

# Catastrophe

A 'Powered By The Apocalypse' RPG

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# Design Philosophy

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There has been much discussions on 4chan's /tg/ board about this setting ever since it was originally conceived. Multiple implementations in a variety of systems are available and while most seem to enjoy the setting just the same, some want different things out of it than others.

Personally I see this as a very lighthearted game, which doesn't take itself too seriously. Young, genetically engineered animal people relaxing in a world full of water, discovering the remnants of the ancient civilization that created them, personal conflict as well as silly games (Volleyball Tournaments, Hide & Seek, Jet Ski Races).

To make this the maximum amount of fun and craziness that it deserves, this game is implemented using the "Powered by the Apocalypse" RPG system that is used in games such as Apocalypse World, Dungeon World or Monsterhearts.

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If you do some fun stuff with it shoot me a message, I'd love to see it.

## FAQ

**Is this some sort of furry thing?**

Nope.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WTFPL>

# Setting

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## Where We Came From

On a post-apocalyptic water world from which humanity has long vanished, the only traces left of its existence are the mostly submerged ruins of its once might cities.

As far as the story goes, earth was struck by immense comets of ice, that caused the oceans to rise at an incredible speed. Civilisations were struggling for survival.

Alien bacteria and algae poisoned the oceans and atmosphere of the planet for most of its native inhabitants.

With time running out, the last great minds of humanity spliced their genes with those of the animals that seemed to have adapted to the new environment the best.

These new creatures, still mostly human in appearance and behavior, were the last hope for continued survival of humanity.

## Where We Are

Earth is now the Endless Blue, populated by demi-humans – also known as Kemomi-

mi – who make their home on artificial islands, the unsubmerged peaks of mountains or the tops of Earth’s flooded skyscrapers.

The Earless, as their mystical common ancestor has become known as, are no longer. All that remains are stories of legend.

Yet together and united they manage to survive and even thrive among the rubble of their ancestors.

## What We Are

We don’t see ourselves as the ‘survivors.’ We are the Living. Life is mostly good.

Fish and other food sources are plentiful, the weather is mostly calm and mild and the world – especially under water – is full of exciting things waiting to be discovered.

Who needs work when you can party?

Who needs responsibility when you can have opportunity?



# Character Creation

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Here are the steps you need to go through to create a character for a game of Catastrophe. Go through them as a group in the beginning of your first session, moving to the next item in this list as each member is ready.

## 1. Choose a Race

Take a look at the race options provided in the next section and pick one that suits you.

Note down the racial moves and take note of decisions that need to be made such (e.g. the fox people's 'Expert' move requires choosing a field of expertise).

Make those decisions now or at a later point during character creation, but don't forget!

## 2. Choose an Archetype

The next step is the archetype of a character. Archetypes provide a bit of a framework to initially develop your character.



At a later point you can deviate from them quite a bit, but they offer a nice way to get started in the beginning.

Unlike races, your archetype must be unique to you. If two or more players want to take the same archetype, talk it over like adults and compromise.

Like with races, archetypes have moves. Look over them in the same manner as you did with the racial moves, checking for things that need to be taken care of during character generation.

## 3. Choose a Name

Picking a name is one of the most important aspects of a character. Pick something suitable and pronounceable. Maybe even a nickname. If you can't think of something came back to this later or ask your fellow players for suggestions.

## 4. Choose Look

Your look is your physical appearance. Make up fitting physical characteristics for your character.

- What kind of physical animal characteristics do they possess?
- What is their build and hair colour?
- What kind of clothes do they usually wear?

## 5. Choose Stats

There are five stats for each character, each rated from -3 to 3. Take a look at the stat descriptions and assign the following ratings to them as you wish (higher is better):

-1, 0, 0, +1, +2

Next take a look at which two stats define your character the most (don't worry, they can change!) and mark them as such.

Performing actions related to these stats will later help you advance your character.

## Stat Descriptions

### Cool

Remaining cool under fire, rational, clear-thinking, calm, calculated, unfazed.

### Hard

Being and acting hard-hearted, violent, aggressive, strong-willed, mean, physically and emotionally strong.

### Hot

Looking fucking hot, attractive, subtle, gracious, sexy, beautiful, inspiring, exciting.

### Sharp

Being sharp-witted, clever, alert, smart, perceptive, educated, skilled, trained.

