

Alternate Rules for Cugel-Level DERPG

By Ian Thomson



Introduction

The Cugel-Level rules elements I aim to enhance in this work are: speed of play, enhanced opportunities for 'adventurous *daring do*', and greater opportunities for Character Development. I would argue that the first variation is a matter of preference, and the second is true to the tone of (some of) Vance's stories of Cugel's exploits. The third is less true to the tone of the original stories than the official rules, but allows for a greater complexities of character, which was something I wanted to introduce to my campaign - because my players preferred it. The clever folk of Pelgrane Press have only themselves to blame for my heresy, as the release of *Turjan's Tome* was what made me realise most the opportunities for adventure and advancement that I could introduce into the classic Cugel-Level rules. So, those are the why's and wherefore's. Now it remains only for me to add that I have two styles of RPG Dice-rolling that I know well and like to use - the percentile system of that famous occult horror RPG and a variant D20 system that has nothing to do with the so-called 'D20 Rules'. What follows uses D20s, which in my opinion best emulate the feel of the original Pelgrane Press D6 system, whilst still expanding on it. Ratings are measured across the human population on the D20 scale here.

Ability Rating Guide

1-3	Awful
4-5	Poor
6-8	Average
9-11	Good
12-14	Great
15-17	Superior
18-19	Exceptional
20+	Phenomenal

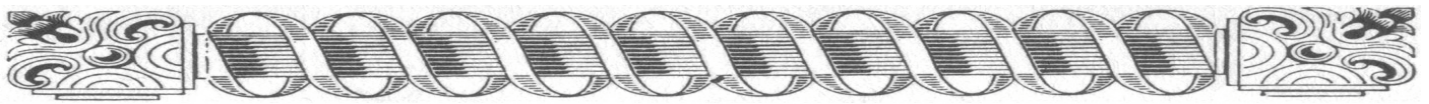
ARTICLE REVISED FEB 2007

Disclaimers

Everyone roleplays differently, and as wonderful as the official DERPG Rules are, they do not ideally suit how I like to run games set in Jack Vance's wonderful fantasy world. The fact that I offer an alternate slant does not in any way reflect on the official rules, except to illustrate that they are not my personal ideal.

Before you go any further I must state at this point that unless you own either the original DERPG Rulebook (Pelgrane Press, 2000), or (less preferably) the famous *Quickstart Rules*, this article will be of no benefit to you. Familiarity with one of these two rules outlines is required to make sense of what follows.

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Ability Levels

In the mechanics of this game-world, the standard ability levels for beginner PCs are from 6-11. GMCs with a skill of 15 or more are considered unusually competent. For instance, a master blacksmith would likely have 15 or 16 in Craftsmanship (Blacksmith).

1) Basic Character Creation

Under consideration are 28 abilities – the 22 basic ones (not including Wealth) plus another 6 – Persuade & Rebuff, Attack, Health, Wit and Magic. Ignoring Health, Wit and Magic for the moment this gives us 25 basic abilities for the purpose of character creation.

Giving Points to the Basic Abilities

A beginning PC gets 125 points - with no more than '9' to be given to any three individual basic abilities, and the rest being capped at '8'. It is strongly advised that Athletics, Perception, Wherewithal, Persuade & Rebuff and Attack are granted at least 7 points each, and that Concealment and Stealth at least 5 points. Look through the variant abilities first as you may wish to allocate some of your 125 points there before sharing the remainder amongst the basic abilities.

Variant Abilities

Health and Wit start at an automatic free rating of 8. Not all GMCs will have this high a figure, but we consider that any remotely successful rogue will have at least this much. It is costly to raise these two during play, and also not so frequently allowed. At the creation stage any PC's Health or Wit may each be increased to 9 by sacrificing three points from the 125, or to 10 by sacrificing seven. ('Wit' measures the capacity to resist and push forth arguments.)

Magic – Each PC receives a rating of 1 for free, for similar reasons as above. It may be increased at this creation stage to 2 for the cost of four points from the 125, or to 3 for the cost of nine points. This can be increased during play, though it is costly to do so.

Resistances – Each starts at '1'. A PC may then allocate a further 10 points amongst the Resistances (with a cap of 5 on any individual Resistance). **OR** choose a single Resistance to be raised to 5 and then instead allocate a further 15 bonus points amongst the rest of the abilities. (Though original variant costs and rating caps still apply.) Resistances too may increase during the game (though slowly and with high cost)

Whilst abilities may stretch upwards from 20 onwards, such power levels mark rare individuals indeed. Each point above 21 increases your chance of scoring an IS (see 'Success Levels below.) Note that **a roll of '1' is always a success** – even if you don't have a rating in that ability. PCs at this beginning level cannot dream of reaching the lofty heights yet, but may come across opponents with these capacities

Advanced Character Creation

For those GMs who wish their PCs to begin the campaign as more accomplished specimens of humanity simply increase the allotted points to 145 and the ability cap to 11. Health and Wit will start at 10 (with the same proportional increases available). Magic still starts at 1 point for free but can be increased as follows: to raise it to 2 costs three points from the 145, to 3 costs seven points, and to 4 costs twelve points. Invent your own rules for Resistances depending on how important you envisage them to be.

The Extras

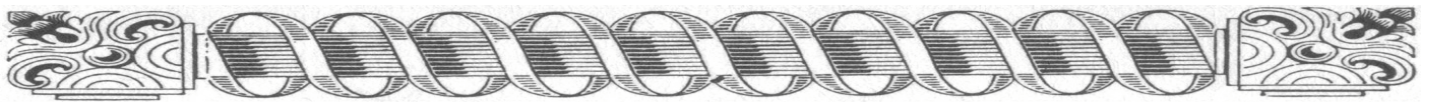
PCs have one cantrap for every point of Magic they possess -1. IE those with Magic of 1 get no cantraps. Each PC may also choose one appropriate Tweak. (Three at Advanced-Level Creation.) Buying cantraps and tweaks in the game from now on costs 10 IP each.

