



LVL 50

LVL 48

LVL 51

# . DUNGEON

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The *Contest System* is based on the mechanics in **Songbirds** (*a TTRPG*).

The fonts used in this book are Rubik and Perfect DOS VGA 437

# . DUNGEON

an alternate reality RPG

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Sometimes I think I live in a gap  
between two worlds, one world that I  
have to wake up to, be adherent of the  
rules and live in a place that is  
dictated by others.

A place I sometimes feel the fear of  
aging and dying before I have figured  
out what it is I am here to do.

That other world is sweet, fresh and  
misty, inviting adventure into the  
unknown, melding ancient wisdom  
with new discovery; the sunlight  
turning into moonlight and the spell of  
eternal life is never broken.

- Riita Klint





Nashan, if you desire to know the truth, then you must know that you also need the courage to accept it as well.

- Wild, *.hack//sign*



# welcome.txt

.dungeon is a game about traveling through a virtual, fantasy world. One person takes on the role of the World, filling in the nooks and crannies with dungeons and adventures that they think up or borrow from books they already own. Everyone else is a Player and creates a Character to explore those nooks, discover their treasure, and interact with NPCs and other flesh-and-blood folks in this virtual world.

Come to this game with an adventure you want to go on, a dungeon you want to crawl, or a wilderness you want to explore. .dungeon gives you a new and interesting way to do those things, with characters influenced by your life and your surroundings. You might gain special abilities based on your pet, or be able to aid a friend if you play their favorite song.

Beyond, you'll find guides for interacting with the game, performing tasks, and answering the questions that come up during play.

## **File.warning**

*If the idea of mixing real life with a tabletop character is upsetting to you, this game supports you creating a person you're playing as. You are not required to be yourself. Instead, think about someone who spends most of their time in an online, virtual space, why they're there, and what keeps them there.*



# world.txt

One player takes on the role of the World. They run the NPCs inside of the game as well as other Player Characters you might meet. Their job is to react to the Characters' actions and create interactions for the Players. This game aims at the heart of the online ecosystem—the individuals you meet and how you choose to interact with them. Let the fantasy of the world be the backdrop and focus on the people. Why do they play the game and what keeps them there?

# playfile.dll

This game settles disputes and answers questions with dice Contests. Each side rolls a die and the highest number wins. The winner gets to choose to either weaken the opponent's Connection, dealing damage to it equal to the difference of the dice rolled, or Do Something Cool, like disarm an opponent or perform a cool stunt. If it's possible in the fantasy video games you've played, then it's possible in .dungeon.

# teamwork.dll

Some Contests will be impossible to tackle on your own--that's where teamwork comes in. At any point you can work together with your party to set up a Contest. All people roll their dice and add them together for one single total, then compare against the opponent. Those involved describe the part they played in the teamwork. But be careful! Opponents can team up against you if you're outnumbered.

# char\_stats.info

Characters have 6 stats.

**RNG** - The will of the programming, reaction rolls, loot, random chance.

*Example: Rolling against a party member to see who the monster attacks.*

**Meta** - Your knowledge of the game world itself.

*Example: Rolling to see if you know the location of a certain NPC.*

**System** - Your skill over the game. Fighting, climbing, exploding, etc.

*Example: Rolling to hack and slash some bandits.*

**Tilt** - Your ability to keep calm in situations that might be defeating.

*Example: Rolling after taking a massive L so you don't rage quit.*

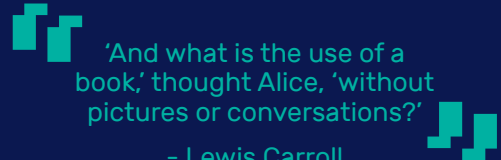
**Charm** - Your ability to invoke real-world presence in a virtual space.

*Example: Rolling to increase pay on a small-time bounty.*

**Perception** - Your physical senses and their usefulness in a virtual space.

*Example: Rolling to see if you hear some spicy takes in the local tavern*


Assign a different die to each of your six stats from the standard set of polyhedral dice: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. The larger the die, the better you are in that stat.



- Lewis Carroll

# contest\_assets

Contests are every question and every uncertainty. Whenever you attempt to do something and it's not obvious you would succeed, you'll roll a Contest. It could be you dodging an attack, or traversing through a difficult storm. It can be something emotional that might be affecting your character that's hard to overcome. Everything can be a Contest if you oppose it. This means, unless a certain Stat is obvious, you can make a case for which Stat you want to use. They are malleable. If the case is made and makes sense to the World and the rest of the player, then it shall be.



I've thought of it ever since, the idea that we don't stray far, that what feels like discovery is only the revealing of what was hidden but there, waiting.

- David Vaan



# failure.info

Losing a Contest doesn't mean that you failed to accomplish the task. The most important thing to the game is how it happened, how long it took, and what it made you feel. Sure, losing a sword fight might mean your character has to respawn, but losing a Contest against a Settlement while you search for information doesn't mean you failed to find the information. It could mean that it took you a lot longer than expected, or that you were side tracked and found something else instead. The only thing losing a Contest means for sure, is that your time in the game is winding down. This is measured by the Connection.

## connection.status

This is your Connection to the game. The bond you share with These People, in This Time. It is inevitable that it will come to an end someday. The group measures this with a d100 (two d10's, one as the tens digit, the other as the ones). When you fail a contest, the difference between the dice can be subtracted from the group's total Connection.

## do\_something\_cool.info

Winning a Contest means that you overcame a struggle, however big or small, and now have the upper hand. Opponents have Connection just as you do, and lowering it to 0 can remove them from the game. But when you succeed in a Contest you can choose to perform a stunt, like disarming an opponent, or convincing an ally to keep moving through a blizzard, instead of lowering the connection of your opponent. This is a moment for the spotlight to shine on you.

## respawn.status

Certain Contests may result in a character needing to respawn and there is nothing inherently punishing about this. It's something that punctuates a particularly dangerous physical task, or wastes more of the Party's time, but ultimately it does not add anything mechanically to losing. The loss of Connection is what's important. Use respawning as comedic breaks, dramatic losses, or quick escapes from scenes that are coming to an end.

## rest\_dice\_assets

Every time your group loses 20 Connection, gain a Rest Die. Rest Dice can only be spent at the end of a session as you log out of the game. For each Rest Die Spent, roll d20 and regain that much Connection.

## game\_over.exe

If the party's Connection reaches 0, it's "Game Over". It's the end of summer and you've gotta focus on school. The servers hosting the game have fallen into some corporation's hands and they're pulling the plug. Or you're just drifting apart. Talk about the reason. Put the manual away and tell the stories of what happened here.

# screen\_name.info

Your irl name is cool and all, but this is the virtual world, so you need to choose a screen name. Username. Whatever you want to call it.

*Examples: milk, bigdaddyxox, JohnMasterChief117, thegodswerewrong, DireFrog, xXFireStarterXx, roflcopter343, WinstonOverwatch12, MichaelJones, BradyBrunch, Ogre2, DockWaterJames, SynysterxGates, jtsparxxx, axeosis, xercrosis, japan\_legendx7, gnometori, k8isl8, sk8tr\_gurl, kokis\_tales, 5er, chronoX, ffx\_lulu, trashgoblinX, servidae.*

If you're at a loss, use your twitter handle, or scroll twitter till you find one you like.

# job.info

What do you do in the real world? Once per day, when you face a Contest that your job could help you with, you can roll your stat die twice and take the better result.

