

Fudge Lite

Version 2.6.4

<http://www.fudgelite.com>

Character Information

Fudge ladder:

- Superb
- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Mediocre
- Poor
- Terrible

Character Creation

The GM provides the players with a list of traits to assign Fudge ladder rankings to. One possible set of traits is included below, but it assumes the game is going to have a large focus on combat and physical activity. The GM is encouraged to alter the list to fit their game better, or even create their own list of traits for the players to use. (See Appendix A for alternative lists of traits.)

Base traits:

Athletics

Melee Combat

Persuasion

Physical Awareness

Ranged Combat

Social Awareness

Stealth

Streetwise

Additional traits for medieval fantasy settings:

Cultural Knowledge (history, religion, customs, etc.)

Dungeoneering (knowledge of dungeon environments)

Languages*

Magic

Magic Lore

Magic Resistance

Nature (plant and animal knowledge, foraging, handle animal, navigation, and tracking)

Thievery (disable traps, open locks, pick pockets, and sleight of hand)

Additional traits for sci-fi settings:

Galactic Knowledge (planetary customs, history, xenobiology, etc.)

Hacking**

Languages*

Psionics*

Psionic Lore*

Psionic Resistance*

Repair**

Starship Use (Piloting, Gunnery, Astrogation)

Additional trait for pulp settings (lots of chase scenes, airplane piloting, and/or train/airship operation):

Vehicles (knowledge, driving/piloting, repair, operation)

*Optional

**Depending on the setting, the GM may wish to combine Hacking and Repair into a single Technology skill.

No trait should be obviously more or less useful than any of the other traits. If the trait is too specific, or the setting won't naturally challenge that trait, the GM should alter it to be more broadly applicable or just remove it. Conversely, if the trait is too useful the GM should split it up into multiple traits. As an example I found myself calling for Perception rolls too often in my games, so I split it into Social Awareness and Physical Awareness.

It's recommended that the GM split the traits Magic and Psionic into smaller categories to match whatever metaphysical system the setting uses.

Once the trait list is determined the GM decides how many traits are allowed at each level. Some example trait distributions:

1 Superb, 2 Great, 3 Good, 4 Fair, etc.

This is best used for games with many traits, or for games where the GM wants the PCs to have a lot of good traits.

Total traits Fair or better: 10. Total traits above Poor: 15

1 Superb, 2 Great, 2 Good, 2 Fair, etc.

This is best used for games with fewer traits, or when the GM wants PCs to be able to shine but only in specific areas.

Total traits Fair or better: 7. Total traits above Poor: 9

1 Great, 2 Good, 3 Fair, 4 Mediocre, etc.

This is best used for games with fewer skills, or when the GM doesn't want the PCs to have a very high level of competence in any specific area.

Total traits Fair or better: 6. Total traits above Poor: 10

2 Great, 3 Good, 4 Fair, etc.

This is best used for games with many traits where the GM wants the PCs to be well-rounded but not extremely good in any area.

Total traits Fair or better: 9. Total traits above Poor: 14

The important questions here for the GM are: What is the highest skill level I want the PCs to be at? How many of their traits do I want to be at least decent (Superb-Fair)? Do I want to give the PCs enough trait levels to be decent at all the traits, or do I want to force the players to specialize?

Optional rule:

With the GM's permission, a player may trade a trait for two traits of the next level down. E.g. one Superb trait for two Great traits, one Great trait for two Good traits, etc.

Gifts and Faults (optional):

With the GM's permission, the player and the GM may collaborate to determine positive traits for the character that don't fit on the Fudge ladder (Gifts) and/or negative traits that don't fit on the Fudge ladder (Faults).

Alternative Character Creation Rules

Subjective Character creation:

The player writes down everything important about their character, ranking any traits that can be ranked on the Fudge Ladder. This should only be done in collaboration with the GM, and the character must be approved by the GM before it can be used.

Quick Character Creation (Over the Edge):

The player comes up with one broad trait (class, occupation, etc.) and two narrower traits (specific skills) that define their character. Any one of the three traits may be Great, while the other two are Good. Any magical ability or superpower should be the broad trait unless it is defined very narrowly. The GM may also require each PC to have a fault. The character must be approved by the GM before it can be used.

Quick Character Creation (Wushu):

The player comes up with three traits that define their character. One should describe their motivation and be ranked Superb, one should describe their fighting style and be ranked Great, and one should describe their profession and be ranked Good. The GM may also require each PC to have a fault. The character must be approved by the GM before it can be used.

Fudge On The Fly Character Creation:

Players don't have to decide on their trait rankings before play starts. The GM creates a list of trait slots similar to the one below, but adjusted to match the number of traits available to the players. When the GM calls for the trait check of a trait that hasn't yet been placed, the player must decide which slot it goes in. The player can only place a trait where there is an open slot for it.

