

Rules system: Advantage

Golden Rules

- 1 If this rules system stops the game from being the fun game that we want it to be then it shall be taken out back, placed in a sack and beaten. Suitably chagrined and much changed by the experience its battered corpse shall serve us more faithfully.
- 2 If it's enjoyable and in genre then you get a Mojo die. James Bond style action, quips, good descriptions - anything. If it's good, you get dice for it.
- 3 Players always roll. If you're doing the hurting - you roll to hurt. If someone is trying to hurt you then you roll to avoid being caught or being hurt. GM sets difficulty, and spends Mojo to arbitrarily increase it.

Rolling Dice

This is a D6 based dice pool system, with slight subtleties.

The size of your dice pool is:

- An appropriate attribute (1-3 dice) (See 'Attributes' section)
- + An applicable skill (normally 1 die)
- + Mojo dice (as many as you want to spend)
- + One die per situational advantage.
 - ⇒ Includes equipment.
 - ⇒ Includes dice for playing up your triggers or weakness.
 - ⇒ Anything in the situation that you can think of

The situational advantage is the crux of the system. About half your dice will normally come from this. Every advantage you can name will get you an extra die. Then you roll the dice. Any dice that come up as EVEN (2, 4 or 6) are successes. If you get enough successes (see difficulty scale) then you succeed - otherwise you fail.

The **level** of success or failure is based upon the dice that did **not** come up EVEN.

- If you succeeded in a **dangerous** action (one in which you or your allies could be hurt by failure), then the **lowest** odd number you rolled is added to your pool of Mojo dice. You can only gain Mojo dice when risking life and limb.
 - If you rolled no odd numbers then you gain seven Mojo points.
- If you failed, and the action was **dangerous** then the **highest** odd number you rolled is added to the GM's pool of Mojo dice.
 - If you rolled no odd numbers and still failed (because it was just too ridiculously hard for you to even attempt) then **you** will get a single Mojo point, for having the balls to try - and doing your absolute best.
- If the action is **safe** (in no way could it cause you or your team harm) then no-one is getting any Mojo from it.

Difficulty Scale

1. Worth rolling for. Something that a normal untrained guy could do about half the time. *Quietly break into an office, for example.*
2. Taxing. Something that a trained spy can usually manage, but might just botch. *Shoot out the tires on a pursuing car, for example.*
3. Hard. The exploits that make your name. *Sneaking past armed guards, for example.*
4. Damn Tough. Even trained spies can't pull this sort of thing off reliably. *Break the codes on the countdown timer, before the bomb goes off.*
5. F'ing Impossible. *Escape the crocodile pit, despite being lowered upside down from a crane.*
6. (and beyond...) The GM can spend Mojo too. Insane difficulties can happen.

Mojo Dice

Mojo dice represent your natural panache - an important thing for a spy. They vanish at the end of a session, so be sure to use them up.

- You may spend a Mojo die to duck fate - avoiding reaping the consequences of your actions. Miraculously the firing squad misses, giving you time to, I don't know, set off the time-bomb with your shoelaces. (See the damage table for details)
- The GM's Mojo dice can be spent by named villains to avoid being defeated (on the same damage table as you are using)
- You may spend Mojo dice to add to skill rolls - one extra die per Mojo point sacrificed.
- The GM may spend Mojo points to increase the difficulty of a task - though he has to explain why it's more difficult than it looked.
- You may spend a point of Mojo at any time to steal the camera. Interrupt someone else and take an action. You don't get an extra die for this action though - the point is spent just to skip the queue. You can spend an Artha die (See later section 'Artha dice') this way - but it's a waste.
- The GM isn't allowed to steal scenes in this way. But then, the GM controls the pacing whenever Mojo isn't being spent.

Worked example of dice system:

Trying to sneak past some guards, "Spook" can list the following advantages. "I'm trained at this (sneak skill)" (=1) "I'm very quick (2 dice attribute)" (=3) "I've got a sound suppression field running (equipment)" (=4) "The guards are bored after waiting this long (a situational advantage)" (=5) "It's dark (a situational advantage)" (=6) "And I'm wearing sunglasses. (a Mojo die)" for a total of seven dice.

The GM decides that sneaking past guards is a hard (difficulty 3) task and "Spook" rolls. The dice come up 5, 2, 1, 6, 2, 3, 2. That's 4 evens so the action succeeds. The guard is bypassed. "Spook" earns 1 (the lowest odd number rolled) Mojo die back which makes up for the one he spent. "Spook" narrowly squeaks past.

