

Elegant

ROLE PLAYING

COPYRIGHT
ERP is (c) 2002 Gregor Hutton.
Text and art by Gregor Hutton.
Typeset version set in Warnock Pro.
Maintained online at <http://gregorhutton.com/>

ELEGANT ROLE-PLAYING by Gregor Hutton
Version 2, released October 14, 2002

Elegant Role-Playing (ERP)
is a free role-playing game system.

Summary for
Fearless RPG
Joseph S. Coleman

CHARACTERS

Characters are described by the three central Characteristics (**Mastery**, **Wisdom** and **Power**), a variable set of Specialties (Attributes, Skills and Gifts) and Glory. An average human has a rating of 3.

MASTERY

Mastery measures physical ability and strength. It is used for tasks that have a physical nature, and for resisting bodily injuries. The Aspects of Mastery are: dexterity, skill, talent, strength. These are alternative ways of thinking of Mastery. Associated Attributes include Strong, Agile, Stealthy, Quick, Healthy, Tough, Nimble, Fleet-Footed, Spring-Heeled, Well-Balanced, Sure-Handed, Stout and Graceful.

WISDOM

Wisdom describes mental ability and capacity. It is used for tasks that have a mental nature, and for resisting insanity and shock. The Aspects of Wisdom are: knowledge, memory, reason, education. These are alternative ways of thinking of Wisdom. Associated Attributes include Wise, Intelligent, Educated, Alert, Witty, Reasoned, Logical, Inquiring, Clever, Quick-Thinking, Cunning and Rigorous.

POWER

Power gauges emotional and spiritual prowess and strength. It is used for tasks with a social and mystical nature, and for protection from empathic and ethereal pain. The Aspects of Power are: chi, charisma, determination, fate. These are alternative ways of thinking of Power. Associated Attributes include Charismatic, Attractive, Strong-Willed, Empathic, Persuasive, Radiant, Purposeful, Defiant and Divine.

SPECIALTIES

While Characteristics are universal to all characters, Specialties tend to vary. They

have no ratings: you either have them or you don't!

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are abilities that describe a character's capabilities deeper. Four Attributes are linked to each Characteristic. You take the number of Attributes equal to your rank in that Characteristic, divided by two. So a Level 4 Characteristic gives you 2 Attributes. In game play these will represent additional dice to roll to meet or exceed the opposition value of the take you are attempting.

SKILLS

Skills cover areas of expertise, training and learning. They depend on the gaming world or genre and some examples are: Athletics, Stealth, Art, Music, Science, Interaction, Manipulation, Armed Combat, Firearms, Ballistics, Mechanics, Electronics, Computers, Engineer, Medicine, Natural History, Pilot, Driver, etc.

GIFTS

Gifts allow characters to perform special actions and activities or some other sort of advantage. Some example Gifts are: Ambidexterity, Eidetic Memory, Animal Empathy, Cult, Sense of Direction, Wealth, Status, Rank, Allies, Contacts, Patron, Danger Sense, Pain Tolerance, Fame, Followers, etc.

GLORY

Glory reflects Karma, Luck, Experience, Fortune and Destiny. It is awarded by the GM for good role-playing and can be used to alter in-game dice rolls and to permanently enhance your character.

GLORY AS PLAYER CONTROL

You may use Glory as a Player Control device - to buy game effects (such as buy an extra action during combat, to

reroll failed results, roll an additional die where otherwise not permitted, buy a "flashback" to provide information or an item you could have mentioned but forgot during an earlier scene, or combine with other players to buy back an unfortunate demise, etc).

If you have another use of Glory that will enhance the game session and can agree with the GM on that new use, give it a try.

CREATION

A common way to create characters suitable for adventuring is as follows.

- 1 Allocate 15 points between the three Characteristics: **Mastery**, **Wisdom** and **Power**. Typically the Characteristics should be rated as 4, 5 and 6, but extreme characters might be rated 6, 6 and 3, or a one trick pony even 7, 5, 3.