Superb:

[_____]

Great:

[_____] [_____]

Good:

[_____] [_____] [_____]

Fair:

[_____] [_____] [_____] [_____]

Mediocre:

[_____] [_____] [_____] [_____]

[_____]

Poor:

[_____] [_____] [_____] [_____]

[_____] [_____] [_____] [_____]

[_____]

Roles (optional):

The GM may create roles for the players to select based on the game genre. For example, a medieval fantasy game might have the roles Fighter, Mage, Thief, etc., while a cyberpunk game might have Techie, Gunner, Medtech, Hacker, etc. Each role defines the gifts and/or the equipment that each character has.

Some example roles:

Fighter

Gift(s): Extra injury boxes.

Equipment: Weapons, armor.

Mage

Gift(s): Spellcasting trait.

Equipment: Spellbook, wand, pouch of spell reagents, dagger.

Rigger

Gift(s): Ability to operate drones with their Tech trait.

Equipment: Drone, drone controller.

Demonslaying Space Marine

Gift(s): Glory Kills (On the last hit, the player gets full narrative freedom to describe how their character kills the demon.)

Equipment: Shotgun, grenades, power armor.

Military Fireteam Machine Gunner

Gift(s): None

Equipment: Machine gun

In the last example, the military member doesn't need a gift to operate the machine gun. Anybody else on the team could shoot it if they got their hands

on the gun. Nonetheless, it's their role so they are the one with the machine gun.

Condition Tracks:

PCs start the game with room for three minor conditions and three serious conditions.

By default the PC marks conditions in order (minor first, then serious), but the GM may choose to judge the situation and tell the player which condition to mark off instead. If the PC would take a minor condition when there is no room left for one they must mark off a serious condition instead.

When a PC's last serious condition box fills up they are either taken out of the scene or taken out of the game, depending on how serious the consequence for repeated failure should be.

If the player is only taken out of the scene they return with all of their minor consequences and at least one of their serious consequences cleared once the next scene starts. The exact number is up to the GM but should be established before the game starts.

Minor conditions go away any time a character has a few minutes to tend to themselves. Serious conditions require the player to spend a significant amount of time recovering, but once they do they get to clear all of their conditions.

A traditional game could use the condition track to measure PC health like this:

Minor injury [_][_][_]

Serious injury [_][_][_]

However, not all games use injuries as the primary measure of whether a PC is able to continue. For example, a game about bargaining with dark forces for power could track corruption instead of injuries, and a game about social conflict at cocktail parties could track embarrassment.

The GM is free to customize anything about the condition tracks, such as the number of different conditions the tracks track and what those conditions are, how many boxes each condition has, how long it takes the different boxes to recover, and what causes each track to recover.

For example, a game where players investigate mind-shattering elder gods and the cults that worship them might have only two boxes for injury (indicating that physical combat is something to be avoided) and a separate track for mental health that uses 6 conditions (3 minor, 3 serious). If either track is completely marked off, the PC is taken out.

Optional rule:

The GM may leave the condition labels blank and decide what each condition is when it's taken by the PC. The condition should be written next to the box and erased when the condition is cleared. For example, a PC might take the three

minor conditions "twisted ankle", "hurt feelings", and "hurt feelings", and the serious condition "cracked ribs".

Optional rule:

By default, players only mark off one condition box at a time. However, the GM may wish to allow for conflicts that check off more than one box at a time. In this case, the GM can assign numbers to different strengths of conditions. For example:

Mediocre effect: 1 box

Fair effect: 2 boxes

Good effect: 3 boxes

Great effect: 4 boxes

Superb effect: 5 boxes

Using this table, getting punched might mark off one injury box while getting shot or stabbed might mark off four.

A GM using this rule should probably give the players more condition boxes to compensate for the increased damage.

Alternative rule: nonlinear conditions

Instead of using minor and serious conditions the GM could create conditions that don't have to be marked in a specific order. These could be physiological states like sick, hungry, injured, and exhausted, and/or emotional states like afraid, angry, guilty, and hopeless. The specific conditions should be chosen to reinforce a specific gameplay experience. For example, a game about teenage drama would have different conditions than a game about wilderness survival.

Either the GM will decide which nonlinear condition to mark or the player will. When the GM doesn't have a specific condition in mind they should let the player decide.

If the GM uses nonlinear conditions they should include a final condition that represents being taken out of the scene or the game.

Optional rule:

Marking in certain condition boxes may give the PC penalties to relevant trait checks. For example, this injury track gives the following penalties to physical actions:

Scratch: [_][_][_]

Hurt (-1): [_]

Very Hurt (-2): [_]

Incapacitated: [_]

Be aware that this can lead to a death spiral where it becomes harder for a PC to keep from taking conditions because they already have conditions.

