How to play a tabletop RPG

Role-Playing Game (RPG): When the players assume the role of a character, as if in a play.

A collaborative effort, where each player comes up with a new piece of the story during their turn. When two or more players say something conflicting, the Dungeon Master (DM) decides for them.

What limits the players?

To provide a challenge (Making use of the players abilities and creativity), limitations are put into place as to what they can do. Allowing a person to express as much as what they’re capable of, by finding alternative paths or methods. So, while dice are used to see whether or not a player fails, rather than punishing the player for failing their ‘check’, it should be used to help build their world.

For example, say a character wants to jump up onto a stack of barrels. The player rolls the dice and the number rolled tells them how large the barrels are. This is compared to what the player rolls to see whether or not they can do it. If not, then the player should be given the a chance to find another way before their turn ends. Depending on what they rolled, the player is given the choice to proceed with their initial action or choose an alternative route.

The DM can roll dice to see whether an obstacle or feat is within the limits (stats) of a character.

In D&D, the usual 6 stat-scores or attributes are: **Strength, Dexterity, Intelligence** (Int) or **Attunement**, **Wisdom** (Perception), **Charisma** (Speech), and **Constitution** (Endurance or Vitality).

This number that the DM rolls determines a level of difficulty and is called the ‘Difficulty Class’. Ideally, the player needs to produce a number that is equal to or greater than what the DM rolled. After rolling their own dice, the player increases their number by adding it with the stats that are relative to their action or choice. When something changes the total score, it is called a ‘modifier’. The act of adding attribute numbers to a dice roll is the ‘Proficiency Bonus’ modifier. This number can be further enhanced or reduced by the ‘Character ability’ (Race, Class, Skills, Buffs, ect).

Dice roll + Character stats (Proficiency bonus) + Character abilities = Total score

When their final score is compared to the DC (Difficulty Class), it is known as a ‘check’.

During battle, if a character fails the check, there may be repercussions before moving on to the next players turn. One ‘round’ is when each player has had their turn. Their opponent may also take action or retaliate during or before a players turn, depending on their speed or proximity.

What determines the outcome of a battle?

A characters ‘proximity’ to a target effects their ability to take or inflict damage. If the player does not have any long-range attacks or abilities, their proximity will need to be subtracted by their speed each turn until they are within range. A weapon such as a spear would have the bonus of decreasing this distance. For example, if a spear had 2m range, the proximity does not need to reach zero before they can attack.

The ‘Hit-points’ are the same as Health Points or HP for short. When the HP of a character drops to zero, it usually means they’re no longer playing. When attempting to eliminate a target, it is called an ‘Attack roll’. But before the player can even begin to reduce another characters HP, they must
first overcome the targets ‘Armour Class’ (AC). Because their Attack Roll is subtracted by this AC, if they cannot produce a number that is higher than their targets AC, then it usually has no effect.

The DM usually controls NPC’s or Attacking forces. They also provide direction for the story. Both outside and inside of battle, the players can openly discuss their next move together.

The type of dice the player rolls during a check depends on which attribute their action falls under. Each attribute can have a different dice type that is between D4 and D12, with a combined total of no less or more than 48, or 56 if you include the speed attribute. The combination of these dice and which stat they roll for is the Class. Otherwise, all the players can just roll D8’s for their ability checks.

There are ten combinations of these dice that can be arranged into any attribute.

48 = D8, D8, D8, D8, D8
48 = D8, D8, D8, D8, D4, D12
48 = D8, D8, D4, D4, D12, D12
48 = D8, D8, D4, D12, D12, D12
48 = D8, D8, D4, D10, D10
48 = D4, D4, D10, D10, D10
48 = D8, D8, D6, D6, D12
48 = D6, D6, D6, D12, D12
48 = D4, D8, D10, D10, D12
48 = D4, D8, D10, D10, D10

If you include Speed as an attribute, then it becomes eleven:

56 = D8, D8, D8, D8, D8, D8
56 = D8, D8, D8, D8, D8, D4, D12
56 = D8, D8, D8, D4, D4, D12, D12
56 = D8, D4, D4, D12, D12, D12
56 = D8, D4, D4, D10, D10
56 = D6, D4, D4, D10, D10
56 = D8, D8, D6, D6, D12
56 = D8, D6, D6, D6, D12, D12
56 = D8, D4, D8, D10, D10, D12
56 = D8, D4, D8, D10, D10, D12
56 = D8, D4, D8, D10, D10, D10

The Race and Skills of a character and the advantages they provide

The characters race provides 6 points that can be distributed among the 7 attributes.

