



# Dodeca System

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Dodeca System Open Source Rules (1.0)

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## Let's Make a Game

So you've played the Dodeca System before (we presume), bought [There's a Game in this Book](#) and its companions (we hope) and you're ready to take it to the next level: making your own game world. Fantastic! We like to see people get industrious with their gaming, exploring all they can do with the rules to make something unique. That's why we've put out this collection of tools to help you forge ahead with your own rules.

What we need to establish, though, is what you have to do to make a new gaming world. If you're playing in more than just a generic fantasy setting (which we have to assume since otherwise you could just play [There's a Game in this Book](#)), there's a lot to consider, from the socio-economic setup of the world to how the various races and populations interact (if you allow for more than just Humans as your only playable race). You have to consider special powers (and how they've effect everything in the world) as well as Skills, Equipment, Combat, Money... all of this is dependent upon the foundation you give yourself: your game world.

So let's take a moment to discuss creating a game world...

### A World of Possibilities

While there are probably plenty of ways to create your own game world (depending on how foreign to us Earth-based humanoids you want to go), let's follow the easiest course we can: your game world, whatever it may be, will be Earth-like, with land, water, and an oxygen-rich atmosphere -- everything we normally expect in a habitable world. Your characters are likely going to be humanoid (probably humans will be a default race) with two arms and two legs (barring misfortune), and they'll have to do all the usual humanoid activities (eat, sleep, breathe, etc.).

It may seem silly to go over all this, but what if you want to play shape-shifting spheroids who live on

a world with tiny, dense inner "core" or land while the entirety of the "habitable" world is a thick, aqueous solution (like jelly)? Well, sure, you can do that, and you might have a great adventure in mind... but we would be willing to bet at least a few of your players will be lost trying to navigate this society (let alone even visualizing it while playing). Characters living in that world might have different needs. They certainly wouldn't build civilizations the way we do, and there wouldn't be any of the adventure tropes we've come to expect from the genre (certainly there wouldn't be a dungeon crawl to play through since dungeons, let alone any other kind of firm structure, would be impossible to build here).

No, for most game worlds, let's keep it simple. Earth-like, humanoid, playable.

With a basic world in mind, you'll then want to think about the time period you'll have your characters running through. Unless you're actually playing on Earth (which is totally allowed, and it certainly make finding maps of areas to play in much easier since we humans have done a good job research and documenting our world), don't concern yourself overly much with specific years (at least, not until you feel like writing a history of the world). Instead, think of it like the ages of Earth: Stone Age, Iron Age, Renaissance, Industrial Revolution, Post-Apocalyptic Future, or any other era in-between. There are a couple of reasons to make this decision:

For one, the technology level will determine what equipment your people will be able to buy. That's an obvious, easy to understand issue, since Bronze Age warriors won't be able to buy steel swords (for example). The level of technology you allow will determine weapons, armor, items, food quality, medicines, and on and on.

Just think about the fact that a character could get an infection (from a mortal wound, if you feel like doing that). Without proper medicine (which comes with a more advanced civilization), that infection could become lethal -- you'd either have to allow magic (which is another decision will discuss soon), have the technology level be at a

place when characters can get antibiotics, or just assume that mortal wounds will kill you because the technology level sucks and that's what you get for living in the wrong time period.

Along with technology though, everything else is affected by your time period. This is a whole range of socio-economic factors that you'd need to consider, from whether democracies exist (the ancient Greeks had a form of it, so you may have to consider if the Greeks have an analogue on your world), to if your societies live in feudal empires or can trust in the protection of your more civilized land (the Romans were able to spread peace and prosperity through their borders, but other time periods before and after weren't so lucky).

Time period and relative governmental setup -- we cannot stress enough how important these factors are. Before you even begin to get into rules for Skills, Powers (and Magic), Equipment, and everything else, really think about your world and how civilization has grown to the point your characters will be playing in. Trust us, someone will ask about it during the game, and if you don't have an answer ready you'll struggle to figure one out during play (we speak from experience).

## Attributes

With your world established in some form (probably some notes and maybe a little historical back story to go with), we can begin to establish stats for your characters. While we recommend you follow the standard point distribution (25 Attribute Points, 30 Skill Points, 4 Power Points, 20 Finishing Points), the exact numbers are open to you (as you're the Game Maker). It's best to stick close to these numbers just to avoid over-powering (or under-powering) your characters... but you're the boss.