*Examples: corporate skill, garbage man, emergency worker, first responder, insurance rep, underpaid teacher, dog walker, student, mother of two.*

# party\_up.exe

The World supports a party system where at least 2 players can enter into a party, linking them. While in a party you can communicate through comms, see a marker over other party member's heads, and see each other's status.

AVATAR



# body\_type

This is less about exactly what you look like and more about the idea behind your avatar. After you choose one or come up with one you can flesh it out through description.

*Example: Tall af, himbo, goth gf, alien, cat-boy, monstrous, pixie, big and soft, anime girl, kick-ass orc, isekai protagonist, track star, some actor, video game character, cartoon hero.*

# hair

You can choose a specific style, draw your ideas, or write down a flavor that suits you.

*Example: Spikey, mohawk, flaming skull, pixie cut, buzzed, tall and pointy, frizzy, out of control, like twisting vines, solid and square, always moving tendrils.*

# outfit

This could be something particular that you need to have, or a genre that you're aiming to emulate.

*Example: Punk, horror movie chique, college hoodie, shirt that says f\$\*#, band shirt, hot topic hipster, lumberjack, metal head, medieval knight.*

# miscellaneous


Here's the space for all the odds and ends that your character wears or has on them.

*Example: Punk, horror movie chique, college hoodie, shirt that says f\$\*#, band shirt, hot topic hipster, lumberjack, metal head, medieval knight.*






# CLASSES



'But it's no use now,' thought poor  
Alice, 'to pretend to be two people!  
Why, there's hardly enough of me left  
to make one respectable person!'



- Lewis Carroll

# character\_classes.info

You have a Class that determines what Moves you get. A Move is a special thing that you can do, based on both the in-world fiction and your out-world characteristics.

Certain classes will only be playable by certain people, while others will have certain tasks or requirements to meet. If there's something unique about you that you wish to use, create a class around it by writing up a short description and creating two abilities.

# the\_knight

Your word is your bond. Knights have a unique Connection with the game itself, starting with vows that hinder them but grant massive boons. A Knight will inevitably break their vows over time, losing them forever and lessening their boons until they eventually fall from grace.

## vows.info

You begin with 4 vows that must be upheld when you're in play. Each one gives you a permanent +1 to all Contests you make.

**Silence** - this vow breaks if an NPC hears the Player speak.

**Truth** - this vow breaks if anyone catches the Player lying.

**Peace** - this vow breaks if an NPC sees the Knight causing violence.

**Poverty** - this vow breaks if anyone catches the Knight accepting payment or holding onto excess wealth.

## promise.exe

You can make and hold a promise with a single person, spirit, or entity at a time. Whenever you act in accordance with the promise add +3 to your roll. If someone catches you breaking the promise, you must write them a letter of apology, and until then take a -5 to all rolls.

# the\_hacker

You have a unique relationship with the system, allowing you to trick or cheat it. The rules of the game are just guidelines. Playing like this is reckless and dangerous, but it can make all the difference when the chips are down.

## cheat.dll

You have 4 Cheats and can use each once per session. Whenever you would roll a die for a Contest, you may do one of the following Cheats instead:

**^^<>AB>** - use two Stats for the Contest.

**AA^>>>B** - hide the dice roll from the World and lie if needed.

**BB>>>^^** - add a d20 to whatever roll you just made.

**>><<^AB<** - roll with the biggest die at the table.

## hacking.exe

Once per session when interacting with an item of any power, you can hack it, changing one word of its title and warping the item's code to function in an entirely different way.

*Example: Changing a sword to a shield, or changing a "Ring of Flight" to a "Ring of Invisibility."*



# the\_beast

You're an animal person at heart, and you've formed a bond with your pet and the natural world around you. This one's for all the pet lovers. If you don't/can't have a pet for any particular reason, it's okay to make one up. Your dream pet.

## turn\_into\_animal.exe

You can take on the form of your pet 1/day. You can do anything that animal could conceivably do. Having multiple pets means having more forms to choose from. This form lasts until it's no longer needed.

## commune\_with\_nature.dll

At any time, you can attempt to commune with nature by closing your mind to your surroundings and making a Systems Contest against the surrounding. If you succeed, the game world presents a physical avatar in the form of an animal to guide you through your challenge or to the goal that you seek.

*Example: A woodland critter guides you to a path, the wind steers your ship, the clouds form a great shape in the sky that reveals some clue.*

## the\_mage

Magic can be found in the words we use. Incantations and rituals abound in even the smallest of literary arts. As a wizard you choose a single book (like, an irl book) to be the sole object of your study for the rest of your life. And from that book you may cast 3 spells per day.

## book.exe

Whenever you're not in-game, you may spend your downtime studying your book and circling words, phrases, passages, and preparing them as spells. You may prepare 3 spells per downtime. After they're cast cross them out-- they can never be used again.

When you cast a spell you tell the World what you aim for the spell to do, then roll the appropriate Contest. If you succeed, you inflict the target with a condition or effect. A condition can be anything from "injured" to "blind." An effect could make you invisible, wipe someone's memories, or turn stone to mud. Let the World know what you want and ask them to make it so.

## ancient\_magics.info

You can read the ancient language of the game, but you cannot speak it and you know better than to write it (if you do so without a fairy present, a dragon will surely come).

# the\_witch

You know a magic that is put onto and into your body through modification. Player, your piercings and tattoos are your character's spells. And you can wield them in a few ways. If you can't/don't have any tattoos/piercings but have always wanted them, make up a few. You have them now.

## tattoos.exe

You can only use one tattoo per session. Upon casting it you must decide which way you want to invoke it: Summoning or Aspect. If you choose to Summon your tattoo, the art becomes a living, breathing thing that you can interact with and that will obey you if it's sentient. If you choose Aspect, then you take on an aspect of the art, like being wreathed in fire, or flying, or becoming an undead beast.

## piercing.exe

Each piercing you have gives you a +1 to a physical contest, like fighting or defending yourself/others. You can activate as many as you'd like at once, but once used they cannot be called on again until the next session.

## the\_leader

Your magic is altruistic and meant to aid others. It manifests as pious gifts from your deity. For the magic to take effect, the target must accept the gift you offer them. If someone is unconscious, paralyzed, or something similar, they can't accept the gift to gain its benefits.

## take\_my\_gift.exe

A gift can be anything from a sincere compliment to a consenting hug. Or it could be a trinket that's personal to you, or an origami swan that you just folded specifically for them. If they accept the gift they can use one of your dice below to add to their Contest roll. These dice are replenished at the beginning of each session.

<d4> <d6> <d8> <d10> <d12> <d20>

## consult\_the\_manual.info

1/session, you can use one of your own dice to roll a Meta check against anything in the world. If you succeed, you're able to find the information you seek within the manual of the game.

# the\_artist

Your power is forged through writing, drawing, painting, and creating. It gives you the amazing ability to tell stories, play with nostalgia, and weave memories.

## art.png

You can relate the Party's story through poetry, illustration, music, or any other form of art to gain a Rest Die for the party. You can do this during the session or after, but you can only gain one Rest Die a session. As long as you are present, all Rest Dice can be spent during a session instead of waiting until afterward.

## teamwork.info

You can aid in any Contest by telling a story, playing a song, doing a dance, or performing some other art of your choice. When you aid in a Contest in this fashion, you spend a Rest Die, rolling it and adding that to the total.

# the\_troll

You are equal parts rage and naivety, fueled by the loss of Connection into a state of super strength which is only matched by your ability to confound.

