

GATEWAY

The Tabletop
Roleplaying Game



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This rulebook is available as a **Mobile Companion App** on the [Google Play Store](#).

A [Mobile Friendly Website](#) has been created for **Kindle** and **IOS** users.

For any questions about this game email: gatewayrpg@yahoo.com

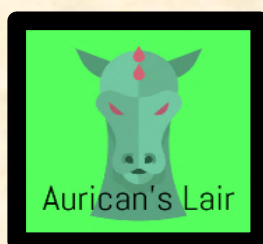
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Introduction

What is this rulebook?

This is **GATEWAY RPG**, an **Easy to Learn, Fast-Paced** roleplaying game that uses a lot of the basic d20 rules seen in popular RPGs such as Dungeons & Dragons®, Pathfinder®, GURPS®, etc.

GATEWAY uses these rules in a “**rules-lite**” way in order to play **ANY** type of roleplaying game theme or setting without worrying heavily about strict rules or complicated math. References to some of these basic rules are copyrighted by the **D&D5e SRD®** and will be cited in accordance with Wizards of the Coast’s Open Source Agreement (*See the **Legal Section**).

What is the point of GATEWAY?

This game system is intended to introduce completely new players to Tabletop Roleplaying Games, hence the name “*gateway*”. Veteran RPG players and Game Masters can also use this system to play a game without worrying about delving through long books, learning new complex and crunchy rules, or switching dice. This game system is **NOT** good for people that want to do the above, or plan out long, expansive, complicated character campaigns. But it's not to say that you couldn't play a long campaign with these rules.

Do I have to use this game system for a High Fantasy style setting?

Nope! This rule-set can be used for High Fantasy, Low Fantasy, Victorian Steampunk, Cyberpunk, Modern, Space Opera, Sci-Fi, Horror, or basically anything a Game Master and players can come up with. Adding in new rules to have the game make sense to the chosen theme or setting is completely up to the Game Master, and can be done with ease.

How do I play a Tabletop RPG?

In a nutshell, this is the normal flow of any tabletop RPG:

- 1) The “person running the game” aka **Game Master (GM for short)**, will describe a scene and environment for the players to take turns and interact with. These scenes will fit one of **3 Types** of scenarios for players to interact in.
 - **Exploration**- In this scenario, a player's character will be able to interact with objects or their environment in general. Examples include anything from characters traveling from one town to another through a forest to players simply opening a treasure chest.
 - **Social Interaction**- Another type of scenario might include **Non-Player Characters** (NPC's for short) that are acted out by the Game Master. Player's will be able to talk to and interact with these NPCs in various ways. Examples include anything from interrogating a witness for more information to just ordering a drink at a local watering hole.
 - **Combat**- This type of scenario is the most structured type in the game and will be explained in greater detail in the **Playing the Game** section. In these scenes, a player's character will use anything from swords, guns, magic, etc. to defeat their opposing enemies. Example enemies could range anywhere from space aliens to colossal dragons depending on the game setting.
- 2) The players all take turns describing what they want to do in a given scene.
- 3) The players and the GM take turns rolling dice to determine the outcome of actions taken by players, non-player characters, or monsters.
- 4) The GM narrates what happens based on the dice rolls and given scenario.
- 5) Then the steps basically repeat which develops an ongoing living story and narrative that the players and Game Master can enjoy together.

How are characters created for the Players?

Players are encouraged to come up with their characters in an archetype manner and will work with the GM to define their particular skills, abilities, weapons, and special actions that make the most sense to the setting and theme. Characters are created with 6 Basic Traits; **Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma**.

Each of these traits will have specific **Abilities (Skills, Attacks, and Saving Throws)** associated with them that characters will use during gameplay for specific situations. To differentiate how these traits will enhance a character and their dice rolls, **Proficiency** (being really good at something) and **Deficiency** (being particularly bad at something) will be assigned to some of the 6 basic traits. This will be covered more in depth in the next section, **Character Creation**.

How do the Dice work?

Just like D&D® and other Tabletop RPGs, **Twenty-Sided Dice** (or **d20's**) will be used for rolling to succeed on things such as Ability checks, Attacks, or Saving Throws. **Unlike** these standard RPG's, **No** other dice are necessary for the resolution of the above. This means that things like **Hit Points, Combat Damage, Spell Effects**, etc. will be handled by what makes sense narratively in the game or with fixed **Low** numbers rather than by worrying about a lot of "Math" and specific rules.

Also, **Critical Success** (Rolling a Natural "20") and **Critical Failure** (Rolling a Natural "1") can be narratively described with ease and provide the same *excitement* or *dread* to a player. These will be explained further on in the **Playing the Game** section.

What can affect the roll of the dice?

A mechanic called **Advantage** and **Disadvantage** will primarily be used that affect rolls. If a player is taking an action that they might do exceptionally well at given the circumstances, they will be given Advantage (able to roll 2 dice instead of 1 and take the highest number rolled.) Alternatively, a situation might cause a disadvantage causing a player to roll 2 dice and take the lowest roll.

Having Proficiency or Deficiency automatically grants Advantage and Disadvantage. Advantage and Disadvantage do not stack, but the two will counter each other out. (**More specifics on this will be explained in the **Playing The Game** section*)

How does GATEWAY work for the Game Master?

The GM can use a lot more of their storytelling discretion, add in new rules to customize their game however they want, or possibly even move players into a standard d20 system like D&D after a few sessions. There is **no** wrong way to play!



Character Creation

In the **GATEWAY** system, the first step to creating a character should be as easy as describing what a character is like to the Game Master. The only limiting factors should be what type of setting or theme the character is being made in. The Game Master will help players in this character creation process. By the end of the process, the GM and player will be able to assign the appropriate proficiencies/deficiencies for character traits, weapons, special abilities, items, etc.

Answering Character Questions:

To get a feel for a character, the GM will construct a few simple questions that the players will answer to help determine what type of character would be appropriate to their game's setting. This should be an open discussion between the GM and the player to make sure the character fits the expectations of the setting and the person playing.

Example Questions:

- What race or species is your character?
- What type of character are you? A Fighter, Spell-Caster, Ranger, Rogue, Jedi, etc.
- What type of weapons do you use?
- What do you think your character excels in?
- What do they lack in?
- Do they have any special powers/abilities?
- What type of background do they come from?

Character Race/Archetype/Abilities:

Characters should be created using imagination and fall into a certain type of race and/or archetype based on what type of game setting is being used and again what the Game Master determines as appropriate. From these descriptions or archetypes, certain traits and abilities can be inferred rather than needing a detailed list of what a character **Can** and **Cannot** do.



Character Archetype Example:

A player wants to play as a **Half-Elf Wizard**. With a few more questions by the Game Master to the player, we can infer what type of magical powers that they might be using. In the game, if the player describes what type of magic they want to use, then it's as simple as rolling dice for the appropriate Character Trait to see if the magic cast is successful.

