

RPG: Rocket Propelled Gaming by Euan Smith (version 1.1)

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Character creation

The GM outlines the genre for the game. The players then create characters to suit the setting.

GM, "Welcome to Two-Fisted Star Rangers, a Saturday Morning Cartoon adventure series set in the retro-future. Your characters live in Capital City on Terra and are undercover agents of the Star Rangers force. The environment is Art Deco with a 1940's feel. Your homeworld is threatened by the secret machinations of mad scientists and off world civilisations."

Invent a name and concept for your character.

Persimmon Quince is a cunning rogue with a taste for the high life.

Dirk Claymore is a cold-blooded merc', who treats life as a risky game and lavishes his affection on his trusty Plasma Cannon, "Bodeen".

Ritzy Starglitz is a catgirl from the jungles of Venus. She knows how to look after herself and has carved out a career as a chorus-line dancer. She likes to live life in the overtaking lane.

Assign your character between three and six Attributes. An Attribute is anything your character can use to help overcome a challenge. Attributes include skills, talents, traits, relationships, equipment, powers, abilities, gimmicks and anything else you can get your GM to agree to.

Persimmon Quince is Cunning, Charming, Urbane and carries a Micro-blaster.

Dirk Claymore is a Lethal Body Guard and Gambler with a Plasma Cannon.

Ritzy Starglitz is a Hollywood Hooper, Venusian Catgirl and Kickboxer with Dimples and a Rocket-cycle.

Divide six Effort Points (EP) between your character's Attributes.

Persimmon Quince: Cunning (2EP), Charming (2EP), Urbane (1EP) and Micro-blaster (1EP).

Dirk Claymore: Lethal (2EP), Body Guard (2EP), Gambler (1EP) and Plasma Cannon (1EP).

Ritzy Starglitz: Hollywood Hooper (1EP), Dimples (1EP), Kickboxer (2EP), Venusian Catgirl (1EP) and RXJ120 Rocket-cycle (1EP).

Stand by for adventure!

Adventure Creation

The GM creates a basic plot for an adventure. The plot should cover the initial set up and the opposition's objectives.

The Jovian Embassy in Capital City is operating an extensive network of spies. They are gathering intelligence for a planned invasion. Unless the spies can be uncovered, the Jovian's will invade the city. To further their plans, the Jovians are attempting to steal the personnel files of the Star Rangers' undercover operatives.

An adventure is divided up into a number of Challenges. A Challenge is an obstacle in the characters' path. It may represent any type of situation that will hamper the characters' progress. An adventure contains a number of Challenges equal to the average of the characters' EP. If the characters average EP changes during an adventure, the number of Challenges remain unchanged.

The GM is running an adventure for a group of characters with an average of 6EP each; therefore the adventure will contain six Challenges.

Each Challenge is rated in difficulty according to the number of Challenge Points (CP) assigned to it. The average number of CP for an adventure's Challenges should be equal to the number of players (not including the GM).

The GM is running an adventure for a group of three players, so each Challenge should be assigned an average of 3CP.

A Challenge with less than the average number of CP will be easier to overcome; while a Challenge with more will be more difficult to defeat. Any Challenge with more than the average CP will require lucky die rolling or extra effort to surmount.

The GM creates a Rough Plot using the Challenges and CP available.

- 1. There has been a break in at a Capital City Security Office. Investigation will lead to a janitor called 'Mops' McGee. Challenge: investigate the break in. Difficulty: 3CP.*
- 2. 'Mops' McGee will resist arrest. When captured or killed, he will be revealed to be a Jovian agent wearing a neo-skin mask. If captured, he will activate a suicide charge implanted in his mandibles. Challenge: apprehend 'Mops' McGee. Difficulty: 2CP.*
- 3. Surveillance at 'Mops' McGee's apartment will identify his contact, who comes to investigate when McGee fails to make his regular report. This contact is McGee's handler, Vox Mantis, a minor official at the Jovian Embassy. Challenge: identify the contact. Difficulty: 3CP.*
- 4. Gain access to Vox Mantis's office in the Jovian Embassy to find out what he is planning. Difficulty: 4CP.*
- 5. Get away with the list of Jovian Agents operating in Capital City. Difficulty: 2CP.*
- 6. One of the agents named in Mantis's files is on the President's security detail. If the agent discovers his cover is blown, he will undoubtedly attempt to assassinate the President. Challenge: apprehend the potential assassin. Difficulty: 4CP.*

The Rough Plot is simply a guide to how the GM expects the adventure to proceed. If the players take an unexpected track, the GM will have to create new, appropriate Challenges on the fly.

Instead of attempting to break in to Mantis' office, the players decide to kidnap him and interrogate him for information. The GM alters the third Challenge to, "Challenge: snatch Vox Mantis. Difficulty: 4CP".

Tracking Challenge Points

It is a good idea to use something like poker chips or beads to keep track of Challenge Points through out an adventure. The players can see how many CP remain without having to break the flow of the action by asking.

The GM should assemble a pile of CP markers at the start of the adventure and then place a stack of them in clear view at the start of each new challenge.

Overcoming Challenges

The GM outlines the current challenge.

GM, "The computer system in the Security Agency Personnel Office has registered an unauthorised file download. The copied file contains the identities of all of the undercover security agents working to defend Capital City; including your own. The computer is not networked so the intrusion must have been carried out on site. You have been sent to investigate."

The players come up with a plan to tackle the Challenge.

Dirk Claymore, "I'll check the alarm system for signs of a break in."

Persimmon Quince, "I'll watch the CCTV footage to look for suspicious characters."

Ritzly Starglitz, "I'll look for physical evidence in the Records Room."

