TRUE 20

Quick Start Rules

Quick Start Rules

True20 is an *adventure roleplaying game* in which you, the players, take on the roles of fictional heroes having adventures in an imagined environment. One player, the *Narrator,* takes on the job of creating that environment and the stories for the other players to take part in. Together, you create your own tales of action and adventure, like your favorite novels, movies, or video games.

The best part about adventure roleplaying is *you* are in control of the action! Literally anything you can imagine is possible, because you and your fellow players control the story.

You may have played other roleplaying games, or this may be your introduction to new worlds of adventure. Either way, welcome to *True20* and new worlds of adventure!

The Rules

True20 is based on a set of rules used in many popular roleplaying games called the *d20 System*, modified for fast, easy, and fun game-play. The basic rules are quite simple and used to resolve virtually all conflicts in the game. This section goes over the essential rules of the game to give you a feel for them.

The Die

True20 uses a single twenty-sided die, abbreviated "d20" or "1d20" (for "one twenty-sided die"). You can find these dice in game and hobby stores everywhere.

Checks

Actions in *True20* are resolved with a *check,* a roll of the die, plus or minus a modifier. The result of the check is compared to a *difficulty* number: if the result equals or exceeds the difficulty, the action succeeds. If it is less than the difficulty, it fails. Sometimes the degree of success or failure (how much the check result is above or below the difficulty) matters; other times, it does not.

Difficulty

Any task in *True20* can be assigned a numeric *difficulty,* the result you need to get on a check to accomplish that task. General difficulties are automatic (0, you don't even need to roll), easy (5), average (10), tough (15), challenging (20), formidable (25), heroic (30), super-heroic (35), and nearly impossible (40). Only the greatest heroes can accomplish high-difficulty tasks on a regular basis.

Difficulties	
Difficulty	**Number**
Easy	5
Average	10
Tough	15
Challenging	20
Formidable	25
Heroic	30
Super-heroic	35
Nearly Impossible	40

Modifiers

Checks have *modifiers*, positive and negative numbers based on the hero's abilities and skills, as well as on the prevailing conditions. In general, positive conditions grant a +2 modifier, while adverse conditions impose a –2 modifier.

Rounds and Scenes

Time in *True20* is generally broken up into *rounds* and *scenes*. A round is a six-second segment of time, enough for a hero to do one or two things in the midst of a fight or other action scene. A scene is an indeterminate length of time, generally long enough for something significant to happen. Think of a scene as a chapter in a story or a single scene in a film.

Traits

True20 defines heroes (and other characters) in terms of certain *traits*. These are game-defined qualities, usually assigned a numeric value to act as a modifier for checks. The traits you will find on the hero sheets include the following:

Abilities are the six basic traits that define a hero*:* Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Each has a modifier ranging from –5 (terrible) to +5 (outstanding), with the average at +0. A strong hero has a high Strength modifier, while a smart hero has a high Intelligence, and so on.

Skills are trained abilities, things you learn to do. Training in a skill provides an additional modifier, added to one of your basic abilities, which you use when making checks involving that skill. If you're trained in the Knowledge of arcane lore, for example, you get a bonus equal to your skill when making Intelligence checks to know something about the arcane. Skills give heroes bonuses ranging from +4 to +20 or more at higher levels.

Feats are special capabilities, talents, or knacks heroes may have. Each feat gives your hero a special ability, explained in the hero's description. *True20* features many more feats heroes can have.

Attack measures your hero's training in combat. It is the modifier you add to your rolls to hit an enemy in a fight.

Defense measures your hero's ability to avoid attacks. It determines the difficulty to hit your hero in combat.

Saving Throws (or "saves" for short) are a hero's traits for avoiding or resisting certain effects. *Toughness* is used for resisting damage and direct harm. *Fortitude* is for resisting attacks on the hero's health, and is based on Constitution. *Reflex* is for avoiding harm using speed and reaction time, and is based on Dexterity. *Will* is for resisting mental influences and arcane powers, and is based on Wisdom. A saving throw is like any other check: a roll, plus your hero's save modifier, against the difficulty of the effect or hazard you want to avoid.