Note that the highest rated Characteristic can be no more than five higher than the lowest rated one.

- 2 Pick Attributes for one of the three Characteristics. You may have no more Attributes for a Characteristic than that Characteristic's rating divided by 2 (rounded up). For example, Nora (right) has a Power of 5 and so can have up to 3 Attributes associated with Power.
- 3 Pick 1 skill under each Characteristic. There is no limit on the number of Skills that a character can possess in later development. This Skill gains a 3rd die in game play.
- 4 Take 15 Glory and use it to buy additional Skills, add Attributes, or Gifts according to the guidelines below. You may save a maximum of 5 Glory for later use, but no more

(mark it on the Character Sheet as unspent Glory).

Gain an Attribute	(current rating/2, round up) in Glory
Gain a Skill	(current number of Skills) in Glory
Raise Characteristics	(current rating + number of associated Wisdom or Power Attributes) in Glory
Build a Sidekick	5 Glory (with 10 Characteristics/10 Glory)
Gain a Gift	10 Glory

Of course, you must also have an idea of the character's name, what they look like and what they do. Try to create your character with flair.

POSSESSIONS

Write down what the character owns. This list is subject to the approval of the GM and your fellow players. Think about what your character has very carefully. Do not make this an exercise in writing down every useful piece of equipment that you can think of. For instance: why does your character have only the clothes he wears, and why are they wet?

BREATH OF LIFE

Think about your character for a moment. How does the character see the world they live in? Why is the character where they are? What does the character believe in, and which things in life do they enjoy? And what do they dislike? Try to create a well-rounded character that will be fun and memorable. Also think carefully about how and why they will integrate with the other PCs. Do not create reasons that your character will not be a team player. When you have found your character's 'voice' within the 'choir' of the group then you are ready to play.

Include your home world or stations, a bit of your lifepath, attitude, politics and faith.

AN EXAMPLE CHARACTER

(Glory costs of upgrades are noted in brackets).

NORA CLARK

Mastery	6, Agile (0), Tough (3)
Wisdom	4, Alert (2)
Power	5, Spirit Communication (3)
Skills	Acrobatics (3), Seduction (1), Armed Combat (2)
Gifts	none
Glory	1

Possessions: Jungle Gear, stylish evening wear, weather-beaten rain-coat, shoulder bag, make-up, nail-file, perfume, 15 Gold Sovereigns, .38 Detective Special revolver, small credit line for wired funds, list of contacts in the US and Europe.

THE SYSTEM

The ERP system is very simple and elegant. (Note that if a fraction is generated by division then round-up to a whole number.)

TASKS

When attempting a task (such as leaping a fence or striking an opponent) you roll a six-sided die (d6) and add this to a rating (Mastery for physical actions, Wisdom for mental actions, and Power for mystical or social actions) to form a score. Compare the score with an opposing value (either a fixed number determined by the GM, e. g. 6 is tough, 9 is hard, or an opponent's score if contesting) to get a result. Most tasks (e. g. striking in combat) have a default opposing value of 6.

acting score - opposing value = result

A result of 0 or lower means failure. A result of 1 means marginal success, higher results yield greater degrees of success. For a lengthy task a character may need to accumulate a number of result points to be successful. These result points may require several contests, with the result points totaled over several attempts.

EXAMPLE:
Picking A Lock

Jargo the Thief is attempting to pick a rusty lock. The GM tells Jargo's player that he must test his Mastery against an opposing value of 6. Jargo has a Mastery of 5 and so his player rolls a d6, knowing he needs anything but a 1 to succeed (as a score of 6 gives 0 result points). He rolls a 3 on the die and so Jargo has a score of 8, for 2 result points. The lock opens with a click.

