Compressed Roleplaying Adventure Manual

A tabletop RPG system suitable for any genre that fits on one page.

By Rusty Gerard
Version 3.1.1 April 2014

What do I need to play?
- Two or more people: one GM and one or more players.
- Some six-sided dice. The more the better.
- Some 3-by-5 index cards to record character info.

What do these words mean?
Characters are represented by four numerical attributes on a scale of 1 (sub human) to 15 (super human).
- PHY (physique): strength, speed, agility, etc.
- MEN (mentality): intelligence, knowledge, perception, etc.
- VIT (vitality): stamina, healthiness, etc. If your character gets hurt he/she loses VIT points. Lose them all and your character is dead.
- LUC (luck): fate, karma, etc. You can temporarily "burn" (lose) 1 point of your character's LUC to add 1d6 additional successes to an *ability check* you just rolled.

Your character gets his/her lost VIT and LUC back when the GM says so.

Character creation
Apportion 20 points between your character's attributes (assigning no less than 1 and no more than 15 points to any attribute), pick 2 skills from the list below, and buy some stuff. Your character gets his/her LUC × $15 in cash. Your character can improve his/her attributes and learn new skills when the GM says so.

Example Sci-Fi character: Mary Sue
4 PHY 5 MEN 5 VIT 6 LUC
Skills: Martial and Telekinesis
Starting cash: $90

Stuff to buy

Gear	Weapons	Armor
Standard/Hobbyist Kit $10 The basic tools of the trade for a skill, e.g. a first aid kit (for the Medicine skill).	Melee $5 Projectile $50 PHY + 1 *or* 5 combat dice.	Light Armor $50 Damage reduction: 1 Reduces PHY by 1.
	Melee $25 Projectile $100 PHY + 2 *or* 8 combat dice.	Medium Armor $300 Damage reduction: 2 Reduces PHY by 2.
Deluxe/Pro Kit $100 Everything in the standard kit plus specialty tools for a skill, e.g. a doctor's bag (for the Medicine skill).	Melee $75 Projectile $250 PHY + 3 *or* 11 combat dice.	
	Melee N/A Projectile $500 PHY + 4 *or* 14 combat dice.	Heavy Armor $1500 Damage reduction: 3 Reduces PHY by 5.

Skills
Skills represent training and in-depth knowledge that a character has in a broad area of expertise. See *Ability checks* for more info on how skills are used in-game. The GM may add, delete, or modify skills to suit the setting.
- Athletics: feats of endurance, brute strength, and acrobatics.
- Lore: history, folklore, languages, religion, philosophy, and the occult.
- Martial: all forms of armed and unarmed combat.
- Medicine: health care, pharmacology, and surgery.
- Psionics: clairvoyance, telekinesis, or telepathy (choose only one).
- Rhetoric: persuasive speaking, negotiation, and diplomacy.
- Science: mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, etc.
- Subterfuge: disguise, legerdemain, security, stealth, and streetwise.
- Survival: hunting, trapping, tracking, and foraging outdoors.
- Vocation: a specialized trade, e.g. Pilot, Soldier, or Tailor.

Ability checks (how to do stuff)
Performing any task in-game that has a chance of failure is subject to an *ability check*. The GM rules which character attribute(s) is relevant to the check, what skill (if any) to use, and the difficulty of the check (see *Standard modifiers* below). If more than one attribute applies then only the character's weakest attribute is used. If the character possesses the relevant skill the player may roll at least 2 and up to 13 dice, otherwise the player rolls at least 1 and no more than 7 dice.

Once the dice are rolled if one or more die shows 1 then the attempt succeeds. Any die showing 6 may be re-rolled. If no dice show 1 then the attempt fails. If all dice show 5 the attempt *critically* fails (something bad happens). LUC can be burned to automatically succeed. The GM may decide before dice are rolled that the attempt automatically fails because it is impossible for the character, regardless of LUC.

Example: Tim is haggling for a lower price with a merchant. The GM rules that it is a trivial (+5) task using MEN and the Rhetoric skill. Tim has 5 MEN and the skill and so the player rolls 10 dice. If Tim did not have the skill the player would roll 7 dice.

Combat (how to kill stuff)
An attack is an ability check using PHY + weapon bonus and the Martial skill. The GM decides the difficulty based on the defender's PHY and any other situational modifiers (again, using the *Standard modifiers* below). If the defender is wearing armor, the first *X* dice rolled for each check that indicate success are ignored according to the armor's *damage reduction*. The defender loses 1 VIT point for each success rolled after the first *X*. The player may burn 1 LUC to add 1d6 successes to the roll.

Example: Tim is fighting a monster with his shotgun, a +2/8 projectile. The GM decides it is moderate (-5) to hit. Tim uses the higher number between his PHY +2 and 8, then subtracts 5. 8 is greater, so the player rolls 3 dice but none show a 1, so the player decides to burn 1 LUC. This die shows 4. Tim shoots and injures the monster, but the player does not know how many successes were ignored by armor.

Legal stuff

Standard modifiers to ability checks
When the GM decides the difficulty of an ability check add the corresponding number to the character's attribute(s) before determining the number of dice to roll.

Trivial: +5   Easy: ±0   Moderate: -5   Difficult: -10   Nearly impossible: -15