Fudge Points (optional):

The GM may give the PCs 1-5 Fudge Points to start the game with. The GM should establish which of these uses the player may spend Fudge Points on:

- Reroll a trait check.
- Automatically succeed at any unopposed roll of Superb or lower difficulty.
- Alter a roll by 1.
- Reduce a condition's severity by one level, clearing it if it's already at the weakest level. A condition cannot be moved to a lower slot unless there is free space for it.
- Convert a failure to a success.
- Get a +4 result without rolling.
- Ensure a favorable coincidence in the world around them.

If using Fudge Points (FP), the GM will need to answer the following questions:

- Will the players get FP at the beginning of each session?
- If so, will it be up to a maximum or will there be a flat amount given?
- Can the players earn FP in-game? If so, how?

Both Fudge Points and XP (detailed in the Character Advancement section) can be used as a reward to encourage specific behavior from PCs. Fudge Points should be awarded when the GM wants to give the players one-time out-of-character bonuses, while XP should be awarded when the GM wants to represent long-term in-character character improvement.

Just don't make the player choose between XP and FP. It can lead to players hoarding XP because they don't want to trade a permanent asset for a temporary boost. Those players would then advance faster than the players that spend more FP, leading to imbalanced characters later on.

Gameplay

Trait Checks:

When a PC attempts to do something significant the GM may call for a trait check. Trait checks are performed by rolling Fudge dice (or Fate dice). These are 6-sided dice with two "+" sides, two "-" sides, and two blank sides each. 4dF means 4 Fudge dice are rolled, for a result from -4 to +4.

The player starts with the appropriate trait and rolls 4dF, shifting the trait up or down the Fudge ladder by the result. The player compares the result to the GM-decided difficulty level (if unopposed) or to the opponent's relevant trait plus or minus an optional GM-decided modifier (if opposed). A tie or better means the roller succeeds. If the GM is uncertain of the difficulty they can set it to Fair or zero modifiers.

Example: a PC with Athletics at Fair is attempting to jump over a small river. The GM decided that the difficulty to do this would be Great, which is two levels higher than Fair, so the player would need to roll a +2 or better to succeed.

A failed roll doesn't *necessarily* mean the PC failed at their task, but the results are always worse than they would have been if the roll had succeeded.

Whether or not a roll succeeds, it should always cause the status quo to change in some way. If nothing would change because the player failed (or succeeded) at a roll, the GM needs to either put something at stake or decide if the player succeeds or fails without a roll.

Critical information should not be locked behind trait checks. If there is any information that the GM thinks is important for the players to have, the GM should give it to them, directly or indirectly, without requiring that they roll for it. This is to prevent situations where the players don't roll high enough and can't figure out what to do next.

If a player attempts to use a trait that doesn't exist in their character sheet, the GM has a few options:

If success or failure is obvious based on what the GM knows of the PC's capabilities and the situation, the GM can just say that.

If the PC was made with subjective character creation, the GM can just ask the player what their trait level is.

The GM may have the player roll one of their existing traits, possibly with a penalty.

The GM may have the player roll at a trait level based on how common the trait is, ranging from Fair for tasks that anybody should be able to do, like fighting, climbing, or basic math, to Poor for tasks that require specialized training, like particle physics or helicopter piloting.

If a player doesn't own any Fudge dice they can roll 4d6 instead, treating the result of 1 or 2 on a die as a minus, 3 or 4 as a blank, and 5 or 6 as a plus.

Thus, a roll of 1, 1, 2, 5 would be equivalent to [-][-][-][+], which adds up to -2.

"Yes, but":

A roll resolves the question of "can I do this thing?" Sometimes, however, the GM may want to make the answer to the question part of the ongoing plot, taking longer to resolve than just a simple 4dF roll. In that case the GM will tell the PC what complications are in the way of accomplishing their goal. If the PC can overcome the complications they get the outcome they wanted.

This is an expansion of the "Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask" GM move.

Situations where "Yes, but" could be appropriate include, but are not limited to: crafting equipment, giving medical treatment, creating a new magical spell or effect, and improving traits.

Trans-Superb traits

Though the effects of rolls generally don't go above Superb, sometimes the difficulty of a roll is harder than Superb but still technically possible. For these rolls there is the Superhuman tier.

- Superb Superhuman
- Great Superhuman
- Good Superhuman
- Fair Superhuman
- Superb
- Great
- Good
- Fair
- Mediocre
- Poor
- Terrible

Bonuses and penalties:

Sometimes the GM will assign a bonus and/or a penalty to a player's roll. +1 is a good bonus, +2 is a very good bonus, and +3 is a very rare, very large bonus. The same modifiers also apply to penalties. Only the single largest bonus and the single largest penalty apply to any given roll.