### Weird

Being a weirdo, psychic, genius, uncanny, lucky, strange, prophetic, touched.

## 6. Stress Tracks

Each character has three stress track (physical, mental and social), which equate to how much they can sustain when being attacked in the respective category.

Each is rated from 1 to 20. Assign the following ratings to them as you wish:

15, 10, 5

## 7. Choose Gear

Archetypes will be equipped with a few pieces of equipment suitable for them. Take note of these items and talk to your GM about changing them as would be appropriate by your character concept so far.

## 8. Introduce your Character

Now it's about time to go around the table and introduce your character to everybody else. When it's your turn, detail your race, appearance and everything you feel is important about your character.

Answer questions of the other players and the GM and ask them questions in return.

Work out how the world works and how your characters live in it.

### 8. Create Bonds

Each character may have up to four Bonds with other player characters, describing their relationships with each other or ways they want to develop their relationship with each other.

Go around the table and pick a bond and a player to have it with. Talk about the implications and details of it. If both agree, note it down on your character sheet (the other person does not note it down, they are one-sided by default, but could also be reciprocal).

Everybody should have at least one Bond, but may have as many as four if appropriate.

### Example Bonds

- ... is the butt of my jokes.
- ... trusted me with a secret.
- ... does not trust me, and for good reason.
- ... owes me their life, whether they admit it or not.
- I worry about ...'s future.
- ... is soft, but I will make them hard like me.
- ... is keeping something from me.
- ... is woefully misinformed about the world; I will teach them what I can.

## 9. Get Ready To Play

Whoa there, cowboy, not so fast. Take a look at your racial and archetype moves again. Did you remember to pick things out here? Is your name fitting?

If everything looks good, lean back, take a short break, grab a drink and stretch your legs.

Once everybody is ready, let the fun begin.

# Races

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This book will present a total of five playable races, each with special racial moves (see the Rules section later on) designed for them.

Of course there is no limit as to what other playable animal people there might exist in this world. Humans, however, are not featured in this game and it is likely advisable to leave them out – It's a game about light-hearted animals after all.

## Nekomimi (Cat People)

In many ways the Nekomimi are the default inhabitants of this world (they are in the title after all!)

Their curiosity and playfulness makes them ideal adventurers and their agility and reflexes make them survive even when the odds are against them.

### Racial Move: Nine Lives

When you would normally take falling damage, roll+Cool. On a 10+ you manage to land on your feet unharmed. On a 7-9 you take only half damage (rounded down). Otherwise take full damage as normal.

### Racial Move: Night Vision

When others remain blind in the near darkness of the night, your eyes are as sharp as ever. Provided that there is at least a minimum light source around, you can see as clear as day.

## Inumimi (Dog People)

The Inumimi show the characteristics of dogs or sometimes wolves. They are fierce and hardy and often are very protective of their family and friends.

### Racial Trait: Merciless

When inflicting only one point of physical harm to another, you may opt to inflict two points instead.

### Racial Trait: Daredevil

When you storm of without a plan to defend those close to you, count your armor rating as one higher than normal.

## Kitsumimi (Fox People)

Kitsumimi are often known for their cleverness and wits. Although their tendency

for indecisiveness rarely makes them leaders, they are often valued members of the society, serving as doctors, teachers and scientists.

### **Racial Move: Bookworm**

When you first enter an important location (your call!) you may ask for a fact about its history or purpose to the GM.

### **Racial Move: Expert**

Choose an area of expertise (e.g. Medicine, History, Sailing, Sports). When using 'Sprout Knowledge' you gain a +2 when it relates to your area.

## **Usamimi (Rabbit People)**

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## **Kumamimi (Bear People)**

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# Archetypes

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There are a few archetypes provided here to give you a start in this world. Each will have a few moves available for them. Pick two of them to be your Starting Moves (you get them at character creation).

You can pick the remaining ones as Advanced Moves when advancing your character or ignore them as you want.

## The Athlete

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### Moves

#### Champion

Pick a sport in which you are the undisputed champion in your area. When playing in matches in this sport, you get a +2 bonus on your Challenge Move when playing against them.

#### Old Rivals

Pick a rival sports team and their leader. You get a +1 on your Aid or Interfere Move targeted at this person.

## The Gear Head

You have a knack when it comes to working with technical stuff. New or old, human or kemomimi technology, you've probably seen it all. Or you'll figure it out.