USING SPECIALITIES

Attributes and Skills allow an additional d6 to be rolled if they are relevant to the task. The die with the highest result is taken to calculate the score of the attempt. No more than one Skill and one Attribute may be used for any given task, so no more than three dice are rolled at the same time (with the exception of Glory-bought extra dice, see below). Gifts sometimes allow special actions but grant no modifications to scores.

EXAMPLE:
Remember Me?

Nora is in a nightclub awaiting the arrival of a fellow PC, when she notices a man acting strangely at the bar. She is sure that she has seen him before. . . The GM asks Nora's player to attempt a Wisdom task with an opposing value of 7. Nora has a Wisdom of 4, but she also has the Attribute 'Alert', which the GM allows her to use. Nora's player rolls two dice and gets to pick the higher of the two. She rolls a 3 and a 5. So Nora achieves a score of 9, giving 2 result points. The GM passes a note to Nora's player. The man at the bar is a bitter foe of the PC she is due to meet in the nightclub, and the man has some sort of gun in his jacket. Note that the roll of 3 would have not been enough for success, as this would have given Nora 0 result points.

LUCK

Glory, in its aspect as Luck, can be used to manipulate in-game scores and events. An example of a Lucky Break is finding somewhere to hide in a dead-end street.

Benefit gained	Glory Cost
Reroll a d6 on a task	1
Add an extra d6 to a task score	2
Lucky Break	(GM decides) 1-3

EXAMPLE:
Resisting Allure

A woman's alluring voice calls forth to Jargo from behind a curtain on the far side of the master bedroom. It is deep, husky and mesmerizing. The thought that vampires inhabit the castle is almost lost from Jargo's mind as he starts to move towards the velvet drapes and away from the jewelry case he is raiding. The GM asks Jargo's player to attempt a Power task with a difficulty of 9. Jargo only has a Power of 3, and the GM rules that the Attribute 'Charismatic' is not usable on the task. Jargo's player rolls a die, which comes up as a 2 and Jargo scores 5. Jargo's player declares he is spending Jargo's final 2 Glory points to add a d6 to the score. He rolls a 4 and Jargo's score is now 9, which is still not enough to resist. His player declares that reluctantly Jargo walks towards the voice, and whatever awaits him behind the curtain. . .

DAMAGE

When completely healthy a character has 0 Wounds. Wounds can be physical (cuts, bruises), mental (shock, insanity) or mystical (a broken heart, spiritual attacks) and are all added (cumulatively) to the same Wounds total. There are not separate Wounds totals for the different types of damage. A physically injured character is more susceptible to a sudden shock than an uninjured character.

Each result point of an attack causes 1 Wound point to the victim. When wounded, a character tests their Mastery,

Wisdom or Power (for physical, mental or mystical damage) against an opposing value of their current Wounds total. A result of 1 or more means the character can fight on. A result of 0 or lower renders the character unconscious. A result of -5 or lower indicates that the character is possibly dead. Only the GM and the other players can decide if a character dies or not, it is their responsibility to choose what is best for the story.

HEALING

Characters normally heal 1 Wound (i. e. subtract one from their current Wounds total) for every hour of rest, but the GM can rule that Wounds may take longer to heal and require either medical or some other aid.

ENCUMBRANCE AND AGILITY

Heavy armor limits the wearer's agility, flexibility and movement; the scores of all tasks involving agility are reduced by the ENC level of the armor worn.

WEAPONS

A punch or kick does less damage than other attacks and so subtracts 3 from the wounds caused [a 'damage modifier' ((DM) of -3], other DMs are given below.