A character ‘Skill’ allows for an additional dice to be rolled when a condition (Specific changes or events that are required before another act or change can occur) is fulfilled. For example, if they are naturally stealthy and they pass a stealth-check (Dex), they may roll a D20 in addition to their Str dice. The players gear or attacks (Weapons, tools, spells) may also have their own dice. Especially if they can inflict ailments such as poison (Toxic), fire (Burn), ice (Frost), Lightning (Electric), as well as curses or hexes.

For example, an enchanted sword can have a yellow D6 (low-mid effect) when attacking a creature that is weak against such an element. The dice number (Faces) may also be increased for targets that
it would have a better effect on, or during certain situations. One example of this, could be an electric arrow during a rainstorm. In this case, it may have a chance to bring lightning down, resulting in a yellow D20 being used. There may also be cases where an effect can ‘stack’ which is when an effect increases after repeated use. Take the stomp move used by Whitney's Miltank in Pokemon Gold/Silver for example.

**Advantages and Disadvantages**

A check or attack roll saving throw can be effected by their characters surroundings or by events that are taking place in said area. This can provide either an advantage or disadvantage depending on circumstances. For example, the players can enter a volcanic cave that would weaken aquatic-type creatures if they were to enter. If a player has an advantage, they get to roll two dice and choose the one with the higher roll. But if they’re at a disadvantage, they can only use dice that rolled lower.

**Making a character**

The player makes their own character using what’s called a ‘Character Sheet’. While there are printable versions, this can be as simple as a notepad. This is where their attributes are recorded as well as any modifiers. It also enables them to keep track of any changes that their character undergoes.

The base attribute score of a character is decided by rolling 4 x D6 dice and then adding together the highest 3. This is done 6 times (A 7th if you include speed). This has fallen out of favour for the more popular method of assigning these numbers (15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8) either by choice or randomly, using this tool: https://www.random.org/lists/

https://www.dndbeyond.com/compendium/rules/basic-rules/races#ChoosingaRace
Name generator: https://www.mithrilandmages.com/
https://wiki.roll20.net/5th_Edition_OGL_by_Roll20
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lWhySS2mJgk
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d0vZFBPs4WQ

**The Attributes that are related to an action**

**Strength**: Physical fitness and Speed

- Being able to move heavy weights and carry equipment.
- To inflict damage or restrain someone.

**Dexterity**: The ability to wield more complex weapons that require better motor skills (Sneaking) or steady aim (Archery or Spell casting).

**Intelligence**: 

- Attunement: To adjust or combine components in such a way that they fit well together.
  - Magic (MP)
- **Miracle**: A type of Magic that heals or buffs the players character, as well as generate lightning.
- **Pyromancy**: A type of sorcery involving fire.
- **Charm**: Adds certain properties or effects to an object or individual.
  - **Buffs**: Granting Resistances or an Advantage.
- **Transfiguration**: The alteration of an object or individual, both in appearance and structure.
- **Curse / Hex**: Intended to cause harm (*Curse*) or control (*Hex*) individuals.

- Note that some abilities require items such as Tomes (spellbook), chimes, armor, etc.
  - Potion brewing, Crafting tools, or Medical expertise

**Wisdom**: The ability to consistently make good choices.
- Also known as Perception, which is the ‘attention to detail’
  - Identify traps, find clues and hidden items
  - Find secret entrances
  - See through disguises and other facades

**Charisma**: Communication Skills (*Speech*)
- To draw out information from someone.
- The ability to tell a convincing lie or expose one.
- Appease someone (Getting them to do something).

**Constitution**: This is a players HP or endurance.
- Certain buffs can increase resistances to effects such as Burn (Fire), Lightning (Electric), Ice (Frost), Poison (Toxic), or can negate magic effects such as curses or hexes.

Finally, a Saving throw is a ‘last ditch’ dice roll that will save the players character when their HP reaches 0. If they roll the high number, they are left with 1 HP. But if the number is low (Below half the highest number of the dice), they may be removed from the game.

Given the information above, a character sheet would look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Player Name:</th>
<th>Character Name: Maru Mc’Lovin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Base stats</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Str 15</td>
<td>D8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Naturally Stealthy</td>
<td>Str: 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+3 to move undetected</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dex 13</td>
<td>D6</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>Dual Wielding</td>
<td>Dex: 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+2 to attack when using dual weapons</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 12</td>
<td>D12</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>Pro Lock Picker</td>
<td>Int: 15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+8 to pick locks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wis 14</td>
<td>D6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wis: 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cha 10</td>
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<td>Cha: 11</td>
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<td>Vit 8</td>
<td>D6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speed 11</td>
<td>D6</td>
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