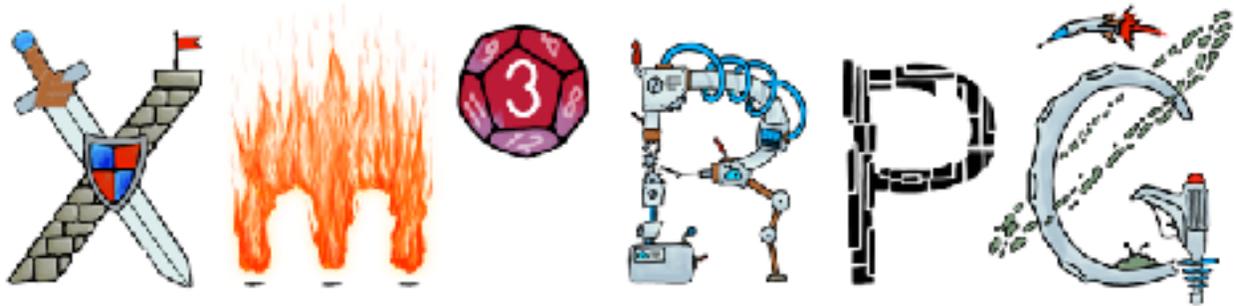




Geek & Dad's



eXpandable Modifiable Modular Multi-Genre Role Playing Game

Core Rules

Player's Guide

Welcome to the XM3RPG Core Rules! Each adventure is based on these Core Rules combined with details from a genre specific "Worldbook" which describes the particular world in which your adventure is set. Essentially, each worldbook only needs to specify the things specific to that genre rather than an entire from-scratch set of rules. The result is a system in which it's vastly easier to create new adventures and worlds in which to set them, and in which each of those worlds is supported by both the power of a genre-specific system and the flexibility of the core XM3RPG.

If you are new to Role Playing Games (RPG) you might want to read an overview of what they are and how one plays. A good one can be found at <http://www.rpg.net/oracle/essays/whatisrpg.html>.

The first step in most adventures is the creation of your character. You'll do this by referring to both these Core Rules and the specific worldbook for your adventure.

Character Creation

Decide on a general character concept, select your character's attributes and skills to fit the concept, then calculate his or her health and anything else required by your worldbook. Characters begin with a level of 1, unless your Game Master (GM) specifies otherwise. Details about these steps are provided next.

Designing a character concept

This can be anything - just a description of who your character is, and what they do. You should write this on your character sheet, to help remind you who this character is next time you play.

Selecting Character Attributes

Every character has attributes. What these are will be determined by the worldbook you are using. When you create a character the number of points you have to spend on attributes will be stated in your worldbook. You can spend these points however you choose, according to Table 1.

Points	Attribute Die
-1	1
0	1d4
1-2	1d6
3-4	1d8
5-7	1d10
8-10	1d12
11-15	3d4
16-21	2d8
22-23	3d6
24-32	2d10
33-35	2d12
36-38	3d8
39-53	4d6
54-62	3d10
63+	4d8

Table 1

Selecting Character Skills

Every character has skills, and each skill has a rank that measures how good the character is at that skill. When you create a character you the number of points you have to spend on skills will be stated in your worldbook. There are two kinds of skills, broad and narrow. Your worldbook will include a list of skills from which to choose.

Narrow skills have no special marking on the skill list. They are very specific skills, applicable to a narrow range of situations. They cost 1 point per rank until rank 10, after which they cost 2 points per rank. There is no maximum rank for narrow skills. Examples: Longbow, Web Scripting, Spaceship Repair.

Broad skills are marked with (B) on the skill list, and can be used in a wide range of situations. However, they cannot be raised above rank 10. Broad skills cost 3 points per rank until rank 5, after which they cost 5 points per rank. Examples: Archery, Programming, Machine Repair.

Skills you spend no points on have rank 0. Skills not on the list may be chosen with GM permission.

Calculating Character Health

Your character's Health is equal to 10, plus five times the number of points you spent on the attribute marked with a * on the list in your worldbook, plus twice your level. If your character's Health is reduced to zero, your character dies. (Or is incapacitated, if the GM prefers.)

Action Resolution

Anything that your character does that has a chance of failure is referred to as an action. Action resolution is the process by which success or failure is determined. If another character is trying to cause your character to fail, the action is opposed. Otherwise, it is unopposed. For any action, the GM can choose to give a character a "situational modifier," a temporary bonus or penalty based on circumstances.

For unopposed actions, roll your attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier and compare it to the Target Number (TN) chosen by the GM. If your total is higher than or equal to the TN, you have succeeded.