TYPE	DM	Example
Ultra Light	-3	Kick, Punch, Improvised Attack (bottle, etc.)
Very Light	-2	Knife, Sap, Sling, Shortbow, .22 Handgun or SMG
Light	-1	Club, Machete, 9mm or . 38 Handgun or SMG
Medium	±0	Sword, Axe, Crossbow, . 45 Handgun or SMG, Shotgun
Heavy	+1	Sword (2H), Flail (2H), Spear (2H), . 357 or . 44 Handgun, Light Rifle (5. 56mm, . 22)
Very Heavy	+2	Greatsword (2H), Greataxe (2H), Halberd (2H), Pike (2H), Medium Rifle (7. 62mm,

. 303 cal), Shotgun (pointblank)

Ultra Heavy +3 Chainsaw (2H), Heavy (13mm, . 50 cal) Rifle

(2H) = two-handed use. Kicks, punches and improvised attacks require no skill.

ARMOR

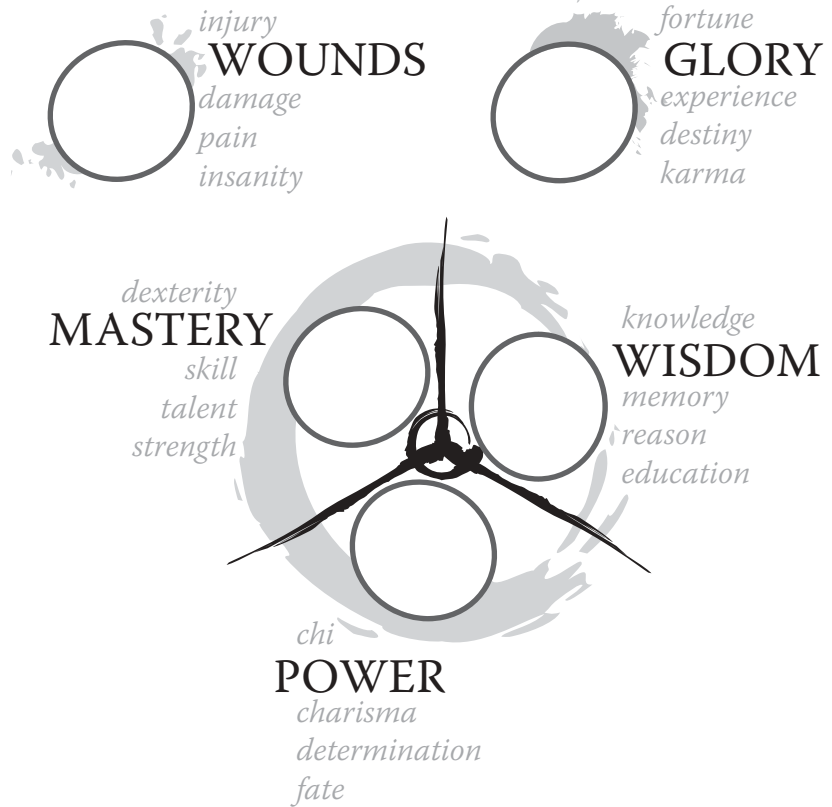
Armor reduces the number of Wounds by a set amount, see the table below. Armor will not reduce a blow below causing 1 Wound. Armor does not protect against non-physical wounds. (PR =Protection, ENC =Encumbrance.)

PR	ENC	Armor
+1	0	Leather, Composite Fabric armor
+2	1	Ringmail, Light Chainmail Armor or Flak Jacket
+3	2	Heavy Chainmail, Scale Armor or Powdered Lead.
+4	3	Plate Armor or Metal Plates

ELEGANT ROLE-PLAYING

CHARACTER SHEET

NAME



MY LEGEND and my Specialities

MY POSSESSIONS and their effects

acting score – opposing value = result

Your **score** is a **rating plus a d6**. Both **Attributes** and **Skills** allow an extra d6 to be rolled on tasks (up to a maximum of 3 dice), pick the highest die for calculating the score.

Reroll a d6 on a task:	1 Glory
Add an extra d6 to a task score:	2 Glory

Wounds start at 0 and are cumulative. When injured test Mastery, Wisdom or Power against the current number of wounds. A result of 0 or lower renders the character unconscious. A result of -5 or below may kill the character.