Conviction is a special quality of heroes (and other important characters in the story). It represents their ability to overcome adversity and do important things when they need to. All *True20* heroes have 3 points of Conviction to start and gain more as they advanced in level. You can spend a point of Conviction to re-roll any die roll you make and take the better of the two rolls. If the result of the second roll is 10 or below, add 10 to it, meaning you always get *at least* an average result if you spend Conviction on a roll. You can also spend Conviction to allow your hero to recover quickly from injury (see **Damage and Recovery**). Heroes regain all spent Conviction as the start of each adventure.

Interaction

Characters in *True20* interact in various ways. Heroes try to negotiate agreements between disputing parties, or go on diplomatic missions. Villains taunt and threaten, or even try to sway heroes to their side.

People get into disagreements or debates. The whole adventure may hinge on convincing the right person at the right time.

The Narrator determines the attitude of any character the heroes encounter during the game. The heroes can then try to influence the character's attitude using Charisma and related skills (such as Diplomacy or Intimidate). The **Interaction** table shows the effects of character attitudes and the Difficulty of attempting to change someone's attitude with a Charisma or skill check. Note that a particularly bad check result can actually make a character's attitude *worse*. For example, rolling less than a 5 makes an unfriendly character turn hostile. In general, a hero can attempt to influence another character only once in any given scene.

While heroes can use their Charisma and skills to influence the attitudes of Narrator characters, heroes generally cannot affect the attitudes of other heroes, nor can Narrator characters modify their attitudes. The players choose the attitudes of their heroes, and when they change.

INTERACTION

Attitude	Means	Possible Actions
Hostile	Will take risks to oppose you	Attack, interfere, berate, flee
Unfriendly	Wishes you ill	Mislead, gossip, avoid, watch suspiciously, insult
Indifferent	Doesn't care either way	Socially acceptable interaction
Friendly	Wishes you well	Chat, advise, offer limited help, advocate
Helpful	Will take risks to aid you	Protect, back up, heal, aid, support

	New Attitude Result				
Starting Attitude	Hostile	Unfriendly	Indifferent	Friendly	Helpful
Hostile	less than 20	20	25	35	50
Unfriendly	less than 5	5	15	25	40
Indifferent	—	less than 1	1	15	30
Friendly	—	—	less than 1	1	20

CONFLICT

The heroes of *True20* are often forced into conflict. When fights occur in the game, follow these steps:

INITIATIVE

At the start of a conflict, each player rolls *initiative* to determine the order in which everyone acts. This is a d20 roll plus the hero's Dexterity modifier. The Narrator rolls for the other characters involved in the conflict. Everyone then acts in order from highest initiative result to lowest. Once the lowest result has acted, go back to the top of the list and start a new round. This continues until the conflict is resolved.

ACTIONS

During a round, heroes can perform one of several types of *actions*. Generally, heroes can perform one *move* action and one *standard* action each round. A move action is moving a short distance (whether running, climbing, swimming, etc.) or doing something equivalent to moving, like standing up, picking up an object, drawing a weapon, and so forth. A standard action affects something else, like making an attack, using a skill or power, and so forth.

Heroes can give up their standard action for another move action (to move twice as far, for example). They can also give up their standard

and move actions to perform a *full-round* action, something that takes the full round to accomplish. Finally, some actions — like speaking, making saving throws, dropping held items, and so forth — are *free* actions, taking no real time. Heroes can perform as many free actions during their turn as the Narrator feels are appropriate.

ATTACKING

To attack an opponent, take a standard action and make an *attack roll*. This is 1d20 + your attack modifier and your Dexterity modifier. The difficulty is equal to 10 + your opponent's defense and Dexterity modifier. If you succeed, your attack hits. If you fail, you miss. If you hit, you may inflict damage, see **Damage**.

> **Attack = d20 + attack + Dexterity vs. 10 + opponent's defense + Dexterity**

DAMAGE

Anyone hit with a damaging attack makes a *Toughness saving throw*. This is a roll of 1d20 plus Toughness (which measures the ability to avoid or shrug off damage) plus any modifiers from armor. Resisting damage has a base difficulty of 15 plus a modifier equal to the attack's *damage bonus*. For unarmed attacks, this is the attacker's Strength modifier. For weapons, this is the weapon's damage plus the attacker's Strength modifier. For example, an attacker with Strength +1, wielding a short sword (damage modifier +2) has a total damage modifier of +3. So, resisting this damage is difficulty 18 (15 + 3).