For opposed actions, roll your attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier and compare it to the other person's attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier. The higher total succeeds/wins.

Combat

In combat, player actions are divided into rounds. Each player can move and do one other thing (cast spells, attack, operate machinery, etc.) in a round. Players take turns, and when each player has taken a turn, the next round starts.

An attack is an opposed action, as described in the Action Resolution section. The attacker will use whatever skills are appropriate for the means with which they are attacking, such as a “Longsword” skill. The defender will use whatever skills are appropriate for their means of defense, such as a “Dodge” skill. If the attacker succeeds, the defender loses Health equal to twice the difference between the totals of roll + skills + modifiers.

Advancement

Every time your group achieves a major objective, as decided by the GM, your character’s level will increase by 1, and you will each receive 2 attribute points and 5 skill points. Your character’s Health will also increase by 2. You can spend the skill points and attribute points you earn just like when you were creating your character. Alternatively, you can save your points until you have enough to do something that costs multiple points, like increasing abilities or broad skills.

Game Masters' Guide

XM3RPG is intended to be more focused on role playing than extremely complex game mechanics. If a player wants to do something the rules don't cover, say yes whenever it seems reasonable. A general guideline is that very creative ideas earn a +2 situational modifier (see below). If you want use a more tactical combat system with miniatures and a grid, feel free. If you and your group don't like a rule, change it.

With your permission, players may use skills not on the worldbook's skill list. Say yes whenever possible, but do not approve anything that would unbalance the game.

Action Resolution

Anything that a character does that has a chance of failure is referred to as an action. Action resolution is the process by which success or failure is determined. If a non-player character you're controlling is trying to stop them, the action is opposed. Otherwise, it is unopposed. For any action, you can choose to give a character a "situational modifier," a temporary bonus or penalty based on circumstances.

For unopposed actions, choose a TN (see Table 2) to compare to the player's attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier. If their total is greater than or equal to the TN, they have succeeded.

For opposed actions, roll your NPC's attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier and compare it to the PC's attribute die + broad skill rank + narrow skill rank + situational modifier. The higher total succeeds/wins.

Combat

In combat, player actions are divided into rounds. Each player can move and do one other thing (cast spells, attack, operate machinery, etc.) in a round. Players take turns, and when each player has taken a turn, the next round starts. You can come up with some sort of initiative order or just go clockwise around the table. Also, if you think an action should take more than one round (like casting a complex spell or hacking into the spaceship's control computer), just say so.

A simple system for keeping track of relative positioning that you may use if you wish is that two characters are either next to each other (can touch, interact directly); close to each other (one round is sufficient to move next to each other); or far from each other (two rounds are required to move next to

Difficulty	TN
Trivial	3
Easy	8
Average	13
Hard	20
Impressive	30
Master	45
Epic	60
Impossible	80

Table 2

each other, some ranged attacks may take penalties). Alternatively, you may wish to use miniatures and a grid.

An attack is an opposed action, as described in the Action Resolution section. The attacker will use whatever skills are appropriate for the means with which they are attacking, such as a “Longsword” skill. The defender will use whatever skills are appropriate for their means of defense, such as a “Dodge” skill. If the attacker succeeds, the defender loses Health equal to twice the difference between the totals of roll + skills + modifiers.

To create a combat encounter, choose a number of enemies equal to the number of players. The average level of the enemies depends on the level of the players and how hard you want the encounter to be.

- Easy encounters: Level-2 to Level-1
- Medium encounters: Level-1 to Level+0
- Hard encounters: Level+0 to Level+1

For a moderately easy encounter, mix enemies from Easy levels with Medium levels, etc.

You can replace an enemy with two enemies two levels lower, or two enemies with a single enemy that is two levels higher. A level 2 enemy can be replaced with three level 0 enemies, and a level 1 enemy can be replaced with two.

Advancement

Every time the characters achieve a major objective, increase their Level by 1 and give them each 2 attribute points and 5 skill points. The players can spend the skill points and attribute points they earn just like they were creating their character.

Enemy Creation Guide

Are your players becoming too high-level for the enemies I've included in the *Villain Volume*? Or have you created your own worldbook and need challenges to fill out your world? Or do you just need a special villain for an adventure you're creating? This guide will explain how to create monsters for all your villainous needs.

On the right is a blank *Enemy Creation Sheet*. We're going to be creating an enemy for the *Swords & Sorcery Worldbook*, so I've already filled in the attribute names.

I use *this font* to show the content we add.