The GM evaluates each characters part in the plan and assigns a modifier to the character's player's die roll. The GM should ignore the characters suitability for each proposed task as this is covered in a later ; see Extra Effort.

- If the character's part in the plan is poorly thought out, extremely difficult, ineffective, dull, over used or inappropriate to the game's genre, the player suffers a -1 modifier.
- If the character's part in the plan is intelligent, not too difficult and effective, the player gains no modifier.
- If the character's part in the plan is clever, easy, highly effective, dramatic, original, novel or highly appropriate to the game's genre, the player gains a +1 modifier.

GM, "That looks like a pretty effective plan to uncover the culprit. I like that you've covered a variety of different approaches. I'll give you each a +1 Modifier to your die roll."

The players make die rolls, modified as directed by the GM.

- If a player's modified die roll is greater than 3, the character's actions were successful. The Challenge is reduced by 1CP and the character gains 1XP (see Experience Points below).
- If a player's modified die roll is greater than 5, the Challenge is reduced by 2CP and the character gains 2XP.
- If a player's modified die roll is less than 2, something has gone wrong and the Challenge is increased by 1CP. The player or GM can describe how things have grown more difficult.

Dirk Claymore, "I roll 3, plus 1, so I'm successful."

Persimmon Quince, "I roll 2, plus 1, so I'm unsuccessful."

Ritzy Starglitz, "I roll 4, plus 1, so I'm successful; but not successful enough to pick up the slack for Quince. I'm tellin' ya, that lazy fop's a dead weight."

If a Challenge is reduced to less than 1CP it has been overcome and the plot advances to the next Challenge.

If the players give up on a Challenge while it still has some CP remaining, the Challenge is failed. Any remaining CP are added back on to the GM's CP budget and can be spent to make future Challenges more difficult.

GM: "The alarm system has not been tampered with, so it was an inside job. The Record Office is totally sterile. There is no physical evidence, not even normal day to day residue. It has been cleaned by a professional intelligence officer. According to Quince, the CCTV shows no suspicious behaviour in the building. However, a review of the footage identifies the office cleaner, one 'Mops' McGee, as the thief. The investigation has taken longer than necessary. McGee may already have passed on the stolen data to one of your planet's mortal enemies."

The GM decides to move the remaining 1CP to the next Challenge. 'Mops' McGee's capture will be more difficult than originally planned as the players will have to overcome 3CP.

Alternative, the GM might decide that the characters' failure has derailed the original plot and create an entirely new appropriate Challenge to reflect this.

GM: "The investigation is taking longer than you expected. When you pop out to visit the Robo-mat for lunch a black sedan roars around the corner and goons on the running boards open up on you with auto-blasters."

The Jovians have learned that the characters are investigating the data theft and plan to rub them out. Challenge: defeat the disguised Jovian hit squad. Difficulty: 3CP.

The Climax

If the players fail to overcome the final Challenge, they fail in their mission and the opposition gain an advantage in future adventures. This advantage is purely story based and is not reflected in a mechanical way by the rules.

GM, "The President is dead and confusion spreads throughout the ruling Executive. Surely the vile Jovians will use this period of turmoil to further their nefarious schemes; maybe even invading Capital City."

Extra Effort

Ordinarily each player only gets to make a single die roll versus each Challenge; however, they can chose to make additional die rolls through Extra Effort. For each additional die roll, the player picks one of the character's Attributes and describe how it is used to make an Extra Effort. The named Attribute loses 1EP. If an Attribute has no remaining Effort Points, it can not be used for Extra Effort.

The characters are attempting to follow 'Mops' McGee's contact to his lair. Due to a failed roll by Dirk Claymore, there is still 1CP remaining in the Challenge. Ritzy Starglitz's player decides the plucky dancer will make an extra effort to overcome the Challenge.

Ritzy Starglitz, "I rev up my Rocket-cycle, drop a cog and jink over, under and around the oncoming traffic to keep the target in sight. I spend my bikes 1EP and I roll again."

GM, "That sounds exciting but difficult and dangerous, so I'll be harsh and grant you +0 Modifier."

Characters regain their EP at the end of an adventure.

Experience Points

Experience Points (XP) reflect a character's growth through adversity. A player can spend XP to grant a character a new Attribute. The XP cost is equal to the character's maximum EP; the amount of EP the character had at the start of the adventure.

If a player spends XP during an adventure, the player must create a new 1EP Attribute appropriate to the story.

Things have gone badly for the Star Rangers and they currently have no EP remaining. Persimmon Quince has managed to collect 7XP and spends six of these to gain a new 1EP Attribute. He gains, "Irresistible to Jovian Handmaidens (1EP)" and attempts to charm his way out of a sticky situation.

If XP are spent after the end of an adventure, the player can either create a new 1EP Attribute or increase an existing Attribute by 1EP.

Having saved the President's life, the Star Rangers get some much needed R&R.

Persimmon does not have enough XP left to buy another EP, but Dirk and Ritzy do. The three heroes have spent time rubbing shoulders with the inhabitants of the Executive Office.

Dirk has been hanging out with the Security Detail, gaining some friends and advice; he spends 6XP to increase his Bodyguard Attribute to 3EP.

Ritzy has been to cocktail parties and schmoozed with senators and party insiders; she spends 6XP to gain a new Attribute, Friends in High Places (1EP).

TWO-FISTED STAR RANGERS

Name	
Concept	

Attribute	Effort Points					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
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	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1	2	3	4	5	6

Player's Plan	Modifier
Poor	-1
Fair	+0
Good	+1

Modified Roll	Challenge	Character
0	+1CP	+0XP
1	+1CP	+0XP
2	+0CP	+0XP
3	+0CP	+0XP
4	-1CP	+1XP
5	-1CP	+1XP
6	-2CP	+2XP
7	-2CP	+2XP