack.

Room/Space Layout

When revealing any spot in the space, use the table below to determine what lies on that spot.

All Aces, twos, and threes are specified in your particular scenario!

Card #	Suit	Effect	Card #	Suit	Effect
4	All	Hidden Spot [†]	9	Spade Club	Trap *
5	All	Obstructed **	9	Diamond Heart	Enemy
6	All	Normal Path	10	Diamond Heart	Normal Path
7	All	Chest	10	Club	Enemy for 4+ players
8	All	Enemy	10	Spade	Enemy (Double for 4+ players)

* Any time a player moves onto a spot with a trap, they must flip to avoid the effects (damage). If they flip lower than their target, they take 2 damage (cannot be defended). The target is: 13 - (Balance + Move)
Note that triggering a trap *does not disable it*. Thus any other players must also perform this check. Enemies are immune to the traps.

** When traveling through an "Obstructed" spot a player or enemy must use 2 movement actions. For players or enemies with a movement of 1, this spot takes two turns.

† When on "Hidden" spots, an enemy can only see you if they are also on the spot (thus no attacks from any range). Ranged attacks made *from* this spot (by a player or enemy) cannot be countered, but can be defended.

Entering a Room

Once the layout of the room (or "space" if exterior) is complete, move your entire party onto the starting spot - you do not all have to move together, but you all must start together in any room.

Initiative

If there are any visible enemies (that is, any that are on lit spots), Flip a card from your Action deck to see if either party gets the drop on the other. **On an Ace, all enemies will go first** – in initiative order – before any player; then play continues in initiative order from the highest value down. **On a King all players will go first** in initiative order before any enemy; then play continues as usual in initiative order from the highest value down. On any other card, play begins with the highest initiative character (player or enemy) and on down in initiative order.

For dark rooms/spaces, if there are no visible enemies, the players may move freely until one appears. When a player moves onto a spot which reveals an enemy (see **Player Movement** below), the player should flip an Action card; on a **3 or less** the enemy will take their turn next, then play will continue in initiative order (which may mean that enemy gets another turn very soon).

On Your Turn

There are a few different things you can do on your turn, but in general you can only do one of those things on any one turn (there are some exceptions). On any turn you may also choose to do nothing (basically passing your turn to the next player or enemy) – this will gain you one Stamina card.

You may also choose to **wait one turn** before taking your turn (thus allowing another player, or even an enemy, to go before you) – note that you can do this as many times as you want, but if your turn comes around again you do not receive an extra turn, your previous turn simply ends (and you get no bonus Stamina card).

Player Movement

Possibly the simplest thing you can do is move your character within the room. Check your "Movement" skill on your character sheet to see how many spots you can move. You cannot move diagonally, but otherwise you are free to move in any direction. An individual character may not leave the room - see **Leaving a Room** below for information on how that happens. Players do not have to go their entire Movement amount on any turn (so if you have a movement of 3, you can choose to go 1 or 2 spots).

Revealing Dark Spaces

As you move through a dark space you will reveal more of the spots. Any time you move to a new spot, flip over any face-down spot cards based on the light in the room. You can read more about **Revealing the Room** above.

Passing Attacks

If you move into a spot with an enemy and then attempt to move out of the spot *on the same turn* then the enemy will get a chance to attack you as you run past – regardless of their initiative. This attack behaves exactly like a normal attack (see Enemy Attacking below) except that the enemy has a +1 to their target (you are harder to hit). If the enemy attack flip is a king, you must stop on the spot – regardless of what damage (if any) you have taken; otherwise you can defend, take whatever damage is dealt, and then continue moving. Note that a player may counter attack, but if they do so they must stop on that space for the remainder of that turn.

Player Attacking

Choose the ability you wish to use and an enemy to target, then flip a card from the Action deck to determine the attack's effectiveness (in other words: did you hit the enemy). The enemy then gets a defense (in some cases), which is determined by another flip of the Action deck. If your total is higher than the enemy's defense, then you deal damage.