### Moves

#### My Trusty Toolbox

Good thing you always carry useful parts around with you when you go out. If it's something that is of use in mechanics or electronics you just might have the right thing in there somewhere.

If you have your toolbox with you, just take a look and roll+Sharp.

On a 10+ you'll find exactly what you were looking for.

On a 7-9 choose one:

- It's not quite what you were looking for, but it'll make due. But it seems like you left a few things back home before heading out. On any future roll of this Move suffer -2 until you get a few days to put your bag back together.
- Damn, you didn't find anything that would be of help.

#### My Shed

Every tinkerer needs a shed to work in undisturbed. Rolls regarding repairing things or looking for the right tool get a +2 bonus when you are working in it on your own.

#### Mend Broken Things

You can attempt to repair broken appliances, machines or electronics. Roll+sharp to attempt to fix it.

On a 10+, it works as good as new.

On a 7-9, choose one:

- It'll hold... kinda... for the moment... barely. But if blows again, this thing is probably gone for good.
- I don't think I can fix it right now. Maybe when I have access to different tools I'll try again.

## The Parent

Sometimes there must be somebody who is in charge of keeping order. Somebody to guide and help and somebody to talk to.

### Moves

#### Charming and Open

When you speak frankly with someone, you can ask their player a question from the list below. They must answer it truthfully, then may ask you a question from the list (which you must answer truthfully):

- Who are you working for?
- What do you wish I would do?



- How to I get you to ...?
- What are you really feeling right now?
- What do you most desire?

### Mutual Benefits

When you successfully aid someone you take a +1 bonus towards your next action as well.

## The Performer

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## The Punk

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### Moves

#### Dangerous & Sexy

When you are in a charged situation such as a tournament or combat, roll+hot.

On a 10+ you hold 2. On a 7-9 you hold 1.

You can spend one hold 1 for 1 to make eye contact with an opponent present, who freezes or flinches and can't take any actions until you break it off.

On a miss, your enemies identify you immediately as their foremost threat.

Merciless

Pick a stress category (physical, mental or social). When you inflict only a single point of harm, you may inflict two instead.

#### Pack Alpha

When trying to impose your will onto somebody in a threatening way, roll+hard.

On a 10+, all 3. On a 7-9, choose 1:

- They actually do what you want.
- They don't fight you over it.
- You don't have to go through with your threat for them to comply.

#### Daredevil

If you go straight into danger without consideration for your well being to defend your friends, treat your armor as one point higher.

## The Quack

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### Moves

#### Infirmary

You get access to an infirmary, a workspace with medicine and equipment. Get patients into it and get a +2 towards healing rolls performed on them.

#### Healing Touch

You are able to heal other people who have been *physically or mentally* wounded. Roll+weird.

On a 10+, heal up to seven points of physical or mental stress.

On a 7-9, heal three points of stress. You may choose to heal additional stress points up to a total of seven, but you suffer one point of mental stress yourself for each two stress points healed from your patient (rounded up).

## The Skipper

Adventure awaits you around every corner, you just have to look close enough.

Maybe you do it for the riches, maybe for the fame, maybe you are just a thrill seeker, but you get bored quickly if you stay put for too long.

### Moves

#### A Boat of your own

You own or have access to a boat of your choice. Choose an option:

- Power +2, Looks +1, Armor 1
- Power +2, Looks +2, Armor 0
- Power +1, Looks +2, Armor 1
- Power +1, Looks +1, Armor 2

Now, whenever you are on your boat ...

- ... add its armor rating to yours.
- ... and when showing strength, add it's power rating to your roll.

- ... and you are trying to seduce or manipulate somebody, add its looks to your roll.

### **Collector**

You get an additional boat. The rules for it are the same as for the primary boat.

### **Under the Sea**

You get two pairs of diving equipment suitable for descending to the lower depths of the sea.

## **The Trickster**

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### **Moves**

#### **A Player's Moves**

When trying to seduce someone, you may roll+weird instead of roll+hot.

# Rules



## Narrative Storytelling

In play, characters narrate their actions and help describe the world by answering questions from the GM or other players.