> **Damage = d20 + Toughness + armor vs. 15 + damage bonus**

If the Toughness saving throw succeeds, the target suffers no significant damage, nothing more than a slight scratch, minor bruise, or torn clothing. If the Toughness save fails, the target suffers damage. How much damage depends on the type of attack (lethal or non-lethal) and the amount the Toughness save result is below the difficulty, as shown on the damage track:

DAMAGE TRACK

0	5+	10+	15+	
Bruised	**Dazed**	**Staggered**	**Unconscious**	
		❏	❏	
		❏	❏	❏
Hurt	**Wounded**	**Disabled**	**Dying**	**Dead**

Non-lethal Damage comes from unarmed attacks (punches and kicks) as well as specific non-lethal weapons like saps.

A failed Toughness save against a non-lethal attack means the target is *bruised*. Put a mark under the **Bruised** column of the damage track. If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *dazed*. Put a mark in

the **Dazed** column of the damage track. If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *staggered;* check off the **Staggered** box on the Damage Track. If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *unconscious;* check off the **Unconscious** box on the Damage Track.

If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result. So if a target is already staggered and suffers another staggered result, check off the unconscious box. If the unconscious box is checked, and the character suffers more non-lethal damage, check off the first available lethal box (so go to wounded, disabled, etc.). Characters can take an unlimited number of bruised and dazed results.

Lethal Damage is inflicted by weapons, from cutting and piercing weapons like swords and spears to heavy bludgeoning weapons like hammers and maces.

A failed Toughness save against a lethal attack means the target is *hurt*. Put a mark in the **Hurt** column of the damage track. If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *wounded*. Put a mark in the **Wounded** column of the damage track. If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *disabled;* check off the **Disabled** box on the Damage Track. If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *dying*; check off the **Dying** box on the Damage Track.

If a target suffers a "boxed" result that is already checked off (staggered, unconscious, disabled, or dying), check off the next highest result. So, if a target is already disabled and suffers another disabled result check off the dying box (if that's already checked off, check off the dead box, etc.).

- *Collateral Damage:* Lethal damage inflicts non-lethal "collateral damage" as well from the shock and pain of an injury. Whenever your hero suffers lethal damage, check off the corresponding non-lethal damage, so a hero who is wounded is also dazed, a hero who is hurt is also bruised. The effects of the damage conditions are cumulative.

Damage Conditions

Damaged characters in *True20* can suffer from any of nine *conditions*, given on the *Damage Track* and described here.

- *Bruised* characters suffer a –1 penalty to Toughness saves against non-lethal damage per bruised condition.

- *Dazed* characters lose one full action after suffering a dazed result; they can take no actions, but retain their normal defense. The following round, they can act normally. They suffer a –1 penalty to Toughness saves against non-lethal damage per dazed condition.

- *Staggered* characters lose one full action after suffering a staggered result. They can take no actions, lose their Dexterity bonus (but not penalty) to Defense, and opponents get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against them. In the following rounds, staggered characters can only take a standard or a move action, not both.

- *Unconscious* characters pass out and cannot do anything until they awaken.

- *Hurt* characters suffer a –1 penalty to Toughness saves against lethal damage per hurt condition.

- *Wounded* characters are *shaken,* suffering a -2 penalty to all checks, including attack rolls and saving throws. This persists until all wounded conditions are eliminated. Additionally, a wounded character is *stunned* for one round after being wounded. They can take no actions, lose their Dexterity bonus (but not penalty) to Defense, and opponents get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against them. Wounded characters suffer a –1 penalty to Toughness saves against lethal damage per wounded condition.

- *Disabled* characters are badly injured. If a disabled character takes a standard action, he falls unconscious and begins dying on the following round.

- *Dying* characters have to make a Constitution check (difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

- *Dead* characters are, well, dead. This usually means the end for the character, although some powerful healers in *True20* can restore life to the recently deceased.