For example, if you choose to use the "Knife" ability and have a level of 2 in that ability, then you would choose an enemy on your spot (it is not a ranged attack) and flip a card - lets say you flipped a 10. Since the 10 is over the target for the Knife ability ($9 - aLv(2) = 7$) you will succeed in hitting the enemy. Now the enemy has a chance to defend. Let's say you flip a 6 for the enemy, this is lower than your total of 10, thus the enemy will take damage.

The damage as indicated by the Abilities table will be:

$(\text{your level in Balance} / 2) + (\text{amount Over target} \times 2)$

which would become:

$(7 / 2) + (3 \times 2) = 9$ (assuming your level in Balance was 7)

Note that all division is rounded down, so $7 / 2$ is 3.

Enemy Items

When an enemy is defeated, they may drop a random item. To see if they have, flip a card from the Action deck, **if it is a face card**, they have dropped an item! You will need to move to the spot the enemy was killed on to collect the item. Determine what type of item you have by the same method you would with a chest. (See the **Opening Chests** section below for information on how to do so.)

Using Stamina

If this particular attack is very important to get right, you can **play a Stamina card from your pile** in order to increase your total (thus increasing your chance to hit and your Over value). However, **you must choose to play a Stamina card before flipping for your attack!** Note that you do not get to "pick" your Stamina card, just flip over the top card.

Power Attacks

If you are lucky enough to flip a King on your attack then you will **deal double damage** should your enemy fail in their defense, but only if you actually deal some damage (in other words, if the damage is zero, this will not add to it).

Counter Attacks

Should you flip an Ace on your attack flip (regardless of your target and/or Stamina flip or lack of one) you will **fail at your attack and the enemy will get a counter attack right away**. This works just like a regular attack, and you may defend against it.

Enemy Defending

An enemy will always try to defend an attack unless their specific character cannot defend the specific type of attack (or not at that time for some reason). This is represented as a simple opposing flip (described above) to your attack flip plus any modifiers or Stamina. If the opposed flip is higher than your attack, no damage is dealt. **If the two numbers are equal, then only half damage is dealt.**

For example, if you use a Stamina card that has a value of 4 and flip an 6 for your attack, then your total is 10. In order for an enemy to defend against this attack (and thus receive no damage), they must flip a Jack or better (Jack = 11, Queen = 12, King = 13).

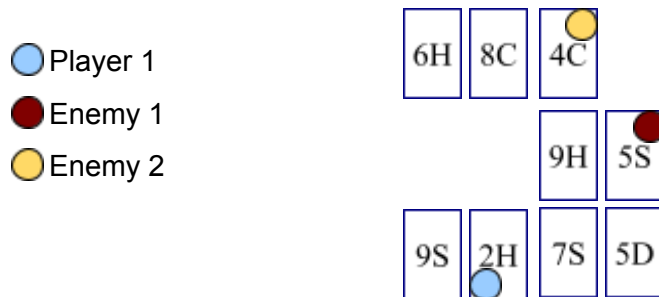
Attack/Item Range

Any time that an ability, weapon, or item indicates it is a Ranged attack (or for anything else with a "Range" attribute) there will be a number associated with it. A Range of 0 indicates that the ability (or item) can only be used on the same spot the player (or enemy) is located. A Range of 1 indicates that the ability (or item) can be used on the player's spot and one adjacent - note that a **diagonal spot is not adjacent** for attacking and item usage purposes. A Range of 2 goes one spot further and so forth.

Line of Sight

When using a ranged attack (i.e. a bow) the player must have a "line of sight" to the enemy. This line includes diagonal directions - but note the section above regarding Attack/Item Range calculations for the actual attack. In general this rule means that an enemy across a gap in the room cannot be attacked by the player on the other side (and vice versa).

In the example below, Player 1 can attack Enemy 1, but not Enemy 2 - and the other way around, Enemy 1 could attack Player 1, but Enemy 2 cannot. Note that although they cannot attack you, the Enemies do know you are there (unless you are stealthy somehow), and will move to find you.