2) Using Abilities

The roll of a D20 decides. If the task is simple, no roll is required - the PC just succeeds. For a task of standard difficulty the player attempts to roll the PC's rating or less. With ratings being so low, especially at the start of play, this means that even with their best skills (around 10 points) the chance of failure is about 50%. That is quite usual for your beginner rogues, and suits the tone of Cugel's antics. A roll of 1 is an IS, a roll of exactly your ability is an HBS. A roll of exactly one higher than your rating is an EF, and a roll 20 is a DF. PS's and QF's are all points in between.

Changes to the Official Rules

This system does not use 'Wealth', which in any case is optional in the official rules. It also combines Attack and Defense into one ability ('Attack'). The reason for this is purely and simply to make combat as speedy as possible (see 'Progressive Contests' below). Finally, we treat Health somewhat differently, using it more in the nature of classic 'Hit Points' (also see 'Health' below).



Boosts & Slumps

These replace boons & levies and bonuses & penalties. Should the GM deem a task to be easier than normal they alert the player to this fact and give a **'boost'** to an ability for a single roll. A boost is a raise in success level by one degree. EG, a character with Athletics 9 rolls to jump a ravine, it is a relatively small gap so the GM grants a Boost. Player rolls 15 – QF; the GM confirms that the Boost mitigates this to an EF. So, rather than falling the PC is hanging by fingertips.

If a task is particularly easy but still requires some risk in order to add a small element of tension to enhance the story, then a **double boost** is applied. This means that a roll of 20 - DF - is the only full failure, mitigated to an EF. But such distinctions may be crucial.)

Sometimes a task will be unusually difficult. If the PC is reasonably perceptive, the GM alerts the player (to give them the option to change the character's decision). Then, applies a **slump** of one level. EG a PS becomes a HBS, and QF becomes a DF. As with ordinary Boosts, there is also a double-slump option for extreme situations, which means that even an IS becomes only a HBS. Although with the special use of Improvement Points (see later) players can also choose to boost any action one level in their favour.

A new use for Boosts & Slumps is the 'incentive for good role-playing'. Should a Player ever announce that "I attack the deodand" or "I tell the farmer something witty to try and convince him", the following roll is made at an automatic Slump. Players must at least make an attempt at describing combat technique or evoking Vancian prose. Even: "I slice the deodand with my rapier" and "Now then my good man, do not disrespect your betters" are adequate. On the up-side of such a restriction, you can consider offering instead a Boost to those who come out with vivid phrases such as: "I feint a riposte towards its eyes then slash down below its guard, going for the belly", and "Fiddle faddle my good man; this may be your livelihood, but I have my prestige to consider."

Matching Abilities: Straightforward Contests

Contestants match two single rolls against each other. For instance, one person might attempt to filch an item from someone's sidetable whilst chatting to them in the room (Quick Fingers) - and the target has a chance to notice (Perception). This chart considers that the target/victim is unsuspecting of duplicity. If

the has any reason to be particularly suspicious of the would-be miscreant (rather than just being a mistrusting person in general), then the target need only equal the roll made by the protagonist (IE need get a PS for a PS or an HBS for an HBS).

Active Ability	Responsive Ability
IS	Perfect (no counter possible)
PS	IS required to counter.
HBS	PS required.
EF	HBS required.
QF	EF to miss this pathetic try.
DF	Unless also DF, target sees all.

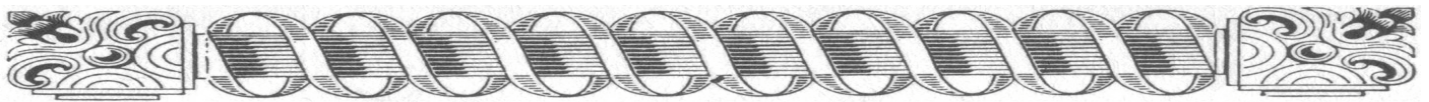
Matching Abilities: Progressive Contests

Those contests with special dramatic tension are played out in a more considered fashion. Typically such things are Persuasion challenges and one on one Gambling (if such suits the tone of play). Combat is worked out on a similar table but using comparisons – see later.

The format here is loosely based on the 'Pools' system in the official rules. First the GM notes each ability rating on scrap paper. The players then make a series of contesting rolls using their abilities, and their total is reduced according to the success of their own roll – see table. As in the official rules, someone trying to convince someone of something uses their 'Persuade' ability, and someone attempting to resist being persuaded uses their 'Rebuff'. In cases where one Persuasion is countered by an alternate Persuasion both parties use their 'Persuasion' ability.

Ability Result	Result to 'Pool'
IS	-1
PS	-2
HBS	-3
EF	-4
QF	-5
DF	-6

The Players must narrate each action their PC is taking. (See Boosts & Slumps above.) When a contest ends depends upon the GM. I found with my gaming group that enthusiasm waned after about three exchanges in any contest. Thus, normally after three exchanges I declared the person with the highest number of points left in their rating pool the winner. Of course if someone's 'pool' was reduced to 0 prior to that point, they were already the loser. Other GMs may wish to have four or even five exchanges as standard. One notable difference here is that the GM



keeps track of this new type of ‘pool’ and the players do not. (Which in my opinion enhances the story by removing some of the mechanics from the hands of the players.)

Reduction of Wit - In a Persuasion Contest ‘Wit’ is eroded. However, due to the deranged optimism of Dying Earth denizens, it recovers quickly. It basically returns to full as soon as you have gone away and restored your own faith in yourself. If you then try and argue with someone in the next few hours on the same topic that you were defeated in, if they are aware of your defeat, then you face a Slump on all your rolls. And if the topic is the same then a new tack must be taken, or else a double Slump applies. If the defeat was decisive, or involved something that in terms of game realism the GMC was unlikely ever to agree to, the GMC may also get a Boost if any rematch is attempted.