Optional rule:

If the GM wishes to apply a bonus or penalty less than one level they may use advantage dice or disadvantage dice. These dice are colored differently and replace regular Fudge dice when they are rolled. The player ignores any minus result on an advantage die and ignores any plus result on a disadvantage die. The two die types cancel each other out, so a player will never roll an advantage die and a disadvantage die in the same roll.

An advantage die is worth roughly 1/3rd of a Fudge rank. Here are some rough guidelines for GMs:

+3 bonus: a superb bonus

+2 bonus: a great bonus

+1 bonus: a good bonus

2 levels of advantage: a fair bonus

1 level of advantage: a mediocre bonus

The same guidelines apply to penalties.

Magic:

The following spell difficulty guidelines are adapted from [Daneel's Simpler Magic System for Mini Six](#).

Poor, Mediocre:

Short Range (touch)

Short Duration (one action)

Single Target (one creature/object)

Cantrips/Orisons, See Auras, Speak Languages, Burning Touch

Fair, Good:

Medium Range (bowshot)

Medium Duration (several actions)

Medium Area (several people)

Charm People, Mystic Armor, Heal Wounds, Fire Ball, Polymorph

Great, Superb, Fair Superhuman:

Long Range (sight)

Long Duration (entire scene/encounter)

Large Area (crowd)

Resurrection, Group Teleport, Earthquake, Anti-magic Zone

Good Superhuman, Great Superhuman, Superb Superhuman:

Any Range, Duration, Area & Effect

Wish, Miracle

Optional rule:

Increase the difficulty if the spell being cast meets more than one criterion of a spell of that level.

Alternative Magic Rules: Minor Magic and Ritual Magic

Instead of ranking the difficulty of the magic on the Fudge scale, another approach is to split magic into one of two types depending on how powerful it is: minor magic and ritual magic.

Minor magic requires a roll of the player's relevant magic trait against a base difficulty of Fair. A minor magic spell cannot affect anything for longer than about half a minute, it cannot affect more than a small group of people per casting, it cannot affect anything further away than an average person could throw a stone, and it cannot check or uncheck more than a single condition at a time.

If your game uses the optional rule that allows more than one condition to be marked off at a time, minor magic cannot check or uncheck more than a Fair amount of boxes at a time.

Ritual magic doesn't have those limitations, but it does have requirements that must be met before the spell can be cast. The GM will tell you what needs to be done to get the effect you want. Some examples include:

It has to take place at a certain location.

It requires a specific ingredient or ingredients.

It requires the assistance of a specific person or people.

The GM may require more than one of these.

Ritual magic does not require a roll to trigger the magic. Once the requirements are met and the ritual is performed, the magic takes effect.

Character Advancement

Trait improvement costs:

Terrible to Poor: 1 XP

Poor to Mediocre: 1 XP

Mediocre to Fair: 1 XP

Fair to Good: 2 XP

Good to Great: 4 XP

Great to Superb: 8 XP

Superb to Fair Superhuman: 16 XP + GM permission

A player can improve multiple traits per session, but they may only improve each trait by one level per session. The methods of obtaining XP are given below. The GM may use more than one method to dispense XP, but does not have to.

The costs given on the advancement table should be multiplied by the average amount of XP the players are likely to obtain per session.

Flat XP Method:

Players gain 1 XP at the end of every session.

Keys:

Keys are PC-specific behaviors that reward the players with XP. They are determined either through collaboration between the player and the GM, or by the player selecting one or more from a GM-provided list. (See Appendix B for a list of example keys.) The GM can award 1 XP any time a player hits their key, or 1 XP per key at the end of the session, or just 1 XP at the end of a session for hitting any key.

If a player feels that their current keys don't fit the type of character they wish to play, they may consult with the GM and then swap out one or more of their keys.

By selecting keys the player is telling the GM what sort of situations they're interested in getting into, so the GM should make sure to give them opportunities to hit their keys during gameplay.

End of Session Questions:

The GM will provide the PCs with a list of questions for them to answer at the end of each session. For each "yes" answer the player gains 1 XP.

XP on a Miss:

Every time a player fails a roll they gain 1 XP. This is meant to encourage players to use their weaker traits and take some of the sting out of a failed roll.

This rule should not be used if the GM calls for rolls when nothing is at stake.

In-character Costs (optional rule):

The GM may choose to impose in-character requirements for a PC to improve their trait, as described in the "Yes, but" rule. This may or may not be used in conjunction with XP requirements.