## rage.exe

Whenever the Party would gain a rest die, you can choose to go into a rage, growing three times your size. While enraged you roll a d100 for any and all physical-related Contests, and lose 1/2 as much Connection for all Contests. This effect ends when you are no longer facing any opposition.

## what?.info

Whenever you make an exaggerated false statement in front of an NPC they are obligated to correct you in a way that makes them feel superior. May also work on other Players depending on how good of a troll you are.

*Example: You say that the sky is red and they will laugh, slap their knee, and correct you. But also, if you say "the King of the Sunken Castle is known for his mighty sword," the NPC might say, "No, you fool, the King of the Sunken Castle has magic that reads your mind. Everyone knows this."*

# the\_dungeoneer

You are a master of the below-ground. The deep ditches. The techno-traps. Unlike others, you gain understanding of your surroundings and use that to manipulate situations to your benefit.

## understanding.exe

Whenever you learn something new about a location (a dungeon, settlement, etc) give yourself an Understanding Token in the form of a little note on your character sheet. You can spend an Understanding to add things to an environment you're in. Like an elevator to a dungeon, or a secret door to a dead end, or a chandelier in a tavern full of pirates.

## rest.info

If you collect 5 Understanding, you can spend them all to gain a Rest die. Add it to the party's pool and keep learning.

# the\_bard

Everyone knows that your choice in music is *\*too\** good. You have the best playlists, the best party mixes, and the understanding of when to use them.

## playlist.exe

Create a playlist with a song assigned to each of the Players in your party. Make it something personal (or funny). You can play each song once per session, and when you do, that Player adds +2 to all of their Contests.

## end\_credits.info

Add a song to the playlist. A song for the end of the session. For the moment when the credits roll. If a Rest die is rolled during this song, roll an additional d20 and take the higher of the two.





GEAR

## .ram

This is your inventory. Every piece of your body has an inventory slot: Body, Back, Hands, Feet, and Head. Plus you have a backpack that can hold 5 things inside. If you're carrying more than your inventory can hold, the party takes double damage from your failed contests.



Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.

- Albert Einstein



## gold.startup

You start the game with 5 gold.

## equipment.info

Since .dungeon uses Contests, weapons don't deal a variety of damages, they always deal the difference between your roll and your opponent's. Weapons and Equipment are simplified down to what each piece *does*, granting a bonus to rolls, or allowing certain rolls to be made in the first place. The more money spent on an item the more powerful of a bonus or power it has.

NAME	RANK	PRICE	EFFECT
<b>Clothing</b>			
Formal	Uncommon	3	Blend in with high society.
Casual	Basic	1	--
Travel	Basic	1	--
Hoodie	Basic	1	Stay warm in cool climate.
Coat	Basic	1	Keep dry in wet climate.
Backpack	Basic	1	Extra pack, 10 slots.
Binoculars	Basic	1	See things from a distance.
Rope	Basic	1	Climbing and other rope-things.
Compass	Basic	1	Always points north.
Fire Snuffer	Uncommon	3	Puts out small fires, noisy.
Light Orb	Uncommon	3	Shines directional light.
Breath Filter	Uncommon	3	For gasses and toxins in the air.
Cooking Gear	Basic	1	Pots, pans, etc.
Sleeping Bag	Basic	1	--
Tent, 2-Person	Basic	1	--
Lockpicking Tools	Basic	1	Allows locks to be picked.
Duct Tape	Basic	1	--
Handcuffs, Stone	Uncommon	3	Must beat a 12 to break out.
Guitar	Basic	1	Used, still beautiful.
35mm Camera	Basic	1	Couple photos used from the roll.
Disguise Kit	Rare	4	Make-up, wigs, light face altering.
<b>Communicator</b>			
Necklace	Rare	4	Short-range communication.
Wrist	Rare	4	Short-range communication.
<b>Forgery Tools</b>			
Herbalism Kit	Uncommon	3	Pens, tracing paper, etc.
Herbalism Kit	Basic	1	Basic information on plants.
Carpentry Tools	Basic	1	Hammers, nails, blueprint paper.
Painter's Supplies	Basic	1	Watercolor, oils, brushes.
Weaver's Tools	Basic	1	Needle, thread, etc.
Mechanical Tool Kit	Uncommon	3	Wrench, grease, rags, etc.
Audio Recording Orb	Rare	4	Records 10 seconds of audio only.

NAME	RANK	PRICE	EFFECT
Dogs	Weapon	2	Can carry a backpack and attack.
Cats	Uncommon	3	Can scout undetected, smells magic.
Birds	Basic	1	Can scout from the air.
Fish	Basic	1	Water-based pet.
Mice	Uncommon	3	--
Snakes	Weapon	2	Can attack.
Horses	Weapon	2	Can carry 1 Character and 1 extra pack.
Crystal Wand	Weapon	2	Spellcaster's tool.
Moon Staff	Weapon	2	Plucked from a moon tree.
Heavy Coat	Uncommon	3	Reduces physical connection loss by 1.
Leather Jacket	Uncommon	3	Reduces physical connection loss by 1.
Chainmail Shirt	Uncommon	3	Reduces physical connection loss by 1.
Plate Mail	Rare	4	Reduces physical connection loss by 2.
Club	Weapon	2	--
Switchblade	Weapon	2	Concealable.
Sword Cane	Weapon	2	Concealable.
Brass Knuckles	Weapon	2	+1 to fist contests.
Shuriken	Weapon	2	Ranged.
Cutlass	Weapon	2	--
Halberd	Weapon	2	Two-handed.
Greatsword	Weapon	2	Two-handed.
Bayonet	Rare	4	Attached to a single-shot rifle.
Katana	Weapon	2	--
Battleaxe	Weapon	2	Two-handed.
Maul	Weapon	2	--
Trident	Rare	4	Ranged.
Bladed Whip	Rare	4	Can do whip-related things.
Net	Uncommon	3	Catches opponents.
Explosive Orb	Rare	4	D12 contest against all in small area.
Single-Shot Rifle	Weapon	2	Ranged, two handed, fire then reload.
Abandoned Hand-Cannon	Weapon	2	Ranged, fire then reload.
Obscuring Orb	Rare	4	Smoke bomb.

## basic\_gear

Ordinary things like rope, candles, climbing gear, tripwire, pen and paper, are all 1 gold each. Each piece of basic gear grants +1 to any Contests where they are helpful. Some tasks might even be impossible without the right gear.

*Example: "You face a sheer cliff face, smoothed by hand for centuries by the NPCs of this region," I say. "Well can I climb?" you ask. "Not without a rope," I say. "Well, dirt bag, here's my flippin' rope!" you say. "Perfect, make a System Contest, +1 against the cliff."*

## weapons

Each weapon costs 2 gold, but in addition to giving you +1 to System Contests with them, they each can Do Something Cool if they succeed in a Contest against a foe.

*Examples: "The giga-raccoon swipes at you! Roll a System Contest against it," I say. And you roll your dice and win! "HA!" you say. "I beat it. But instead of doing damage I want to jump on its back and get it in a chokehold so Bjorn can convince it to be our friend." And just like that*  
—Something Cool.

## uncommon\_gear

Special things like armor, masterwork weapons, and fancy versions of basic gear (like a golden lantern of the Unforgotten House) cost 3 gold each. And you need to succeed in a Meta contest against the shop or the area to even find something like this. These items offer “story” perks.