Gambling (one on one)

Each roll simulates a hand or other section of an ongoing game. Stakes are raised at each section, and when a person reaches 0 points in their pool, either their nerve has broken, they have decided to cut their losses, or they have run out of funds to add to the pot. (GM’s may choose to track coins for GMCs or not, but players must keep track of their character’s funds. Running out of money may cause participants to retire from a contest when they are still with points in their pool. However, PCs are of course welcome to try and take a loan or add their possessions to the pot instead. GMCs will do this only if it adds to the story.)

Abandoned Concepts

Pools – as mentioned above a vague representation of this concept comes into play during the Progressive Contest. But the GM tracks these, not the Players.

Bonuses & Penalties, Boons and Levies – All replaced by ‘Boosts & Slumps’, which of course you may choose to refer to as Bonuses & Penalties instead.

Refreshing Abilities – Gone. Again whilst this is a valid concept that makes the original DERPG Rules special, it simply did not suit the gaming style of myself or my players. We prefer the more adventurous style of play where you can go quickly from one action scene to the next. (Not all the time, but every now and then.) And if your pool has run out, then this course of action is simply denied you. So – Gone. The GM merely keeps track of realistic tiredness and starts

applying ‘Slumps’ as appropriate. In a Progressive Contest (the equivalent of the kind of thing in the original rules where pools and their effects apply) depending on the result a PC may require a sit down and a stiff drink, or a quiet lie down, or whatever, if their ego has been bruised, before they can try again on the same topic.

Re-Rolls – Re-rolls are not possible. The concept has been replaced with the self-assisted Boost (see ‘Improvement Points’ below).

Adjusting a Task’s Difficulty

This information also subsumes ‘Caught without the Right Ability’.

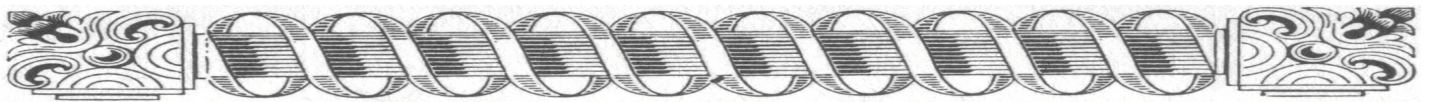
The simplest way I find for this is to let the player’s know that a task is especially easy or difficult by adjusting their ability. For instance: “You should easily be to jump that small chasm. Subtract 9 from whatever you roll.” Or, “Actually, the chances of you knowing esoteric information like that are really low, add 6 to whatever you roll.” I typically do this in increments of three. Slight adjustment – 3; significant adjustment – 6, major adjustment – 9, massive adjustment – 12. **A roll of 20 is always a Failure**, but does not necessarily have Dismal consequences if the character’s actual or adjusted ability is high.

Trumps

Trumps are optional. If you like the fun of them the go for it. In addition to the information in the original rules, two new tables are necessary for this system. In this system if you Trump someone you get an automatic Boost of 1. In any contest between a PC and a GMC I work it so that the adjustment is always to the roll of the GMC (IE a PC’s Boost becomes a GMC’s Slump). This again removes some mechanics from the hands of the Players, which the way I run things makes the game more fluid for the players. (Golden Rule – GM handles as much of the mechanics as possible.) Style in the left column is stronger – trumping style in the right column.

Attack vs Attack

Strength	Caution
Speed	Cunning
Finesse	Ferocity
Cunning	Strength
Ferocity	Speed
Caution	Finesse



Persuasion vs Persuasion

Glib	Intimidating
Eloquent	Obfuscatory
Obfuscatory	Glib
Forthright	Eloquent
Charming	Forthright
Intimidating	Charming

Magic vs Magic

Curious	Daring
Daring	Insightful
Devious	Forceful
Forceful	Curious
Insightful	Studious
Studious	Devious

3) Improvement Points

PCs gain IP as normal for use of Tag-Lines. Additionally, as suggested in TT, they gain 1-5 throughout play for actions or conspicuous successes that are both Cugelesque and support the goals of the group or the individual. You may choose to award this bonus at the end of the session when reassessing how each PC has done. If you want more IPs in the mix each session, you may wish to also award 1-3 for each PC according to how well the group moved towards its goal. At Turjan-Level play many more IP are needed, and so this would be adjusted.

Boosting a Roll

An IP may be sacrificed at that moment to Boost a character's rolled result up by one level of success. EG: an EF may be Boosted to a HBS. (A PC may even Boost a DF to a QF, but this costs 2IP instead.) Some DERPG purists may find Boosts in this fashion unusual, since they seem to suggest a kind of heroic play. However, in playtest we have discovered this not to be the case. Rather than promoting Cugel-Level PCs to become heroic, it merely gives them a small edge against GMCs of similar ability levels, thus giving them the 'luck of Cugel'. Since IPs are so valuable for improving abilities, players tend to spend them in this way only in emergencies.

Note: Resistances *can never be boosted with an Improvement Point*. What you roll is what you get.

Improving Abilities

At the end (or beginning) of a session, players may use IPs to increase abilities in the following fashion. (note that table does not cover Health, Wit or Resistances).

Many ability increases can be attributed to worldly experience (even things the PC does offstage). Others are specialist: Craftsmanship, Engineering, Etiquette, Physician, Seamanship, Stewardship. If the PC does not already have a rating of 4+ (and can therefore be assumed to know enough to self-train) the Player must explain (or arrange within the game) the PC's training means. Otherwise no increase is allowed.

Increasing Abilities (cost in IP)

Raise to:	Standard	Magic
Up to 6	2/pt	3/pt
7-10	3/pt	4/pt
11-14	4/pt	5/pt
15-18	5/pt	6/pt
19-22	6/pt	7/pt

Increasing Resistances

See back of Character Sheet. The Resistance rating cap is 7 for Cugel-Level characters - but can be higher for GMCs if GMCs have Resistances in your game.

Increasing Health and Wit

The Health rating does not normally increase during the game, however after some sessions players may suggest that their characters have become hardier due to the excesses of the trail. Kindly GMs may allow a raise of 1 Health for 5 creation points a maximum of two times per character during a campaign.