Scenario Example:

Our wizard has decided that they are going to use Fire Magic. During their turn, they will describe their magic use in terms of what type of fire elements it might cause, such as fireball or a wall of flame. Then they would roll their die/dice to see how successful it was. We will cover the exact mechanics that go into this further on.

Proficiency/Deficiency:

The Game Master and player will determine what a character would have as Proficiency/Deficiency. A player's character will be Proficient and/or Deficient in at least 1 of their Character Traits, but are not limited to this depending on what the Game Master feels. (*See **Character Traits** to the right.)

Again, having Proficiency will grant an **Advantage** to the outcome of rolling the dice and Deficiency will give a **Disadvantage**. Players will be asked to mark a "+" sign next to traits that will be Proficient and a "-" sign next to the Deficient traits. Leaving traits blank means that a character will have no Advantage or Disadvantage on their rolls. (*To see how these affect the outcomes of rolling dice, see **Advantage/Disadvantage in Playing the Game** section).

Proficiency/Deficiency Options:

"+" Proficiency = A character is proficient in a trait, thus giving them Advantage on their rolls. They will roll a d20 **twice** and use the **HIGHER** roll.

"-" Deficiency = A character is deficient in a trait, thus giving them Disadvantage on their rolls. They will roll a d20 **twice** and use the **LOWER** roll.

Normal (Blank Trait) = A character has neither Proficiency or Deficiency will have No Bonus Die and will only roll a d20 **once** and use the result.

Character Traits:

As described before, each player's character will be broken down into 6 basic character traits: **Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma**.

Attached to these character traits are **Ability Checks, Combat Actions, Magic Spell Casting, and Saving Throws**. See the following chart below:

Character Traits & Corresponding Skills:

- **Strength (STR)** = Athletics checks, Melee Combat, Strength Saving Throws
- **Dexterity (DEX)** = Turn Order in Battle (Initiative), Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, Stealth, Hiding, Lock Picking, Piloting (Land, Air, Sea, Mech), Ranged Combat, Dexterity Saving Throws, Determines Armor Class
- **Constitution (CON)** = Constitution Saving Throws, Determines Hit Points
- **Intelligence (INT)** = Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, Religion, Computer Use, Sciences, Streetwise, Intelligence Saving Throws
- **Wisdom (WIS)** = Animal Handling, Insight, Medicine, Perception, Survival, Magic Spell Attacks, Casting non- attack Magic Spells, Wisdom Saving Throws
- **Charisma (CHA)** = Deception, Intimidation, Performance, Persuasion, Charisma Saving Throws

Using Character Traits:

Anytime a character chooses to use or is determined by the GM that they need to roll dice to make a check for any skills/attacks/saves, they will use the corresponding Character Trait. If they have Proficiency or Deficiency in the trait they are using for the check, they will use the Proficiency and Deficiency rules on the previous page for rolling the appropriate dice. (**These can be affected by Advantage and Disadvantage as well, see Playing the Game*).

Other Character Creation Options:

To assist players and GMs for faster and/or more in-depth characters, there are also some other **Character Creation Variants** further on and an **Advanced Play Variant** at the book's end.

Ability Checks:

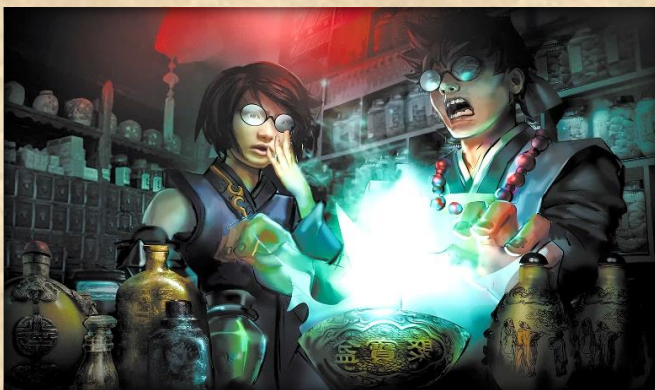
A player will use the following skills when they are applicable to the theme or setting throughout the game. Examples of what can be done with a skill are as followed:

Acrobatics

- Freeing yourself from grapples and the like
- Squeezing through tight spaces
- Balancing on thin/fragile surfaces without falling
- Landing on your feet after a fall
- Tumbling

Animal Handling

- Calming an unfriendly animal down
- Controlling a friendly animal to do something
- Teaching an animal



Arcana

- Recall lore about magic items, creatures, and spells
- Identifying a spell in a scroll/book/item/etc.
- Controlling a magic item/effect
- Disarming magic traps
- Identifying spells being cast by enemies

Athletics

- Climbing
- Grappling creatures
- Going through rough terrains, such as mud, without losing movement
- Jumping a certain height/distance
- Swimming in rough currents



Computer Use

- Hacking a computer system
- Implementing a virus into a computer system
- Overriding or controlling something that is run by a computer
- Opening a door that is locked by a computer

Deception

- Lying
- Disguise emotions
- Playing dead
- Passing yourself off as someone else
- 'Being cool' if seen while following someone

History

- Recalling lore about families, events, places, and heraldry
- Remembering anniversaries of important happenings
- Telling when/where a certain item was made
- Noticing a person's origins based on their looks or customs

Insight

- Identifying whether someone is being deceitful or evasive in answering
- Noticing what a person plans by what they're doing
- Telling if someone is following you rather than just going in the same direction
- Getting the meaning of underlying messages

Intimidation

- Intimidating someone into doing what you want
- Torturing someone
- Taunting someone into violence

Investigation

- Searching someone (dead or alive) or an area (unlike Perception, this is made for clues or deductions that mere sight fails)
- Seeing through illusions
- Finding more about rumors
- Searching for specific information in a book

Lock Picking

- Kind of self-explanatory, picking a lock manually using some sort of tools

Medicine

- Stabilizing someone
- Noticing a certain disease in someone
- Providing long-term treatment
- Knowing the body's limits regarding a certain physical activity
- Knowing the dosages and uses for natural healing items

Nature

- Recalling lore about beasts, plants, terrain, types of vegetation and weather
- Knowing what plants are needed to make certain compounds/potions
- Identifying poisonous/dangerous food
- Harvesting poisons from plants/beasts
- Detecting strange weather changes



Perception

- Spotting/hearing hidden threats
- Recognizing someone who's far away
- Finding minute details
- Identifying a source of a noise

Performance

- Singing
- Dancing
- Telling stories
- Delivering a good speech



Persuasion

- Convincing someone to do what you want
- Knowing how to behave in a given social setting
- Flattering someone
- Seducing someone

Religion

- Recalling lore about deities, temples, and rituals
- Performing a ritual per specification
- Knowing what would be offensive to a certain faith

Sleight of Hand

- Stealing from people without being noticed
- Putting something on someone without being noticed
- Concealing belongings in yourself
- Performing gestures or messages without being noticed

Stealth

- Hiding
- Moving without being heard
- Blending in a crowd
- Following someone

Survival

- Tracking
- Protecting yourself from weather/terrain hazards such as sunburn and mosquitoes
- Finding water
- Knowing which way is north

Streetwise

- Recalling information of underground or criminal organizations
- Recalling information of a city or urban environment



Character Creation Variants:

In most Roleplaying Games, a player can have many options to choose from when building a character. Most can choose to **Roll their Stats**, **Buy Stats** with allotted amounts of points, or use a **Standard Array** of stats. These stats are then arranged in each of the **6 Base Character Traits** (*Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, Charisma*) at the player's choice.