### Example

**John:** *Who else is here at the beach?*

**Steve:** *Probably Stacy, the leader of my rival team, again. She's known to work out during the afternoon hours.*

**GM:** *As you take a look around the beach with the sun rapidly approaching the horizon, you do indeed see Stacy sitting on a picnic blanket next to the volleyball court. She doesn't seem to notice you as she seems to be preoccupied with her notebook. What do you do?*

The narrative of the story is developed by the players as well as the GM, largely by improvisation.

Sometimes, actions taken by the player characters trigger what is called a Move. Moves describe a mechanic to resolve these interesting narrative forks in the storyline.

A Move's roll is always a 2d6 (that is two six-sided dice). The sum of the move is then compared against these three ranges:

**10+** is counted as a full success. The character achieves what they set out to do without a problem.

**7-9** is a partial success. The character essentially manages to do what they wanted to do (or are otherwise successful in a sense), but there are other factors playing in as well. Maybe unforeseen consequences or complications arise.

**6 and below** generally equals a failure of what they wanted to do, but to make matters worse, complications either present themselves in the distant or become immediately apparent to the players.

It is important to note that these are narrative consequences and as such they need not at all be related to the action that the character attempted. They are there to tell an interesting story.

Under normal circumstances the character might have easily succeeded under normal conditions, but couldn't because of what happened next.

### Example

**GM:** *John, it looks like the hose from your air supply unit has become detached when you jumped into the water. You quickly notice it becoming harder to breathe as the oxygen in your mask is running out. What do you do?*

*John: I try not to panic. I can fix this. I'll just grab the hose and reattach it. No problem.*

*GM: Sounds like you are trying to Defy a Danger here. Give me roll for this.*

*John: What stat applies here?*

*Steve: Well, you told yourself not to panic. Cool fits that quite well.*

*John: Alright. 2d6+2 it is then. I've got this.*

Let's look at some possible outcomes for this situation. Outcomes are always specific and can be suggested by players, although the GM is generally the one who gives the call. Sometimes she may offer a choice to the player.

**10+:** You breathe in a deeply, focusing yourself on the task at hand, and you manage to reattach it without too much trouble.

You're going to want to have a talk with Anna about this when you get back, so she can look it over.

You lost a bit of oxygen, but everything seems to be alright for the moment. Steve is swimming ahead of you, looking back wondering what is taking you so long.

**7-9:** Just as you turn your head looking towards your tank you see the reason for it becoming detached. A large squid is behind you, grabbing you by your tank. It swings at you with one of his arms.

Choose: Either you manage to get the oxygen flowing again, but you suffer 1d6 damage from the attack or you dodge and free yourself from its hold, but still with no working oxygen.

**6 and below:** You turn around and behind you you can see the pirate captain from earlier. She holds the hose in her hand, grinning at you as she punches you in the stomach, causing you to exhale in pain. You suffer 1d4 damage.

## Health, Stress and Damage

Characters have three stress tracks that they can use to absorb temporary stress that can occur as they adventure.

**Physical** stress relates to injuries and wounds suffered in combat. It shows how much a character can tolerate and how much strength they can muster to move on.

**Mental** stress is suffered when engaging in discussions and when attempting to solve difficult mental tasks. It shows how much concentration and rationality a character can muster before conceding.

**Social** stress is suffered when being humiliated or provoked by others. It shows how much self control a character can muster.

Characters can sustain as many points of damage or harm as they have points in their respective stress tracks. When a character's stress track goes over its limit, they suffer a consequence.

What this consequence is, depends on the situation at hand.

A physical consequence might be broken bones or even death, while a social consequence might be a loss of respect from an ally.

Consequences must be real and an actual hindrance in game, however. When the consequence is agreed upon, reset the stress count for that category to one below maximum. Thus if the character suffers two additional points of harm or damage, they will suffer yet another consequence, so be careful!

## Armor

In certain situations a character might have armor to help them protect them against harm.

Armor is rated from 1 to 3 in most cases and subtract from the damage that would normally be applied.

In some cases it can be very situational and might not apply even if it is of the right type.

**Physical** Armor could be cover or a bullet-proof vest.

**Mental** Armor in a discussion could be proof of ones arguments in some way or form.

**Social** Armor could for example be people arguing alongside you.

## Healing Damage

A character automatically heals up to two points of stress in each category if they do not gain any stress at all for one day (i.e. they are relaxing and rejuvenating).

## Gaining Experience

Whenever you fail a Move roll with a 6 or below, mark down one experience point.