*Example: You have a Masterwork weapon and are in town resting up when some bandits cause problems at the Inn. “Crap,” you say. “Well, I brandish my masterwork sword to scare them off.” I call for a Charm Contest and when you succeed the bandits recognize the sword and rush off, tails between their legs.*

## rare\_gear

Unusual things like magic potions, special armor, and powerful weapons each cost 4 gold, and you can only buy them from NPC magic-users in settlements. Careful though, these weirdos like to give you dangerous quests before they’ll willingly sell anything to you.

Quests like: Climbing dangerous mountains for flowers, gathering monster parts, slaying mythic beasts, or testing unidentified potions.

# legendary\_gear

Unique things like the sentient blade Excalibur, or the Mighty Cloak of Van Walt, are priceless and can only normally be found outside of settlements in dungeons. There's a small chance you might find them in settlements, but only in the hands of other Player Characters--such as yourselves. These weapons typically let you automatically succeed at certain Contests without needing to roll, or they may provide you with new, class-like abilities with which to pull the real world into the virtual world.

## scapegoat

You can transfer incoming Connection damage into this willing (and happy) globule of slime that floats around your head. It can withstand Connection damage equal to the amount of gold pieces you feed it. All left over damage goes to the party.

## falling star

If you catch a falling star and trade it for your heart, you can grant one wish. The wish must be possible within the game.

## storm caller

The orb on the tip of this staff swirls with different energy depending on the weather in the Real World.

- >**Sunny** - Swirls with bright light which can blind a target 1/day.
- >**Cloudy** - Swirls with fog which can expand around you, concealing you 1/day.
- >**Rainy** - Swirls with dark water which allows you to raise or lower a source of water in the game dramatically 1/day.
- >**Stormy** - Swirls with dark clouds and thunder which allow you to call down a lightning bolt 1/day.



## dog whistle

When blown this whistle summons one war dog in the game for every dog that is in the Player's house.

## the treasure's mantle

A small sack of rocks that vibrate when gold is near.

## black cat of the lake

A simple black cat with a number on its back equal to the number of lives it has left. When found, it has lives equal to the number of cell phones on the gaming table.

## wax wings

These messy wings allow safe flight 1/day. If you attempt to fly again with them it will work, but they will melt and be unusable afterward.

## winter's cloak

If you wear this cloak during the standard winter months (irl) then your Character can walk on water, creating little lilypads of ice where they step.

## tyrant-o-saurus

If you charge into a dangerous situation alone your movement becomes unstoppable, allowing you to crash through walls.

## time spinner

When the medallion in this necklace is spun, the Player may step away from the table to go get a snack or take a break, and nothing can affect their Character. They are displaced from time and space within the game until the Player returns.

## vampire fangs

These strange teeth allow you to drain Connection from sleeping targets without a Contest roll. You drain an amount of Connection equal to the number of red objects that are around you (the Player).

## the ring of melancholy

This powerful bone ring allows the Player who has it to tell a sad story 1/day, at the end of which all of the people who hear it in-game burst into tears for 10 minutes.



It is a very strong rule in drama, and in life, that people remain true to their basic natures. They change, and their change is essential for drama, but typically they only change a little, taking a single step towards integrating a forgotten or rejected quality into their natures.

- Chris Vogler



# skills.info

Skills are techniques, strategies, and knowledge that are picked up through travel, training, and time. They can be knowledge about the game, like learning the landscape (geography), discovering the uses of different plants (herbology), or communicating with a randomly generated culture (lost languages). But they can also be meta knowledge about the game, like learning the market timings to get items for cheap (shop stalking), double jumping to cross a difficult obstacle (butterfly jump), or knowing the button combination necessary to land a killer combo (mash the X button).

There is no definitive list for .dungeon because the game is continuing to grow and generate content within itself. It's impossible for a single Player to know the entire game. Instead, Players are encouraged to come up with their own Skills to specialize their Character and leave their mark on the world.

To learn a Skill, you must be taught from a source: a text in the world, and online message board, an NPC, a fellow Character, divine intervention, magical dream journey, etc. After learning a Skill, you can use it to get +1 to Contests that it applies to.

Further study of the skill from a different source will improve it, granting a +2 bonus when using the Skill in Contests. And finally, only when training a +2 Skill under a Master can you increase that to a +3 bonus and be considered a Master in the Skill as well.

example\_skills.dll

- >**Button Mashing**  
to land a combo
- >**Dracology**  
the study of dragons.
- >**Sword Dancing**  
the art of the duel.
- >**Double Jump**  
allowing you to reach new heights.
- >**Reading Ancient Scripts**  
deciphering a forgotten language.
- >**Dupe Glitch**  
to multiply a basic item.
- >**Cartography**  
mapping the unknown, reading old maps.
- >**Gold Farming**  
knowing the locations where you can earn quick cash.
- >**Criminology**  
study of laws and how to break them.
- >**Necromancy**  
talking to and working with the dead.
- >**Timing**  
learning the timing of a game mechanic (like swinging trap blades)





ANNWN

-----(The World)

...\\

-----(:47)

# your\_role.info

You run the world of the game, Annwn, and all of the NPCs and MMO players inside of it. Primarily your role is to react to the Players, and to force them to react in turn. Like bouncing a ball back and forth. The Players do something, which forces the World to come up with an answer, and that answer pushes the Players to do another thing. So it goes.

## some ways to do this:

- Ask the Players a question.
- Have the game ask the Characters a question.
- Introduce a new Player.
- Trap the Characters where they are.
- Split the Characters up.
- Destroy the place the Characters are.
- Answer Player questions truthfully.
- Provide living answers to Character questions.
- Open a secret door.
- Reveal a strange secret.
- Tell a story as a Player.
- Talk about the fact that this is a game.
- Have the game ask the Players about their lives.
- Have other Players ask about the game.
- Give the Players information their Characters don't have.
- Make the Characters the source of information.
- Fill the silences with new or repeated information.



Isn't life disappointing?  
- Tokyo Story

# annwn.info

Annwn contains the entire virtual gaming space. It's shaped like a twenty-sided die, made up of 20 distinct "faces". And it's special because every book on your shelf or PDF on your drive can be fed into and read by .dungeon, converting it to a "face" or "adventure" file to then be played by .dungeon characters. Think of this game as a unified, simple system to put all of your favorite setting materials together and explore them.

# file.adventure

Porting adventures into .dungeon involves figuring out the Connection Rating of each obstacle and assigning Difficulty to it. Connection Rating is similar to the Player's Connection, measuring how many failed Contests they can take before it's game over. Difficulty is measured in dice, the size of them and how many.

# connection\_rating

The easiest measurement for Connection Rating when converting is Hit Points. No numbers need to be changed, but it's good to remember that since Connection doesn't only measure physical health, obstacles can be defeated in other ways than physically violent Contests.

If the adventure uses another method of tracking success, such as Clocks, Jenga Towers, or Playing Cards, a successful Contest would fill in a slice of the Clock, or equal a pull from the Jenga Tower. Guaranteed, any way a game handles success and failure, a Contest can slip its way in to make the adventure possible with .dungeon characters.

# do\_something\_cool.info

Turn abilities, status effects, and conditions from monsters in other books into Do Something Cool abilities when an opponent wins a Contest. A large tentacled beast might grapple a Character when they win a contest, while a goblin might snatch some precious item from them instead.

# difficulty.info

Difficulty means different things to different people. When porting obstacles over to .dungeon, use the guides below to help set a difficulty and assign dice to it.

## vague guides

For when you need to ballpark it.