Enemy Creation Sheet

Level:

_____ : _____ : _____
_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

Strength: () Dexterity: ()

Constitution: () Intelligence: ()

Wisdom : () Charisma: ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Health:

Skills

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Enemy Creation Guide

We need a core concept for our enemy. For this tutorial, we'll choose "Ninja Monkey." In this case, that will also be the name of our enemy, so write that on the top line. On the next line, put a brief (one or two sentences) description of the enemy. Also, our enemy will be level 1, so write that where it says level.

Enemy Creation Sheet

Ninja Monkey

A monkey with epic ninja skills.

Level: 1

_____ : _____ : _____
_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

Strength: () Dexterity: ()

Constitution: () Intelligence: ()

Wisdom: () Charisma: ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Health:

Skills

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Enemy Creation Guide

Next, we will add skills. Look at your worldbook to find the number of starting skill points your enemy gets; adjust the starting number up by five points for each level above first, or down by five points for a level zero enemy.

The *Swords and Sorcery Worldbook* indicates that our ninja monkey gets 36 skill points. Now, spend the skill points on skills that make sense for the enemy, usually lots of combat skills. We'll spend ten points on Katana skill, which I'm making up for this enemy (and yes, that's allowed), and another eight on Stealth, which will be the ninja monkey's main skills. That leaves 18 points to spend on miscellaneous skills so I divide those between Dodge, Perception and Forest Survival in a way that seems sensible.

Enemy Creation Sheet

Ninja Monkey

A monkey with epic ninja skills.

Level: 1

_____ : _____ : _____

_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

Strength: () Dexterity: ()

Constitution: () Intelligence: ()

Wisdom: () Charisma: ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Health:

Skills

Katana: 10 (10) Stealth: 8 (8)

Dodge: 6 (6) Perception: 5 (5)

Forest Survival: 7 (7) _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Enemy Creation Guide

Next, we will add attributes. Look at your worldbook to find the number of starting attribute points your enemy gets; adjust the starting number up by two points for each level above first, or down by two points for a level zero enemy.

Our ninja monkey gets 18 attribute points. We'll spend 8 on Dexterity for 1d12, and another 5 on Strength for 1d10. We'll spend 3 on Constitution for 1d8 and 27 Health (10 + 3*5 + 1*2). We'll put our remaining points in Charisma and Wisdom, raising each to 1d6, and leave Intelligence at the default of 1d4.

Enemy Creation Sheet

Ninja Monkey

A monkey with epic ninja skills.

Level: 1

_____ : _____ : _____

_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

Strength: 1d10 (5) Dexterity: 1d12 (8)

Constitution: 1d8 (3) Intelligence: 1d4 (0)

Wisdom: 1d6 (1) Charisma: 1d6 (1)

_____ : () _____ : ()

Health: 27

Skills

Katana: 10 (10) Stealth: 8 (8)

Dodge: 6 (6) Perception: 5 (5)

Forest Survival: 7 (7) _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Enemy Creation Guide

Now, the last step is to fill in the primary skills in the summary area. Choose the four most important skills from the skills section (Katana, Stealth, Dodge, and Forest Survival in this case) and write them in the blanks above the attributes. To make combat more convenient. write the skill rank + broad skill rank + attribute die after each skill,.

Congratulations! You now have a custom-made ninja monkey!

The final step is to send a huge army of the newly created ninja monkeys at your players, and laugh maniacally as their characters are destroyed by your marvelous creations.

Muahahahaha!

Enemy Creation Sheet

Ninja Monkey

A monkey with epic ninja skills.

Level: 1

Katana: 1d10+10 *Stealth:* 1d12+8

Dodge: 1d12+6 *Forest Survival:* 1d6+7

Attributes

Strength: 1d10 (5) *Dexterity:* 1d12 (8)

Constitution: 1d8 (3) *Intelligence:* 1d4 (0)

Wisdom: 1d6 (1) *Charisma:* 1d6 (1)

_____ : () _____ : ()

Health: 27

Skills

Katana: 10 (10) *Stealth:* 8 (8)

Dodge: 6 (6) *Perception:* 5 (5)

Forest Survival: 7 (7) _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

_____ : () _____ : ()

Worldbook Creation Guide

If you like XM3RPG, but don't want to play a fantasy game, you can create your own worldbooks with this guide and the *Worldbook Template*.

In order to illustrate the process of creating your own worldbook we will go through the sample *Swords & Sorcery Worldbook* section by section. You can view the entire completed worldbook in the document *Swords & Sorcery Worldbook*.

I use *this font* to show the content we add.

We'll be working on this first section of the template:

Worldbook Name

Attributes: List the attributes here. Mark the one that determines Health with a *.

