

BASIC SYSTEM MECHANICS

During the course of most Episodes, there will come a time when two or more Actors will come into a conflict that can not be resolved through role playing alone. The Center Stage Game System allows for conflicts to be resolved simply and quickly, whether they are drop down bar brawls to fire fights to trying to manipulate another Actor or Director Portrayed Persona in the Episode.

ATTRIBUTE & SKILL CHECKS

Attribute and Skill Checks are actions that a character performs when they are performing a Contested Action versus another Player or Director Portrayed Persona. The Resolution Value of a Check is generally lesser than the Resolution Value of a Contested Action.

UNSKILLED CHECKS

Personas attempting to do Skill Checks for Skills that they do not possess Ranks in receive a -2 Penalty to their total Card Draw.

10S

For every 10 Card that an Actor pulls while attempting to perform a Check or Contest, that Actor may draw again from their deck in an attempt to increase the number of points towards the target number that they need to perform the appropriate check or contest. If the Actor pulls a Jack, Queen, King or Joker though; they must deal with the negative effects of drawing a Face Card.

DECLARATION OF ACTION

A Contest begins when a Player declares an action against an opponent. The difficulty of the Contest is determined by a Resolution Value that is required to perform said action.

PERFORMING AN ACTION

To perform any action of Difficulty Value: Difficult to Next to Impossible, except of course for speaking, the Actor adds the Attribute Value of the appropriate Attribute to the Skill Value of the appropriate Skill. The Actor then draws a card from their deck and adds the value of the card to the total combined value of their Attribute + Skill Ranks to get the Resolution of their Resolution Value.

PERFORMING A CONTESTED ACTION AKA "CONTEST OF WILLS"

The opposing Actor's Attribute + Skill + Card Value equals the Player's Difficulty Value to succeed in the Contested Action. In the case of both Players getting the same Number Value, each Player draws a second card, and then a third if necessary to gain a Resolution to the Contested Action. Should another tie occur on the drawing of the third card, the Contested Action will continue on into the next Round.

EXTENDED CONTEST

An Extended Contest is any Contest or Check that requires more than one round to complete it in.

CARDS OF POSITIVE VALUE

ACE	+1
TWO	+2
THREE	+3
FOUR	+4
FIVE	+5
SIX	+6
SEVEN	+7
EIGHT	+8
NINE	+9
TEN	+10

CARDS OF NEGATIVE VALUE

JACK	-2
QUEEN	-4
KING	-8
JOKER	-20

DIFFICULTY RESOLUTION CHART

1 - 5	Trivial
6 - 10	Simple
11 - 20	Difficult
21 - 25	Very Difficult
26 - 30+	Next to Impossible

COMMON DAMAGE TYPES

In the course of an Episode, Personas are eventually going to get hurt from any number of sources, the following are some of the more common injury types.

DAMAGE SOURCE	INJURY TYPE
FIRE	1 Wound per Round exposed to an open flame, 2 Wounds per Round for Lilans, Revenants, and Thralls.
SUNLIGHT	2 Wounds per Round exposed to direct sunlight for Lilans, Revenants, and Thralls.
MOONLIGHT	<p>For the Faux and True Blooded: For those with the Disadvantage: Burned By Moonlight; during the partial phases of the moon, for every round that a Persona is exposed to the moonlight; they take a Rank of Stun Damage. During the three days of the Full Moon, Personas take a Rank of Wound Damage for every round that they are exposed to the moonlight.</p> <p>For Lilans, Revenants, and Thralls: For those with the Disadvantage: Burned By Moonlight; during the partial phases of the moon, for every round that a Persona is exposed to the moonlight; they take a Rank of Wound Damage. During the three days of the Full Moon, Personas take a 2 Ranks of Wound Damage for every round that they are exposed to the moonlight.</p>
BULLETS	Wound Damage, See Chapter 7: Armor, Equipment & Weapons
BLADED WEAPONS	Wound Damage, See Chapter 7: Armor, Equipment & Weapons
BLUNT WEAPONS	Wound Damage, See Chapter 7: Armor, Equipment & Weapons
ARMOR PIERCING (AP)	This type of ammunition is meant to penetrate armored targets. For pistols using this type of ammunition; all pistols, rifles and submachine guns receive a -1 penalty to Wound Damage on each bullet fired, all remaining Wound Damage is transferred directly to the target.
FALLING DAMAGE	1 Wound per every 10 feet that the Persona falls. Example: A Persona falls off of a 100 foot tall building, the Persona takes 10 Wounds of Damage when they hit the ground.

