

COMBAT

This is by far the most rule-intensive part of any role playing game. Serenity's rules are simple (and vague), but you still need to know how they work.

First, everyone rolls to see who goes in what order. That's a Agility + Alertness role. Highest number goes first, and so on.

After that, you need to make a key decision: Are you going to **multitask** this round, or **play it simple**? If you're playing it simple, you get to do one thing, no penalties. If you want to do more, everything is done (starting with the first attack) at a consecutive -2 penalty.

WHEN YOU'RE ATTACKING:

Roll **Agility + your weapon skill** for guns or **Strength + your weapon skill** for sticks and swords.

Here are some colorful options to add to that basic attack:

All-out attack: Make no attempt to defend yourself. You get a +d4 in this case, but you better be wearin' armor -- that one action is all you can do this round.

Called shot: You're trying to hit a specific spot. It'll be tougher, but possibly more rewarding. Like an all-out attack, it'll take all your attention this round -- you could be a sitting duck. (see table in book for penalties)

Aim: You get a +2 to any attack roll, but it'll cost you. The next thing to come your way can't be dodged.

Disarm: It can be tough (-4 for melee, -8 for guns), but your opponent loses his weapon.

Feint: Roll Alertness + weapon skill (opponent rolls intelligence + perception). If you win, your target can only use innate defense against your next attack.

Grapple/shove: Grab a person with Agility + physical skill. Opponent rolls Agility + Strength to get out of it. If you're holding him, anyone else gets a basically free swing (must beat a 3).

Burst fire: 3-round burst... it's like three attack rolls, all at -4 at the same target.

Autofire: Burning a big spray of bullets -- half a clip is standard. All potential targets in the area must make defense rolls vs. Average difficulty or be struck. This is the only attack option you can do this round.

Improvised weapons: Feel free to grab a pool cue or a barstool. Depending on the weapon, various penalties are applied.

WHEN YOU'RE DEFENDING:

The good news: You get an innate dodge, and it doesn't cost anything (**straight roll on Agility**). The bad news: it ain't all that good.

Other things you can do to keep your guts in your body:

Dodge: Agility + Athletics/Dodge. Takes one action.

All-out defense: Make no attempt to do anything other than dance. +4 bonus to anything you try to dodge this round. Note that you can't attack anything.

Block: Agility + a skill roll. Guns can't be blocked.

Take cover: If there's cover about, you can hide a little. This will affect your ability to get hit, depending on what you're hiding behind. It'll also take a little edge off your ability to attack. (half of the cover bonus is turned into an attack penalty.)

WHEN YOU GET HURT (OR HURT OTHERS):

Go back to your original attack roll. Subtract the opponent's defense roll, and that's how much basic damage it does. Now add your weapon damage, and that's how bad it hurt.

Dying: When all of your wound bar is full, you can hear the angels. You must make an easy endurance check every round or die. The difficulty increases by +4 every minute.

Instant death: When damage is equal to double your life points.

Passing out: If the total damage (stun + wounds) equals life points, make an average endurance roll or fall unconscious.

Bleeding: When wounds equal half your life points, you're hurt. -4 to anything you do.

TIPS FOR PLAYERS

WHAT THOSE ATTRIBUTES MEAN

How you measure up: A d6 is usually average in most normal folk.

Strength: Brute force and muscle, plain and simple.

Agility: Quickness, physical coordination.

Intelligence: Book smarts, raw learnin'.

Alertness: Intuition, observation, perception.

Willpower: Determination, force of personality, mental endurance.

Vitality: Your toughness, physical resistance and health.



HOW STUFF WORKS

Normally, you just describe your character's actions in things. These can be simple conversations or complex battle descriptions. When the laws of chance come in to play, a roll of the dice is required.

The basic rule is this: Roll the appropriate attribute + skill = the result.

Here are the numbers you have to beat:

Easy: 3

Average: 7

Hard: 11

Formidable: 15

Heroic: 19

Incredible: 23

Ridiculous: 27

Impossible: 31

A FEW ROUTINE ROLLS YOU'LL MAKE:

Burst of strength: Strength + Strength, used for brief feat of physical might.

Stay conscious: Vitality + Willpower, used when your Wounds exceed your Life.

Get out of harm's way: Agility + Alertness, used to react to sudden danger.

Initiative: Agility + Alertness, used to see who goes first in combat.

Memorize: Intelligence + Alertness, used to commit information to memory.

Resistance: Vitality + Vitality, used to resist disease, toxins, environmental hazards.

ECONOMICS

The credit is the major form of transacting business. They're accepted about anywhere, and go a long ways. The rough ratio of credits to today's dollar is **1C=\$25**.

Most of the rim worlds also accept **platinum**. A few holdouts refuse to accept credits. The rough ratio here is **1P=\$10**.

FOOD (a few examples of how to quell the gnawing in your belly):

Protein packs (in all colors of the rainbow, of course) will cost you about **2.5 credits per week**. **Canned** stuff is a sight better, but it's nearly **double** that of the straight protein. **Fresh** fruit and meat is to be had for about **8 credits per week**, but it don't keep all that long. And, of course, if you're feeling spendy, there are all manner of other, more expensive foodstuffs to stock your cupboards with.

AMMO:

It varies, depending on your gun and where you buy, but expect around 50 rounds to set you back a credit.

USING YOUR PLOT POINTS

These are great, and separate you from your average joe. You earn them by acting a part well, playing a disadvantage or just plain being cool. You can use them to affect changes to the storyline or increase your chances at doing something. Note that you can only keep 6 points per session. The rest are stored as points you can use to improve your character.

If you're spending them to improve a roll, you have to call it before you do it. At that point, use the number you want to do, and that's your dice amount (6 points, add a d6 to the total).

If you want to save a miserable roll, each plot point nets you half a point of increase.

You can use them to stay alive, too. 6 points spent will net you a d6 roll to gain back wound damage.

You can use them to manipulate the story. 1-3 points is an "inconsequential" change, but it'd take at least 11 points to make a major plot shift.