On the next page are some variations of how players can build characters using these RPG standards rather than the Game Master assigning Proficiencies and Deficiencies based on the player's Archetype chosen.

Note: "Unbalanced" Characters such as having all Proficiencies or Deficiencies is possible.

Option 1: Rolling Stats

Roll the d20 six times and write down the results. Use the following table to calculate whether the result grants a Proficiency or Deficiency. Then the player can choose where to align the results in the Character Traits.

- **1-7 = Deficiency Trait**
- **8-14 = Normal Trait**
- **15-20 = Proficiency Trait**

Rolling Stats Example

STR: 15 = Proficiency

DEX: 3 = Deficiency

CON: 6 = Deficiency

INT: 18 = Proficiency

WIS: 11 = Normal

CHA: 13 = Normal

Option 2: Point Buy

Each player is given **7 Points** to buy Traits with. They can then arrange the points however they like across the 6 Base Traits. Assigning 0 points to a Trait will default to having a Deficiency in that Trait.

- **Deficiency Trait = 0 Points**
- **Normal Trait = 1 Point**
- **Proficiency Trait = 2 Points**

Point Buy Example

STR: 2 = Proficiency

DEX: 1 = Normal

CON: 0 = Deficiency

INT: 1 = Normal

WIS: 1 = Normal

CHA: 2 = Proficiency

Option 3: Standard Array

This option is the most basic. Simply give each player the option of **1 Proficiency** and **1 Deficiency** to assign into the 6 Base Traits. All the other traits will be **Normal**.

Standard Array Example

STR: Proficiency

DEX: Deficiency

CON: Normal

INT: Normal

WIS: Normal

CHA: Normal



Weapons:

A character can use a variety of different types of weapons for close combat or ranged attacks. To keep with being simple and rules-lite, these weapons will be grouped into 3 Types of Attack Categories: **Melee**, **Ranged**, and **Magic Attacks**. (*Bonuses and Modifiers can be added to these, see **Character Advancement Options** further on.)



Melee Combat Attacks = Strength Trait
Swords, Daggers, Axes, Katana, Clubs, Lightsabers, etc.



Ranged Combat Attacks = Dexterity Trait
Crossbows, Longbows, Short bows, Muskets, Pistols, Lasers, Rifles, etc.



Magic Attacks = Wisdom Trait
Fireballs, Lightning, Charm, Force Push, etc.

Versatile Melee Weapons (Optional):

Sometimes a weapon could be able to use the Dexterity Trait instead of Strength when making a Melee Attack. These are known as “**finesse**” **weapons** and fall under items like rapiers, lightsabers, or katanas. A Game Master and player can work together to decide if the character’s weapon can be considered **Versatile**. They would just want to mark something next to the weapon on their character sheet so they would know to roll their Dexterity Trait when making an attack.

Weapon Damage:

To be simple, each weapon attack should deal **1 Damage**. No extra dice rolls will be needed to calculate weapon damage. (*Note: unless modified by a **Critical Attack** or another **Modifier** assigned by the GM, see **Playing the Game**)

Armor Class (aka AC):

This statistic is essentially how hard it is for a foe to successfully attack a character or vice versa. A character’s Armor Class (AC) should be based on whether they have **Proficiency** or **Deficiency** in their **Dexterity Trait**. (*Bonuses or Modifiers can be added when picking up new armor or for alternative reasons the GM sees fit, See **Character Advancement Options** further on.)



“+” **Proficiency** = 14 AC

“-” **Deficiency** = 10 AC

___ **Normal (Blank Trait)** = 12 AC

Hit Points (aka HP):

Because the goal of GATEWAY is to be fast-paced and simplistic, **Hit Points (HP)** will be low. The Game Master can always increase the number of HP and Damage values as well to make things more challenging or to advance characters in longer campaigns. (*See **Character Advancement Options** further on.)

Calculating Hit Points:

A character’s **Constitution** is the main Base Trait that will determine a player’s Hit Points. After Character Creation, a player can consult the following to calculate their HP.

- **Deficiency Trait** = 3 Hit Points
- **Normal Trait** = 4 Hit Points
- **Proficiency Trait** = 5 Hit Points

Special Abilities:

These can be defined at Character Creation or as the game goes along. A basic example of a special ability would be spell-casting in general. This can be defined as a special ability where the player gets to describe in general what spells they cast, or the GM and player can get creative to come up with spells and mechanics around them.

But be wary, getting more detailed and complicated with rules is less the point of this game. (*The Game Master has the final say and can define specific mechanics to only be used as **Actions** or **Bonus Actions** which will be covered in the “**Playing the Game**” section)

Basic Special Ability Example:

Multi-Attack - Each combat turn, a player can make an extra Attack Action.



Character Advancement Options:

If a game goes past one session, the players may end up liking the characters they are playing with, and might feel like advancing towards something greater with them. Here are a few options a GM can pull in whenever they feel like giving characters a boost.

- **Add Modifiers:** Give +1, +2, etc. bonuses to Weapons, Armor Class, Hit Points, or even particular Skills. These can even be items that they buy as they go along. Players then add those modifiers to their d20 rolls.
- **Weapons, Armor, or other Items could grant Proficiency or Deficiency:** Aside from adding +1 or higher modifiers, GM's could make items give a Proficiency or Deficiency in something. A GM could even combine modifiers and Proficiency/Deficiency together.

Example: A player finds an ancient demonic battle ax that is magical. It grants him Proficiency in Charisma (Intimidation) Checks, as NPC's could be fearful of the demonic energy coming off it.

- **Awarding Proficiency:** Add Proficiency to a non-proficient Character Trait
- **Adding new Special Powers or Abilities:**
Example: if a magic user casts primarily Fire spells, allow them to start casting Water spells.
- **Upgrade to the Advanced Play Variant:** This variant assigns Proficiencies and Deficiencies into the specific Abilities, Saving Throws, and Attacks instead of in Character Traits. A character could be proficient in intimidating an enemy (CHA) but could also be deficient at persuading an enemy to do what they ask (also CHA). This helps make characters feel more customized and special without overly complicating things. (**See the **Advanced Play Variant** rules at the end of this book*)



Character Example 1:

Dag "Strong in the Arm" - Dwarf Barbarian

*Barbarians are good at fighting but might be lacking in intelligence. From this, the Game Master could grant the player's character Proficiency in the **Strength** Trait and Deficiency in the **Intelligence** Trait.