REACTION CHECKS

In the simplest terms, a Reaction Check represents that first impression that is made when two people meet for the first time. If the first meeting (Reaction Check) goes well, then both Personas' first impressions of one another went relatively well and they are comfortable interacting with one another. If the first meeting (Reaction Check) went poorly, then some part of the meeting process did not go well and one or both Personas feel uneasy being around one another.

When two Personas meet for the first time, one of the Actors must make a Reaction Check for both (determined by both Actors drawing a Card from their Decks, the Actor with the lowest Card value draws for both). The Actor that makes a Reaction Check, drawing a Card from their Deck and adding their Reaction Rating to the value of the Card to gain their Reaction Check Total. After a Reaction Check Total is reached, consult the below Reaction Check Table.

Personas that already know one another (through a Persona Background) do not need to make a Reaction Check. Reaction Checks are only reserved for that first meeting and the results should be written down by both Personas because the initial Reaction Check will color all of their future interactions with one another.

REACTION CHECK TOTAL	DESCRIPTION
-6 or Lower	<i>The first meeting went horrifically awry and the opposing Persona wishes to avoid the Persona at all costs; if forced to deal with the Persona, the opposing Persona will be extremely hostile with them.</i>
-5 to 0	<i>The first meeting went poorly and the opposing Persona reacts coldly to the Persona.</i>
1 to 4	<i>The first meeting went uneventful, neither Persona truly impressed one another; but neither are the Personas hostile towards one another.</i>
5 to 7	<i>The first meeting went cordially between the Persona and the opposing Persona.</i>
8 to 10	<i>The first meeting went well between the Persona and the opposing Persona; both reacting in a friendly manner toward one another.</i>
11 or Higher	<i>The first meeting went extremely well between the Persona and the opposing Persona; so well in fact that both were immediately at ease with one another and they are interacting with each other as if they are long standing friends.</i>

COMBAT

INITIATIVE

Each Actor draws a card from their deck plus appropriate Initiative Bonuses, at that point the Actor with the Highest Value goes first. Actors of lesser totals go in descending order.

ONCE COMBAT BEGINS

Once the contest begins, all Players part of the contest do not reshuffle their decks until the end of the combat.

UNARMED COMBAT

If a Persona is attacking their opponent with their bare hands and they do not have a melee weapon or one of the Martial Arts Skills, the Persona does Stun Damage to their opponent. If the Persona has a improvised, melee, or ranged weapon in hand when attacking their opponent; whether it is a baseball bat, knife, sword, or folding chair, the Persona does Wound Damage to their opponent.

HAND TO HAND COMBAT DAMAGE

The damage that a Persona does is equal to their total Brawn Ranks in Stun Damage.

MELEE WEAPON COMBAT DAMAGE

The damage that a Persona does in melee combat is their Brawn + Damage of Melee Weapon, plus whatever Damage Bonus the Actor Controlled Persona has.

ATTACKING WITH BOTH HANDS

The Persona receives a -2 penalty to both attacks, the Advantage: Ambidexterity cancels this penalty.

MULTIPLE ACTIONS

A Persona gets to perform 2 Actions per Combat Round; these can be used to either attack or defend. Personas with a higher Agility can take additional Actions (See Agility Related Modifiers Chart), though each additional Action after 2 receives a cumulative -2 Penalty per Action.

Note: Actors that are dumb enough to use all of their Actions to Attack will have nothing left for Dodge; so all attackers need only make a Draw at Difficulty: Trivial to hit the Persona. Life's a bitch...sorry.)

Example: The 3rd Action suffers a -2 Penalty; the 4th Action suffers a -4, and so on.

DOES MOVEMENT COUNT AS A COMBAT ACTION?

An Actor Controlled Persona (ACP) is able to move their standard Walking movement once per Round without it counting as an Action in order to attack their Opponent. If the ACP is farther away from their Opponent than Walking movement would carry them, then the ACP must spend one of their Actions to cross the distance between them selves and their Opponent.

SATURATION FIRE

This is a means for a Persona to use a firearm to fire a grouping of shots at a specific target in the hopes of bracketing the target. Each additional shot fired decreases the effective difficulty by -2 per shot fired past the first shot. Damage for Saturation Fire is full Wound Damage for the first shot; and an additional half Wound Damage (per ammunition caliber, rounded down) per additional hit. These rules can also be used in situations where the targets are not visible to the shooter due to fog, smoke, etc. When using this rule; draw from the Hit Location Chart to determine where the shots hit the target.