Recovery

Recovering from damage, lethal or non-lethal, requires a Constitution check (Difficulty 10). A successful check erases the damage condition, while an unsuccessful check means there is no significant improvement for that time period. Some damage may take multiple recovery checks to go away entirely.

You can make a recovery check once per minute for staggered and unconscious, once per hour for wounded, and once per day for disabled. Dying characters make checks to stabilize; once you are stable, dying becomes unconscious and disabled, which you recover from normally (one minute for unconscious, one day for disabled).

You can spend a Conviction point to get an immediate recovery check from non-lethal damage, rather than having to wait a minute. You can also spend Conviction on your recovery check, ensuring success (since Conviction always grants you a roll of 10).

Bruised and dazed conditions fade automatically at a rate of one per minute. Hurt conditions do the same at a rate of one per hour. You can spend a Conviction point to immediately erase all bruised, dazed, and hurt conditions after (but not during) a conflict.

Fatigue

Characters can suffer from *fatigue* as well as damage. This usually results from tasks requiring great effort, such as moving all out, exertion in difficult environments, and using powers. There are three levels of fatigue: winded, fatigued, and exhausted.

- *Winded:* The character suffers a –1 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity, and cannot move all out or charge. A winded character suffering an additional fatigue result becomes fatigued.

- *Fatigued:* The character cannot move all out or charge, and suffers a –2 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. A fatigued character suffering an additional fatigue result becomes exhausted.

- *Exhausted:* The character is near collapse. Exhausted characters move at half normal speed and suffer a –3 penalty to effective Strength and Dexterity. An exhausted character suffering an additional fatigue result falls unconscious (and must recover from it normally, see **Damage Conditions**).

- *Recovery:* Every hour of rest, a hero makes a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) to recover from fatigue. Success reduces the character's fatigue condition by one level (from exhausted to fatigued, from fatigued to winded, winded to normal). A full ten hours of rest allows any character to completely recover from all fatigue conditions.

Powers

The worlds of *True20* are places of wonder, and many *True20* characters have certain *supernatural powers* at their command. Each power is like an individual skill, except powers are available only to heroes of the adept role and cost the same as a feat (since powers are, in essence, special types of feats only adepts can have). Heroes can start out with various powers, and can acquire them during play as well. Powers have a rank based on an adept's level and use that rank to determine their effectiveness.

FATIGUE

The use of some powers puts a strain on the adept's mind and body. When an adept uses a fatiguing power, the player must make a *fatigue save*; this is a Will saving throw against a Difficulty of 11 (for the powers of a 1st-level adept). A successful save results in no ill effect. A failed save means the character suffers a level of fatigue (see **Fatigue**).

Rapid use of powers in a short period of time makes it harder to overcome fatigue. Every time an adept uses a fatiguing power within an hour's time, the Difficulty of successive fatigue saves increases by 1. So, an adept uses a fatiguing ability, making a fatigue save against the normal Difficulty. A minute later, the adept uses another fatiguing ability. This time the Difficulty is one higher. Use of certain powers in rapid succession can tire out even powerful adepts.

To eliminate the cumulative fatigue save modifier, an adept must refrain from using fatiguing powers for at least an hour. The adept does not need to rest during that time, just avoid any further uses of fatiguing powers. You can also spend a Conviction point to eliminate the accumulated fatigue penalty from using powers, gaining a second wind.

POWER DESCRIPTIONS

The powers known to the heroes and other characters in the *Death in Freeport* adventure are described here. The *True20 Adventure Roleplaying* rulebook contains these and many other powers available to adepts.

CURE
FATIGUING

You can heal injuries by touch. With a full-round action, you can grant a subject an immediate recovery check using your Cure check result in place of their Constitution check. If the recovery check fails, you must wait the normal recovery time for that condition or expend a level of fatigue or a point of Conviction before trying again. You can stabilize a dying character with a Difficulty 10 Cure check.

You can use Cure on yourself. You can't cure your own staggered or unconscious conditions or stabilize yourself while dying, since you have to be conscious and able to take a full-round action to use Cure. You can use Cure on your own disabled condition, but doing so is a strenuous action. If your recovery check is successful, you suffer no ill effects. If it is not, however, your condition worsens to dying.