Strength = "+" Proficient

Dexterity = Normal

Constitution = Normal

Intelligence = "-" Deficient

Wisdom = Normal

Charisma = Normal

Armor Class = DEX is Normal = 12 AC

Hit Points = CON is Normal = 4 HP

Weapons = Great Axe (Melee and STR Proficiency)



Character Example 2:

Duke Starslayer - Human Jedi *Jedi are known to be excellent at using lightsabers and have special magic-like abilities through "The Force." From this, the Game Master might assign them Proficiency in Dexterity (AC) and Wisdom (Magic) but a Deficiency in Constitution (HP).

Strength = Normal

Dexterity = "+" Proficient

Constitution = "-" Deficient

Intelligence = Normal

Wisdom = "+" Proficient

Charisma = Normal

Armor Class = DEX is Proficient = 14

Hit Points = CON is Deficient = 3 HP

Weapons = Lightsaber (Versatile DEX Proficiency)



Playing the Game

Gameplay will go as in any standard Tabletop Roleplaying Game as described in the introduction of this book. The Game Master sets the scene and interacts with players as appropriately in

Exploration, **Social Interaction**, or **Combat** scenarios. Players take turns explaining to the Game Master what they are trying to accomplish in a given situation. If the Game Master determines the need to check if a player's action is successful or a failure, he/she then asks the player to roll for the corresponding Character Trait for the action.

The Game Master will also calculate an appropriate **Difficulty Class** or **DC** for the player to roll **exactly** or **higher** to be a success.

These same rules **WILL** be followed for players to roll to succeed on anything from **Attacks**, **Ability checks**, **Casting Spells**, **Special Abilities**, **Contested Checks**, **Combat Turn Order**, and **Saving Throws**.

Difficulty Class:

Calculating a DC should be **ONE** number within the general range of difficulty below:

- **Simple: 2 to 5** - A task that even a child could do.
- **Easy: 6 to 10** - A task that requires some skill to perform but not much.
- **Moderate: 11 to 15** - A task that requires a great deal of skill to accomplish.
- **Hard: 16-19** - A task that is very hard to accomplish even with skill.
- **Near Impossible: 20** - A task that is almost impossible.

DC Example:

Dag "the Barbarian" from Character Creation wants to try to intimidate a foe using his words and stature as a barbarian. The Game Master determines that the weak barkeep could be easily intimidated with a roll of 8 or above.

Dag has Normal Charisma Trait (which is where the Intimidate Skill falls under), so he would roll the d20 only once and take the value.

Dag rolls a **10** which is higher than the DC of **8**, thus he succeeds. The Game Master then narrates that the barkeep is shaking in his boots and that Dag has successfully intimidated him into giving him the ale he ordered for a discounted price.

Ability Checks:

Anytime a player's character is attempting to do something inside of one of the Skill Traits, they will roll a d20 for that Character Trait the skill is under. The DC that the GM sets is what the player will look to roll or higher.

Contested Rolls:

Sometimes players will be in what is known as a "Contested Roll" with something. This could be **Grappling** with another creature (opposing Strength contest) or **Lying** to another NPC (opposing Persuasion vs. Insight). When this occurs, they player rolls the appropriate Character Trait, and the Game Master will also roll what they determine is the appropriate trait for the NPC. Whoever has the higher number succeeds over them.

Saving Throws:

If something causes a character or non-player character/monster to be under some type of condition, such as being blind, the GM can make them roll an appropriate "Saving Throw." If they fail to pass the DC the GM sets, they are then affected by the condition.

Saving Throw Examples:

Being **Blinded**, **Poisoned**, **Unconscious**, **Grappled**, **Stunned**, **Frightened**, **Deafened**, **Incapacitated**, etc. are good examples of what players would need to make a Saving Throw against. (*GM's, if you need exact rules for these conditions, they could be pulled from the D&D5e SRD)

Advantage/Disadvantage:

Sometimes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw is modified by special situations called **Advantage** and **Disadvantage**. Advantage reflects the positive circumstances surrounding a d20 roll, while Disadvantage reflects the opposite. When a player has either Advantage or Disadvantage, they roll a second d20 when they make the roll. They will then use the higher of the two rolls for Advantage, and use the lower roll for Disadvantage.

For example, if a player has Disadvantage and rolls a 17 and a 5, they use the 5. If they instead have Advantage and roll those numbers, they use the 17.

If a player has a Proficiency (in which they always roll Advantage), having an imposed Disadvantage on a roll will negate out their Proficiency, thus dropping their roll down a level as if they had a Normal Character trait (rolling 1d20).

When dealing with **Double Advantage** or **Disadvantage**, these do not stack in which no extra dice will be rolled. Instead, a simple +1 or -1 as a modifier from the number rolled based on the Advantage (+1) or Disadvantage (-1) will be added.

Advantage/Disadvantage Examples:

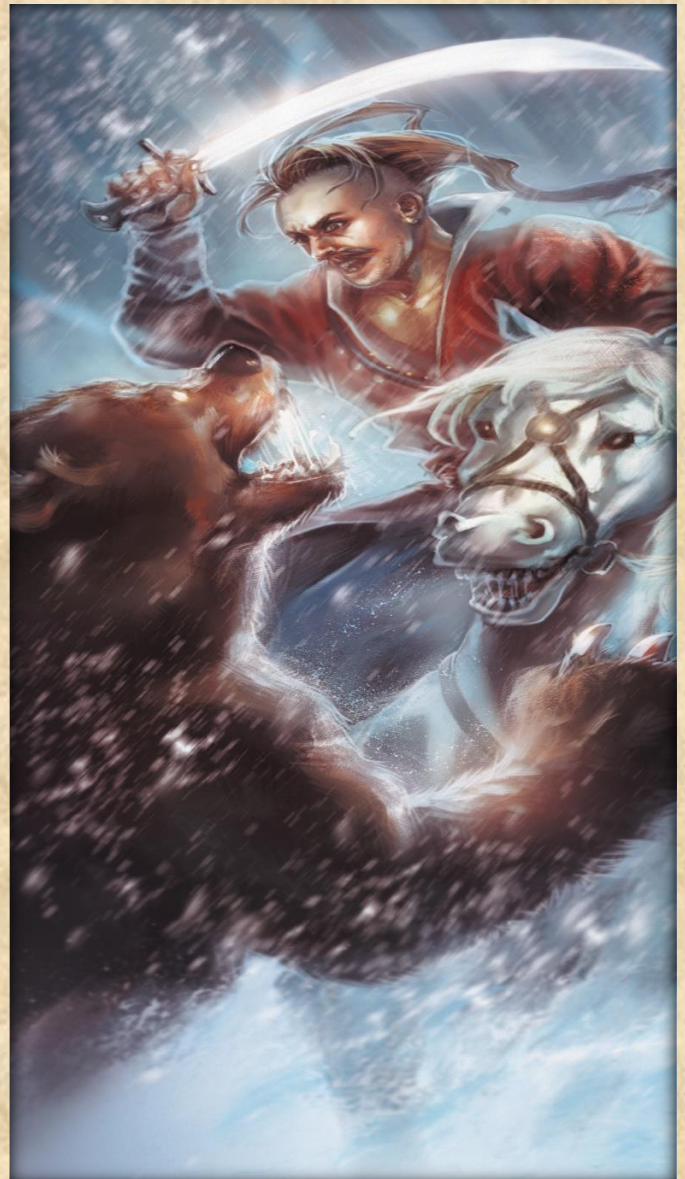
- **Proficiency (+) Trait with Advantage**
Advantage (+1) = 2d20 and take the highest number rolled and add +1 to the total
- **Proficiency (+) Trait with Disadvantage**
No Bonus = 1d20 and take the number rolled
- **Normal (Blank) Trait with Advantage**
Advantage = 2d20 and take the highest number rolled
- **Normal (Blank) Trait with Disadvantage**
Disadvantage = 2d20 and take the lowest number rolled
- **Deficiency (-) Trait with Advantage**
No Bonus = 1d20 and take the number rolled
- **Deficiency (-) Trait with Disadvantage**
Disadvantage (-1) = 1d20 and take the lowest number rolled and subtract -1 from the total.