4) Spells

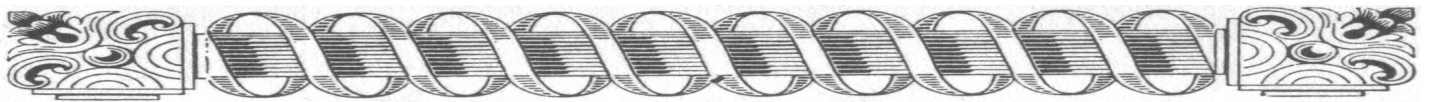
Learning Spells

Cugel-Level PCs do not start with spells, but as the game progresses you may wish to introduce them. It will always cost 3IP to learn a Straightforward Spell and 5IP to learn a Complex one. (Unless you wish to make this more costly and keep magic even rarer.)

Casting Spells

To cast, the character rolls the Magic ability rating.

If the spell is *encompassed* it automatically works unless a 20 (natural DF) is rolled. (Casters with a higher rating encompass their spells more quickly and easily than those with a lower rating, but once encompassed, the differences in rating do not matter - as the spell does the work.) Even on a DF if an encompassed spell is perfected or the same style as the caster's Magic speciality, then it simply fails. However, if it is a different style the caster is disorientated (unable to act) for one round.



If the spell is being *read from a tome*, then it fails if the player rolls higher than the PC's ability rating. In the official DERPG rules, various horrible options are given for DFs. If you suffer a DF when reading from a tome and the spell is perfected or of your Magical speciality type then you merely become disorientated and unable to act for one round. However, if it is not of your speciality type, then you suffer the full Spell Failure result noted. If you roll a QF in this situation you are disorientated for three rounds.

5) Health

Regular healing occurs at the rate of 1 Health point per 12 hours of rest, or per 24 hours of moderate activity. As you can see it is best if at least one or two in the party have healing cantraps.

Magical Healing

Spell ->	Cantrap	Tome	Encomp.
IS	+7	+12	+12
PS	+5	+9	+9
HBS	+3	+6	+6
EF	+1	+3	+3
QF			+2

Death and Injury

Those with 1 or 2 Health are Incapacitated (Down) Unconsciousness occurs at 0 Health.

Death occurs on reaching a negative number greater than one third of your Health. (EG 9-11 Health: -4)

Anyone left bleeding and untended on 1 point or less must roll their Health. Failure indicates eventual demise. (EF - lose 1 pt per hour, QF - lose 1 pt per 30 mins, DF - lose 1 pt per 10 mins.)

Poison

Healing Poisons

(Standard Healing Spells)

IS: increases Health by 11 points

PS: increases Health by 8 points

HBS: increases Health by 5 points

EF: increases Health by 2 points.

(If encompassed, QF also reduces one level.)

Cantraps reduce one level with IS/PS only.

All spells negate the poison, no matter how much physical healing they give.

Once poison is ingested, use the 'Progressive Contests' table (matching Health against the poison's Potency.) Each poison has a rating (typically 10-20) and an interval. The interval notes how long occurs

between rolls. This is typically 1 minute, 5m, 30m or 1 hour. The poison will also have a description of the effect that occurs whilst the person is resisting.

i) Weak Fatal Poison: Pot 10, interval 10m, victim takes single Slump on all physical abilities (due to nausea) whilst resisting.

ii) Strong Fatal Poison: Pot 18, interval 3m, victim takes dbl Slump whilst resisting.

6) Combat

Damage in Combat is accrued by comparing successes and failures with Attack ratings. Obviously any loss indicated accrues to the loser's Health. This can be subdual damage if the attacker so wishes it. Subdual damage is bruising, cuts and grazes, and regenerates within an hour or two of the end of the contest.

Attack Resolutions (loss to Health)

WINNER	OPPONENT	LOSS
IS	PS	Lose 3pts
	HBS	Lose 5pts
	EF	Lose 7pts
	QF	Lose 9pts
	DF	Lose 11pts
PS	PS	Both lose 1
	HBS	Lose 3pts
	EF	Lose 5pts
	QF	Lose 7pts
	DF	Lose 9pts
HBS	HBS	Both lose 1
	EF	Lose 3pts
	QF	Lose 5pts
	DF	Lose 7pts

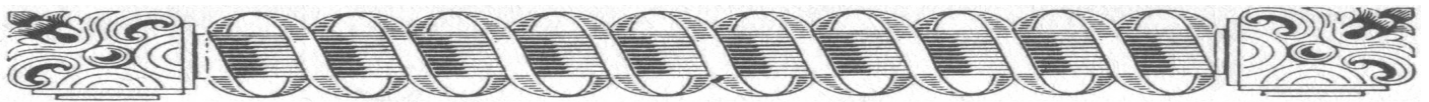
Mutual Failures: No loss is accrued with one exception. If one combatant rolls a DF and the other does not, the character with the DF loses 1 point if their opponent rolled a QF, and 2 points if it was an EF.

Mutual Superiority: If both roll IS, then an intense flurry of blows ends with nobody damaged but any audience dazzled by the skills involved.

Armour (optional consideration): Heavy armour blocks 2 pts of damage to Health from weapons, creature attacks etc; light armour blocks 1pt.

Group Combat

A lone PC facing multiple assailants takes -3 to their Attack for every foe more than 1. Abstract this in group combat by deciding exactly who attacks whom.



Missile Attacks

Missile attacks are made using standard Attack ratings.