Attribute Points: How many attribute points each player gets. 3 times the number of attributes usually works.

After choosing a name for your worldbook, the next step is to choose which attributes to use. In some cases, you may want to make one of the special rules first, but in this case we won't. For this worldbook, we're going to use the same six attributes that have been around since the dawn of role playing games. Don't forget to mark the attribute that determines Health (Constitution in this case) with an "*". Next, decide how many attribute points a newly created character starts with. Multiplying the number of attributes by three tends to give you a good number, but feel free to use more or fewer to change the relative importance of skills and attributes. For example, the *Cyberpunk Worldbook* deals with characters who have been enhanced beyond human norms by technology, and so gives 20 starting points (4 times the number of attributes). In this case, we'll use 18 points. Here's our filled out version of this first section:

Swords & Sorcery Worldbook

Attributes: *Strength, Constitution*, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma*

Attribute Points: *18*

Next, you need to make the skill list. Here is the template before we fill it in:

Skill Points: How many skill points players get. The more skills there are in the list, the higher this number should be.

Skill List

Broad Skill (B)

Narrow Skill - (optional notes)

Don't forget to mark broad skills with a "(B)". The more skills, the better. You should organize them either by first listing broad and then narrow skills, or by grouping related skills together. Also, decide how many skill points a character gets. With 40-60 skills, this should be about 30-40. You might need more skill points if you have significantly more skills, or if you want to emphasize characters' training over their natural capabilities; you might want fewer skill points if you have a very small skill list. Here's our filled out version of this section:

Skill Points: 36

Skill List

Archery (B)

Swordfighting (B)

Thrown Weapons (B)

Large Weapons (B)

Light Weapons (B)

Longbow

Shortbow

Crossbow

Broadsword

Hand-and-a-half Sword

Longsword

Shortsword

Long Knife

Dagger

Battleaxe

Greataxe

Throwing Axe

Warhammer
Throwing Hammer
Greatclub
Javelin
Spear
Sling
Staff
Lance
Unarmed Combat
Thievery (B)
Picking Pockets
Picking Locks
Trap Use/Deactivation
Stealth
Assassination
Disguise
Climbing
Wilderness Survival
Riding
Sailing
Perception
Bluff
Combat Leadership
Diplomacy
Lore
Dodge
Persistence
Arcana (B)
Warding
Blasting
Deceiving
Transmuting
Binding
Animating

Divining
Channel Faith (B)
Channel Light
Channel Darkness
Channel Order
Channel Chaos
Channel Balance
Wild Magic
Flame Magic
Earth Magic
Iron Magic
Water Magic
Life Magic

The final step is to create any special rules for the worldbook. These can be magic systems, spaceship combat rules, insanity, explosives, spy gadget rules, anything you want! Also, you can add optional rules if you wish. In this case, we'll add a magic system, and an optional rule to modify it. We'll also add a special rule explaining how the Assassination skill works; skills with non-obvious uses are a frequent source of special rules.

Here's the template section for special rules:

Special Rules

Rule Name

Detailed Description

Optional Rule: Rule Here

Another Rule

Detailed Description

We've partially filled in the optional rules below, but the magic system's too large to include here — see the *Swords and Sorcery Worldbook* for the full details:

Special Rules

Optional Rule: Magic and Armor

If armor-wearing wizards does not fit well with the GM's ideas of the fantasy world, they may choose to extend the armor penalty to Dexterity-based rolls to also apply to some or all magic rolls (see Money & Equipment). Players, ask your GM before equipping your wizard. GMs, it's up to you. GMs who use this should certainly waive the penalty for Iron Magic users, and potentially also for divine Channelers.

Assassination

When attacking while successfully using Stealth, make a Dexterity + Thievery + Assassination vs. Dexterity + Dodge opposed roll. If successful, the target of your attack defends only with a Dexterity roll; they may not add any skills to their defense roll.

Once you've created your worldbook, simply make an equipment list and various vicious villains — in this case, also a spell list, or whatever else your special rules require — and you'll be ready to play!

Character Sheet



Basics

Player Name _____

Character Name _____

Level _____

Worldbook _____

Health _____

Attributes

Name : Die (Pts. Spent)

_____ : __d____()

Attribute Points _____

Skills

Name : Rank (Pts. Spent) (B)

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

_____ : ____ () ()

Skill Points _____

Character Picture

Notes:

Equipment:

Enemy Creation Sheet

Level:

_____ : _____ : _____
_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()

Health:

Skills

_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()



Level:

_____ : _____ : _____
_____ : _____ : _____

Attributes

_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()

Health:

Skills

_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()
_____ : () _____ : ()