Critical "Successes" and "Fails":

When rolling a "20" or a "1" naturally without any modifying numbers for any scenarios are **Critical Successes** (20) or **Fails** (1).

The Game Master usually takes extra time to explain what happens in these scenarios because they are supposed to add excitement or dread to the player. A critical success can add anything from achieving the impossible to getting some sort of bonus or Advantage on the next roll.

Opposite to this, a critical fail can take away anything from failing to accomplish the most mundane task to getting a penalty or Disadvantage on the next roll. It is all circumstantial and is whatever the Game Master dictates it to be.
(*Critical Hits in combat will be covered further on.)





Combat:

Before combat even begins, the GM will determine the order in which players and non-player characters/monsters will act. This is called an **Initiative Roll**. Initiative for each player can be determined by having all players roll their **Dexterity Trait** (*Initiative Order Check*) and group their order from highest to lowest.

The GM will do the same for each of the NPCs or monsters. Combat will then go into a **Round**, starting with the highest Initiative Number rolled. During Combat, a character will be able to make **ONE Move Action** (30 feet on average), **ONE Primary Action**, and **One Bonus Action**

Primary Action Options: (*D&D5e SRD*)

- **Attack**
- **Dash** - Move again (same amount of the first move)
- **Interact** with an object
- **Cast a Spell** or **Special Ability**
- **Hide**
- **Search**
- **Ready an Action** (Choose to delay your action and set a trigger and what you want to do when the trigger is met)
- **Grapple** (Strength Skill Contest)
- **Escape** from being Grappled (Strength Skill Contest)
- **Declare a Dodge** (causes Deficiency or Negative modifier, GM's choice, of all attacks to this player until its next turn.
- **Help** on another player's turn (Gives the target player Proficiency or Positive modifier, on their next Primary Action)
- **Improvise** simply tell your GM what you would like to do as an action to see if they can allow it. Get creative! (*GM's see "***Rule of Cool***" section)

Bonus Action Options: (**D&D5e SRD*)

- **Attack** with a different weapon
- **Interact** with an object
- **Switch Weapons**
- **Talk** to someone during combat
- **Special Ability** (GM Discretion)
- **Cast** a Spell (GM Discretion)
- Any "other" **Minor** action

Combat Example:

Duke Starslayer is facing two stormtroopers who are about 30 feet away. Duke is Proficient with his Dexterity Trait and would like to move then swing his Lightsaber at one of them since it is a Versatile DEX Attack Weapon.

On his turn, Duke will be able to use **1 Move Action** to move the 30 feet to engage with one of the stormtroopers. He will then be able to use his **1 Primary Action** to Melee Attack with his Lightsaber causing him to roll the d20 twice and take the higher total (***due to being Proficient in Dexterity***).

The GM will already have determined the Armor Class of the stormtroopers and see if Duke hits on his attack. We will say that he successfully hits with an **18** and the GM determines that it kills the space marine. At this point, Duke forgoes using his **1 Bonus Action** as he decides that he will wait until the next turn.

***GM Note:**

Describing this scene should not be like how it is written above. The GM will describe in detail the characters Actions, either by grouping together some actions (movement and attack) and waiting after the attack to give that player the option to come up with a Bonus Action and then describing how the scene all plays out.

"Duke Starslayer runs up in between the two stormtroopers who hunkered down in preparation for the Jedi's attack. Duke swings his Lightsaber at the head of the trooper to his left and takes it clean off. Smoke trickles up from the cauterized wound as the man's body falls over in front of his comrade."

Combat Damage:

Each player's combat attack will only inflict **1 Point of Damage** on a successful hit. For balance, the Game Master will also have Non-Player Characters and Monsters follow the same damage values.

Alternatively, as gameplay goes on, the Game Master can give players better weaponry or abilities that increase damage, and do the same for enemies making them more challenging.

Critical Hits:

Rolling a "**20**" on the die during an Attack action will automatically deal **Double Damage**.

Critical Failure:

Rolling a “1” on the die during an Attack action will automatically Fail, but the Game Master can also then impose other types of Disadvantages on the player’s characters. These could be anything from dropping the weapon, falling prone, or having a **Disadvantage** on the next attack.



Reaching “0” Hit Points:

Being reduced to 0 Hit Points (or further depending on the damage taken) will result in a player falling into a state of **Dying**. When a player is in this state, they must succeed **Three** “Death Saves” to be returned to **1 HP**.

On the beginning of the turn in this state, the player uses **ALL** their actions to roll a **10 or higher** on the d20. If they fail to roll 10 **three times**, their character dies. If they succeed to roll 10 or higher three times, they are returned to 1 HP on their next turn. Rolling a **Critical** on Death Saves grants **two Successes** (Rolling “20”) or **two Failures** (Rolling “1”).

Also, if a player is **Hit/Loses HP** while in this state, they **automatically** suffer 1 Failure towards their Death Saves. A player can be brought back to **1 HP** or more instantly when another player uses some sort of Healing on them (*magic, medicine, potions*).

Recovering Hit Points:

Other than Hit Points being recovered by magic potions, magic spells, or receiving medical aid. HP can naturally be healed as well when players decide to take a **Short Rest** (*1 hour of in-game time*) or **Long Rest** (*8 hours of in-game time*).

- After a **Short Rest**, each player receives **Half** of their Max Hit Points back (rounded down) automatically.
- After a **Long Rest**, each player’s Hit Points are returned to **Full**.