Targeter:	Adjustment
Aims for 2 rounds	+3
Aims for 4 rounds	+5
Target:	
At Short Range	None
At Medium Range	-4
At Long Range	-8
Human Size	None
Half-human size	-4
Quarter-human size	-7
Tenth-human size	-10
1.5 x human size	+5
Double human size	+10
In Minimal cover	None
In Some cover	-4
In Notable cover	-8
In Heavy cover	-12
Almost total cover	-16
Still or Slow	None
Jogging pace	-4
Running speed	-7
Dodging swiftly	-10

The GM must calculate the total bonus/penalty for each shot. The simplest way to do this is to ask for the character's ability, and then adjust it on a scrap of paper by going swiftly through the table above. This table is designed to indicate that missile use is unusual and unwieldy. No regular people train in or use missile weapons. In the standard DERPG rules, ownership of missile weapons is actively discouraged. Apparently magicians and civic authorities become disgruntled when freelance adventurers sport bows and such like. If you wish to restrict missile weapon ownership, simply have such mistrust be tangible. Characters will routinely have such items confiscated at the city or town gates, and be questioned whenever there is a robbery or other disturbance of the peace. (Because by carrying a bow they have marked themselves as potential brigands.) Recognised hunters are of course exempt from such discrimination, and a character could pose as such. However, such a person would be judged by the quality of their companions.

Dodging Arrows

No doubt the PCs will expect to be able to roll Athletics successes to try and avoid these missiles. Such an option is only available if the PC sees the archer as they begin to aim. At this point, if there is any cover available the character may attempt to leap behind it, thus spoiling or preventing the archer's aim. Athletics will not help when the arrow is fired, unless the character is deliberately running, leaping or otherwise making themselves difficult to hit - and is not within Short-Range. In all cases use table above as a guide.

Missile Damage Per Size and Accuracy

Missile	Light	Med.	Heavy
EF	NA	1 pt	2 pts
HBS	2 pts	3 pts	4 pts
PS	5 pts	7 pts	9 pts
IS	8 pts	10 pts	12 pts

7) Other Ability Use

7.1) Concealment

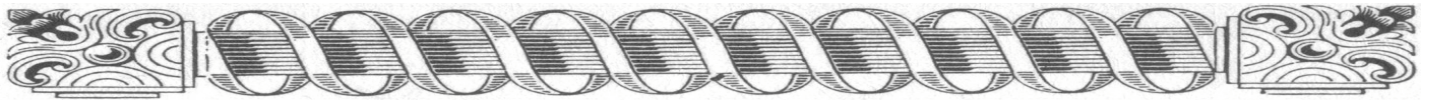
Use the 'Straightforward Contest' table. However, other adjustments may be applied. For instance, hiding yourself depends on many things:

Circumstance	Adjustment
Poor cover	Perception: Boost
Viewer very distracted	Percep: dbl Slump
Viwr. normally unaware	Percep: single Slump
Viwr alert for hidden	Percep: single Boost

Concealing something on your person or in a place where you hope it won't be found is resolved by a straightforward contest every time someone looks for the object or searches the area. GM applies Boosts and Slumps dependent on the circumstances. Only one standard adjustment exists - if the hider takes their time and isn't rushed then they get a Boost to their success level. If the person has all the time in the world, then the GM simply grants a PS or IS without a roll being required. (Choosing which success to grant dependent on the circumstances.)

7.2) Imposture

Extrapolate the 7.1 rules also to cover **Imposture**. (Ignoring the mention of 'cover'.)



7.3) Chasing

This is a contest of Athletics against Athletics. Use the 'Progressive Contests' table. Whoever runs out of points first loses. (IE the pursuer either catches the person or loses them/is unable to keep up.) Boosts may be applied depending on circumstance.

7.4) Picking Pockets

This matches Quick Fingers v. Perception. Use the Straightforward Contest table. If the victim is distracted (either by external circumstance - such as when watching a play or in a crowded bar - or by a deliberate attempt to divert their attention) then they take a Slump for a standard distraction, and a dbl Slump for a major distraction (such as a punch in the face or being physically threatened with such by an angry assailant).

7.5) Group Gambling (Cards and Dice)

- 1) If PCs join a group, abstract the GMC opponents:
 Unskilled Bumpkins: 7; Wary Tavern Regulars: 10
 Half-Decent Players (or regulars + a good player): 13
 Good Players (or half-decent + a superior player): 16
 Superior Players (or good players + an expert): 19
 Expert Players (or superior players + a sharp): 22
 Gang of Card Sharps: 25
- 2) Decide on the stake - usually 1 terce per round in a typical tavern game, and up to 5 in a Gambling Hall.
- 3) Use the Complex Contests Table, with each roll indicating a round of gaming. (The participants drop out when their pool is reduced to '0', and the winner is the last remaining. In some games the GM may just play all rolls through to the end and then announce the winner. This better simulates situations when PC participants wish to participate to the bitter end. The GM may (rather than announcing pool totals) simply describe the PC's game fortunes as appearing to be good, excellent, poor, abysmal etc – then it is up to the player if the PC wishes to withdraw or take a risk.

7.6) Picking Locks

Straightforward contest: One must use either Quick Fingers or Craftsmanship (against the Lock's intricacy rating). Lock ratings range from 10 for a simple lock to 15 for a very tough lock, to 20 for a highly complex lock.

NB: For a huge and/or complex lock in a high-drama situation consider using a Progressive Contest.

7.7) Haggling

NB: Sellers will generally refuse to haggle for anything less than 10t, except when they are desperately poor.

Match Persuasion against Persuasion, making this a contest of Wit not pools. Apply Boosts as follows:

Circumstance	Seller
Buyer wants minimal discount	-
Buyer wants 10%-20% discount	+1
Buyer wants 20%-40% discount	+2
Item is worth 10-20% less than asked	-1
Item worth 20-40% less than asked	-2

i) Buyers will generally not sell for more than 40% dscst.

ii) If the item is worth more than 40% less than asked, then sellers are thieves or extortionists (not hagglers).