Character Creation Rules (It does! Really!)

The first thing to remember is that you are filling out an application form in character. Sell yourself in a positive light - but don't lie too obviously. Answer the questions in your characters voice.

The second thing is - that application form becomes your character sheet. And here is how:

The adjectives are your attributes. In order from 1 to 6. You get 3 dice in the first two, 2 dice in the second two and 1 die in the two you place last.

The 'top three skills' become your skills, at one die each. Look at the sample skill list for inspiration. An exceptionally narrow skill may be worth 2 dice. (GM's decision on what counts as a 'narrow skill')

Your weakness and the triggers are both roleplaying aids - and also grant you a die (each, if you can roleplay multiple emotions at once) when they are in effect.

Attributes

You have six attributes:

Active, Thoughtful, Large, Perceptive, Social and Quick.

- Active:** Escaping, jumping, dancing and generally being vigorously alive.
Thoughtful: Studious or outright clever. Breaking codes and following clues.
Large: Being a big person. Fighting. Being hard to hurt.
Perceptive: Spotting things, including through a telescopic sight.
Social: Schmoozing. Also bluffing fast-talking and seduction.
Quick: Being speedy. Running away as well as kung-fu.

Skills

You can have any skills that you like. Really narrow skills will be learnt at a higher level than broader skills. A list of example skills is available. (There are some pregenerated characters too.) Each time you pick a skill you will get 1 die in it. (2 dice for a narrow skill.)

There is a sample skill list available in an appendix.

Sample Character:

The spy who came to be known as 'Paint', a white hat hacker, applied to join the I.M.R. He decided his attributes were Perceptive (3), Quick (3), Thoughtful (2), Active (2), Large (1) then Social (1). He described his reason for applying and gave his triggers as Anger at 'black hats', Fear of exhaustion and Nobility under pressure. His weakness is "always being sat in front of the PC". He then listed his top three skills as Computers (1) Gadgets (1) and Nimble (1) - which he decided was like Athletics. And, at least in terms of stats, he was done.

Artha Dice / Artha Mojo

This score is the way 'experience points' are handled in this system. It is named 'Mojo' because it can be used in the same way as normal Mojo points. A point of Artha can be spent in several ways:

- It can be used to subvert reality. An Artha point will usually let you succeed at a task but the GM gets to decide how it happens. When spent this way it is gone. Spending your point this way also uses up all your remaining Mojo. But that's ok, if you had any Mojo left you probably wouldn't have needed to resort to such a desperate a measure.
- It can be used as a normal Mojo point. When spent this way, they come back at the start of the next session.

When you spend them as a Mojo point you **may** choose to:

- Either: Immediately acquire the skill you are using. (Giving you TWO extra dice for that roll, instead of one.) That skill is then permanently yours, you've mastered it in the heat of action.
- Or: Reveal that you have a hidden spy gadget that is applicable to the action in question. (Again this will mean TWO dice gained, one for the Mojo point and one for the equipment) You get to keep the gadget.

However: In each of these cases once the point is spent this way it is permanently gone. You have traded it in to improve your character.

In general, a point of Artha will be handed out after each successful mission.

Artha (xp spend) rules example:

Meeting her fourth electronic code-locked door of the day, tired and frustrated Emma decides to spend Artha. "I may not be naturally talented", she says (1 die thoughtful) - "but this is the fourth one today" (1 die situation). "I see the pattern!" she exclaims (1 Mojo die from the Artha spend) and now have the lockpicking skill (1 die for the newly gained skill)

The Artha is gone - but the skill remains forever.

Deciding that this probably still isn't enough dice, Emma spends her second point of Artha (1 Mojo die) - declaring that her watch was secretly modified to contain one of those little x-ray machines to show the tumblers. You know, like in that film. (+1 die for the gadget, +1 for the quote) She now has seven dice, and that door is toast. The personalised watch gadget is hers to keep forever.

Artha (emergency success spending) example:

Acey hasn't got any security skills at all - but he needs to rendezvous with Emma inside, right now, to warn her of the impending ninja attack.

Panicked, he spends his point of Artha. The rest of the team is shocked as he takes a single leap straight onto the roof, tears off a vent and dives in. Moments later Emma is surprised when a guard discovers her and turns out to be Acey in disguise. Even then, he's not quite sure how he managed it. Acey currently has no Mojo left, but he does have a nifty guard uniform from somewhere.