Note: Multiple **Short Rests** do not gain any extra HP back **UNLESS** there was Combat or Encounter where damage was dealt (traps/enemies) in between the last Short Rest.

Using Miniatures (Optional):

Most Tabletop Roleplaying Games use the creative imagination known as “Theater of the Mind”, but many people running games like to use miniatures when involved in combat or other scenarios. If the Game Master decides to use miniatures, the following can be used as conversions.

If using a 1-inch square grid playmat or a hex board, each space will be considered 5ft when determining Size, Movement, or Range. Of course, the squares/hexes can be adjusted at any time according to the Size or Scale of the characters or combats.

Example: If the characters are in giant robots and are fighting other Giant things (think *MechWarrior®* or *Pacific Rim®*) then the Game Master would want to adjust the distance between squares/hexes to be something higher than 5 ft.

Size:

GM’s and players can use the following to determine size in feet in game and size of a mini on a grid or hex board:

• <u>Tiny</u>	2 feet and below	1 square	1 hex
• <u>Small</u>	2-4 feet	1 square	1 hex
• <u>Medium</u>	4-8 feet	1 square	1 hex
• <u>Large</u>	8-16 feet	2x2 squares	3 hex
• <u>Huge</u>	16-32 feet	3x3 squares	7 hex
• <u>Gargantuan</u>	32-64 feet	4x4 squares	12 hex
• <u>Colossal</u>	64 feet and above	5x5 squares	19 hex

Movement:

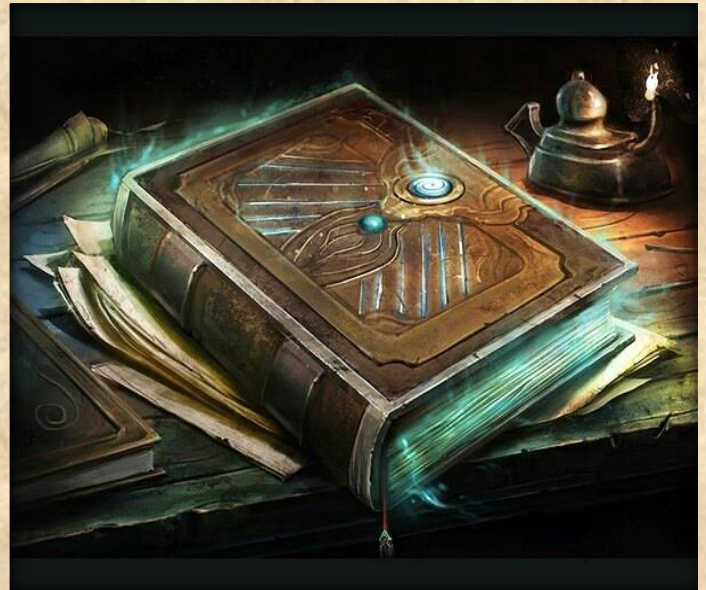
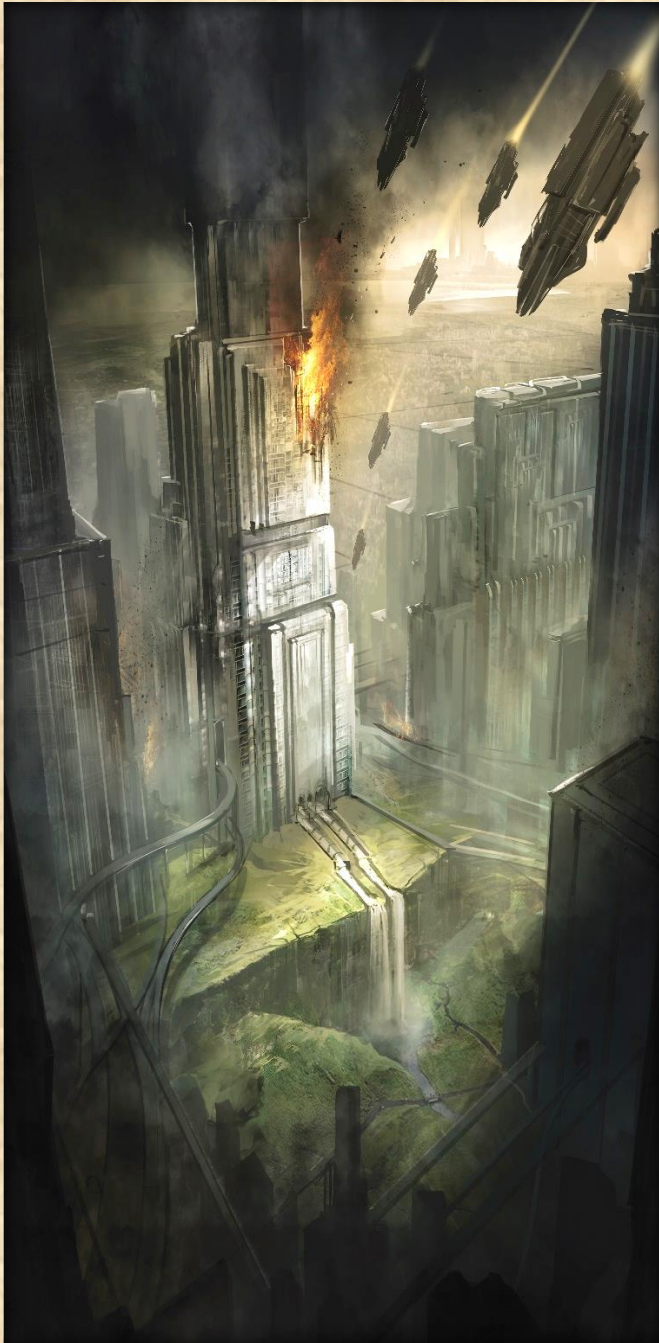
A standard base movement speed for any **medium-sized** character in *GATEWAY* is 30 feet per turn. A Game Master can give higher or lower numbers to characters and NPCs as they wish depending on size or other factors. Consult the following table below for good average movement speeds per size.

• <u>Tiny/Small</u>	20 feet to 30 feet
• <u>Medium</u>	30 feet
• <u>Large</u>	30 to 35 feet
• <u>Huge</u>	35 to 45 feet
• <u>Gargantuan</u>	45 to 50 feet
• <u>Colossal</u>	50 feet and Above

Range:

Following the 5ft per square/hex standards, GM's and players can use the following to calculate range for attacks. (If you are not using miniatures, to simplify game mechanics, a Game Master and Players only must narrate in terms of what type of range a player character or NPC is in.)

- **Close Combat**- Within 5 feet
- **Short Range**- 10 feet to 60 feet
- **Medium Range**- 65 feet to 300 feet
- **Long Range**- 305 feet to 500 feet
- **Very Long Range**- 500 feet and Above



Game Mastering Tips

If you are a Veteran Game Master, you might not need these tips, but if you have never run a Tabletop RPG, read on as this may help you run GATEWAY and many other RPGs.