Aiming

You may choose to wait a turn and aim at (or concentrate on) an enemy instead. Doing so will add a +1 to your hit Flip for your next attack. You may aim for as many turns as you like, but only for a **maximum potential bonus of +3**. You cannot take any other actions to maintain the bonus - in other words, you cannot aim, then move, then attack and still receive the bonus. Nor can you defend against other attacks (if you want to maintain the bonus). And if you are hit by any attack your bonus will reset.

As soon as you attack an enemy, the bonus resets. Also note that you must indicate which enemy you are aiming at beforehand, and while enemy movement does not change your aim, you cannot transfer this bonus to another enemy or action (but your bonus does still apply if the enemy moves). This bonus may be used on counter-attacks, but only on the enemy you were aiming at.

Defensive Stance

While you may defend any attack separately (see **Player Defending** below), you can also choose to take a defensive stance during your turn. Doing so will add a +1 to your ability to defend on the next turn. You can take this stance as long as you like for a **maximum potential bonus of +3**. You cannot take any other actions on your turn to maintain the bonus; however, if you successfully defend an attack while using this bonus you may continue to take your defensive stance and maintain your bonus. As soon as you take any other action your bonus is lost.

If you are hit while taking a defensive stance - and you fail to defend against it or choose not to defend - then your bonus will reset.

Using an Item or Opening a Chest

You may use any item in your inventory on your turn - whether on yourself or another player. See the **Chests and Items** section below for specifics. Most items may be used at any time during your turn, although some items may restrict this. Attempting to open a chest also consumes your turn (see **Opening Chests** below).

Note that **trading items among players is a free action and does not consume your turn**, but it can only be done on your turn (before any other action) and only while the two players are on the same spot. In other words, if player 1 and player 2 are on the same spot, player 1 could trade as many items as they like with player 2, then move on the same turn. However, player 1 could not move onto the same spot as player 2 and then trade items that same turn.

On Enemies Turn

Determining Enemy Action

Enemies mostly move and attack predictably, use the following rules to determine what an enemy will do on their turn. Note that these rules should be followed *in order* - that is, if rule 1 applies, do not continue to rule 2 or further; if rule 1 does not apply, then move to rule 2 and so on.

1. If an enemy has less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of their maximum HP - and they have the ability to move - they will **move away** from the nearest player - but they will only do this if it *does not move them closer* to another player. (The player(s) may choose the direction if there is a choice.)
 - a. An enemy under $\frac{1}{4}$ of their max HP will not proceed to the other actions in this list. If they cannot run away any further, they will **heal 1 HP**.
2. If an enemy is in range of any player they will attack following the normal rules for doing so (see **Enemy Attacking** below). If there are multiple players in range, they will attack the weakest (lowest current HP). If a second enemy is in range of this weakest player **and another player**, then the second enemy will attack the next player in range distance, and if there is another tie, they will attack the next weakest player. This continues for all enemies in range of players.
3. If an enemy has the ability to move they will **move toward** the nearest player. If there are multiple equidistant players, the enemy will move toward the weakest player (lowest current HP).
4. If none of the above rules apply – or the enemy cannot take any action – then the enemy will skip their turn. **When an enemy skips their turn in this manner they recover 1 HP.**

Enemy Attacking

*Note that these rules apply for all enemies - including bosses for the Boss quest - although the bosses do have some special rules that supersede these (see the **Choose a Quest** section).*

An enemy will attack any player in its range (unless it has less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of its maximum HP, see **Determining Enemy Action** above). If there are multiple players in range of its attack, an enemy will **target the weakest player** (by current HP, not maximum). Note that who is weakest may change, and the enemy will change who they attack as a result! If all players in range have the same HP remaining, the enemy will attack the player with the greatest maximum HP. (If this still does not identify the enemy's target, select a target at random.)

If a **second enemy** is in range of the weakest player described above **and another player**, then the second enemy will attack the next player in range distance, and if there is another tie, they will attack the next weakest player. This continues for all enemies in range of players. The goal here is that enemies will distribute their attacks, not all focus on a single player.