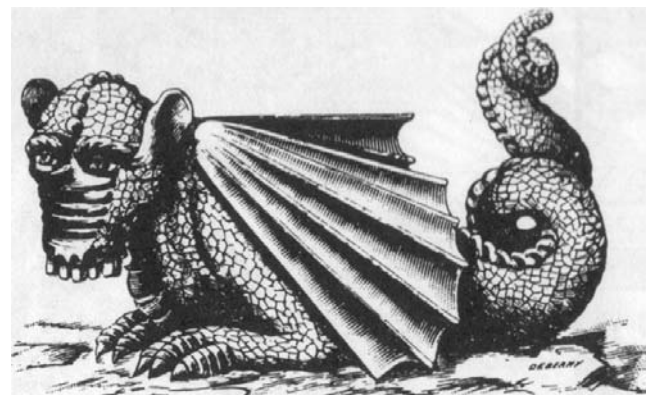
7.8) Walloping

This optional rule speeds up Progressive Contests considerably.

If your rating is 5 points higher than your opponent, as soon as you roll an IS/PS at the same time that they roll a QF/DF you can deliver a Wallop - IE achieve a decisive and conclusive victory in the manner of your choosing. Remember that PCs using IPs to boost their rolls, and relevant Trumps will affect what a roll really is, as opposed to the number on the dice. Same consideration if any Boosts or Slumps are in play.

7.9) Dodging Objects

If the object is not sentient, nor sentiently-controlled, the GM merely decides any bumps up or down on the character's rolls of avoidance – again as per the 'Simple Contest' table. Penalties apply if the character is taken by surprise, or if the object is moving very fast (see also Missiles below). Damage options depend on the weight and speed of the object.





7.10) Sympathy Points

Ignoring Someone When Helping would be Easy:

Someone in grave peril: -2

Someone in moderate danger: -1

Someone in difficulty/duress not of their own making: NA

Reduce penalty one point if to help would be notably taxing in some way, or if the person is an enemy. Increase by a further point if the person is a companion of the road or other friendly acquaintance.

Stealing:

Small sum from wealthy or reasonably wealthy person: NA

Small sum from a poor person: -1

Substantial sum from a person of vast wealth: NA

Substantial sum from a reasonably wealthy person: -1

Substantial sum from a clearly poor person: -2

NB: Increase penalty by an additional point if this person trusts you or is a companion of the road. No SP are subtracted if this is all part of a cunning swindle of someone whose survival is not threatened – unless the person being swindled is a philanthropist of some sort.

Causing Injury:

Wounding an antagonist who has surrendered: -1

Major deliberate wound to an innocent: -3

Minor wound or severe intimidation to an innocent: -2

Unjustifiably slaying an intelligent non-human: -2

Unjustifiably slaying a human of violent disposition: -3

Unjustifiably slaying a neutral or peaceful human: -4

Unnecessarily wounding a human who meant you serious harm or otherwise seems deserving of vengeance: -1

Unnecessarily killing a human who meant you serious harm or otherwise seems deserving of vengeance: -2

Deceit:

Lying to/about a friend/innocent for significant trouble: -1

As above but putting them in terrible trouble: -2

As above but life-threatening or injurious danger: -3

Decrease penalty by 1 if victim a non-violent enemy and by 2 if violent

Optional Reductions:

Assisting a colleague at a small personal risk: NA

Assisting a colleague at middling personal risk: +1

Assisting a colleague at great personal risk: +2

Assisting a colleague at major personal risk: +3

Assisting a stranger at a small personal risk: +1

Assisting a stranger at middling personal risk: +2

Assisting a stranger at great personal risk: +3

Assisting a stranger at major personal risk: +4

Postponing selfish plans to assist someone in need: +1

NB: Increase all above by 1 if no intended significant gain exists.

8) Tweaks

Use of official 'Tweaks' isn't recommended in this style of play, as they require lots of rules-checking for individual effects. However, if all Tweaks are adapted to become Special Abilities dealt with in a uniform way, then this difficulty becomes moot. Thus, Tweaks under these rules are all special abilities that must be applied to a specific standard ability. The 'Tweak' itself has no rating, but is listed on the back of the character sheet as "<Tweak Name> [Associated Ability]". The associated ability must be one of the standard DERP abilities, which can rarely include Resistances, Persuasion, Magic or Attack.

Each Special Ability (Tweak) does one of three things:

(i) Skill Increase: Typically adds 4 to the rating.

(ii) Boosts. IE Someone with the Tweak 'Card Sharp [Gambling]' Boosts their Gambling success result by one when opting to cheat whilst playing cards, or a character with the Tweak 'Good at Ducking Punches [Athletics]' gets a Boost when someone throws a punch at them. (Of course sometimes the GM will apply this as a Slump to the GMC instead.) Or,

(iii) It allows the person to avoid a GM-imposed Slump. IE a character with the Tweak 'Locksmith [Quick Fingers]' avoids the Slump normally imposed for incorrect use of the ability to pick a lock.

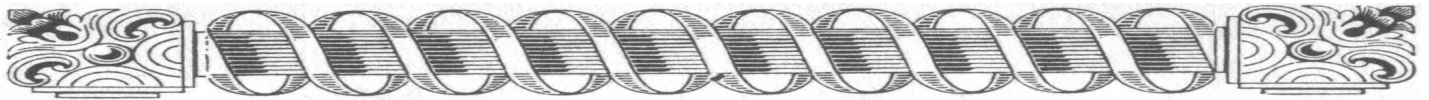
The last example illustrates another point. The same Tweaks might be available for different abilities. Locksmith is also available for 'Craftsmanship'.

Rolling a **DF** with a Tweak-Boosted ability is still a DF if the act is performed swiftly or under duress (duress can even be fear of failure consequences), OR if it is a direct deception - IE when using the 'Card Sharp' Tweak cards fall out of their sleeve - unless the PC expends an IP to transmute this to a QF.

Those abilities which most readily seem to require Tweaks are Craftsmanship and Pedantry, and (at advanced-Level) Magic. In fact, Craftsmanship actually requires one to make any real sense, although it could be used as a general rating for someone who was good at practical applications with their hands.

The ability for which the Tweak is chosen must have a minimum rating of 4. No character may ever have over 9 Tweaks. All Tweaks must be suitable for use in adapting an existing ability (since they lack ratings). They must also be quite specific. Thus, 'Agile' is not valid as a Tweak, but 'Good at Ducking Punches' is.