Game Mastering

Gameplay takes the form of a conversation between the GM and the rest of the players. The players describe anything relevant about their characters and their attempted actions. The GM describes everything else, such as the environment and NPCs, and calls for trait checks as appropriate. Whenever the GM wants to set up a situation for the PC(s) to react to, and whenever a PC fails something with significant consequences, the GM should make a GM move.

List of GM moves:

- Use an NPC's default behavior
- Reveal an unwelcome truth
- Announce future badness
- Inflict a condition
- Offer an opportunity, with or without cost
- Put a character in a spot
- Force them to choose
- Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask
- Make a countdown and mark a box
- Advance a countdown

The GM can adjust this list to fit the tone of the game you're running, adding and/or removing moves as needed.

For comparison, here is a set of GM moves I wrote for a slice of life, non-combat, low-conflict setting I ran for my mom:

- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost
- Show a conflict
- Give somebody a conflicting priority
- Encounter a character
- Share a person's history, problem, desires, or goals

Soft Moves vs Hard Moves:

A soft move is something that will cause problems if isn't handled. A hard move is that problem actually occurring. Seeing a fist coming towards you is a soft move. It gives you time to deal with it. Getting punched and marking off an injury is a hard move. The problem happened and it's too late to do anything about it.

Making GM Moves:

To make a GM move the GM looks at the list and picks one that's appropriate to the situation. If the GM is just setting up a situation they should make a soft move. If the GM move is the direct consequence of a PC failure, the move can be as hard as the GM likes. It doesn't *have* to be hard, but it can be. If the GM isn't sure what should happen in a situation they should make a soft move.

The GM should never say the name of the move to the players. Instead, the GM should make it something that actually happens within the fictional world. Don't say, "I reveal an unwelcome truth." Say, "It turns out the bridge wasn't as stable as you thought! You hear a loud cracking noise from the stone under your feet."

After every move the GM should ask the player or players, "What do you do?"

Example GM Moves:

Use an NPC's default behavior

One of Christine Cassiopeia's behaviors is "Let your flunkies take care of things."

GM: "Christine scoffs at you. 'Whatever, loser,' she says. 'Will one of you be a dear and take care of this wretch for me?' Two well-built men in tuxedos step forward with grins on their faces. One of them cracks their knuckles ominously. What do you do?"

Reveal an unwelcome truth

An unwelcome truth is anything a PC wishes wasn't true. It doesn't have to be something that was previously established. As the GM you could make up a new story element on the spot, as long as it fits the established tone and setting of the game.

GM: "You punch him in face. The skin tears and pulls away, revealing the grinning skull of a lich. What do you do?"

GM: "You successfully crafted the cloaking device, but even with your best efforts you couldn't make it work perfectly. The machine is unstable, prone to malfunctions, and the resulting invisibility will be temporary at best. What do you do?"

Announce future badness

GM: "The doorknob rattles as somebody attempts to open it. You hear the jangling of keys on the other side. The house's owner must have come home early. What do you do?"

GM: "Looking through the telescope you see the telltale flashes of light that indicate missile fire and two tiny blobs that grow larger at an alarming rate. They'll arrive in less than a minute. What do you do?"

Inflict a condition

GM: "Alex swings the crowbar wildly, painfully clipping your head. Mark off an injury. What do you do?"

Offer an opportunity, with or without cost

GM: "His path takes him right underneath you and he doesn't seem to have noticed you perched on the overpass. You could drop onto him, but you'd take an injury doing that. What do you do?"

GM: "Nobody's eyes are on you. If you wanted to grab the amulet, now would be the time. What do you do?"

Roles are good sources of opportunities, if the GM uses them.

GM: "You don't see an easy way for your group to get inside the building, but Rigger, you notice an air vent that seems just large enough for your drone. What do you do?"

Put a character in a spot

GM: "Your foot is stuck and the giant counterweight is swinging towards you. What do you do?"

GM: "The snarling monster swipes at the overturned car, trying to get at the woman trapped inside. You hear her scream in terror. What do you do?"

Force them to choose

GM: "As you approach the scroll you hear a strange click as the ground under your feet shifts downward just slightly. The portcullis behind you starts loudly sliding downwards. You can stay inside with the scroll or you can run out of the room, but there isn't time to do both. What do you do?"

The player must have enough information to make the choice meaningful. If the choice is between two identical doors with no other information, that's not a meaningful choice.

The player can take a third option if it makes sense within the narrative.

Tell them the requirements or consequences and ask

GM: "'You want this sword?' the man asks. 'Sure, if you can beat me in a duel.' What do you do?"

GM: "The guard is willing to look the other way while you sneak into the palace, but in exchange he wants that golden statue you obtained earlier. What do you do?"

Make a countdown and mark a box

GM: "I'm making a countdown of 6 boxes. When the last box is marked, the building collapses. If you're still inside when that happens, your character will die. What do you do?"