Now, we're going to try to dissuade from adding more Attributes than the standard core, set, but before we do that we should probably establish what the core Attributes are:

### Brains

How smart a character is -- book-smarts and

intelligence. If you're using damaging Powers (discussed in a bit), we also recommend that each point of Brains should give the players a certain amount of points they can spend (and recharge) over time on their damaging Powers.

### Brawn

How physically strong a character is. Brawn is combined with physical combat Skills to produce a character's Base Attack (combat is discussed very briefly later in this supplement).

### Charm

The suaveness and social skill of a character. Charm combines with Vicious Taunt (if you're using that Skill) to produce a character's verbal Base Attack.

### Cool

How well a character can keep calm under pressure. Cool combines with ranged combat Skills to produce a character's ranged Base Attack.

### Looks

How pretty (or handsome) a character is. Looks is largely a passive stat, but there are some instances (such as grooming and poise in court) where a character's Looks will come into question.

### Notice

A character's ability to see information around them and process it quickly. Notice combines with a dice roll to produce a character's rank in the Order of Combat.

### Savvy

The wisdom your character possesses. Can be used in instances when a character may otherwise succumb to their more gullible instincts.

### Speed

The reflexes and dexterity of a character. Speed combines with the Parry Skill to produce a character's Base Defend.

### Vitality

The physical fitness of a character. Each point of Vitality grants a character 5 points of Health

(the damage they can take and survive in combat situations.

One thing we don't recommend, though, is changing around the Attributes. These Attributes are the basic physical makeup of all your characters, and while they may have different points allotted for their stats (some may be stronger, some smarter, others better looking), the core Attributes are going to remain from one character to the next. It's hard to find a way to segment these down further than they already are, but combining (or straight removing) them doesn't make much sense either -- characters can be physical strong, yet slow, so while Brawn and Speed may both rely on muscles, they have very different functions. So please, we urge you, do not remove or combine Attributes.

We also recommend against adding new Attributes unless you really have to. For example, maybe you want to have cybernetics in a futuristic game, and would like a way to quantify how well people can use their cybernetics. It seems like a new Attribute, like Cy-Sense, could be in order.

And sure, from one perspective, maybe it does make sense. You can use Cy-Sense as a sort of Cool check, and if the characters get in a pinch they may have to roll their Cy to see if they retain complete control over their cybernetics.

Or maybe it's like their Brains stat. Maybe each point of Cy-Sense gives characters 5 points in cybernetic vitality. As they gain more cybernetic enhancements (and thus use up their cybernetic vitality points), the characters become less and less human, responding to situations more robotic-ly, until such time as they use up all their points and die (or something).

Sure, in both those situations you could do that... and yet, hopefully you've already seen why that's not necessary. Creating a Cy-Sense that acts like a Cool check isn't needed since characters already have a Cool stat. Why have another Attribute that does the same thing as a per-existing one. It just dilutes the amount of points characters get (and unnecessarily divides their focus across stats).

In the case of a Brains-like stat, here we have the question why you have Cy-Sense when you have Brains. Think about it: you have cybernetics, so whatever Magic would be able to do, Cybernetics can do instead. Are you going to have both? Is that necessary. And if you don't have both (cybernetics and Magic), then why not just allot Brains over cybernetics and remove the confusing Cy-Sense Attribute?

Honestly, in any situation where you can come up with a new Attribute, the existing ones will probably do the job you're looking for, and you don't have to add more points (or create new stats) to pull it off. It's so rare to find a situation where new Attributes are actually needed that we fell comfortable say, definitively, don't make new Attributes. Just don't do it.

## Skills

Make new Skills instead. [There's a Game in this Book](#) provided a list of Skills, which we've taken the courtesy to reproduce in the following section (while adding a few suggested additions to aid in most scenarios). Use these to get your ideas flowing for the kinds of Skills you want to include in your game -- you don't have to include them all, but it's probably not a bad idea to allow most off them as optional Skills in case your players have specific situations in mind where these Skills are actually appropriate.

For example, an easy situation to envision is a player in a modern setting wanting to take Ride (a horse-based Skill). While some of us can ride horses now, there is probably a good portion of the population that has never ridden a horse (especially in a situation other than a birthday party pony ride). For most characters in a modern setting, Ride doesn't need to be on the sheet, so don't include it (just let your players choose it and write it in if need be).

