

FREESTYLE™

DICELESS ROLEPLAYING

A universal system designed by Patrick McCoy of VooDoo Games



VooDoo GAMES™

BRINGING YOUR GAMES TO LIFE



INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking the time to download Freestyle a completely diceless system. However while Freestyle is diceless there are rules to use the system that can adapt to any setting you wish to use freestyle with. As Freestyle grows I can only hope that more people get interested in the project. I know a lot of people who constantly download things that are free and then throw them away. Give Freestyle a chance and constantly check back at our web site www.voodoo games.net

With all this said Freestyle is a work in progress system with lots to be done to it. You are looking at the first incarnation of the system.

Our Purpose

Its hard to explain why anyone writes anything. I have been a long time role-player and big follower of the industry. While I was in school my friends and I would play games until we were so burned out there was no material left to play.


As time moved on so did my friendships and more and more of them left. A lot of us grew apart and the time came to say goodbye and start my life without role-playing. Hard part was something always interested me. Still to this day I find myself at night looking at tons of new games coming on the market from great people who had an idea. I figured with this system this would be my idea.


One of the biggest problems role-players face is the lost of fellow role-players who basically live far away or only have time enough to maybe play the occasional game. This system was built for one purpose and one purpose only. Easy, functional use, online through play by post, or play by email. This system was created for web play. For all the people who need an outlet for their online games, your answer has arrived.

Symbols

Before reading this you must understand what the different symbols for this system mean. Below we will go over the different symbols you will find all through out this book.

This is a box which includes optional rules and text for Freestyles system this maybe used as determined by the GM or Gamemaster

 This symbol is used for important information or critical ideas that can be used in order for system to run smoothly.

 This symbol is used to show ideas that are in development or work in progress for the time being.

As this book continues to be developed more symbols might be added some might be changed. So it is always good to find out what version you have to check against the current version that is out. To tell your current version and info, see below.

Current version of Freestyle is **version 1.0**. Last updated on: 3.2.2005. Freestyle was created and conceived December 19,2004 by Patrick McCoy. Currently VooDoo Games is the publisher of Freestyle. So it goes without saying:

Copyright © 2005 Patrick McCoy. All right reserved. These rules maybe printed for personal use only. They may never be sold for money without express permission from the author. If you are interested in making a setting or using these rules for your game please contact Patrick directly through my email. voodoo games@gmail.com www.voodoo games.net

RULES

Overview

Rules the heart of any system they determine a number of different things from conflict to death. We maybe diceless but there is always a need for certain rules. In order to understand the game you must understand how players interact with conflicts.

Conflicts determine how the game revolves and a lot of times a game is nothing more than people sitting around the table telling a story but what should become of a player's character when they are hanging for their dear life at the edge of a cliff. Will they have enough strength to pull themselves up? One would assume but assume is the word that kills chance. Chance must take place in order to achieve a real sense of danger or drama. Without chance many games fall victim to generic boredom, that is passing tasks that the gamemaster feels is right and failing the ones he feels is too hard.

The problem with this conflict is, some times it is a shock but characters can achieve results that gamemasters might not have prepared for. Well that is one of the perks of having a system in place. Chance comes into play and is important in more ways than one.

This system is still a work in progress and as it develops over time so will the rules. I am hoping to start testing them ASAP and soon getting feedback from online players about their ideas on how to make them more compatible with what they would like to see in a diceless roleplaying game.

i *Please submit feedback if you are testing this system at the current moment. If you somehow got a hold of this system without the Authors knowledge (which is highly likely), please feel free to submit your ideas or even try to run a game. Do contact the author about the specifics of the game.*

Character Creation

Without dice its really hard to define what a character can or can not do. Online becomes more of a task, who can do what and how are you sure they can succeed. Characters are made up of three key elements: Virtues & Vices, Backgrounds, and Tricks. Characters are given 15 character points or CP to distribute freely among the categories.

More high powered adventures might require the use of more points and therefore the GM should make sure to choose carefully when ever you give out more points that what we have labeled here, it could very well unbalance your games. 15 for normal every day characters, 20 for dramatic adventures, and 25 for pulp or high fantasy adventures.

Virtues and Vices

These are characteristics every person has. A virtue is defined by Webster's dictionary as a particularly efficacious, good, or beneficial quality; advantage. It is this simple thing that separates people from other people. A vice is a slight personal failing; a foible. Together these make up the strengths and weakness of characters.