## Character Advancement

Whenever you have downtime (a few hours or days) and you have more than or exactly seven XP points do the following:

- Subtract seven XP points from your total
- (Optional) Change your favoured attributes to something else
- Pick one (keep in mind the limits):
  - Increase a stress track by one point
  - Increase an attribute by one point
  - Gain a new Advanced Move

## Basic Moves

### Attack/Challenge

When you attack an enemy in a direct confrontation, roll 2d6 + a stat modifier fitting the kind of attack performed.

The damage dealt is always 1d4 unless you are using one of your two favoured attributes, in which case it is 1d6.

**On a 10+**, you deal your damage to the enemy and avoid their attack. At your option, you may choose to do +1d4 damage but expose yourself to the enemy's attack.

**On a 7-9**, you deal your damage to the enemy and the enemy makes an attack against you.

Challenge is for attacking a prepared enemy plain and simple. If the enemy isn't prepared for your attack — if they don't know you're there or they're restrained and helpless — then that's not a Challenge. You just deal your damage directly. Nasty stuff.

This Move functions for both physical combat as well as things like matches in games.

### Example

**GM:** *Stacy – “Oh yeah? Bring it on.” She throws the ball at you.*

**Steve:** *I catch it with my left hand, throwing it around a bit, staring her down. “Alright. On the field. Now!”*

**GM:** *You're going to have to wear her down physically to win this. Roll with Hard as your stat.*

**Steve:** *Alright. That's an 8. With 1 damage.*

**GM:** *She laughs at you as the two of you are batting the ball around for a few turns, then slams it hard towards the ground. You'll have to get really low to hit that one up again. That'll take you down by 1d4 on stress.*

**Steve:** *Damn. 3 harm. She's playing a tough game. But I'm not telling her. I'll hit the ball high. Let's see her jump.*

### Aid and Interfere

When you help or hinder someone, roll 2d6 + the number of bonds you have with them.

**On a 10+**, they take +1 or -2 to their roll, your choice.

**On a 7-9**, they still get a modifier, but you also expose yourself to danger, retribution, or cost.

## Example

**John:** Doesn't seem to be going to good for my man over there.

**GM:** Indeed, Stacy is beating him quite badly it seems.

**John:** I'll try to distract her, so maybe he'll get a good opening.

**GM:** How are you doing that?

**John:** Look at me. I pull of my shirt and throw it down on the ground next to her picnic blanket and take a seat. Then I'll look at her, seeking eye contact.

**GM:** Sounds good. Since you don't have any bonds with NPCs it'll be a straight up roll here.

**John:** Alright... 9. Close, but good enough. She'll get a -2 on her next roll.

**GM:** That'll be her next damage roll.

**Steve:** Yep and that's coming up again, I'd wager. I got a 7 on my attempt.

**GM:** Not to bad. In this case I'll even strike her retaliation completely. She's looking over to John. "Hey! Get off my blanket you flea infested peace of shit!" The game seems to be over prematurely as she storms over to John, carrying the volley ball in her hand. She looks seriously pissed. What do you do?

## Defy Danger

When you act despite an imminent threat or suffer a calamity, say how you deal with it and roll 2d6 + a fitting stat modifier.

**On a 10+**, you do what you set out to, the threat doesn't come to bear.

**On a 7–9**, you stumble, hesitate, or flinch: the GM will offer you a worse outcome, hard bargain, or ugly choice.

## Example

**John:** Calm down, foxy girl.

**GM:** She throws the volley ball at you. It's going for the face. What do you do?

**John:** I'll dodge that and then get up.

**GM:** Alright, sounds like you are defying a danger here. Roll+Cool.

**John:** How about +Sharp? It says perceptive in the description as well.

**GM:** Sure, that works as well.

**John:** Damn. No luck today it seems. Another 9.

**GM:** Alright let's see. Take your pick:

You manage to dodge the attack, but you slip on her blanket shuffling her stuff all over the place and landing on your ass (worse outcome).

Or you dodge the attack, but Cynthia, your sister, standing up on the tower sees the whole ordeal and calls over a few others to watch you get your ass beaten (hard bargain).

Or ... umm I can't think of anything for an ugly choice.

**Steve:** His glasses fall to the ground as he gets up.

**John:** Thank's buddy.

**GM:** Sure sounds fine.

**John:** I dodge the ball, but I stumble around trying to get up and land square on her picnic basket, crushing whatever is inside.