The Skills available to use (and improve upon) include:

Agriculture (Brains)

The study of farming and growing vegetables.

## Alchemy (Brains)

Mystical sciences, usually related to magic.

## Archery (Cool)

Fire a bow and arrow (and/or crossbow)

## Armpit (Charm)

Play your armpit as an instrument.

## Avoid Pursuit (Savvy)

Run from people, and do it well.

## Blacksmithing (Brawn)

Metalworking and forging.

## Brass (Health)

Play a brass instrument.

## Brawling (Brawn)

Fight with your fists.

## Carpentry (Brawn)

Woodworking and whittling.

## Catch (Notice)

Catch a ball (and other thrown objects).

## Chemistry (Brains)

The science of matter (non-mystical).

## Cook (Brains)

Fend for yourself when it comes to food.

## Dancing (Charm)

Put on a show with your body (non-sexual, probably).

## Direction Sense (Savvy)

Figure out where you're going from the clues around you.

## Disguise (Looks)

Put on a costume and make it work.

## Drive (Speed)

Drive a car or other standard motor vehicle.

## Dwarf Tossing (Brawn)

Throw those smaller than you as weapons.

## Endurance (Health)

Sustain feats of physical prowess.

## Fishing (Notice)

Catch fish with hooks and twine.

## Forgery (Savvy)

Create convincing duplicates of real works.

## Fortitude (Cool)

Be strong in the face of danger.

## Gain Trust (Looks)

Use your wiles to bring others to your side.

## Gambling (Savvy)

Take a chance with dice or cards

## Hold Breath (Health)

Keep alive without drawing a breathe for longer periods of time (without passing out).

## Hunting (Notice)

Find and kill prey.

## Interrogate (Cool)

Get information out of people by using your physical scariness.

## Interview (Brains)

Get information out of people by asking the right questions.

## Intimidate (Looks)

Being the biggest, scariest person in the room.

## Investigate (Notice)

Look for clues to find information

## Iron Will (Health)

Take damage, poison, and other ailments and keep on standing.

## Languages (Brains)

Study languages and get the gist of written words.

## Laws (Brains)

Understand the rules of society.

## Martial Arts (Speed)

Unarmed combat (with an eastern flourish).

## Masonry (Brawn)

Stone work and architecture.

## Massage (Charm)

Rub muscles to relieve tension (could be sexual).

## Melee (Brawn)

Fight with weapons.

## Painting (Savvy)

Create art with paints and brushes.

## Parry (Speed)

Deflect damage with your weapons.

## Percussion (Speed)

Play percussion-based instruments.

## Perform (Looks)

Act in character and put on a show.

## Persuade (Charm)

Convince others to do your bidding.

## Pick Locks (Cool)

Use tools (or just paper clips) to open locks.

## Pottery (Speed)

Create art with clay and dexterity.

## Read Lips (Notice)

See what others are saying and understand their words (even from a distance).

## Research (Brains)

Use books and look up facts to find clues.

## Ride (Savvy)

Ride a horse (or other trained animal).

## Running (Health)

Run, at speed and length, without tiring.

## Sculpting (Cool)

Create art with stone, chisels, and hammers.

## Seduce (Looks)

Use your wiles to bring others into your bed (or other convenient location).

## Singing (Charm)

Perform with music and your voice.

## Sniper (Cool)

Shoot from a long distance).

## Spot Traps (Notice)

See dangers around you before stumbling into them.

## Stealth (Cool)

Move unnoticed.

## Stringed (Speed)

Play a stringed instrument.

## Subterfuge (Charm)

Use subtlety and misdirection.

## Survival (Savvy)

Survive on your own in the great outdoors.

## Swimming (Health)

Move, at speed and length, through water without drowning.

## Swipe (Speed)

The art of stealing, unnoticed, from others.

## Throw Ball (Brawn)

Throw a ball a distance and have it go where you intend).

## Tracking (Notice)

Follow the clues to find someone (or something) long after they've gone past.

## Tumbling (Speed)

The art of moving and dodging through flexibility.

## Vicious Taunt (Charm)

Cut others down with your sarcasm

## Woodwind (Health)

Play a woodwind instrument.

A blank character sheet (devoid of just about all information, such as Skills) is provided at the back of these Open Source Rules to aid you in crafting a character sheet for your world.