Advance a countdown

GM: "The mermaid punches you in the gut. Bubbles of air leak out of your mouth despite your best efforts. Mark off a box on the oxygen countdown. What do you do?"

Don't plan the story.

To use GM moves properly you shouldn't pre-plan what the story will look like. You can't expect the PCs to, for example, face the monster, save the princess, and bring her back to the king for their reward. Pre-plan the setting, if you want, with the monster, the princess and the king, and you can loosely sketch out general locations (leaving plenty of room for improvisation) but let the player rolls and the GM moves take the story wherever the story goes.

Maybe the princess is secretly best friends with the monster. Maybe the king has no intention of letting the PCs or the princess live, and now they have to deal with an army out to kill them. Maybe the princess's soul has been trapped in the monster's lair and now the PCs need to find a wizard to help revive her. Play the game to find out where the story goes.

Combat Rules:

Combat is almost exactly the same as the rest of gameplay: the GM and the players have a conversation and the GM makes GM moves and calls for rolls as appropriate. Unlike more traditional RPGs, there is no such thing as combat initiative or rigidly-defined turns. The GM just moves the spotlight around as needed.

A failed trait check in combat *can* mean that the PC takes a condition, but inflicting a condition is only one of many possible moves the GM can make.

Example Combat

The GM in this example is running a medieval fantasy game about exploring dungeons, killing monsters, and retrieving treasure.

GM: The cultist waves his staff ominously over the altar, but the more immediate threat are his two warg rider cronies who are rapidly approaching you. The goblins have wicked curved blades and they cry for your blood. How do you react to their charge?

PC: I cast a flash cantrip to blind them.

GM: What's your Intelligence?

PC: Mediocre.

GM: I'm gonna say casting flash in this context requires a Mediocre Intelligence, so you just need to roll 0 or higher on the Fudge dice.

The player rolls -1.

GM: Mediocre minus one level is Poor. The spell backfires and goes off in your face, temporarily blinding you. What do you do?

PC: Okay, I know the wargs are coming, so I try to jump out of the way.

GM: Dexterity check.

The player rolls -3.

PC: Augh! That's... one level below Terrible! I did so poorly on my roll that there isn't even a ranking for it!

GM: Blinded, you run straight into the wall. Using your moment of disorientation, the goblins attack you from warg-back with their swords. You feel the blades slice through your armor. Mark off an injury.

PC: That was my last minor injury. Freaking hell.

GM: Okay, the temporary blindness has worn off, but you're still a little disoriented. You're at -1 to your next roll. The warg-riders come around for another pass. What do you do?

PC: I vault onto the nearest warg to knock the goblin off his perch.

GM: That'll require a Good Dexterity roll, followed by an opposed Strength check to knock the goblin off. Roll for Dexterity.

The player rolls -1.

GM: Combined with the -1 penalty for disorientation and your Mediocre dexterity, you did Terribly. You make it onto the warg, but at a cost. Because of your fumbling the goblin gets a free shot at you. Mark off another injury. Okay, now for the opposed Strength check. The goblin has Mediocre Strength.

PC: I have Good Strength, so this should work.

The player rolls -1.

PC: So my Fair beats the goblin's Mediocre.

GM: And down the goblin goes!

Fictional Positioning and Combat Mechanics:

Injuries only apply to NPCs in situations where the NPC is able to respond to the threat. If an NPC is disabled or caught unaware they can be knocked out or killed regardless of their condition track.

Conversely, if an enemy is too well-protected fictionally, the player cannot roll to deal damage to them. A large dragon or a military tank won't be injured by some guy randomly swinging a sword, no matter how well the player rolls.

For further information:

For more information on GM moves and the flow of combat, please see the fanmade Dungeon World Guide, linked to from [the Dungeon World website](#). The rules are a little different, but it should help you get the general idea. For context, a Dungeon World result of 7-9 is roughly equivalent to succeeding within one point of a Fudge skill check. So if the difficulty of the skill check was Fair, a 7-9 result would be the equivalent of a result anywhere from Mediocre to Good.

NPCs:

NPCs have a condition track and any traits the GM wants them to have. Traits that don't fit on the Fudge ladder are called gifts (when positive) and faults (when negative). NPCs also have behaviors that can be used as GM moves.

NPCs that aren't supposed to be serious obstacles to the PCs should only have 1 or 2 boxes in their condition tracks. NPCs with more narrative importance can have larger condition tracks, up to the size of a PC's.

Depending on their personality, some NPCs may try to end a conflict without winning it (ie. running away or giving up). They don't always have to fight to the end.

Example NPCs:

Christine Cassiopeia

Setting: Modern-day upper-class.

Physical: Terrible

Social conflict: Superb

Gift: Super-rich.