**GM:** Ok, that's great!

## Defend

When you stand in defense of a person, item, or location under attack, roll 2d6 + a fitting stat modifier.

**On a 10+**, hold 3.

**On a 7–9**, hold 1. As long as you stand in defense, when you or the thing you defend is attacked you may spend hold, 1 for 1, to choose an option:

- Redirect an attack from the thing you defend to yourself
- Halve the attack's effect or damage

- Open up the attacker to an ally giving that ally a +1 bonus on the next attack against the attacker
- Deal damage to the attacker (1d4/1d6 for favoured stats)

### Example

**GM:** *She's not happy. She's swinging for you there on the ground.*

**Steve:** *She's gonna kill the guy. I'm going to step in here. "Get a grip, girl. He wasn't doing anything until you ran away from our game. What's going on? Are you afraid already?"*

**GM:** *Alright, sounds like a solid defensive Move to me.*

**Steve:** *Sure. +Cool?*

**GM:** *Yep. Go for it.*

**John:** *He gets all the good rolls tonight.*

**Steve:** *12. I'm gonna take that punch for him at half damage. Then I'm gonna attack her. That provocation should give her something to think about.*

**GM:** *Take half a 1d4 in physical damage. Then hit her for 1d6 in social damage.*

**Steve:** *That'll be ... damn, I'm full up on physical. But she suffers... Yep, 5 social damage.*

**GM:** *Uh, as soon as you open your mouth she turns around and glances at you with angry eyes. She slaps you across the face, leaving a red mark.*

*With the amount of physical exhaustion you've taken today you're fatigued and will probably remain so for a few days. That'll be a -2 on all intensive physical tasks until you reduce all your physical stress, which is now at ... 9.*

**John:** *What about her?*

**GM:** *She seems to be quite satisfied with her apparent victory for the moment, although somewhat taken aback by the confrontation. She grabs her squashed up bas-*

*ket and blanket and heads back towards the village.*

**John:** *Oh man what a day. Let's go fishing tomorrow. I need some relaxation away from this.*

**Steve:** *I don't know. I think we need to show her up some more. Maybe find a way to humiliate her in front of her friends...*

## Spout Knowledge

When you consult your accumulated knowledge about something, roll 2d6 + an appropriate stat modifier.

**On a 10+**, the GM will tell you something interesting and useful about the subject relevant to your situation.

**On a 7–9**, the GM will only tell you something interesting—it's on you to make it useful. The GM might ask you "How do you know this?" if it isn't obvious. Tell them.

### Example

**John:** *She has friends?*

**Steve:** *Seeing as she is my rival, I should know something about this.*

**GM:** *Sure enough, you've seen her around in the village. Roll Sprout Knowledge for this. That'll probably be +Sharp. Pretty clever of you after all. Knowing your enemy.*

**Steve:** *7. What do I remember?*

**GM:** *Well, it's weird, but you've noticed her hang around the showers after training for a pretty long time, even after having finished up. Maybe she's waiting for somebody?*

**Steve:** *Then I guess we'll see who it might be tomorrow afternoon.*

## Discern Realities

When you closely study a situation or person, roll 2d6 + an appropriate stat modifier.

**On a 10+**, ask the GM 3 questions from the list below.

**On a 7–9**, ask 1 of them.

Either way, take a +1 bonus the first roll when acting on the answers.

- What happened here recently?
- What is about to happen?
- What should I be on the lookout for?
- What here is useful or valuable to me?
- Who's really in control here?
- What here is not what it appears to be?

### Example

**GM:** *Ok, the two of them head inside of the shack, holding hands. The guy is checking her out alright as she leads him inside.*

**Steve:** *I am observing this. This sure looks like she has gotten herself a boyfriend. Can I do a Discern Realities with a +Hot? I should know about this stuff.*

**GM:** *Actually not really. It would be +Hot if you were figuring stuff out for example by flirting with somebody. Here you are observing. So it's + Sharp.*

**Steve:** *Oh well. Three Questions it is anyway.*

**GM:** *Shoot.*

**Steve:** *What here is useful or valuable to me?*

**GM:** *The guy she's seeing is her brother's best friend. And from your experience, he would not appreciate if this is what it looks like.*

**Steve:** *Uh.. ok. What is about to happen here?*

**GM:** *It is what it looks like. The two of them are certainly going to have sex in that toolshed.*

**Steve:** *Toolshed? What here is not what it appears to be?*

**GM:** *Ah, good one. Let's see.*

**John:** *Is it Anna's toolshed? Why would she allow them to use it?*

**GM:** *Yes, sure. It is Anna's toolshed. And knowing her, it would seem odd for her to let anybody in her. It's her fortress of solitude after all.*

**Steve:** *Great. I think we've seen enough. No need to creep around out here any longer.*

## Parley

When you have leverage on a GM Character and manipulate them, roll 2d6 + an appropriate stat modifier.