## POWERS

With the innate stats (Attributes) and trained abilities (Skills) established, now we can discuss creating rich, powerful characters that stand above the usual rabble of the populace -- it's time to give your characters special powers.

When we discuss Powers we actually mean a couple of different categories for abilities that can function similarly. In [There's a Game in this Book](#) we call them "Class Powers" and "Magic", although you're free to call them what you will. The difference between the two is whether they can damage other characters or not (Class Powers do not, Magic does).

It's good to make a distinction between Powers that can damage and those that can't and group them separately (we recommend only allowing Finishing Points for the purchasing of damaging Powers). It's probably not a good idea to mix them together and allow characters to build up a mish-mash of the two without any differentiation between the Power groups... especially if you attach any powers to Classes.

### Wait... Powers AND Classes?

A key part of the Power purchasing process comes in once players choose the Class they'll play. What Classes are available, and what kinds of Powers you'd attach to them, are you to you. For instance, in [There's a Game in this Book](#) we established ten Classes the players can choose from. Each Class has a Power associated with it, and then we arranged the ten Classes around a circle so that each of the Classes "intersected" with two neighboring Classes. Effectively, each character chose a Class and they gained access to the power of that Class and the two intersecting Classes next to it (for a total of three possible Powers).

When you set up your game, we recommend having at least six Classes to choose from (for some variety), with at least one Power associated with each Class -- you can do more, but at least one for each Class helps to make them different from each other and adds in some decision making for the players to go through.

As we said before, though, don't mix damaging Powers with non-Damaging powers. As an example, let's create a world where superheroes exist. One character is an alien from another planet that can fly and summon claws of pure force to fight those who would rain down injustice on the land (heroes always talk in overblown speech). Another character is a master detective who uses stealth and their mystery solving skills to fight crime. Both characters have Powers we can easily quantify:

- Flight (Levitation)
- Force Weapons
- Observation (Mystery Solving)
- Stealth Mastery

However, of those Powers, two are obviously mystical in nature (Flight and Force Weapons) and one actually does damage (Force Weapons). The other two (Observation and Stealth Mastery) can just be earned through practices and training. Neither of why need to be mystical and so they would likely not need any kind of recharging after use (so long as the character doesn't fail at using it, they can use their Powers are often as they so desire).

If we assigned these Powers as they are to a variety of Classes, it's almost assured that most players will pick the Classes that let them have super-powers and cause all kinds of damage to their foes. The master detective Classes, though, would go largely ignored.

In a case like this we recommend dolling out powers like Observation, Stealth, Convince, Courage, and a litany of others that the super heroes could use, but wouldn't normally be considered "damaging" (except to someone's ego, maybe). Damaging attacks (things that

would seem “magical”) should be grouped separately, away from the Classes -- characters would have to buy these with Finishing Points (discussed in a bit), and when these Powers were used, they would eat up a certain amount of the Brains-based meter or pool (which, in [There's a Game in this Book](#), we call Focus).

Bear in mind that you don't have to have both damaging and non-damaging Powers in your game. If you are playing a more realistic game of knights and courtly intrigue (maybe a game set during the War of the Roses, for example), damaging “mystical” Powers might not make any sense (although they'd give an interesting spin to that setting, certainly).

We do recommend that you have some kind of non-damaging powers if nothing else. You want to find a way to make each Class interesting (and not have all the characters end up the same).

## Finishing Points

Once you've given your players a list of the Attributes, Skills, Classes, and Powers they can choose from (and they've been given the points to assign those), it's time to finish up their characters with Finishing Points.

Finishing Points are free points given to players near the end of their character creation process for them to spend on bonus stats:

Attributes: 3 points per dot  
Skills: 2 points per dot  
Class Powers: 5 points per dot  
Off-Class Powers: 8 points per dot  
Damaging Powers: 5 points per dot

These points can also be used to buy Advantages, Disadvantages, and Races (if you're allowing Races other than Human only). Let's go over the basics of each and discuss spending more points on them:

**Attributes:**  
Since these aren't just basic stat checks but also often have bonuses attached to them (such as

Brawn directly affecting combat, Vitality granting players Health), these are more expensive than Skills to buy at this stage.

**Skills:**  
Cheap to buy, but players don't necessarily gain much benefit from spending their points here (especially not if there are damaging Powers or Races to look at in your game).

**Class Powers:**  
Our term for any of the Powers associated with Classes in your game (which may be different from damaging Powers).