Fault: A super-bitch.

Behavior: Make snide comments about somebody else's outfit. Let your flunkies take care of things.

Huai Dan

Setting: Xianxia (fantasy China, but with assholes everywhere).

Description: A qi cultivator.

Social: Fair

Combat: Great to Fair Superhuman

Gift: Capable of superhuman feats.

Fault: Has a very thin skin when it comes to perceived disrespect.

Behavior: Avenge any insults. Stand proud and boastful, even in front of a stronger foe. Steal cultivation resources from others.

Killbot 9000

Setting: Survival horror/action.

Description: Human flesh over a robot body. Easily capable of passing for human.

Physical: Good Superhuman

Combat: Fair

Gift: Virtually indestructible robot body.

Fault: Vulnerable to incredibly high pressures or temperatures.

Behavior: Track down and try to kill one specific human.

Troll

Setting: Medieval fantasy.

Description: Big. Dumb. Strong.

Physical: Great

Gift: Quick regeneration. On a failed player roll the troll may regain a condition.
-and/or-

Gift: Slow regeneration. The troll comes back to life a certain amount of time after dying (minutes, hours, days), eventually coming back to full health. Limbs regenerate, etc.

Fault: Pretty dumb.

Fault: Fire attacks and acid attacks both permanently deal damage to the troll.

Fault (optional): Permanently turns to stone in sunlight.

Behavior: Grab things, pick them up, and smash them against other things. Do the same thing to people.

Giant Spider

Settings: Medieval fantasy or horror.

Body: Great

Gift: Paralyzing venom in fangs.

Gift: Webspinning.

Behavior: Create sticky webs to catch prey, inject a paralytic venom with your fangs, then wrap your prey in a cocoon before sucking their fluids out.

Alternatively, the spider may store the cocooned character for later consumption. It depends on how hard of a move the GM wishes to make.

Brigand

Setting: Medieval fantasy.

Combat: Good

Behavior: Loot, pillage, and plunder. Obey your leader. Attack the innocent. Take by force.

Brigand Leader

Setting: Medieval fantasy.

Combat: Great

Leadership: Great

Behavior: Command your followers. Reward obedience. Crush any challenges to your authority. Boast recklessly.

Pyromaniac Fire Mage

Setting: Medieval fantasy.

Magical combat: Great

Physical combat: Mediocre

Gift: Spellcasting. Spells known: Fireball, Flamethrower.

Gift: Immunity to his own flames.

-OR-

Gift: Immunity to all flames

Behavior: Burn all the things! If anybody tries to stop you, burn them as well!

Psionic Monk

Setting: Space opera.

Combat: Great

Gift: Psionicist. Psionic abilities: Telepathy/empathy, Telekinesis, Physical Augmentation (acrobatic jumps, fast movement), Suggestion.

Gift: Plasma Sword.

Behavior: Defend the weak. Destroy the wicked. Be at peace in all your actions.

Fallen Psionic Monk

Setting: Space opera.

Combat: Great

Gift: Psionicist. Psionic abilities: Telepathy/empathy, Telekinesis, Physical Augmentation (acrobatic jumps, fast movement), Lightning.

Gift: Plasma Sword.

Behavior: Let your anger and hatred flow through you. Crush your enemies. Show no mercy.

Mooks (guards, stormtroopers, minions, cultists, etc.)

Setting: Any action setting.

Combat: Mediocre

Behavior: Mob the heroes, die in droves.

Sample complications:

- It's going to require rare or expensive resources
- It will require assistance from somebody else
- It will require following a specific procedure
- You and your allies will risk danger or unwanted attention
- While you work on it, a specific situation will be getting worse elsewhere

The GM may allow the player to choose between different combinations of complications. ("Either it will take a lot of money and several weeks, or you can swallow your pride and ask Jorgen for help." "Never!")

Countdowns

Whenever something may happen in the future but hasn't happened yet, the GM can create a countdown for it. A countdown is just a series of boxes that get checked off when certain criteria are met. Once all the boxes are checked off, the thing happens.

Countdowns are incredibly versatile. The condition track technically counts as a player-facing countdown. Countdowns also can be used as Apocalypse World/Dungeon World Fronts, as skill challenges with success and/or failure conditions, and as a visible "ticking clock" to spur players into action.

Countdown Examples:

Front countdown

Trigger: players fail to act against the kobold menace.

Kobolds attack the town

Kobold Mage steals the Tome of Dragons

The Dragon Lord Awakens

"Ticking clock" countdown

Countdown advances as a GM move

Stairwell collapses, limiting access to the second floor

Building creaks ominously. Players are informed it's about to collapse.

House collapses, incapacitating anybody still inside.