A virtue can be anything from patience or courage depending on what your character values that most. These are positive qualities your character possesses.

A vice unlike a virtue takes away something from your character. Usually habits like smoking or drinking are common vices but can range from simple things like this to more dynamic things like courage or will power.

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A person may never have the same thing for both virtue and vices. For instance a person can both be courageous and a coward. But someone can have courage but no will power.

Backgrounds

Backgrounds make up a character's basic skills they have acquired throughout life. Backgrounds can be as broad as delivery driver or as specific as knowledge: poison. The biggest difference between broad and specific is the GM ability to manipulate your skills. A GM may never manipulate specific skills such as fighting: brawling or athletics: swimming. But should a person decide to pick a broader category they can suffer penalties during play. Such as the GM deciding just how skilled a delivery driver really is at driving or directions.

Most backgrounds help to define a career your character had or skills they have picked up but it also includes things like wealth, allies, and so on.

Tricks

These are generally powers or special skills your character possesses over others. They are very rare and cost 5 CP to start out with. The GM can allow or disallow certain tricks depending on the setting and what they have in mind.

Task Resolution

In a dice-less system some people like to argue over how important or unimportant dice really are to a game. What a person believes is how much chance is involved in whatever task you are trying to accomplish. Dice give most games a sense of drama or dynamic feeling but many people abuse systems

and some force rolls for everything. So the question that is asked at this stage is how to achieve some sort of task resolution.

When a person jumps in between two buildings what are their chances of succeeding?

This is determined by what the character's skilled at. No normal person in their right mind would ever dare to jump across a gap between two buildings the chance of failure is too great. But at the same time if that person was a world class athlete or dare devil and they had tried this task before they might feel their chances are greater. Also time becomes a factor it's much different from getting a good head start with lots of time to plan the jump than being chased by guards with guns.

Contested Tasks

Generally contested tasks are tasks in which the character is trying to succeed at something. Climbing a wall, sneaking past guards, are all contested tasks. The GM determines what virtues, vices, backgrounds, and tricks are relevant and then allows the person to spend points to succeed. The really hard part is the person has to guess the number based on the GM's description of what they say.

Automatic Tasks

Automatic tasks are easy there is no point in making a character even think about how they are going to succeed. These tasks are usually opening a door, eating, etc. sometimes the GM might decide that certain more complicated tasks are also automatic.

Some Tricks can be earned through race or special circumstances. Not all Tricks have to be bought. When someone is bit by a werewolf they gain **uncontrolled shapeshifting** without having to buy it with CP.

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Resisted Tasks

This type of task requires a bit more creativity than the others. Resisted tasks are usually tasks where two characters are locked in some sort of duel or combat. An excellent example has always been two characters arm wrestling to see who is the strongest. Obviously the person with the most strength is going to win but with diceless rules it makes it a bit harder to figure out. When ever a character has been challenged by another character is becomes a game of skills vs skills. Less skilled characters must make up for the lack of experience by using their brain. In most cases characters will bid points secretly to the GM until a predetermined time or number of rounds after which the person who has put in the most effort wins the match.

Roll of the Diceless

The system of freestyle works off of a characters abilities listed above. The GM decides how much effort must be expended before the character succeeds. In order to determine this the GM must work backwards on the character sheet.

First they look over tricks. If any trick is applicable the character might automatically succeed or in some cases just give him instant effort points toward their total.

Next is backgrounds. If the character has any backgrounds that might help at the task they are allowed to spend points towards the task.

Finally is virtues which work just like backgrounds but offer a little more in the way of help.

If the target amount of effort is equal or greater than what the GM purposes the person succeeds at the task if not, they fail.

Stamina and Health

Each character starts off with a number of stamina points. This trait is a characters basic ability to survive damage. As the character falls lower and lower they suffer more. When a person reaches 0 in stamina they have fallen unconscious. At -1 they are bleeding to death or suffocating. At double their normal stamina they have died. Normal human beings have a 3 in stamina.

The higher the starting stamina the more capable characters are of beating what ever it is they are fighting. Normal human beings have differing stamina depending on tricks and virtues but stamina should never increase and only decreases as the character ages. For dramatic games characters start with 5. For pulp or high fantasy games characters start with 7.