Whether named by a quote or a title, the name must be specific as to the nature of the Tweak.

Here is a selection of Tweaks, many of which are adapted from the official lists. Players may suggest their own, and the GM can accept or disapprove such:

Appraisal: Gem Dealer, Spot Forgeries, Sense Con-Man, Antique Furniture, Fabric Merchant.

Athletics: Fast Runner, Strong Swimmer, Contortionist, Jumping Through Windows, Dodges Spells, Dodges Missiles, Knocks Open Doors, Quick-Draw Rapier.

Concealment: Palm Object, Hides Fast, Hides Well in Nature, Hides Well in Towns.

Craftsmanship: Blacksmith, Chef, Document Forger, Locksmith, Seamstress, Carpenter, Jeweller.

Driving: 'I Raced at Kaiin', Trained as a Coachman, Trusted by Animals;

Engineering: Safety Evaluator, Sniff of an Oily Rag, Schooled in Ancient Edifices;

Etiquette: Makes Light of Faux Pas, Wide Knowledge of Clothing, Recognise a Scoundrel

Gambling: Card Sharp, Dice Master, Recognises Cons.

Imposture: Make-Up Artist, Ventriloquist, Mimic, Air of Nobility, Air of Authority, Flair for Accents;

Living Rough: Hunter, Forage for Food, Sleep Anywhere, Predict the Weather, Habits of Half-Men;

Pedantry: (shows the character has been educated or trained) Animal Husbandry, Archaeology, Celestiology, History of Kaiin, Lore of the Overworld, Lore of the Subworlds, Ancient History, Famous Personages, Plant Lore, Magic Lore, Scaum Valley Geography, Knowledge of Fashions, Classical Poetry.

Perception: Acute Sense of Smell, Night Vision, Alert for Manmade Traps, Acute Hearing, Sees Hidden Assailants, Keen Eyesight, Alert for Thieves.

Physician: Cure Mental Malady, Treat Burns, First Aid, Treat Disease, Treat Poison, Recognise Ailment;

Quick Fingers: Pickpocket, Juggler, Pea Under Shell Con, Accurate Throw, Quick-Draw Dagger;

Riding: Trick Rider, Leaps into the Saddle, Handles Difficult Terrain.

Scuttlebutt: Streetwise (Kaiin), Evaluates Rumours, 'You Can tell Me'; I Know a Geezer.

Seamanship: Worminger, Rafter, Pirate Lingo.

Seduction: Imposing Bosom, Alluring Glance, 14 Silken Movements, Romantic Poetry.

Stealth: Shadowing, Silent in Forests, Silent on Stonework, Silent Leap.

Stewardship: Book-keeper, Intimidate Underlings.

Tracking: Recognises Tracks, Recognise Spoons.

Wherewithal: Fearless of Half-Men, Unafraid of Demons, Unafraid of Corpses.

Persuasion: Tear-Jerking Oratory, Piteous Plea, Denial of Guilt, Inspiring Oratory.

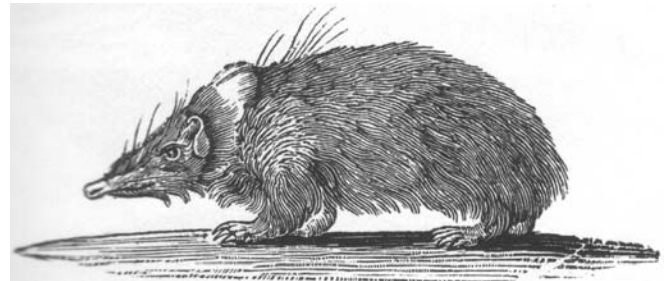
Attack: Bar-Room Brawler, Avoid Larger Foes.

Magic: Resistant to Unnatural Coercions

9) A Handy Price List

NB: Prices vary up and down dependent on availability due to region and season. If two prices are given, they indicate the variance between city/ town. Sometimes items purchased in a city are also of higher quality (and sometimes not).

Axe - 10/15t, Beer (flagon) - 5g, Beer (barrel) - 30/40t, Boots (quality) - 40/30t, Boots (standard) - 20/30t, Bow 50/75t, Candle (2hr) - 3g/5g, Cart - 30t, Cloak 10/15t, Club 5g/1t, Dagger - 3/6t, Fishing Boat 1200/600, Gown (fashionable) - 200/400t, Grappling Hook - 10/15t, Hat (fashionable) - 50/100t, Hat (functional) - 20/15t, Jerkin (quality) - 60t, Jerkin (standard) - 40t, Jerkin (poor) - 20t, Lantern - 3/6t, Meal (banquet) - 5t, Meal (filling) - 3t, Meal (meagre) - 1t, Net - 20/30t, Night's Lodging w/meals (luxurious) - 10/20t, Night's Lodging w/meals (moderate) - 5/10t, Night's Lodging w/meals (spartan) - 5g/1t, Oil (flask) - 3/4t, Pack Animal - 200/400t, Rapier - 50/100t, Riding Animal - 300/500t, Rope (25ft) - 1/2t, Rowing Boat - 50/75t, Sack - 5g/1t, Saddle/Bridle - 60/80t, Shield - 30/40t, Shirt (quality) - 50t, Shirt (standard) - 30t, Shirt (poor) - 15t, Shovel 5/10t, Sling 5/7t, Spear 20/30t, Spear (erb) - 50/70t, Torch (1hr) - 1/2t, Trousers (quality) 40t, Trousers (standard) - 25t, Trousers (poor) - 15t, Wagon - 500/750t, Waterskin - 2t, Wine (fine bottle) - 100/200t, Wine (average bottle) - 5/10t, Wine (cheap jug) - 5g.