Damage Rules

If you fail to avoid getting hurt - then spend a Mojo point. Otherwise you'll be out of the fight (and depending on how you were being hurt and whether there's a nearby medic or not you may well be dead - see the chart below) If you do spend the Mojo point then fate is averted. The amount of hurt is reduced by one level per Mojo spent.

And later the medic gets to bump you by a level on the chart. Worst case, hospital and bed rest should put you back together from anything short of 'dead'.

Name	Description	How you get that way	What you can do
Dead	Dead dead dead.	This is inflicted only by massive and personal attentions.	When dead, you're dead.
Dying.	Comatose and bleeding.	This is the usual result of successful automatic gunfire.	You can't do anything and will die in the next scene, without help.
Out of it.	Unconscious or just unable to stand.	This is the usual result of explosions or being knifed.	You can't do anything and won't wake up until you get some kind of help.
Badly hurt.	Limping, broken bones etc.	This is the usual result of being beaten or shot at.	You can't apply your skills.
Action Hero.	Scars, bruises, burns, cuts etc. Anything you like that looks stylish.	This is the usual result of spending Mojo.	It doesn't hamper you in the slightest.

Whittling Someone Down

It can be hard to actually hit someone with lots of advantages in a situation - and you may want to only slow them down. In this case you will do well by attacking their advantages.

Let's say a mad scientist is escaping on his moon-rocket-ship. He's far away, wearing body armour (mad scientist he may be, stupid he aint) and protected by his ships moon-shield (work with me here...) Hitting him would be pretty difficult - 3 base (at that range even an agent has trouble) and two advantages - and maybe the GM is throwing in Mojo. (He's got a moon rocket. It has the word 'moon' in it. Of COURSE he gets to spend Mojo.)

Against this, you'll probably miss. But perhaps you should shoot out the field effect device. That's still a hard task (3 dice) because of the range - but it's got no armour or mad scientist bonus. Blam! Away it goes. And now he's only got a defence of four before Mojo...

Working together as a team in this way should assure a stylish victory.

Equipment Purchase

Each session the team gets a number of Resource Points (RP) depending upon the expected difficulty of the mission. You can (and probably should) stockpile a few of these points - but you can also bargain with the GM for more. The disadvantage of having more points is that the GM gets points to spend on equipment for the opponents too. Points are shared among the whole team.

Bonus points (and first spending rights) are awarded for campaign contributions (such as maintaining the website, or keeping an in-character diary). The GM doesn't get to copy these points.

Equipment bought through this system remains the property of the tower - you don't get to keep it between missions. (although you can buy it again next time) For personalised gear, you need to spend Artha.

When buying equipment, you can choose to either flat-purchase the items you desire, or roll.

For flat purchase, simply spend points equal to the cost of the equipment that you want to buy.

Otherwise, if you don't have enough points then you can try and wheedle with the various people on base for loans. You can spend Resource Points on this just like spending Mojo on an ordinary roll. The roll is probably a social one - but the various people might just be persuaded to bend the rules through other contests.

You'll owe them big if the equipment doesn't come back in perfect shape, though...

Cost scale:

- 1 = Ordinary equipment for the whole team.
- 1 = Service for the whole team. (Services include delivery to or extraction from the mission area, or extra intelligence services.)
- 1 = A +1 bonus ordinary item.
- 3 = A +2 bonus item.
- 5 = A +3 bonus item (These will not initially be available at all.)
- +1 = Equipment that is unusual or hard to get

Examples of 'unusual' services (cost 2) would be an air strike, fire support or a 'dark light' extraction (black helicopters) such as might be needed when under fire in enemy territory. These usually need to be arranged well ahead of time. An ordinary extraction could well consist of nothing more than plane tickets.

Equipment purchase example:

Edith decides that he needs to improve his contacts with the mob. So he attends a high stakes casino meeting. Figuring (correctly) that no-one is going to lend him the money he puts in an official request. And since the rest of the team haven't yet blown the budget (he spends 1RP) he gets it. But he also wants some personal protection so he goes off to cadge grenades from Biff. (Cost/Difficulty 1, Social 1 invokes his anger at not having enough explosives and rolls 3 and 4) - browbeating Biff into giving up a few of his grenades 'just in case'. But Biff wants those back...)