Recovery

When ever a character is hurt they usually want to know how to heal. Depending on the damage they have sustained a GM might be compelled to force characters to keep the damage until they are looked at by a proper doctor. But since this is not always the case the GM should use their best judgement.

Fatal wounds taken by blades, fire, blunt objects, bullet wounds, or any other extreme damage heal at the rate of 1 stamina per week.

Superficial wounds taken by suffocation, cuts, bruises, or any other non life threatening damage is healed at the rate of 1 stamina per day.

Recovery may be speed up by the use of proper medical supplies and a skilled doctor or surgeon depending on the wound.

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Make sure to mark on the character sheet the difference between superficial wounds and fatal. The GM should also keep track of what weapons can cause fatal and which ones do superficial damage.

More dramatic or fantasy settings require heroes to be larger than life which means not sitting on their asses healing from every fatal wound. If the GM is running a dramatic or fantasy setting it is best if Fatal wounds are healed at the rate of 1 stamina per day and superficial at the rate of 1 stamina per hour.

Combat

Combat is the at the heart of most players because they are allowed to do things they normal could not do in normal life. Freestyle uses a very dynamic combat system which allows creative players to enjoy more freedom and promotes good role-playing.

Diceless rules usually make combat very description based which means a lot of words and in table top this doesn't work as well as it sounds in text.

In Freestyle combat is defined as two characters or more getting into a fighting using weapons or natural means of attack. During a combat time is broken down into turns and then rounds.

A turn is a single action. Running, shooting a gun, pulling out a sword, bashing someone in the head, etc.

A round is the total amount of time for everyone in the combat to achieve an action.

Initiative

In order to find out what happens in combat characters must figure out their initiative or speed. This is in reference to a number of things.

First any virtues or backgrounds the person might have in awareness, speed, dexterity, agility, wits, combat, warfare, etc. can be spent at this time to insure they go first. These points are not regained until after combat is finished, so use them wisely.

After everyone has tossed in their totals the person with the highest is allowed to go first. then second, then third and until only equal speeds are present. When this happens these two character move at equal speed.

Hitting and Dodging

Once everyone has determined their speeds its time for the real fun to begin. Hitting and dodging comes into effect. That is a character trying to hit or hurt another character.

When ever someone wants to hurt someone else they must use the relevant background or virtue. They spend a number of effort to hit and the other person spends a number of effort to dodge. Who ever has the highest number wins. In case of ties defender always wins.

Advantages

Some times a person tries really hard to beat the other person and comes up with creative ways of stopping them. This extra roleplaying effort that the person uses is called advantages. A person can achieve perks from good roleplaying or as I stated above getting creative.

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Advantages offer a creative outlet for combat instead of the normal "I hit you, you hit me, I dodge.". Advantages are anything from the difference between a person fighting with his fist against another person with a sword to weaknesses.

The GM should allow players to describe why they get the advantages they want through storytelling.

Each advantage should offer 1 extra point of effort towards the person's total. The maximum advantage a person can achieve is up to the GM but average might be from 1-5 since once you get past 5 you get into dangerous realm of over analyzing things instead of roleplaying and you don't want players to do that.

Dramatic or fantasy settings should allow for 7-9 advantages instead of the norm to allow for more dynamic action.

Calling the shots

Some times in combat you want to do something real simple, target a body part or object. When ever you make a called shot you take the chance of the person bidding more points than you.

Every body part or object has a certain number of points the person must bid in order to target it. This does not count towards successes which is why called shots are so dangerous.

There are three levels of called shots. From easiest to hit to the hardest.

- 1 extra effort allows an arm/leg/torso or huge objects.
- 2 extra effort allows hands/feet or medium objects.
- 3 extra effort allows head/neck or small objects.

Damage

Weapons hurt and in this game it is no exception but many games are forced to come up with lists and lists of weapons in order to make sure people have something to base their games off of. Freestyle is a little different. Weapons in Freestyle have no damage rating but instead a minimum amount they can inflict on a person.

Once damage is rolled its time to check for damage. First figure out the person's success ratio. That is the number of points that character bid over the other characters attack.

Then figure out the weapons minimum damage rating using the rules below as guidelines.

Damage Rating: 0 - Fist, Knives, Daggers, Staves.

Damage Rating: 1 - Swords, axe, pistol.

Damage Rating: 2 - shotguns, bastard swords.

Damage Rating: 3 - Rifles, machine guns, two handed weapons

Damage Rating: 4 - Explosives, Gerrenades