Each enemy attack will require the players to know the Average Level (AvgLv) of all players. To determine this, add all player levels, divide by the number of players and round down. For example, if there are three players with Levels of 3, 5, and 6 then the average player Level will be:

$$(3 + 5 + 6) / 3 = 4.7 \rightarrow 4$$

Each enemy will attack using its primary attack method (see the **Enemies** table for your scenario) which will happen very similarly to player attacks (see **Player Attacking** above). Any player may do the enemy's attack flip, if the value is **greater than the enemy's target**, then the attack succeeds, but the player may be able to defend. Similar to player attacks, an Ace will allow for a counter attack by the player, and a King will mean extra damage from the enemy to the player.

An enemy **attack flip of a King** indicates that the player will take extra damage *if the attack hits*. The

bonus damage for enemies should be specified in the **Enemies** table of your scenario!

An enemy will receive a **+1 bonus to their attack flips for every 5 average Levels** of the players. In other words, if the average player Level is 7 all enemies (including bosses) will receive a +1 to their attack flips; if the average player Level is 19 all enemies will receive a +3 to their attack flips.

Player Defending

If a player is hit by an enemy attack they may choose to defend using one of the defensive abilities (see the **Abilities** table). In general these flips will need to be successful by reaching (or exceeding) the target for that ability.

For example, let's say a ranged enemy attacks you with a bow and a target of 8. Their attack flip is a 10, and thus is successful at targeting you. You may then attempt to defend using one of the defensive abilities that you are trained in (and which can defend this type of attack). You will flip for this defensive attempt, and **if you meet or exceed the target for the ability**, then you take reduced damage - read the ability's description for how much damage is reduced. Keep in mind that you can take a defensive posture on previous turns to increase your defensive flip value (see **Defensive Stance** above).

You may also use Stamina on these defensive abilities, but you must do so **before you flip for the success (or failure) or the defensive ability!**

Note that some defensive abilities may only be used against certain types of attacks!

Additional Defensive Abilities

Players may use defensive abilities they are **not trained in**. When using them, all defensive targets are at a +3 and the ability level is assumed to be a 1 (but you may use the defensive stance to increase this flip value, see **Defensive Stance** above).

Player Deaths

When an enemy deals damage to a player it is taken off of their current Hit Points (HP). If that number reaches **exactly zero**, then the player will be stunned indefinitely: they can do nothing but defend, move, use items *on themselves* (and only themselves), or cast healing spells *on themselves* (and only themselves) until their HP is raised above zero.

Should their HP drop **below zero** for any reason the player will die. They may be resurrected by certain items (and at the end of the playing session if the players allow it), but they may take no other actions. All of their items are on the spot where they died and any other player may come by to pick them up.

Dead players will still receive experience for the current room/space based on their actions, and they **will gain experience from completing the quest** should the party be able to do so without them. Note that this is only true if the group decides to resurrect them at the end.

Chests and Items

The most common way to get an item will be by opening a chest. See the **Chest Items** table in your scenario for what items are possible.

Opening Chests

Attempting to open a chest consumes a player's turn - even if the attempt is unsuccessful. In order to open a chest the player will want to use the Lock Picking ability. To open a chest using this ability,

simply move to the spot with the chest and take a turn to open it using the ability. Flip a card from the Action deck to see how you did, you will need to meet or exceed your target for that ability (similar to attacking) in order to succeed.

Flipping an **Ace** results in a **broken lock**. When a lock is broken, the chest can only be opened by attacking (see **Attacking a Chest** below). You may attempt to open a chest as many times as you wish, but keep in mind that it takes a full turn each time.

If you flip a **King**, the chest **contains two items**. Determine what they are individually, but in the same manner described below.

If a player is not trained in the Lock Picking ability, they can still use this method using a Lock Pick item. Attempting to open a chest with a Lock Pick **consumes the lock pick if you fail**, thus after the attempt - if unsuccessful - remove the item from the player's inventory. For this method, assume a single ability level for each Lock Pick used. For example, if you use 3 Lock Picks, it is as if you had a 3 in the Lock Pick ability. Now attempt to open the lock as described above.