Skill challenge countdown

Goal: get funding for a new spaceship

Trigger: make enough successful skill rolls to the relevant people

Skill challenge with linked failure countdown

Goal: get funding for a new spaceship

Trigger: make enough successful skill checks to the relevant people

Result: get the funding

Trigger: fail the relevant skill checks

Result: get kicked out of the embassy

Appendix A: Example Sets of Traits

Body, Mind, Soul

Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Wisdom, Intelligence, Charisma

Physical, Mental, Social

Careful, Clever, Flashy, Forceful, Quick, Sneaky

Fighting, Agility, Strength, Endurance, Reason, Intuition, Psyche

Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Void

Might, Speed, Intellect

Body, Coordination, Sense, Knowledge, Charm, Command

Brains, Chutzpah, Mechanics, Moxie, Violence

Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, Vigour

Appendix B: Example Keys

The Shadow of Yesterday Keys:

Key of Bloodlust: Hit your key when you overcome an opponent in battle.

Key of Conscience: Hit your key when you help someone in trouble or improve someone's life with your compassion.

Key of the Coward: Hit your key when you avoid danger, or stop a battle by means other than violence.

Key of Faith: Hit your key when you defend your faith or convert another to your faith.

Key of Fraternity: Hit your key when you are influenced by your friend, or show how deep your bond is.

Key of Glittering Gold: Hit your key whenever you increase your wealth.

Key of the Guardian: Hit your key when you are influenced by your ward, or show how deep your bond is.

Key of the Impostor: Hit your key when you actively fool someone with your imposture.

Key of the Masochist: Hit your key whenever you are injured, physically or emotionally.

Key of the Mission: Hit your key when you take action to complete your mission.

Key of the Outcast: Hit your key when the fact that you are an outcast is highlighted in the scene in some manner.

Key of Renown: Hit your key whenever you add to your reputation, by words or by deeds.

Key of Power: Hit your key whenever you gain power or status, either by improving your own situation or weakening a rival's.

Key of Vengeance. Hit your key when you strike a blow against those who wronged you.

Key of the Vow: Hit your key when your vow significantly impacts your decisions.

Lady Blackbird Keys:

Key of the Paragon: Hit your key when you demonstrate your superiority or when your noble traits overcome a problem.

Key of the Commander: Hit your key when your orders are obeyed.

Key of Hidden Longing: Hit your key when you make a decision based on your secret affection or when you somehow show it indirectly.

Key of Greed: Hit your key when you steal something cool or score a big payoff.

Key of the Daredevil: Hit your key when you do something cool that is risky or reckless (especially piloting stunts).

Key of Banter: Hit your key when your character says something that makes the other players laugh or when you explain something using highly technical jargon.

Key of the Traveler Hit your key when you share an interesting detail about a person, place, or thing or when you go somewhere exciting and new.

Key of the Broker: Hit your key when you bargain, make a new contact, or exchange a favour.

Key of the Tinkerer: Hit your key when you repair, design, or modify technology.

Key of the Pirate: Hit your key when you impress someone with your piratical capers or add to your notorious reputation.

Dungeon World Alignment Keys:

Key of the Chaotic Barbarian: Eschew a convention of the civilized world.

Key of the Neutral Barbarian: Teach someone the ways of your people.

Key of the Good Bard: Perform your art to aid someone else.

Key of the Neutral Bard: Avoid a conflict or defuse a tense situation.

Key of the Chaotic Bard: Spur others to significant and unplanned decisive action.

Key of the Good Cleric: Heal another.

Key of the Lawful Cleric: Follow the precepts of your church or god.

Key of the Evil Cleric: Harm another to prove the superiority of your church or god.

Key of the Chaotic Druid: Destroy a symbol of civilization.

Key of the Good Druid: Help something or someone grow.

Key of the Neutral Druid: Eliminate an unnatural menace.

Key of the Good Fighter: Defend those weaker than you.

Key of the Neutral Fighter: Defeat an opponent.

Key of the Evil Fighter: Kill a defenseless, beaten, or surrendered person.

Key of the Lawful Paladin: Deny mercy to a criminal or unbeliever.

Key of the Good Paladin: Protect someone weaker than you.

Key of the Chaotic Ranger: Free someone from literal or figurative bonds.

Key of the Good Ranger: Combat an unnatural threat.

Key of the Neutral Ranger: Help an animal or spirit of the wild.

Key of the Chaotic Thief: Leap into danger without a plan.

Key of the Neutral Thief: Avoid detection or infiltrate a location.

Key of the Evil Thief: Shift danger or blame from yourself to someone else.

Key of the Good Wizard: Use magic to directly aid another.

Key of the Neutral Wizard: Discover something about a magical mystery.

Key of the Evil Wizard: Use magic to cause terror and fear.

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