1.3 Game Rules

These are the core rules, necessary to the basic functioning of both the sci-fi and fantasy games. Many rules can be safely ignored or changed, especially if they're illusive to the group or to make the game simpler for beginners. However, this section composes the essence of the game, so change these at your own peril.

This game is a very open one, leaving much to the imagination of the game master. Rather than specifically saying that a character that's running in the dark has X% chance of tripping, it's left to the discretion of those playing. That said, don't look through this book for every detail of the happenings that go on in the game. Improvisation by the participants is what sets this sort of game apart from those played on the computer, so take advantage of it!

Dice and Notation

Most role playing games use a special notation to keep things simple. A variety of types of dice are rolled, including those with four, six, eight, ten, twelve, twenty, and a hundred sides. The hundred sided dice can be emulated with two ten sided dice (one for the ones digit, and the other for the tens, where 00 = 100).

Like many role playing games the dice amount is written first, followed by a 'd', then the dice type. For an example 3d10 would mean three of the ten sided dice. As for the notation that's only used in the book, italicized words belong to the general difficulty table (see 'Difficulties' below) and bold words are part of the general mechanics section.

Stats and the Wild Die

The fantasy and science fiction sections each use different stat systems for their characters. Still, the basics of each are the same. Skills are generally measured in six sided dice though their's a few exceptions like the fantasy's 'base skills'. These skills are used when taking any action in which the result depends on the character's proficiency. For an example when a fantasy character is running they use their physique.

Whenever the character rolls a skill that's measured in six sided dice (with the exception of taking or dealing damage) a wild die is rolled. This is a single six sided dice that's chosen before the roll and should stand out from the rest. If the die rolls a one, it and the highest other die are removed from the roll (this is called a mishap). If the die rolls a six then another die is added to the roll. If this rolls another six, then add another die (until it rolls something other than a six). If the wild rolls a two through five, then it's added like a normal die.

Skill rolls should be modified (if appropriate) by the game master to reflect the environment. For an example, camouflage should increase a character's ability to hide, and fog should lower an archer's accuracy. These modifications are usually additions or subtractions, rather than changes in the number of rolled dice.

Difficulties

To determine if the character succeeds, a required roll is specified. If the roll is higher, it's successful. If it's lower, it fails. To determine how well the skill succeeds or fails, the difference between the required roll and the actual roll is used (and the game master interprets the effects). For an example, when trying to outrun a boulder the game master sets a difficulty (the boulder's speed). If higher, the character outruns the boulder and the higher over the required amount, the more they outrun it by.

Their are two different ways of determining the required roll. If the roll is made against another character, they will be using opposite skills such as search verses hide or physique vs physique in the case of arm wrestling. Ties should go to the character who is acting passively or defending (such as the hider when being searched for, or dodger when considering accuracy). If the skills can't be matched together so that one is active and the other passive (such as arm wrestling) then the game master will need to determine a neutral effect.

If the roll isn't against another character, such as trying to jump across a pit, then the game master sets a difficulty from the table below. These are called 'general difficulties' since they give the character a range of what the minimum roll might be. This is because characters can never judge with exact precision how well they need to perform to succeed in a given task. If a character tries to judge what difficulty it is then they may need to roll a skill to make the estimate (such as search for jumping distance). The better they do the more accurate they are. With especially high judging rolls they may even narrow down the range of the required roll within a given difficulty. When found in the text general difficulties are italicized.

General Difficulty Table

Difficulty:	Required roll:	Average skill required:
Very Easy	1-3	1d6
Easy	4-7	2d6
Moderate	8-10	3d6
Difficult	11-14	4d6
Very Difficult	15-17	5d6
Extraordinary	18-24	7d6
Seemingly Impossible	25-31	9d6
Masterful	32-42	12d6

Heroically Difficult	43-52	15d6
Legendarily Difficult	53-70	20d6
Requiring Godly Ability	71-87	25d6
Impossible	>87	>25d6

Time, Turns, and Rounds

This is a turn based game meaning that only one player takes actions at a time. A turn is the time in which a player controls their character. A full cycle in which everyone gets a turn is either called a 'cycle' when it is outside of combat or a 'round' when in combat. The difference between cycles and rounds is how much time is taken.

A cycle can be any length of time and is decided by the game master. It may be seconds, minutes, hours, or even days depending on what the characters are doing and when the game master thinks that it's appropriate to end the person's turn. For an example, if players are traveling over vast distances their turns might be measured in days since very little happens in that time.

The other, more common form of time is called a round. A round is approximately three seconds and is used in combat or anything that happens quickly. All sorts of things are based on rounds including magic, attacks, and almost all the abilities. Each round, during each player's turn they can only take one action. For an example, they might cast a spell, make an attack, move, etc. but they can't do multiple things. The speed in which they do the action is stated by the action. For an example, it may take a couple of rounds to shoot a bow, so during the round after they don't get an action since they're reloading.

Many times characters will be separated and have their turns measured in different ways. For an example, one character might be on a voyage for several days while the other is engaged in combat. It's up to the game master to keep track of time and what each character is doing in it. It's important to remember that game time is different than real time. Rounds may take minutes or hours in real time but in the game only cover a couple of minutes. Cycles, however, may take seconds to explain but cover days or weeks in game time. It's important for the player to understand before embarking on actions that would take a long period of time in the game that they may not get to do anything for quite a while in real time either.