*Using each Lock Pick adds a +2 to your attempt if you are **already trained in Lock Picking**.*

Revealing the Item

Once a chest is open, you flip two cards from your Action deck and use the card total in combination with the **Chest Items** table in your scenario to determine what you have found. Place any item received in your character's inventory. Note that you do not have to take the item, and if you do not it remains on that spot. *There is no limit to the number of items you can hold.*

If you **both of the cards are the same suit** in your flips to reveal the item, then you also gain 1 Lock Pick item, add it to your inventory.

Attacking a Chest

If the lock on a chest has been broken - or if you simply choose not to use the Lock Picking ability or a Lock Pick item - you may attack the chest in order to open it. Flip a card from your Action deck, then add that value to: (Think / 3). A 10 or greater value opens the chest, a 3 or less destroys the chest and any item in it. A King will still reveal a chest with two items in it. On a flip of an Ace, the chest explodes and you take (2 x avgLv) HP of damage.

You may use Stamina to increase your flip value in this case.

Equipping (and Unequipping) Items

On your turn you can choose to equip an item that is **not consumable**. For example, a piece of armor or a weapon may be equipped, but a potion may not. This process **does not consume your turn**, but it must be done **before any other actions**. Once an item is equipped, its effects are applied to all future actions. You cannot have more than one item equipped on the same body part, and you should be sensible about other items. You may be able to have a sword and a knife equipped, but certainly not a sword and a bow. Consider equipping what you would be holding in your hands, not what is in your satchel.

You may also choose to unequip an item you have previously equipped - this does not consume your turn, but must also be done before any other actions.

Leaving a Room

The party may leave any room/space that has an unlocked and unblocked exit (see **Determining the Exit**) any time they choose with the exception of rooms with Bosses or when on the Survival quest (see **Choose a Quest** for information on those two). In order to leave a room/space **all players must be on the exit spot** - on the next *full* turn round the entire party will leave the space. In other words, if there are three players and two of them are at the exit, the turn in which the third player gets to the exit is **not** the turn your party leaves - the enemies will get one more turn, then you may leave.

Delaying Your Exit

If there are **no visible enemies** in a room/space (in other words, you may not have revealed all of the room yet, but there are no enemies present) *and the exit spot is visible* you **must flip a card from the Action deck after each round** of player turns to see if a new enemy will appear from the exit. If that Flip is 4 or lower then a new enemy appears on the exit spot and takes their turn immediately. Reveal this enemy just as you would normally (see Revealing the Room); the enemy will behave just as usual.

Any time there is an enemy in the room you do not need to Flip for delay (including enemies that show up by delaying), but as soon as there are no more enemies in a room you must resume this process.

For example, let's say there are three players, Player 2 defeats the last enemy in the room, then Player 3 takes their turn, then each player takes another turn. After Player 3 takes their second turn, flip for delay. If you did not get an enemy this time, each player takes another turn. Once again, after Player 3's turn, flip for an enemy. Repeat this process until the party leaves the room or an enemy appears.

Note that you do NOT need to flip for delay until the exit spot is revealed. Thus, upon entering a dark room, you do not need to immediately begin flipping for delay.

Gaining Experience and Leveling Up

After exiting a room/space players will receive experience (exp) points which are used to gain levels (see **Leveling Up** below). Each player that is alive will receive +5 to their experience for completing a room. In addition, players can gain experience for the following actions (note that these are for individual players, not the group as a whole).