- >D4 - If the challenge is super easy and shouldn't be a problem.
- >D6 - If it's a typical challenge, medium level of difficulty.
- >D8 - If it's a challenge you could lose if you're unprepared.
- >D10 - If it's a solid challenge even when you are prepared.
- >D12 - If it's a tough challenge for most people.
- >D20 - If you have no idea who will win, regardless of preparation.

## opponent guides

For judging an enemy's difficulty.

- >D4 - Minion.
- >D6 - Easy.
- >D8 - Medium.
- >D10 - Hard.
- >D12 - Heroic.
- >D20 - Legendary.

## information guides

For judging understanding.

- >D4 - Easy to process.
- >D6 - Normal information.
- >D8 - Harder to parse.
- >D10 - Difficult to understand.
- >D12 - Purposefully confusing.
- >D20 - Headache inducing.

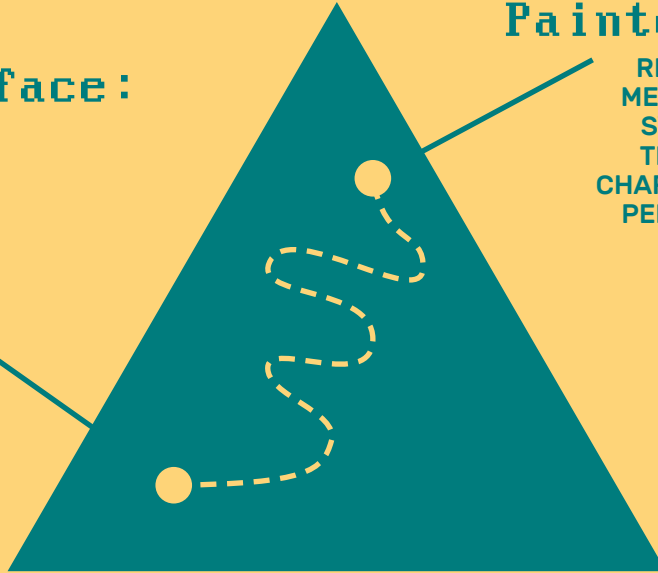
# file.face

The twenty sides of the die. Twenty faces. Each face is unique and might be affected by different gravities, magics, cultures, economies, and dangers. This is where you plug in your own adventures, or pre-owned adventures that you want to run. The following few pages will help you make your own, as well as tie them all together to create your own Annwn.

example\_face:

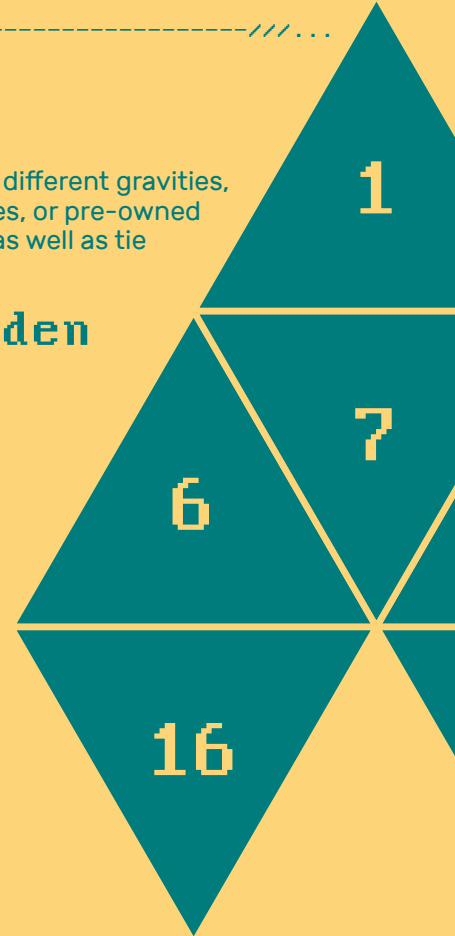
## Red Hill

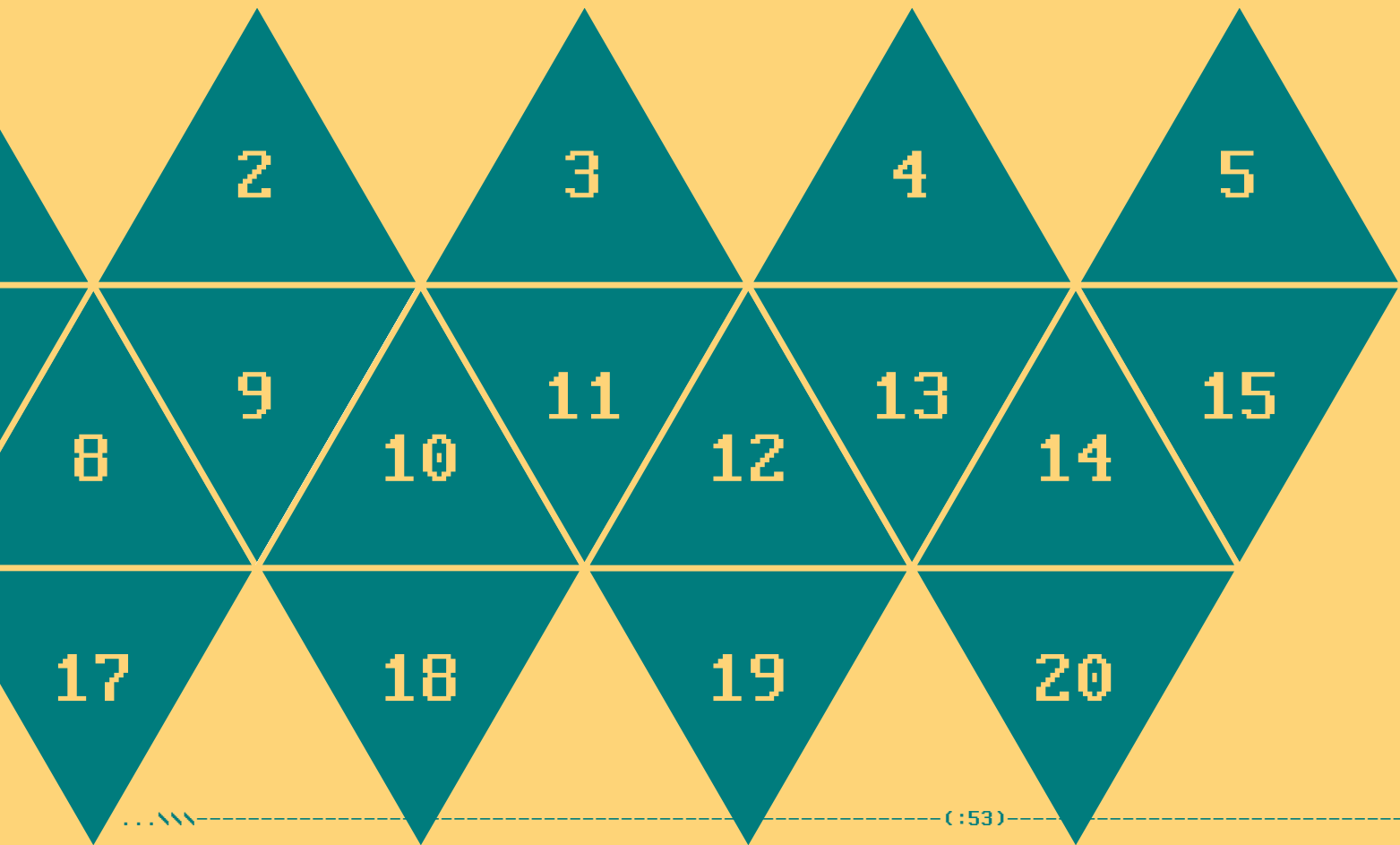
- RNG d6
- META d6
- SYS d4
- TILT d20
- CHARM d4
- PERC d12



## Painted Garden

- RNG d4
- META d6
- SYS d8
- TILT d10
- CHARM d12
- PERC d20





# settlements.info

Towns, villages, cities. Each face has at least one. Settlements have the same stats that a Player Character does, and are assigned dice in the same way. Exploring a settlement requires each PC to state what they want, rolling the appropriate stat contest, and spending an hour of time. Success means they find what they want, failure means they waste time wandering the city.