**Off-Class Powers:**  
Powers players purchase that are associated with Classes other than the one they chose.

**Damaging Powers:**  
Special Powers that can cause damaging effects. May not necessarily be associated with specific Classes.

**Advantages:**  
Special background and personality traits that convey a bonus to their character (like Ambidextrous, Comes from Money, or Undiluted Machismo). Unlike the above stats, Advantages can only be purchased with Finishing Points -- once the player completes their character, they cannot buy any further Advantages.

**Disadvantages:**  
Like Advantages, but bad for a character. These stats give characters penalties (like Certifiable, Narcoleptic, Social Disease) but in exchange they grant the players more points to spend on their characters.

**Races:**  
Special builds of Advantages and Disadvantages, usually around a theme (like dwarves are short, angry, and bearded). Depending on how horrible the build is for a Race, these can either cost points (if it's really good) or cost points (if it's really bad). Like with Powers, we aren't going to specify what Advantages, Disadvantages, and Races you have to include in your game -- a lot of it just comes

down to your setting and the kinds of societal expectations the character will run into.

For instance, some combat Advantages (like Ambidextrous) may seem perfectly useful in a fantasy setting. However, in a high school setting (like in the upcoming game High School: the Graduation), these combat Advantages may not make the most sense (teenagers fight, but few of them fight very well).

Our best advice is to come up with a list of Advantages and Disadvantages that work best for your setting and use those to create Races (if you're even using them). It's better to find stats that work for your setting than to try and shoe-horn in things that don't make much sense.

## Let's Go Shopping

Right now your characters are naked. As fun as that may be, we really need to get them equipped. So how do we go about doing that?

Well, that's another funny instance. See, like with Advantages and Disadvantages, what we're looking at is entirely dependent on the setting you're playing in. For instance, There's a Game in this Book is a "default fantasy setting". We start characters off in that game with 500 Cash, which comes out to about how much a well-off person can expect to earn in a year (more than a serf, certainly, but not by any means royal income). Everything on that game's equipment charts is then geared to take that level of income (and the economy around it) into account.

But maybe you're playing in modern times. 500 Cash is a meager amount for a yearly salary. A teenager starting out now would have much more money to spend (since we have to buy everything for them, from clothes, to school books, and on and on). We'd give them more money to start (but buying equipment would be easier since we already know, round about, what things should cost in this day and age).

Think through your economy and come up with appropriate numbers for starting Cash as well as

equipment, and then let your players go wild.

## Now Let's Talk Mechanics

With the setting established and your characters created, we can talk very briefly about mechanics for the game. As with all Dodeca System games, everything your players will need is written on the sheet (we may have blanked out the Skills and Powers but we left all the necessary numbers). They'll still be able to find their target numbers and operate as always.

When it comes to combat, things will work the same as always (so long as you haven't changed all the combat skills around completely -- you are allowed to, if you want, but then this section may be meaningless to you).

Physical combat (and close-range ranged combat) is a matter of taking your Base Attack (Attribute plus Skill), subtracting their Base Defense (Speed plus Parry), and calculating your Skill Total (such as  $7 - 4 = 3$ , with 3 being the Skill Total). Again, everything is on the sheet, so if you're players have played in a Dodeca System game, they'll know what to do.

And then, beyond that... you're good. If you've come up with what you need for your world and made the character sheets setting appropriate, your work is done and you can run a game.

## And Then Share It With Us

And then, once you've built it and you're happy, come over to the Dodeca System website:

[www.dodecasystem.com](http://www.dodecasystem.com)

We have a community there set up to discuss the latest in the Dodeca System, and fans can come on with their newly created games (and whatever else they've come up with) and share their creations with the community.

And you never know, we may like your ideas enough to add it to our official curated collection.



# Dodeca System Open Source Character Sheet

## Combat and Arms

Skill Total: ③②①①① | ①②③④⑤⑥⑦⑧⑨⑩  
 Target: 1111109 | 8 7 6 5 4 3 3 3 3 3

### Attack

Weapon Name	Damage	Skill	Attribute	Base Attack
_____			+	=
_____			+	=
_____			+	=
_____			+	=
_____			+	=
_____			+	=

### Defend

Parry + Speed = Base Defend

### Armor

Armor Name	Armor Points	Damage Taken	Armor Left
_____		-	=
_____		-	=
_____		-	=

## Equipment

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