The “Rules”:

The rules of this game provide some basic instructions on how to play a game using this system, but you as the Game Master are not limited to them. Treat **ANY** rule in this system as a **“Guideline”**. Add new rules in whenever!

Be flexible with your players and change anything from the rules that need changed to make your story make sense, or to create the most fun situation/outcome for the group.

Helping Create Characters:

As stated in the Character Creation section above, you should help your players come up with exciting characters by having prepared questions to help them figure out what type of character they are.

If this seems to be too much of a task for them, **HELP** them along. If they can't put down exactly what they want to be at first, or choose something that doesn't exactly fit into your game, have them describe their character, pick out some Proficiencies and Deficiencies, and then you can add in any special abilities that they might get or extra proficiencies as you go along. There is no right or wrong way to play.



World Building:

Because this game can be played with any genre, there really is no right or wrong way to do this. If you are running something completely random, say a Space themed game, feel free to play off tropes that already exist, or get creative and come up with your own stuff. If you are running a theme like an already established Roleplaying Game, then potentially consider using other source materials and ideas that fit. And if you are brave and good at **Improvising**, simply ask your players before you start what theme they would like to play. Maybe even let them give you some setting ideas.

Adventure Building:

Each adventure that you plan for should have elements of what will make for the most fun for you **AND** your players (**not just you!**). It is always good to find out what type of game your audience is looking to play. Are they a bunch of heroes who want to explore and kill things? Are they a bunch of diplomatic people who want to interact heavily with people or solve a mystery? Or are they looking for high-paced adventure with these combined?

Just make sure you talk with your players first to find out. If they don't know, the simplest formula for a game is to try to include **Somewhere** for your players to explore (a town, a dungeon, a spaceport, etc.), **Someone** for them to talk with (a barkeep, a star pilot, a villain, etc.), and **Something** for them to fight (dragons, evil robots, an evil mastermind, etc.) **OR** something to accomplish (finish a race, solve a mystery, return an object) within some form.

Creating Non-Player Characters and Monsters:

This is as simple as following the same rules above for creating characters. You can stat them out with all their different stats if you feel the need to. **Or** you can choose to forgo this and just assign them only the Proficiency or Deficiency Traits and AC. Don't make it harder on yourself if you don't have to. Your players don't always have to know that you came up with a creature's AC or attacks on the fly. Just be sure if you are in combat and you choose one, try to jot it down so you don't forget it while combat takes place.



Example Monster: Goblin

AC: 10

HP: 1

Proficiency: None

Deficiency: INT, CHA

Weapons: Rusty Sword (Melee)



Example NPC: Carlow McGillicuty - Blacksmith

AC: 12

HP: 2

Proficiency: STR

Deficiency: WIS

Weapons: Hammer (Melee)

Non-Combat Scenarios:

Try to remember to ask **ALL** your players what they are doing during exploration or interacting with people or places. Some players will always try to do everything for the group or say that they are doing multiple things at the same time. Try to break these moments down and go around to each player to give them a turn.

Rule of Cool:

A great GM should allow their players to come up with clever ideas of how their characters are going to try and accomplish things. Award these players by at least letting them attempt to roll to see if they succeed. Even if you want to set the DC to an Impossible number. This will also help you as a Game Master be able to **"Roll"** with things (*pun intended!*) and improvise on the fly yourself. Most importantly, just make sure that you and your players are having the most fun there possibly can.

Avoid Metagaming:

Try to have players act accordingly to what their characters would do, not what the player knows they should do to accomplish something. This is called **Metagaming** (doing something that your character has no knowledge of, but the player does).

Metagame Example:

A character should not know a Werewolf is allergic to silver in your world as they have never heard of them or encountered it, but a player might and want to immediately go find a silver weapon to attack it with. This should be frowned upon.



Advanced Play Variant

In the Basic Rules of **GATEWAY**, certain character builds might seem to become a bit redundant depending on what “Proficiencies” or “Deficiencies” have been placed in Character Traits. Players may feel that their characters are rolling 2 twenty-sided dice and taking the highest (**Proficiency**) or lowest (**Deficiency**) way too often, possibly feeling overpowered or underpowered.

The **Advanced Play Variant** has been created that will help make characters feel more “**Customized**,” “**Balanced**,” and more “**In-Line**” with a standard d20 Tabletop RPG. This involves simply **assigning** Proficiencies and Deficiencies into specific “Skills” rather than by an entire “Character Trait.” This means that a character can be Proficient under the Dexterity Character Trait for the skill Acrobatics, but also have a Normal or Deficient skill under the same character’s Dexterity trait, such as Stealth or Dexterity Saving Throws.

Breaking these down and assigning a certain number of points for a player to choose their Skills, Attack Proficiency, and Saving Throw will make for a custom feel for each character, and will stick with the **simple** and **universally-themed** character creation process **GATEWAY** thrives on.

Advanced Character Sheet:

For this Advanced Variant, each player will have the following **Character Creation Points** to be used in creating a character, **or** the Game Master can help create characters for the players using the following to match the Archetype a player is looking for.

Character Creation Points:

- **2 Proficiency Points** and **1 Deficiency Point** used for Saving Throws
- **1 Proficiency Point** used for an Attack Skill (Melee, Ranged, or Magic)
- **5 Proficiency Points** and **3 Deficiency Points** to be used for Other skills (cannot stack with other Proficient or Deficient Skills)

***Exception:** A Proficiency Point **CAN** be spent to negate a Deficiency; therefore, a player can choose to use their Proficiency points to get rid of any Deficiencies they have and make them into a Normal Trait.



Advanced Character Example:

A Player wants to play your typical **Rogue/Thief**. Either by the player's choice or the GM build, we end up with the following Proficiencies and Deficiencies:

Proficiency:

- **Saves (2):** Dexterity Saving Throws, Charisma Saving Throws
- **Attack Skill (1):** Ranged Weapon Attacks
- **Other Skills (5):** Acrobatics, Lock Picking, Deception, Stealth, Sleight of Hand

Deficiency:

- **Saves (1):** Intelligence Saving Throws
- **Other Skills (3):** History, Nature, Medicine

Strength (STR):

- Athletics Check
- Melee Attack
- Strength Saving Throw

Dexterity (DEX):

- Turn Order in Battle (Initiative Check)
- Acrobatics Check “+” **Proficient**
- Sleight of Hand Check “+” **Proficient**
- Piloting
- **Lock Picking “+” Proficient**
- **Stealth Check “+” Proficient**
- Hide Check
- **Ranged Attack “+” Proficient**
- **Dexterity Saving Throw (AC) “+” Proficient**
AC = 14

Constitution (CON):

- Constitution Saving Throw (HP)
HP= 4 (Normal Blank Trait)

Intelligence (INT):

- Arcana Check
- **History Check “-” Deficient**
- Streetwise
- Investigation Check
- **Nature Check “-” Deficient**
- Religion Check
- **Intelligence Saving Throw “-” Deficient**

Wisdom (WIS):

- Animal Handling Check
- Insight Check
- **Medicine Check “-” Deficient**
- Perception Check
- Survival Check
- Wisdom Saving Throw

Charisma (CHA):

- Deception Check “+” **Proficient**
- Intimidation Check
- Performance Check
- Persuasion Check
- **Charisma Saving Throw “+” Proficient**



***Note:** Any other dice rolls outside of these Skills and Saving Throws will just be a Normal d20 roll and take the number rolled as the result.