- For each unique enemy attacked (not necessarily defeated), gain +1 exp
- For each successful attack defense, gain +1 exp
- For each enemy defeated, gain +3/+5/+7 exp (for Jacks, Queens, and Kings respectively)
- For each Chest **successfully** opened by Lock Picking, gain +3 exp
- For each Chest opened by attacking, gain +1 exp
- For attacking **3 or more** enemies with the **same attack type**, gain +1 to *one* of its base attributes (For example, if you defeat 3 enemies with Black Magic, +1 to your Think attribute)
- For **successfully** defending **3 or more** attacks with the **same defensive ability**, gain +1 to *one* of the attributes for that ability
- For each **successful** use of another ability not discussed above (one in which you had to flip to succeed), gain +2 exp
- For each instance of damaging another player in your party, for any reason, **lose -3 exp**

Leveling Up

Leveling up occurs after experience is awarded, but before any other actions (such as setting up and entering the next room). Gaining levels will add to the difficulty of the enemies, but also means the player is stronger. A player will increase their Level any time their experience reaches the next Level's threshold. A Level's threshold is **(Current Level x 10) + 10** (so for a Level 2 player, they will move up to Level 3 when their experience reaches 30).

When a player gains a Level they should do the following:

- Add points to their **core abilities**, the number of points is determined by: Action Flip / 2 (distributed among the abilities any way they want, but only to core abilities)
- Increase basic skills (HP, Movement, Initiative) based on new core ability levels
- Add a new ability **on odd Levels only** (and they must qualify for the ability – that is, they must have the required amount in the core abilities – see the **Abilities** table for more on this)
- Remove the required experience points to Level Up (for example, a player moving from Level 2 to Level 3 should subtract 30 points from the current experience (it is consumed while leveling up))
- Increase any other abilities desired (see description of this process below)

Remember that enemies play to the average Level (Avg Lv) of all players. To determine this, add all player levels, divide by the number of players and round down. For example, if there are three players with Levels of 3, 5, and 6 then the average player Level will be:

$$(3 + 5 + 6) / 3 = 4.7 \rightarrow 4$$

Increasing Basic Skills

Any time that you increase your core attributes you should double check that your Movement, maximum Hit Points (max HP), and Initiative are up to date. You can find those calculations in the **Step 6: Determine Other Attributes** section, or possibly on your **Character Sheet** (see the example Character Sheet below).

Increasing Other Abilities

During the time when players can level up, a player may choose to spend experience points to increase a specific ability's level (versus their character level). The amount of experience required to increase an ability is listed in the **Abilities** table in your scenario. Remove this experience from your character sheet and increase the level of that ability. You cannot gain a new ability this way! Any experience used in this manner is taken out of your experience points **after leveling up**. In other words, you cannot use the same experience points to level up your character *and* an ability.

Running Out of Abilities

Should your character be so amazing that they have mastered all of the abilities, then you have three choices:

1. Kill everything in your path and grow to insurmountable strength.
2. Start a new character and build them up with new abilities and attributes.
3. Create a new ability! And while you're at it, maybe tinker with the rules to make the game more challenging!

Accomplishing Your Quest

The information on how to accomplish each quest is in the Choose a Quest section above, but it is important to remember to dole out experience points and do any required Leveling up after you complete your quest. All players will have their maximum Hit Points (HP) restored prior to the next session of play.

Once all of that is finished, you have completed this session. All players should keep their character sheets (see the Character Sheet below for an example) for the next time you play. Remember, you are building a character over time!

Note that characters do retain all items in their inventory for the next session of play!