# three\_things.info

Every settlement, village, town, and city has three things that Players can discover about them. These are:

**Common Knowledge** - Something anyone can learn by being observant.

**History** - Something that must be discovered through search or questioning.

**Secrets** - Something hidden that requires specific circumstances to uncover.

# name.list

Roll 2d20 to get a name.

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. Black       | 1. Wood       |
| 2. Red         | 2. Hill       |
| 3. Metal       | 3. Grave      |
| 4. Death       | 4. Ghost      |
| 5. Lost        | 5. Haunt      |
| 6. Undead      | 6. Fort       |
| 7. Corpse      | 7. Block      |
| 8. Forgotten   | 8. Burbs      |
| 9. Cursed      | 9. Archive    |
| 10. Ashy       | 10. Mire      |
| 11. Painted    | 11. Garden    |
| 12. Ringed     | 12. Park      |
| 13. Old        | 13. Valley    |
| 14. Moon       | 14. Shrine    |
| 15. Patchwork  | 15. Outskirts |
| 16. Scrap      | 16. Lake      |
| 17. Colossal   | 17. Ward      |
| 18. Industrial | 18. Campus    |
| 19. Starved    | 19. Frontier  |
| 20. Veil       | 20. Tower     |

# local .quest

Roll a d20 to determine the settlement quest.

1. Flocks of crows eating the crops at night, led by angry druid.
2. Church crumbles overnight, caused by opposing church's ritual.
3. Monster terrorizing trade route.
4. Dragon tithe needs paid in paintings.
5. Children say strange woman knocks on windows at night asking to be let in.
6. Apex predator wandered into area, disrupting wildlife.
7. Water supply magically poisoned by local shaman upstream.
8. Deer carcasses stuffed in well, no signs of druid problem.
9. Rats in the basement, really wererat thief guild.
10. Tunnel under village collapses.
11. Mines infested with awoken war machines.
12. Demon making bargains late at night at the crossroads in town.
13. Strange spellcaster willing to teach children "magic tricks".
14. Goats are snatched in the middle of the day by a large, flying beast.
15. Shopkeepers are shaken down by a strange hooded man with a big stick.
16. All the wine in the bar is discovered to be blood.
17. Thirteen bodies float down the river. They went missing ten years ago.
18. A thief disguised as a cleric dishes out "healing" for high prices.
19. Bandits set up in the church, desecrating ancient icons.
20. Bandits have hostages in the barn.

# npc.info

Most shopkeepers, quest givers, and quest-related characters are Non-Player Characters, meaning they are made by the game itself to serve a function or carry out a certain task. Interacting with them can be robotic and/or scripted. Each NPC knows what it knows and nothing more.

## npc\_name\_list

Osty	Partridge	Snipe	Sungem	Thorn	Silvereye
Rhea	Quail	Wanderer	Crest	Logrunner	Bluebird
Casso	Loon	Dove	Sunbeam	Saddleback	Wallcreeper
Kiwi	Shearwater	Pygmy	Hillstar	Thrush	Starling
Corella	Ibis	Nightjar	Woodstar	Cicada	Dipper
Macaw	Heron	Treeswift	Kingfisher	Whistler	Leafbird
Keet	Vulture	Emerald	Hornbill	Olive	Snow
Parry	Kite	Inca	Aracari	Fig	Ovenbird
Rosella	Hawk	Firecrown	Honeyguide	Oriole	Seedeater
Bonnet	Eagle	Sunangel	Woodpecker	Flycatcher	Cardinal
Lory	Buzzard	Barb	Flicker	Jay	
Lovebird	Bat	Sapphire	Wren	Magpie	
Teal	Sparrow	Hummingbird	Velvet	Rook	
Cape	Falcon	Lance	Bellbird	Crow	
Gadwall	Bustard	Golden	Gnateater	Jackdaw	
Wigeon	Crane	Sabre	Lyrebird	Raven	
Pintail	Plover	Violetear	Treecreeper	Robin	
Goldeneye	Stilt	Mango	Bristle	Rockjumper	



# princess.info

Every settlement has a Princess and a Knight; two Players who accomplished all the quests the settlement has to offer and have been given special titles. They both know the Three Things about the settlement and are granted special treatment while there. Remember these three things while deciding what they do:

1. Their self-esteem is linked to how well the settlement is doing.
2. They spend 90% of their gaming time together.
3. They treat the NPCs of their settlement as if they were real people.

# treasure.loc

Roll to determine the local treasure.

1. Fading but classic painting.
2. Several rings from an old king.
3. The fallen king's old crown.
4. Bones of an extinct animal.
5. Legendary sword and shield.
6. Very delicate and beautiful dice.
7. Several sacks of treasury gold.
8. Torn pages from a spellbook.
9. Goblets from a disappeared era.
10. The body of a mythic hero.
11. The key to the settlement.
12. Legendary artifact with magic powers.

# location.info

1. NPC bandits stole it as part of a story quest.
2. Another Player snatched it already.
3. Lost in the local dungeon.
4. Watched by the knight of the settlement.

# hero.loc

Roll to determine details about the most powerful warrior and spellcaster in the region surrounding the Settlement.

### *They are a*

**warrior.exe**

- Knight** 1.
- Gladiator** 2.
- Beastmaster** 3.
- Soldier** 4.
- Thief** 5.
- Pirate** 6.
- Vigilante** 7.
- Forgotten King** 8.

**spellcaster.exe**

- Wizard**
- Herbologist**
- Fae**
- Draconologist**
- Plague Doctor**
- Moon Cleric**
- Magician**
- Mechanist**

### *Who*

- hunts down:Players for sport 1. knows your real name
- allegedly killed a dragon 2. is obsessed with constructing clones
- survived a lore-torn war 3. is stuck in an eternal slumber
- is a famous author irl 4. is trying to become a monster
- has a large amount of wealth 5. is an old friend from high school
- is the princess in disguise 6. is way too young to be this good
- is friends with an enemy 7. hides away from the locals
- has a large crush on a Player 8. seeks out assistants for a big spell
- is a hacker 8. has made enemies with a dragon
- is turning people into vampires 10. is trolling the settlement
- knows your sister 11. plans to kidnap the princess
- has connections with moderators 12. plays deadly pranks

# quest.generator

The following is a mad-lib style sentence meant to generate random ideas for quests that NPCs might talk about. Use these as sparks for ideas.