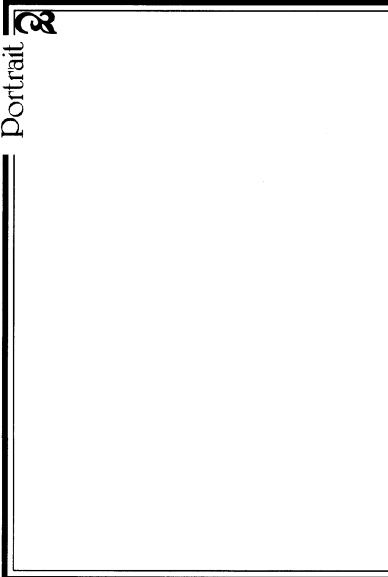


Character _____ Player _____

Personal Details

Hair (Color/Cut) _____
 Facial Features _____
 Upper Costume _____
 Lower Costume _____
 Cloak & Belt _____
 Footwear & Hat _____
 Mannerisms _____
 Background _____

Portrait



Abilities

Rating

Persuade _____
 Rebuff _____
 Attack _____
 Health _____ Wit _____
 Magic _____
 Pedantry (_____) _____
 Craft'ship (_____) _____

Dying Earth

IT - House Rules version

Resistances

Rating Rating

Arrogance _____ Indolence _____
 Avarice _____ Rakishness _____
 G'mandism _____ P'foggery _____

- Tick Box Below When Spell is Encompassed
- * Mark Spell With Asterisk If Matches Magic Style

Unspent Improvement Pts

Weapons

Melee _____
 Melee _____
 Missile _____
 Missile _____

Cantraps/Spells

Spell/Cantrap (Straightforward=SFD, Complex=CPX, Cantrap=Ctp) Rge Dtn ^{SFD, CPX,} or Ctp PBN (Pg)

<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____

PBN: DRP=Rulebook, TT=Turjan's Tome, CC=Cugel's Comp, DDE=Demons, KPG=Kaain Guide

Tweaks

[Associated Ability] PBN (Pg)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Possessions

Total of Terces Carried =
 Total of Groats Carried =



- Appraisal _____
- Athletics _____
- Concealment _____
- Driving _____
- Engineering _____
- Etiquette _____
- Gambling _____
- Imposture _____
- Living Rough _____
- Perception _____
- Physician _____
- Quick Fingers _____
- Riding _____
- Scuttlebutt _____
- Seamanship _____
- Seduction _____
- Stealth _____
- Stewardship _____
- Tracking _____
- Wherewithal _____

⌘ Cantraps/Spells/Tweaks ⌘		Rge	Dtn	SFD, CPX, Twk, Ctp	PBN (Pg)	Attack Vs Attack Trumps	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Strength	Caution
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Speed	Cunning
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Finesse	Ferocity
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Cunning	Strength
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Ferocity	Speed
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Caution	Finesse
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Magic Vs Magic Trumps	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Curious	Daring
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Daring	Insightful
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Devious	Forceful
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Forceful	Curious
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Insightful	Studious
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Studious	Devious

⌘ Dice Rolling (D20) ⌘	Increasing Abilities (using IPs)			Resistances	
	Raise To:	Standard	Magic	Raise To:	
Illustrious Success (IS) - rolling '1' when testing an ability.	6	2/pt	3/pt	2	3/pt
Prosaic Success (PS) - any other success 'below' your rating.	10	3/pt	4/pt	4	4/pt
Hair's-Breadth Success (HBS) - dead-on the ability rating.	14	4/pt	5/pt	6	5/pt
Exasperating Failure (EF) - rolling 1 over your ability rating.	18	5/pt	6/pt	8	6/pt
Quotidian Failure (QF) - any other failure except a 20.	22	6/pt	7/pt	10	8/pt
Dismal Failure (DF) - rolling a 20.					

Combat Roll your Attack rating and compare it with your foe's. GM reviews table and subtracts Health points

Persuasion The originator of the contest 'attacks' with their Persuasion. The target resists (or makes a counter proposal) with their Rebuff. GM consults same table, but subtracts Wit. After 3 exchanges highest Wit wins. NB: Wit regenerates when self-composure is regained. (GM decides according to realistic circumstance.)

Trumps When your ability trumps another, you gain a 'bump-up on your roll. (EG: a HBS changes to a PS etc)

Wallops If your ability rating exceeds your opponent's by 5 (IE 16 vs 11) whenever you score an IS you Wallop them - the contest ends in the way of your choosing. NB: If you also trump them, you Wallop on IS and PS!

Tweaks These special abilities apply a bump-up to the appropriate standard ability. (EF to a HBS etc)

Cantraps These small magics either apply a +5 bonus to your ability roll, or have a discrete standard effect. Roll Magic x3 or less to cast. On fail wait 3mins to retry. 20 always fails. On DF magic backlash occurs!

Improvement Points (IPs) These are awarded for good use of Tag-Lines. You can use one IP to bump an ability roll, or use them to increase an ability rating (see table). NB, IPs cannot bump the special Resistances. [PCs also receive IPs at the end of each session according to how well their PCs acted in Cugel-style]

Spells Spells are 'encompassed': forced into the brain. (20mins for a standard spell). Then cast with a thought. After casting each spell must be re-encompassed. To resist spells, you may leap behind cover, or use your Magic rating. (NB Some spells cannot be resisted, ie bolts of flame, sundering darts etc)

⌘ Special/Magic Items ⌘	Item	Property	PBN (Pg)	Persuasion & Rebuff Trumps	
	_____	_____	_____	_____	Glib
_____	_____	_____	_____	Eloquent	Contrary
_____	_____	_____	_____	Obfuscatory	Lawyerly
_____	_____	_____	_____	Forthright	Penetrating
_____	_____	_____	_____	Charming	Wary
_____	_____	_____	_____	Intimidating	Obtuse
_____	_____	_____	_____	Pure-Hrtd.	Intimidating
_____	_____	_____	_____	Contrary	Charming
_____	_____	_____	_____	Lawyerly	Forthright
_____	_____	_____	_____	Penetrating	Eloquent
_____	_____	_____	_____	Wary	Obfuscatory
_____	_____	_____	_____	Obtuse	Glib