CALLED SHOTS

When a Persona chooses to make a called shot on a specific area of their opponent or object, the difficulty to hit the target becomes: +10 higher. Should the Persona actually succeed in their "called shot", all damage done to that area is doubled. It is quite easy to kill a mundane from a called shot because of the sheer amount of wound damage that is being imparted to them.

SEVERING LIMBS

The severing of a limb from a Persona immediately drops that Persona's current wound category into the first box of (-4) Critical Wounds. In the case of the head being severed from the neck, the Persona is killed immediately.

RATE OF FIRE MODIFIERS

A bow, crossbow, or even hand guns to rifles may have a Rate of Fire, or ROF that allows for one to multiple shots. But for every single shot that is not Saturation Fire, fired beyond the first adds a +2 Difficulty Modifier to the target.

CHARGING

Charging at a target gives a Persona a +1 to their Brawn in regards to attacking another Persona or entering a Contest of Will with another Persona that pits their Brawn against that of their opponent.

ACCURATE HITS (OPTIONAL RULE)

When using this rule, whenever a Persona attacks an opponent they do additional damage based on how much they beat their Target Difficulty by. Whenever a Persona attacks their opponent, for every 2 points that they beat their Target Difficulty by, the Persona will add an additional point of damage (Stun or Wound) to the damage total. Directors should note that using this rule does increase the chances of killing an opponent in one successful hit; which in turn makes violent confrontations very bloody, but it also does decrease the amount of time that battles take up during the course of an Episode.

SURPRISE ATTACKS

When a Persona attacks another Persona or Non-Actor Persona without warning, in other words by surprise, the Persona that is being attacked defends them selves with -6 Ranks to their total Dodge Contest; the Persona that is attacking makes their attack Contest as normal to successfully attack and injure their opponent. All attacks after the first surprise attack are resolved normally.

DROWNING & SUFFOCATION

When a Persona is immersed in water for long periods of time, or otherwise can not breath, the Persona suffers Wound Damage. A Persona can hold his or her breath for a number of Rounds equal to their Ranks in Vitality, after that point the Persona begins taking a point of Stun Damage until they fall into unconsciousness. Once a Persona has been rendered unconscious, they automatically take a point of Wound Damage for every Round they are submerged, taking on water and are unable to breath. Obviously this can kill a Persona quickly if there is no one around to safe them from drowning.

FATIGUE

A Persona that overexerts him or herself will become fatigued, when this occurs, the Persona will begin taking on Stun Damage as a sign of their fatigued physical condition. Stun Damage that is gained in this manner disappears at a rate of 1 point of Stun Damage per minute of rest.

Example #1: Bob chases after the Mook that just took a shot at him; the Mook has a Vitality of 3, Bob has a Vitality of 2. Bob can give chase to the Mook for 2 Rounds before he begins becoming Fatigued from the chase. For every round after Round 2 that Bob continues to give chase, Bob takes a point of Stun Damage.

Example #2: Jane has just been thrown into a river when her car was run off the road. Jane has 3 Rank of Vitality; Jane can swim for 3 Rounds before becoming Fatigued from swimming. After Round 3, Jane will begin taking a point of Stun Damage for every Round that she is still swimming for shore.

MOB COMBAT (OPTIONAL RULE FOR LIVE-ACTION)

Every so often there comes a time when a group of Personas or Non-Actor Personas will have the opportunity to confront a single Persona in melee or ranged combat. When this occurs, going directly by the standard rules the combat scene has the potential to last a considerable amount of time (which the Actors could be using to role-play their Personas rather being stuck in the middle of a lengthy combat scene). When a mob scene occurs, the Actors choose who the leader of the mob will be, then that Leading Actor draws a single card for the rest of the mob. The resulting card is the number that is added or subtracted from all of the Personas or Director Controlled Personas that are attacking the single Persona.

COVER & CONCEALMENT

The best defense in a combat is to deny your opponent a target to fire at or attack. When taking cover behind a building, car, or tree, the Persona is denying their attacker visibility. Below are the difficulties for trying to hit a target that is using cover.

COVER TYPE	COVER PENALTY TO HIT TARGET
ONE-QUARTER COVER	+3 to Difficulty
ONE-HALF COVER	+6 to Difficulty
THREE-QUARTERS COVER	+10 to Difficulty
FULL COVER	Opponent is fully protected by Cover. Only Armor Piercing ammunitions will be able to defeat this cover.
MYSTICAL CONCEALMENT	The attacker makes their attack attempt at a -10 to their Contest.

DICE CONVERSION OF DARK AEONS

For those of you that are diehard dice fanatics, here is the conversion so that you can use your gaming dice instead of the playing cards. You will need two D10s, and one D4.