Time: Cure is a full-round action.

FIRE SHAPING
FATIGUING

You can mentally start and control fires. You can make a Fire Shaping check to ignite a fire, to increase the size of an existing fire, or to create light but not heat.

Ignite Fire: You can set any flammable object in your line of sight on fire as a standard action with a successful Fire Shaping check (Difficulty 15). Targets must make a Reflex saving throw (Difficulty 15) to avoid taking +2 fire damage. The target must save each round. A successful save means the fire goes out. You can reignite it with another standard action and successful Fire Shaping check. A character on fire can automatically extinguish the flames by dousing in water (or other flame-retardant material). Spending a full round rolling on the ground grants a +4 bonus on the Reflex saving throw. In addition to using it as an attack, you can use this power to light candles (up to a dozen candles in a 5-foot square with a single skill check), torches, hearth fires, and so forth. At the Narrator's discretion, lighting tiny fires, like candles, is not fatiguing.

Increase Fire: You can increase the size and intensity of a fire. The Difficulty of the Fire Shaping check is 10 + 1 per square foot of increase. Every two square feet increase the fire's damage potential by +1. The fire maintains its increased size and damage as long as you concentrate, and it can even burn in the absence of fuel; smothering, however, still puts it out. While you maintain an increased flame, a victim does not get a Reflex saving throw to put the fire out (although it can still be extinguished by dousing with water), and the fire does additional damage based on your Fire Shaping check. So, an adept who makes a Difficulty 16 Fire Shaping check can spread a fire over an additional 6 square feet and it does +3 damage.

Light: You can create a glowing spot that sheds light but no heat, illuminating a 20-foot radius. This requires a move action and a Difficulty 5 Fire Shaping check. You can increase the radius of the illumination by increasing the Difficulty of the check; each +5 Difficulty increases the radius of the illumination by 10 feet. The point of light moves where you direct it within your line of sight, as a move action. Creating light is not fatiguing.

Time: Igniting fires and increasing flames are standard actions. Creating or moving light is a move action.

HEART SHAPING
FATIGUING

You can impose emotions on others. The target makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, you can impose any one of the following emotional states:

Despair: The target suffers a −2 penalty on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Despair dispels the effects of hope.

Fear: The target flees from the object of its fear (chosen by you).

Friendship: The target's attitude shifts to the next more positive attitude (hostile to unfriendly, unfriendly to indifferent, and so forth). Creatures involved in combat continue to fight back normally, however. Friendship dispels the effects of hatred.

Hatred: The target's attitude shifts to the next more negative attitude (indifferent to unfriendly, unfriendly to hostile, and so forth). Hatred dispels the effects of friendship.

Hope: The target gains a +2 bonus on saving throws, attack rolls, checks, and damage. Hope dispels the effects of despair.

Time: Heart Shaping is a standard action.

LIGHT SHAPING
FATIGUING

You can mentally control light. With a successful check, you can make your outline blurred and indistinct, or even become invisible.

You can create realistic three-dimensional images of light occupying up to a 10-foot cube. Each additional 10-foot cube that the image occupies increases the Difficulty by 5. Subjects seeing the image get a Will saving throw to realize it is not real if they have any reason to suspect it, such as the fact that the image makes no noise.

You can create light like the Fire Shaping power (see **Fire Shaping**).

You can create light effects anywhere in your line of sight, and they last as long as you maintain them.

Task	Difficulty
Illuminate	5 (+5 per additional 10-foot radius)
Visual Illusion	10 (+5 per additional 10-foot cube)
Blur (20% miss chance)	15
Blur (50% miss chance)	20
Invisibility	25

Time: Light Shaping is a standard action. Creating light is a move action.

MOVE OBJECT

FATIGUING

You can move objects with the power of your thoughts. A Move Object check allows you to move an object in your line of sight. The Difficulty of the Move Object check is based on the mass of the object you want to move and whether or not you choose to risk fatigue. A fatiguing use of Move Object can move ten times the mass listed on the table (so 20 pounds at Difficulty 10, up to 2,000 pounds at Difficulty 40) and doubles the listed damage.