*There is a [person/object]  
that will [do a thing]  
[#]  
[adjective]  
[item]  
for [reward].*

## **person/object**

1. Statue
2. Merchant
3. Faerie
4. Player
5. Hidden NPC
6. Astral Plant

## **adjective**

1. Mercurial
2. Astral
3. Mecha
4. Glitching
5. Chrona
6. Legendary

## **that will**

1. Trade
2. Buy
3. Sell
4. Eat
5. Create
6. Assimilate

## **item(s)**

1. Flower(s)
2. Gem(s)
3. Animal hide(s)
4. Book(s)
5. Tooth(teeth)
6. Soul Gem(s)

## **#**

1. One
2. Two
3. A handful of
4. An inventory of
5. Ten
6. Fifty

## **for...**

1. Armor
2. Weapons
3. Gold
4. Information
5. Keys
6. Potions
7. Scrolls
8. Pets
9. Mounts
10. Dungeon maps

# travel.info

Moving from place to place is a form of opposition. Fast travel is something widely available but it costs gold (1 per person per location on a Face), so Characters will often find themselves moving through terrain and facing the perils of overland treks. When traveling, the Players will roll Contests against the terrain itself, whether they are trying to locate something (Perception), avoid random encounters (RNG), or simply surviving the harness of the wilderness (System).

Each terrain has its own difficulty rating which you can determine from the guidelines below. Terrains roll their difficulty rating for every Contest. While traveling, each Character will have to make a Contest roll against the Terrain. Which Stat they use is up to them, but each one must have an explanation and they cannot overlap with another Character's. If one Character is already searching for food, another cannot do that for their own Contest, but they could search for something else as long as the party and the World thinks its helpful.

## Difficulty Ratings

- >Plain - d4
- >Oasis - d4
- >Steppe - d6
- >Hill - d8
- >Marsh - d10
- >Butte - d10
- >Swamp - d12
- >Tundra - d12
- >Canyon - d20
- >Plateau - d20
- >Desert - d20+5
- .Mountain - d20+5



# CHARACTERS



That's what life is. It's a series of  
rooms and who we get stuck in those  
rooms with adds up to what our  
lives are.

- House



# player\_character.info

Player Characters are real people in the world who are also playing this game. Interacting with them should be complicated, intense, and difficult. They don't have to listen to the party's order, give them information, or do as the Party asks like the NPCs do. Each PC has wants and needs that they are in this game to accomplish, both inside and outside the Game.



I'm a leading man, and the lies I weave  
are oh so intricate.  
- Patrick Stump



# three\_things.info

Every Player Character is made up of three things: what they say, what they don't say, and what they actively hide. Think of these as a way to abstract three-dimensionality and help you play a living, breathing character other than yourself. The act of playing them from this framework will bring them to life at your table.

**What They Say** - *This is what they wear on their sleeve, the most obvious things about them and how they act, how they present themselves.*

**What They Don't Say** - *This is the subtext of their actions. What they believe, what they desire, fear, or more often what they want.*

**What They Actively Hide** - *This is their secret and one that they keep close to the chest, sometimes they don't even know that they're hiding it.*



# reason.idea

Everyone in the game has a reason to escape into a fantasy world. These are not inherently tragic, but they are revealing. A person's reason is a part of their life in this moment and is what their Connection measures.

A Player Character has 100 Connection and a reason to be online:

1. Summer vacation, they're in junior high and just got the game.
2. Boring office job drains their soul every day.
3. Social anxiety has them retreating to a safe place within the game.
4. First year at college, no irl friends yet.
5. They are a rather popular author and need to maintain an online presence.
6. Mother of two trying to escape mundanity.
7. Dad's time after the kids go to bed. He streams sometimes.
8. Hold-over from childhood. Been playing for 13 years.
9. They're dating another Player, but they still play alone sometimes.
10. Professional Gamer and this is their hobby.
11. Youtuber mining the game for content.
12. Confused about their gender and trying out a new name online.
13. Disability has them restricted to their home for most of the day.
14. Quarantined at home due to a possibly fatal sickness.
15. Broke their leg while doing something dumb and now they're restricted.
16. Pregnant and trying to find new hobbies while at home.
17. Mom trying out a game because they know their daughter plays a lot.
18. Recent bout of insomnia has them clinging to old habits.
19. It's a way of clinging onto waning youth.
20. They've found a way to turn it into a job that barely pays the bills.

# character.map

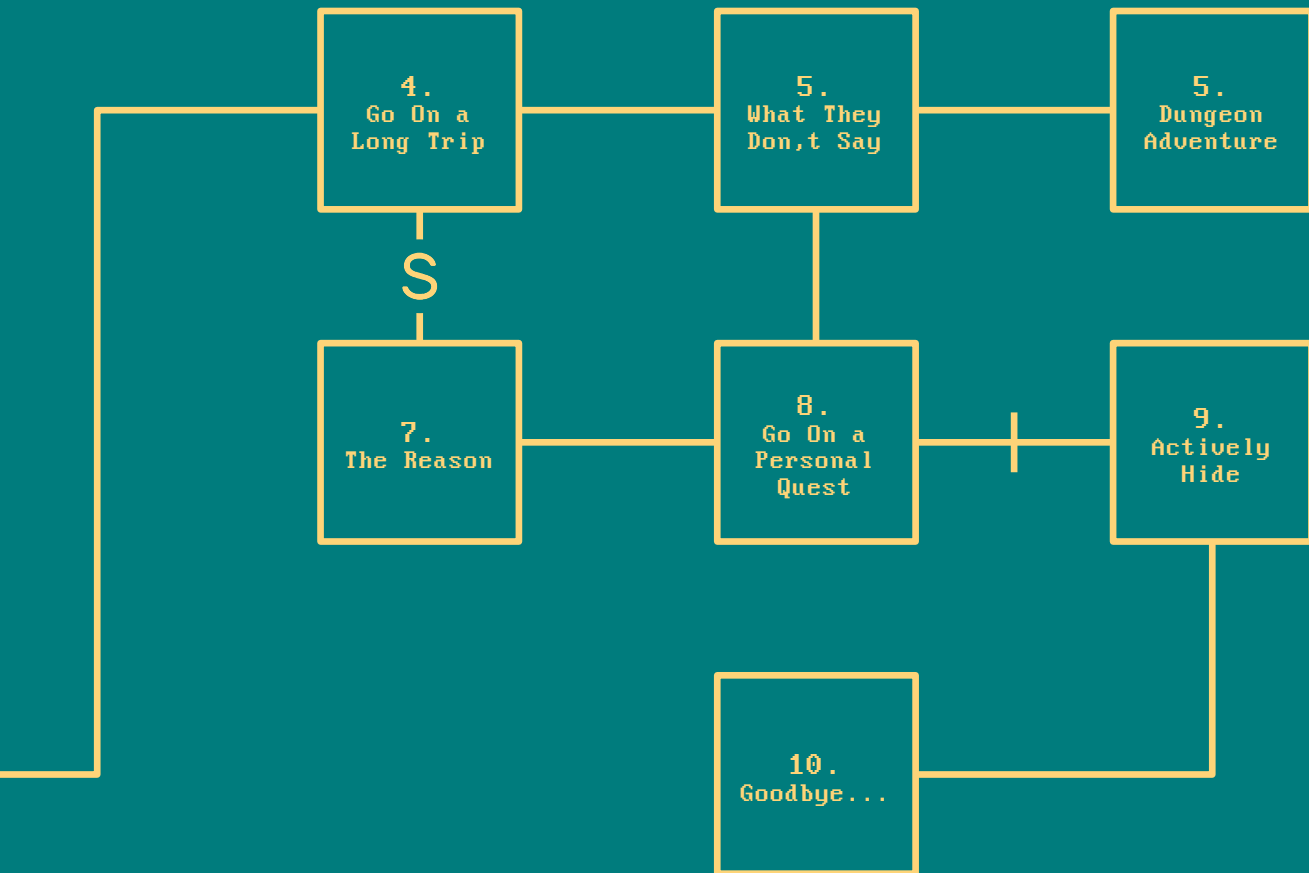
Each Player Character encountered is a chance to explore something human. It's not easy to quantify that experience into something gameable. But maybe by gamifying it, the fear and anxiety behind portraying a living, breathing human can be easier to overcome.