Failing Your Quest

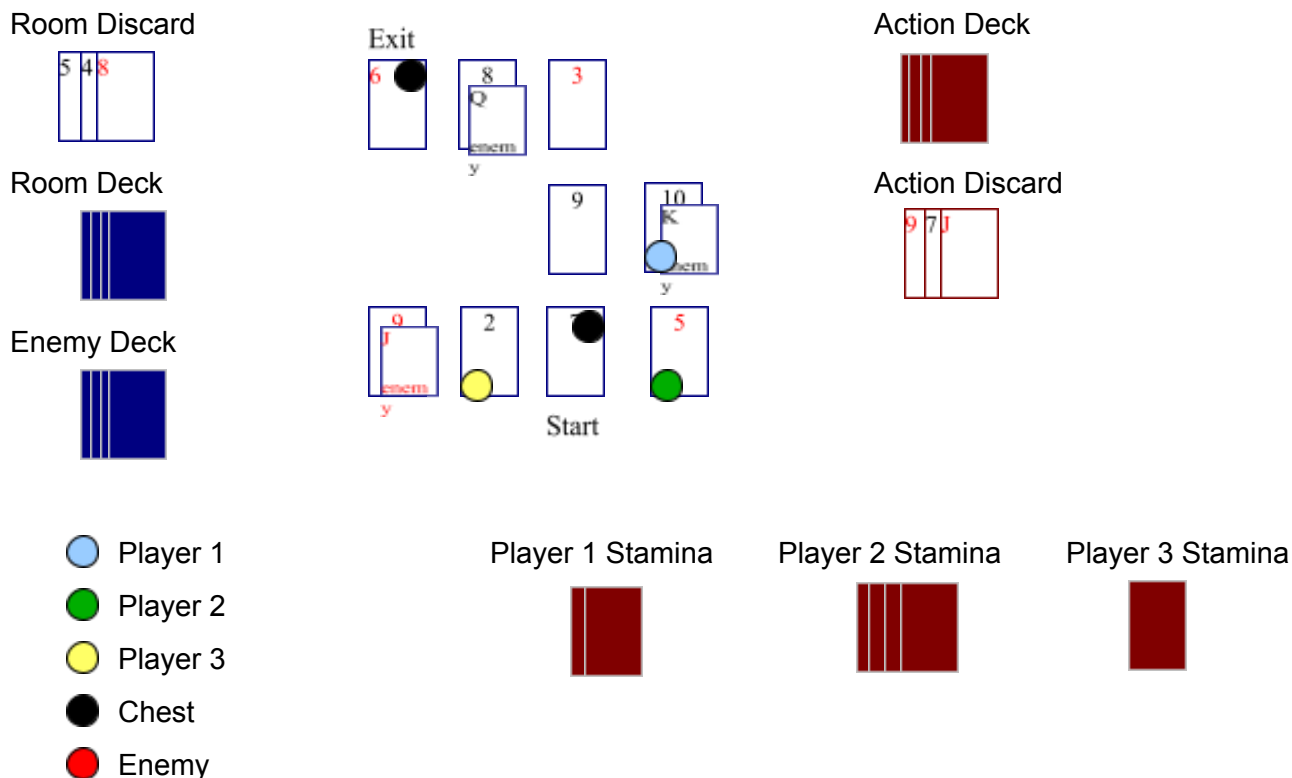
If all players die during your quest, you will have failed. You will not receive any experience for the current room/space, nor any experience from completing the quest. The game session will end there. Players may decide to bring back their character for future sessions (see **Resurrection** below), but they do not have to.

Resurrection

If any characters have died during the game session the group may decide if they wish to resurrect the character or start a new one the next time they play. Resurrecting a character is simply a matter of restoring their HP to its maximum, but they will still **lose all items** in their inventory, whether equipped or not.

Example Table Layout

Below is an example of what a game might look like while in progress:



Abbreviations and Definitions

aLv	Ability Level
AvgLv	Average Player Level
D	Damage
E	Enemy
Exp	Experience points
F	Flip the top card of the Action Deck
HP	Hit Points
Lv	Player Level
M	Movement
NPC	Non-player (or Non-playing) Character
Over	The amount played over the target for any ability (may also be labeled simply “O”)
Pl	Player (or Players plural)
R	Range of weapon/effect
RPG	Role Playing Game

Character Sheet

Name: _____ Race: _____ Class: _____ Experience: _____
 Level: _____ Exp. to Next Lv: _____ Movement: _____ Max HP: _____ Curr. HP: _____
 Quirk: _____ Initiative: _____

[illegible]
$$\text{Movement} = ((\text{Move} / 8) + 1)$$

Max HP = Lift x Think

$$\text{Initiative} = \text{Move} + (\text{Lead} \times 2)$$

Exp. required for next Level = $10 + (Lv \times 10)$

Session Log

[illegible]

Defending / Lock Picking / Abilities / Etc			
Action	By	On	Notes

Example Charts