Omnibus Lite

v0.1

This game of make-believe follows a story told by a single Game Master (GM), whose world is inhabited by one or more special characters, called Player Characters (PCs), whose actions are decided by other players at the table. Sometimes, the PCs may be competing against each other, but almost every challenge they face will need to be overcome together.

The rules here provide multiple different levels of rules complexity, so that simpler rules can be used when greater narrative control is desired and more complex rules can be used to add additional tactical strategy elements to the game. When in doubt, the GM may choose to revert to a lower level of rules complexity at any time to gain greater control of a situation or to simplify a situation which would otherwise be tedious or boring. Complexity Level 3, the highest available for free from this system, is the highest recommended complexity level for short games with new players.

Complexity Level 0: The GM Says So

The GM describes the set-up of the scene, the players say what their characters try to do in response, and the GM describes what actually happens.

This can always be used when simply telling a story, but for game-based challenges to be fair, beatable, and fun, the players need to know enough about what's happening in the story for a solution that they think up themselves to be feasible. For example:

- In challenges related to social interaction with other characters, such as lying passably or swaying a group to your own side, the players will need to know or be able to find out what the non-player characters (NPCs) are trying to accomplish, and the types of value systems or rules they have that affect their decision-making and their beliefs about the world around them.
- In challenges related to leadership or organizational ability, such as running a business together or building up a frontier town, the players will need to know or be able to find out what the different strengths and weaknesses of the various forces involved are and how the opposition (whether it's competitors, nature, or otherwise) may or may not respond to their decisions.
- In challenges related to investigation, such as solving a crime or uncovering a villain's secret weakness, the players will need to have or be able to gain access to clues that logically reveal the answers they need or the way to their next clue.
- In challenges related to survival, such as surviving a plague or exploring a new territory, the players will need to know or be able to find out what the dangers are around them and how to get or find resources that will help them overcome them or get to safety.
- In challenges related to skulking and infiltration, such as robbing a bank without being detected or defeating the booby traps guarding a tomb, the players will need to know or be

able to find out what weaknesses they can exploit and how to tell if they've failed and left evidence or triggered something.
- In challenges related to physical combat, the players will need to know or be able to find out what weapons they have, what they're fighting, what types of damage they can do, and what types of damage they can take without dying or losing.

All of these things can be as abstract or as specific as is needed for the narrative.

Complexity Level 1: Rolling Dice

To add an element of uncertainty and managing probabilities, you can use dice to decide uncertain outcomes. This game uses standard gaming notation, #d#; the first number is the number of dice to roll and add together and the second number is the number of sides, for example, 1d20 means one twenty-sided die, and 2d6 means roll two six-sided dice and add them together.

Ability Checks

When deciding how well it goes when a PC wants to do something, have their player roll 1d20. If the number they roll is higher than or equal to a target number chosen by the GM called a Difficulty Class (DC), the PC succeeds. Otherwise, they fail. This is called making an Ability Check.

Multiple Degrees of Success

If you roll a 20 on the die and succeed, it's a Critical Success, and if you roll a 1 on the die and fail, it's a Critical Failure. The GM can choose to have a Critical Success or Critical Failure do more than a normal success or normal failure in terms of advancing the story, or can choose to have there be an amplified effect from rolling very high above or very far below the DC. Additionally, if a player narrowly fails, the GM may allow them to succeed instead at a cost, such as having a complication occur that creates something new for the party of PC's to have to deal with.

Determining Difficulty Class

The table below shows how the GM might assign DCs to things so that rolls are always possible to succeed or fail at.

Difficulty of Task	**DC**
Easy	2d6
Medium (the default)	2d10
Hard	2d6 + 8

The GM can also DCs in other ways, such as assigning a number without using dice or using more or less dice for harder or easier tasks, but, as always, they can also simply choose what happens (Complexity Level 0), with or without rolling any dice first.

Modifiers to Rolls

To make the impossible possible (or vice versa), the GM can choose to apply a modifier to the d20 roll, usually in the form of Bonuses (a number added to the roll) or Penalties (which are subtracted) to represent things like having better tools at hand or being better suited to the task. This not only makes it easier to succeed or fail in general, but Penalties can make a failure with a DC less than 1 or a roll of 20, and Bonuses can make a success with a DC higher than 20 or a roll of 1. This lets the GM create differences between what's possible or not based on things like the PCs' equipment, circumstances, or individual abilities.

To make rolls more likely to succeed or fail without changing what's possible, the GM can instead have players roll multiple d20s and ignore all but the highest or lowest result. Each additional d20 you roll and keep the highest result is called an Advantage, and each d20 you roll and keep the lowest result is called a Disadvantage. If you have at least one of each, they cancel each other out; for example, if you have two Advantages and three Disadvantages, you roll with only one Disadvantage die and no Advantages. The more Advantages or Disadvantages a roll has, the less difference each makes to the final number rolled.

Describing Difficulty to Rolls

The players should generally know what the general difficult of a roll is (such as what dice will be rolled or how generally hard it is in plain English terms), as well as what Modifiers they will have that could help them or hurt them, before the roll is made, and for Ability Checks, before they are forced to commit to a course of action. The GM, of course, may make exceptions for times when the PCs themselves don't know anything or when telling the players these things would in some other way spoil the narrative.

Complexity Level 2: Energy and Resting

To introduce resources into the game, you can use numbers to represent how tired the PCs are, with rests – declared breaks within the game world where the PCs recuperate – required to get each character ready for the next encounter.

Mental Energy

Each character has 20 Mana Points (MP) to represent their mental energy; it costs 1 MP for every 10 minutes of concentration – such as intense studying or watching for one person in a crowd – and you can spend as many MP as you want when making a mental Ability Check to gain 1 Advantage for every MP you spend. You regain 1d4 expended MP after 1 hour of uninterrupted rest, and all after resting overnight.