This is a Character Map made up of 10 rooms, each room is 10 Connection. When their Connection reaches 0, then it's time for them to move on, at least from your group. The flexibility of the Connection system means that these rooms can be traversed through sharing dangerous travel, experiencing epic combat, or through sitting around in the settlements, talking.

The rooms can be rearranged any number of ways. Interconnecting with locked passageways, secret doors, or any manner of typical dungeoneering. This gives you something to fall back on when you're feeling lost.

Each room is a moment shared. A deeper understanding of a person. It could be a memory, a like or dislike, a chance for bonding, etc. You already have 5 of them figured out; Three Things, a Reason, and the final room, which is a Goodbye. The rest is up to you.





# knights.info

These are the moderators and administrators of the gaming world. Each one is a Player Character, and each one is as complicated as any other Player Character. The only difference is that they were given the right to invoke punitive measures against people found to be breaking the rules.

## tools at their disposal:

**Silencing** - mutes a character for 24 hours.

**Prison** - locks a character in in-game jail for 24 hours.

**Temporary Ban** - logs a character out for 48 hours.

**Ban** - logs a character out permanently, but it can be fought.

**Perma-Ban** - logs a character out permanently.

It is very easy for someone who is given this power to abuse it. And one of the biggest obstacles the Party might come across is a Knight.

Color	Ranking	Purpose
Blue	Ambassador	Guide new players, give information.
Red	Moderator	Respond to calls for help, maintain prison.
Black	Caretaker	Carry the Ban Hammer.
White	Administrator	Fix bugs and glitches in the world.



The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed.

- Carl Jung



ORACLE

# answering questions

When it comes to answering questions during solo play (everything from “will this NPC help me?” to “are there rumors of a dungeon nearby?”) .dungeon uses a target number that you roll against instead of contests. Whenever you have a question, figure out which stat works best for the situation and roll its die attempting to either match or get higher than the target number.

The base target number for questions is 8, which means 4 of your stats will have a chance to succeed. It also means that teamwork is still helpful during solo play. After a failed roll, don’t roll for the same question until you do something to change the circumstances (such as finding an item or character to help you).

For more difficult questions, or tasks that should be harder to accomplish, raise the target number to 10 or 12. The higher you raise it, the more necessary teamwork will be.

# npc\_s

Take stock of the Things that are around you. If you're sitting at a desk in front of a computer, or sitting at a cafe enjoying a morning coffee, it doesn't matter; you can make NPCs. They can be general purpose, or help fill out a Settlement, or just set dressing to help you get in the creative mindset for your adventure. I will be doing this for myself so you can follow along.

## step 1: make a list

I'm sitting at my computer desk, and I have: a coffee mug, cell phone, stuffed pikachu, a little stress-ball in the shape of a cow, a spiderman mug holding pens/pencils, and a cleaner rag for my glasses. Excellent.

## step 2: give them names

There are two ways to go about this: 1.) shorten the item to 3 or 4 letters to create a name that fits a strange video game, or 2.) give them a name based on the item they are.

**Coffee Mug** - Cof/Coff

**Cell Phone** - Pho

**Stuffed Pikachu** - Pik, Ani (stuffed animal)

**Stress-Ball** - Beef (cow), Squi (squishy)

**Spiderman Mug** - Penny (pencils/pens)

**Cleaner Rag** - Glass (glasses cleaner)



## step 3: give them purpose

NPCs in video games serve some kind of purpose. They give quests, do tasks, sell/buy things, etc. Give each NPC a job or task based on the kind of item they are.

**Coff** - Potion seller (caffeine is a pick-me-up).

**Pho** - Mail shepherd (phones send messages).

**Ani** - Mage with a cool electricity spell (because pikachu).

**Squi** - Farmer (since it's a cow stress-ball).

**Penny** - Scribe/cartographer (pens make me think of calligraphy).

**Glass** - Seer or fortune teller (glasses help me see!)

## step 4: give them timing

Now you have a little group of NPCs but when do you meet them? If you want to set them in a Settlement or use them in a Dungeon, go forth and do such. But, the Oracle system takes the item's proximity to you and uses it to create a meeting system, determining which NPC will approach you first during a lull in the game. It runs on one simple rule; whichever item is closest to you, you'll meet first.

My list would look like this now:

1. Pho
2. Coff
3. Glass
4. Squi
5. Ani
6. Penny

## step 5: give them emotions

Why do these NPCs approach you? Or how do they act when you come to them? Use the following Color Chart to get a grasp on their general disposition and outlook. They are separated by positive traits and negative traits.

My list would look like this now:

1. Pho - dramatic mail shepherd
2. Coff - jealous potion seller
3. Glass - harmonious fortune teller
4. Squi - isolated farmer
5. Ani - spontaneous electric mage
6. Penny - passionate cartographer



## step 6: assign dice

Everything can be considered Opposition, so even NPCs need dice in their stats. Each NPC uses d6's for all of their stats, and add +5 to rolls revolving around their profession/specialty. Coff would get +5 when it comes to anything involving potions, including haggling. Ani gets +5 when talking about, teaching, or using their electric spells. And so on. Getting help from NPCs might be necessary for your success.

## the end

Now you have a handful of NPCs to pepper around Annwn, start quests with, and gather supplies from. Whenever you need more, just expand your circle of items or move to another space to play.

## settlements

After creating NPCs you can use them to fill out a settlement. In .dungeon each settlement has only a handful of buildings and you can create a map by drawing squares on a blank piece of paper, placing them in the same spot relative to where they are around you. After all the squares are placed and labeled, connect them with lines to show the different walkways through the settlement.

**a note on travel** - Part of the joy of the oracle system is generating a settlement where you're sitting and realizing you need something that isn't there, forcing you to create more settlements from different items around your play space. The Contest for traveling to these new settlements is determined by how far apart the different play spaces are.

Same location + different objects - d6

Same room - d8

Adjacent room - d10

Same building - d12

Outside of the building - d20

If you have to drive or travel to this new location - 2d20

# discord

Share your settlements and NPCs with other players on our discord. Visit [projectnerves.com](http://projectnerves.com) to join. That way people can collect settlements and flesh out their own version of Annwn, and maybe you can team up to tackle a particular dungeon that you've had on your shelf for a while.

# end\_note.txt

.dungeon is my love letter to Isekai, .hack, Code Lyoko, Sword Art Online, and all those dreams from childhood of falling into the world of a video game. Running games of d20 Modern set in my hometown, full of zombies, gangsters, or supernatural horrors. Always wanting to bleed between two worlds and for two worlds to bleed across each other. To be the character and explore "what ifs" that could never come true.

This one's for that fanfiction I never wrote.

This one's for the person who reads this and has their mind opened to new possibilities.

This one's for the games that come after it. The games that will inspire me.

This was written to be the game I've always wanted to make. The game that fourteen-year-old me would have fallen into and wanted so desperately to run for friends.

This one's for the kid in all of us.

**Good luck,  
don't die.  
- BATTIS**