- The first D10s is for a Positive outcome to the dice roll (as in the 1 to 10 positive numbers that playing cards can produce).
- The second D10 (different color) is for a Negative outcome.
- The D4 is to represent the Face Cards and their Negative effects. (1 = Jack, 2 = Queen, 3 = King, and 4 = Joker)

Here is the way it works, when you roll the D10s take the die the rolls the highest number. If it's the Positive, simply add the number rolled to the Attribute + Skill to get your total for resolution. If the Negative die rolls high, roll the D4 to determine which of the face cards that the Actor will get; and then simply take the negative number from the Chart above. Past that, there are no changes in the Center Stage Game System. We highly recommend the Card System as it was designed because the probability of Face Cards appearing under the dice conversion greatly increases.

RANGE DIFFICULTY CHART

SHORT (1 TO 10 FT.)

-2 to Difficulty

MEDIUM (11 TO 20 FT.)

+2 to Difficulty

LONG (21 TO 50 FT.)

+6 to Difficulty

EXTREME LONG (50 TO 200 FT.)

+10 to Difficulty

When attempting to shoot at a target, the shooter must be able to equal to or beat their Opponents Agility + Dodge (+Range Modifier) + Card to Hit their Target. To Dodge, the Opponent must beat the Shooter's Total Resolution Value.

HIT LOCATIONS

To allow for Directors to deal with the randomness of melee and ranged combat, we are providing a random Hit Locations Chart to make it easier for a Director to determine where an attack hits on a Persona to avoid the perception of bias or favoritism on their part.

RANDOM HIT LOCATION CHART

LOCATION	CARD
RIGHT LEG	1
LEFT LEG	2
RIGHT ARM	3
LEFT ARM	4
ABDOMEN	5-6
CHEST	7-10
CHEST	Jack
NECK	Queen
HEAD	King
HEART	Joker

HEALTH & HEALING

A Persona in the Center Stage Game System has 2 different types of wounds that can be inflicted, the first being stun damage. These wounds are only temporary and last a very short time. The second type are actual physical damage done to the character via any number of ways, this type of damage take a lot longer to heal and requires that the character take some downtime of rest and relaxation to heal these injuries.

All wound penalties listed by the health levels indicate the number of Attribute traits the player loses in all Checks and Contests. If the character is at Negative Attribute traits left, then they may not take an Action until that number rises against to a Positive number.

STUN DAMAGE: This type of damage is none fatal and considered temporary. A Persona heals a Rank of this damage every 10 rounds per Rank of stun damage taken. So for example; if a character is critically stunned and brought down to critical stun -4, then it will take that character 70 rounds to completely recover from the stun.

LIGHT WOUNDS: This type of wounds requires 2 days of rest per Light Wound healed.

SEVERE WOUNDS: This type of wounds requires 5 days of rest per severe wound healed. With accelerated healing medicines and a physician at hand to aid in the healing process, the duration of the healing process can be greatly declined; to a minimum of 1 week to bring the Persona up to Light Wounds.

CRITICAL WOUNDS: This type of wounds can take one month per critical wound to heal in normal time. With accelerated healing medicines and a physician at hand to aid in the healing process, the duration of the healing process can be greatly declined; to a minimum of 3 weeks to bring the Persona up to Severe Wounds.

RESISTING STUN AND WOUND DAMAGE: The Persona uses their Toughness Ranks and subtracts that number from the total amount of Stun or Wound Damage that was done to them each turn during a combat.

ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE: This type of Damage directly affects a Personas Attributes. Losing an Arm would remove a Rank in a Personas Agility, while taking a nasty face Wound could result in the Person closing a Rank in Appearance.

HEALING ATTRIBUTE DAMAGE: Attribute Damage takes One Week per Rank of Wound damage to heal.

LIFE FORCE: All Personas have a set amount of Life Force that represents the life energy that naturally keeps them living. Whenever a Persona reaches 5 Life Force Points through use of Life Force or the drain of their Life Force, that Persona takes a point of Fatigue/Stun damage and for every point below 5 the Persona takes another point of fatigue/stun damage. When a Persona reaches 0 Life Force, that Persona falls unconscious. When Persona loses 9 points of Life Force past 0, that Persona dies.

LIFE FORCE REGENERATION: Only living creatures have the capacity to regenerate Life Force points that have been spent or drained. Life Force regenerates at 1 Life Force point per hour of restful sleep. Creatures that are denied the ability to sleep will simply not regenerate their lost Life Force points until they have succumbed to unconsciousness.