Whenever a character loses MP and the new total is a negative number, the player must make an Ability Check with a DC equal to 10 + the absolute value of their total MP. If they fail, they gain Mental Exhaustion until the next time they rest overnight, meaning that they have Disadvantage on mental Ability Checks and Saving Throws, cannot spend MP to gain Advantage on these rolls (or do anything else), and they fail to do anything that would cause them to lose MP, such as intense studying or concentration.

Physical Energy

Each character has 5 Stamina Points (SP) to represent their physical energy; it costs 1 SP for every 20 minutes of light activity or 1 minute of intense exertion, and you can spend as many SP as you want when making a physical Ability Check to gain 1 Advantage for every SP you spend. You regain 1 SP after 10 minutes of uninterrupted rest and all after 1 hour of rest.

Whenever a character loses SP and the new total is a negative number, the player must make an Ability Check with a DC equal to 10 + the absolute value of their total SP. If they fail, they gain a level of Physical Exhaustion, whose effects are listed below:

1 - They have a Disadvantage on Ability Checks not made in intense situations, such as those that are life-threatening or are otherwise high-staked and adrenaline-pumping.

2 - They have a Disadvantage on Ability Checks in intense situations and two Disadvantages on all other Checks.

3 - They have a Disadvantage on Ability Checks in intense situations, three Disadvantages on all other Checks, and it takes them twice as long as normal to move long distances on foot or perform other menial physical tasks.

4 - They have two Disadvantages on Ability Checks in intense situations, five Disadvantages on all other Checks, and they cannot stand or move on their own. While at this level or less, they can spend 1 SP to ignore all Physical Exhaustion levels they have for one minute of in-game time.

5 - They fall unconscious.

They lose one level of Physical Exhaustion every time they rest overnight (which is their only option if they have already fallen unconscious).

Complexity Level 3: Ability Scores

To make differences between different characters' abilities significant in determining what challenges they can overcome, use numbers to represent different things the characters are good or bad at, and make those number modifiers to the rolls that involve those skills.

The Six Ability Scores

This ruleset recommends using six different Ability Scores for each character:

- **Charisma** to represent social skill and force of personality.
- **Wisdom** to represent non-analytical thinking and intuition.
- **Intellect** to represent analytical thinking and education.
- **Constitution** to represent general vitality and bodily fortitude.
- **Dexterity** to represent fine motor skills and precision control.
- **Strength** to represent gross motor skills and brute force.

Determining Ability Scores

For each Score, roll either 2d6 - 7 (for Scores tending toward 0), or 1d12 - 7, ignoring rolls of 1 (for Scores that are more spread out). Players can also assign their Scores themselves by choosing one number for each Score between -5 and +5, so that they add up to 0.

Making An Ability Check With Ability Scores

When making an Ability Check, the GM assigns either one or two Scores to the Check, and the Player adds them to the number rolled, doubling the amount they add if only one Score is chosen. Below is a table and explanations showing how different Scores might be assigned to different types of tasks.

Social (Charisma): • Endearing (Charisma + Charisma) • Convincing (Charisma + Intellect)	**Survival (Constitution):** • Endurance (Constitution + Constitution) • Laboring (Strength + Constitution)
Leadership (Wisdom): • Planning (Wisdom + Wisdom) • Inspiring (Wisdom + Charisma)	**Stealth (Dexterity):** • Sleight of Hand (Dexterity + Dexterity) • Acrobatics (Dexterity + Constitution)
Investigation (Intellect): • Logic (Intellect + Intellect) • Insight (Intellect + Wisdom)	**Combat (Strength):** • Melee Combat (Strength + Strength) • Ranged Combat (Strength + Dexterity)

- Social: “Endearing” is getting people to enjoy being around you, such as when making friends or appealing to someone’s sense of kindness, and “convincing” is making people believe something, such as a lie or a hard-to-believe truth.
- Leadership: “Planning” includes business-type decisions and , and “Inspiring” is getting people to be willing to follow these plans.
- Investigation: “Logic” follows things that have to be true, while “Insight” is the kind of problem-solving that involves gut-reactions as much as reasoning.
- Survival: “Endurance” is not dying; “Laboring” is accomplishing long-term physical tasks without fainting with exhaustion.
- Stealth: “Sleight of Hand” includes pickpocketing or disabling locks or traps, while “Acrobatics” includes moving silently across a field or hanging from or climbing across a ceiling without falling down or breaking something.
- Combat: “Melee Combat” includes hitting people directly with a rock; “Ranged Combat” includes throwing at people from far away.

If the GM assigns both a mental and a physical Ability Score to a Check, they also decide whether Mana, Stamina, either, or both can be spent to gain Advantages for that Check.

Energy Levels With Ability Scores

A character’s maximum number of Mana Points is equal to 20 + double their highest mental Score, and their maximum number of Stamina Points is equal to 5 + their highest physical Score.

The Checks to avoid Mental and Physical Exhaustion when MP and SP go below 0 are made with the same Scores that determine a character’s maximum energy levels, so a character with high

Wisdom and Dexterity Scores would make a Wisdom + Wisdom Check to avoid Mental Exhaustion and a Dexterity + Dexterity Check to avoid Physical Exhaustion.

Simplifying The Ability Scores

If your campaign includes mostly mental challenges, you can use Constitution in place of Dexterity and Strength, and if it's mostly physical, you can use Intellect in place of Charisma or Wisdom.

To convert a six-ability character into a four-ability character (or into a two-ability character, if you decide to simply mental and physical scores together), add together Charisma, Wisdom, and Intellect to get the new Intellect Score, or add together Constitution, Dexterity, and Strength to get the new Constitution Score.