Difficulty	Mass	Damage
10	2 lb.	+1
15	5 lb.	+2
20	10 lb.	+3
25	25 lb.	+4
30	50 lb.	+5
35	100 lb.	+6
40	200 lb.	+7

You can move the object a distance of 5 feet times your Move Object rank per move action.

If two adepts vie for control of an object, use opposed Move Object checks. The winner controls the object for that round. If a creature is holding the object, make a Move Object check opposed by the creature's Strength check.

Striking with Objects: You can hurl objects at opponents. This requires a ranged attack roll and the object deals damage based on your Move Object skill check, as shown on the table. Since using Move Object is a move action, you can move an object and strike with it (as a standard action) in the same round.

Moving Multiple Objects: As a full-round action, you can attempt to move multiple objects at once. Use the Difficulty of the heaviest object, then add +2 for each additional object and increase the fatigue check Difficulty by +2 for each additional object. You cannot strike a target with multiple objects as part of the same action.

Time: Move Object is a move action. The power use lasts for 10 rounds (1 minute) and requires concentration to maintain.

PAIN

FATIGUING

You can inflict terrible pain on a target. You must touch the target, who makes a Will saving throw. If the save fails, the target is stunned (see the wounded condition for effects). So long as you maintain concentration, the effect continues. The victim gets a new Will save each round to overcome the pain. A successful Will save means your Pain power stops working. You must use it again to affect the target (with the usual increase in fatigue save Difficulty for successive use). A target gets a +2 Will save bonus for each successive use of Pain in the same scene.

Time: Pain is a standard action.

SECOND SIGHT

You can sense the use and lingering effects of supernatural powers. The Narrator makes a Second Sight check for you in secret as a reaction whenever powers are used in your general area. The base Difficulty is 10 and increases by +1 for every 10 feet between you and the user or subject of the power (whichever is closer). A successful result means you sense the power use. You also know the general direction and distance to the source of the power and its target. If you succeed by 5 or more, you know which power was used. If you succeed by 10 or more, you also recognize the user, if known to you.

Time: Second Sight is a reaction, taking no time on your part.

SUGGESTION

FATIGUING

You can implant suggestions into the minds of others. The suggestion must be worded in such a manner as to make the activity sound reasonable. Asking a creature to shoot or stab itself, immolate itself, or do some other obviously harmful act automatically fails. However, a suggestion that a pool of acid is actually pure water and that a quick dip would be refreshing is another matter...

If the target's Will saving throw fails, the suggested course of action is followed for up to 30 minutes per power rank, or until the course of action is complete, whichever comes first. You can also specify conditions that trigger a particular course of action, in which case the duration is counted from when the triggering event occurs. A very reasonable suggestion may impose a saving throw penalty of –1 or –2, at the Narrator's discretion.

Time: Suggestion is a full-round action.

WARD

You can create interference with other supernatural powers and even creatures. You can affect an area around you with a radius equal to your adept level times 5 feet. Alternatively, you can choose to focus your Ward against a single creature in your line of sight.

Anyone affected by your Ward must make an opposed check against the result of your Ward check to successfully use any powers. Powers with results less than yours fail; although, the users of the failed powers still suffer fatigue, if any. Adepts can choose to suffer a fatigue result, in addition to the normal fatigue of the power used, to gain a +5 bonus to overcome your Ward. If so, you can choose to suffer a fatigue result to reinforce your ward, forcing the subject to make a normal check to overcome it (without the bonus). This takes no actual time; it happens as part of the check to overcome the Ward.

Creature Ward: You can also use Ward to "hedge out" or ward off certain supernatural creatures. The Narrator decides what type of creatures you may ward, depending on the setting. Examples include undead, fey creatures, elementals, psychic or energy beings, demons (or other extraplanar entities), and so forth. Different types of supernatural powers may ward against different types of creatures.

Any creature affected by your Ward must make a Will save against the result of your Ward check to pass the boundary of the ward (a radius of adept level x 5 feet). A creature that fails the save cannot cross the boundary so long as the ward is maintained, nor can it directly affect or influence anything within the bounds of the ward.

Time: Ward is a move action.

Open Game License V1.0a