Leverage is something they need or want.

- On a 10+, they do what you ask if you first promise what they ask of you.
- On a 7–9, they will do what you ask, but need some concrete assurance of your promise, right now.

### Example

**John:** *"So here's the deal, Stacy. Leave us alone in the future and we'll keep quiet about your little love affair with lover boy over there." I nod towards the guy on the benches watching the game.*

**GM:** *That sounds like you are trying to Parley with her.*

**John:** *+Cool? That's a ... oh my... a 2.*

**GM:** *She grunts in disgust at you. Then turns away and walks over to her boyfriend. She whispers something in his ear and he looks over to the two of you smiling and cracking his wrists.*

**Steve:** *Oh boy.*

**GM:** *A few moments later her brother arrives, sitting down next to the guy. They exchange a few words and he also glances over to you with an angry, determined look on his face.*



# Game Mastering

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This game is heavily based on the Dungeon World RPG System and it will make a lot more sense if you already know it.

Additionally, any GMing Advice for Dungeon World will surely also work quite well in this system.

## The First Session

When everybody gets ready to play a game of Catastrophe, briefly go over the rules to make sure that everybody understands them.

Then, begin character creation together, creating backstory and bonds as you go through the steps.

Set a few things straight:

*Are the characters friends? Not necessarily, but they manage to work together, even if they have different goals.*

*Is the GM trying to kill us? No, the GM portrays the world through creative improvisation. The goal is to tell an exciting story.*

Work out the setting by asking your players questions:

- What is the currency used in this world?
- Where do the characters live?
- etc.

When in doubt, ask more questions and create a world together. If a player asks a question, turn it around if possible. Let them provide an idea.

Once everything seems fleshed out enough for the time being, get ready with the first adventure.

## The First Adventure

The first adventure is really about discovering the direction that future sessions will take. Throughout the first adventure keep your eye out for unresolved threats; note dangerous things that are mentioned but not dealt with. These will be fuel for sessions to come.

Start the session with a group of player characters (maybe all of them) in a tense situation. Use anything that demands action: Cornered by a group of pirates, on a boat with a broken motor surrounded by sharks or in a tense competition with a rival sports team.

Ask questions right away: Why are the pirates after you? Why are you on a boat? Who are your rivals?

Here's where the game starts. The players will start saying and doing things, which means they'll start making moves. For the first session you should watch especially carefully for when moves apply, until the players get the hang of it. Often, in the early sessions, the players will be most comfortable just narrating their actions — this is fine.

When a move triggers let them know. Say, "It sounds like you're trying to..." and then walk them through the move. Players looking for direction will look to the rules. When a player just says "I attack him" be quick to ask, "so what are you actually doing?" Ask "How?" or "With what?"

For the first session, you have a few specific goals:

- Establish details, describe
- Use what they give you
- Ask questions
- Leave blanks
- Look for interesting facts
- Help the players understand the moves
- Give each character a chance to shine
- Introduce NPCs

## End of Session

When you reach the end of a session, every player should look at their bonds. They may pick one of them that they feel is resolved (completely explored, no longer relevant, or otherwise). If the bond partner

agrees, the character marks XP and may create a new bond.

Now answer the following questions as a group. For each “yes” answer every player marks XP.

- Did we learn something new and important about the world?
- Did we overcome a notable monster or enemy?
- Did we loot a memorable treasure?

## Advanced Moves

When characters gain levels they unlock abilities that assist them. In general these must be restricted to a specific situation and they generally provide one of these benefits:

- A +1/+2 bonus (depending on how specific the situation is).
- Additional 1d4 damage for a specific stat (not stackable).
- Use another stat instead of the one that would be more appropriate here.
- Role play benefits such as a pet or companion that can do things.

Or something else along those lines. Work with the players to see what fits thematically with their character concept.