***Also Note:** Armor Class and Hit Points are still based on what players have in their Dexterity (AC) and Constitution (HP) Saving Throws.

Example Scenarios:

Our Rogue is presented with a door to try and unlock:

This is a Lock Picking Check; therefore, they roll **2d20** and take the highest result rolled due to having Proficiency.

Our Rogue tries to attack an orc using a Longsword:

This is a Strength Melee attack; therefore, they only roll **1d20** and take the result rolled as they do not have Proficiency nor Deficiency.

Our Rogue tries to recall some history about a town:

This is a History Check; therefore, they roll **2d20** and take the lowest result rolled due to having Deficiency.

Our Rogue is being Charmed by an enchantress:

This is a Charisma Saving Throw; therefore, they roll **2d20** and take the highest result rolled due to having Proficiency.

Creator's Note

That's it! Now enjoy taking your players on an adventure with the Printable Character Sheets on the next few pages!

Also remember that there is a Android Mobile App for this game system on the [Google Play Store](#) and a [Mobile Friendly Website](#) for Kindle and IOS users.

May this be you and your players “**GATEWAY**” into the fun and exciting hobby of tabletop roleplaying. If any of the rules don't sync up with your game, just quickly modify them to whatever is the most fun!

GATEWAY RPG- Standard Character Sheet

Character Name: _____

Character Race/Archetype/Class Description:

Proficiency: Mark "+" sign next to traits below
Deficiency: Mark "-" sign next to traits below

____ **Strength (STR)**

- Athletics Check
- Melee Attack
- Strength Saving Throws

____ **Dexterity (DEX)**

- Turn Order in Battle (Initiative Check)
- Acrobatics Check
- Sleight of Hand Check
- Piloting (Land, Sea, Air, Mech)
- Lock Picking
- Stealth Check
- Hide Check
- Ranged Attack
- Dexterity Saving Throws (AC)

____ **Constitution (CON)**

- Constitution Saving Throws (HP)

____ **Intelligence (INT)**

- Arcana Check
- History Check
- Streetwise
- Investigation Check
- Computer Use
- Nature Check
- Religion Check
- Intelligence Saving Throws

____ **Wisdom (WIS)**

- Animal Handling Check
- Insight Check
- Medicine Check
- Perception Check
- Survival Check
- Magic Spell Attack
- Casting Magic Spells (Non-Attack)
- Wisdom Saving Throws

____ **Charisma (CHA)**

- Deception Check
- Intimidation Check
- Performance Check
- Persuasion Check
- Charisma Saving Throws

Character Portrait

Melee Weapons: (STR)

Ranged Weapons: (DEX)

Armor Class (AC): _____ (Based on **DEX** Save Stat)

Hit Points (HP): _____ (Based on **CON** Save Stat)

Character Special Abilities:

Items:

Background

GATEWAY RPG- Advanced Character Sheet

Character Name: _____

Character Race/Archetype/Class Description:

Proficiency: Mark "+" sign next to traits below

Deficiency: Mark "-" sign next to traits below

Strength (STR):

- _____ Athletics Check
- _____ Melee Attack
- _____ Strength Saving Throw

Dexterity (DEX):

- _____ Turn Order in Battle (Initiative Check)
- _____ Acrobatics Check
- _____ Sleight of Hand Check
- _____ Piloting (Land, Sea, Air, Mech)
- _____ Lock Picking
- _____ Stealth Check
- _____ Hide Check
- _____ Ranged Attack
- _____ Dexterity Saving Throw (AC)

Constitution (CON):

- _____ Constitution Saving Throw (HP)

Intelligence (INT):

- _____ Arcana Check
- _____ History Check
- _____ Streetwise
- _____ Investigation Check
- _____ Computer Use
- _____ Nature Check
- _____ Religion Check
- _____ Intelligence Saving Throw

Wisdom (WIS):

- _____ Animal Handling Check
- _____ Insight Check
- _____ Medicine Check
- _____ Perception Check
- _____ Survival Check
- _____ Magic Spell Attack
- _____ Casting Magic Spells (Non-Attack)
- _____ Wisdom Saving Throw

Charisma (CHA):

- _____ Deception Check
- _____ Intimidation Check
- _____ Performance Check
- _____ Persuasion Check
- _____ Charisma Saving Throw

Character Portrait

Melee Weapons: (STR)

Ranged Weapons: (DEX)

Armor Class (AC): _____ (Based on **DEX** Save Stat)

Hit Points (HP): _____ (Based on **CON** Save Stat)

Character Special Abilities:

Items:

Background

Legal Stuff

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Dire Rugrat Publishing

GiantBomb

Deviant Art- vombavr

GATEWAY is a "Homebrew Ruleset" that pulls in some of the mechanics/terminology from *Dungeons & Dragons 5th Edition*® SRD such as Character Traits/Skills, Armor Class, Combat Options, Saving Throws, Advantage/Disadvantage, and Difficulty Class. This ruleset is "Free" to all and should not substitute or undermine Wizards of the Coast®. Again, this game should be used in conjunction with introducing new players into what it is like to play a Tabletop RPG and then potentially move them on into another system, such as *Dungeons & Dragons*®. For this purpose, I will still sign the Open Source Agreement that Wizards of the Coast provides.

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The GATEWAY Tabletop RPG System is a **Free, rules-lite, easy to learn, fast-paced, and universal** D20 Roleplaying Game that is perfect for introducing new players to the hobby of tabletop RPG's. This system allows for any theme or setting, from **Fantasy** to **Cyberpunk**, from **Horror** to **Noir**, or whatever your imagination can create.

GATEWAY's simple rules are based around similar mechanics from the 5th Edition of **"The most popular roleplaying game in the world"**. It is easy for new players to learn the rules, go on an adventure in a short period of time, and is the perfect **"gateway"** to other tabletop RPG's. The open genre even provides a great format for "One Shot" adventures with your fellow veteran players and Game Masters. Alternatively, long term, on-going campaigns are possible by using Gateway's "Advanced Rules Variant" or by incorporating (or even replacing) with other d20 systems.

All in all, the moral of GATEWAY is to just have the most **FUN** you can possibly have roleplaying.