

Basic Game Rules

The rules of the Awakening game system are based off a simple percentile system relying almost entirely upon two ten-sided dice for action resolution. This basic system is easy to understand and implement in play, and allows for character abilities to improve through actual play as opposed to an arbitrary “experience point” system. In Awakening, characters improve their skills by using them, and watch as their abilities improve – one percentage point at a time.

Skill Checks

When a character fires a gun at a pack of a Nightmare Runners, or uses his First Aid skill to patch up a nasty wound received in a knife fight in the pits of Barge City, the character must make a *Skill Check*.

Skill Checks are made by rolling percentile dice (d100) against a character’s flat chance of success. If the character rolls underneath his skill score, he succeeds.

Determining Chance of Success

A character’s base chance of success is determined by taking his *Base Skill Rating* (always 20 for starting characters), adding the related attribute modifier, and – if possible – adding the modifier from a character’s training in the indicated skill. This is the character’s base chance of success.

Example: Riley finds herself in the bowels of an abandoned barge’s engine room on the outskirts of Barge City, trying to escape from two thugs armed with assault rifles. The thugs are about to close in, and the only way Riley can escape is if she balances across a narrow catwalk above the engines to a safe hallway.

Luckily, Riley used to be a dance instructor before The Awakening. She used to do this sort of thing all the time on the balance bars in the gym! So, she gulps nervously and begins to inch across the catwalk...

Riley has a Base Skill Rating of 20, an Agility score of +20% (Agility being the associated skill with Acrobatics) and expert training in Acrobatics (a +30% modifier). Thus, Riley has a 70% base chance of success.

Difficulty Modifiers

Of course, not all tasks are created equal. It is far easier to drive a car down a slightly cluttered

toad than it is to drive the same car up a steep incline... in the rain... at top speed... while being attacked by bloodthirsty wolves.

This is where skill difficulty comes in. The GM can set a modifier to a character’s base chance of success if he feels that the attempt is easier or more difficult than average. The modifiers are summarized below, though if the GM feels like choosing a modifier somewhere in between, that is obviously acceptable. It is probably wise, however, to keep modifiers in 10% increments, to allow for quicker math during play.

Difficulty	Modifier
Very Easy	+40%
Easy	+20%
Average	+0%
Difficult	-20%
Very Difficult	-40%

Very Easy difficulties are those that almost any skilled character can accomplish with little effort. They can usually avoid being rolled at all, and should only be bothered with in dramatic situations where failure can have a consequence. *Example:* Using Perception to notice two figures approaching you in broad daylight.

Easy difficulties are accomplished with little concentration by trained individuals, and can probably be attempted even by the unskilled. *Example:* Using Perception to notice that both figures have assault rifles slung over their shoulders.

Average difficulties are those that a trained individual will have a bit of trouble with, though should succeed at most of the time. *Example:* Noticing that one figure has his hand on his holstered sidearm, and that the other figure seems to be muttering something underneath his breath.

Tasks that are **Difficult** are probably beyond the skill level of untrained individuals, and will cause even veterans in the skill to break a sweat. *Example:* using perception to see the twitch in the gunman’s wrist as he readies to draw his weapon, and hearing the second figure muttering: “Come on, Tim, just kill him and we can go home...”

Very Difficult tasks are nearly impossible even for experts in the field to achieve with any regularity. *Example:* Noticing that the first gunman is favouring his left foot and that the way he moves his hand suggests arthritis and an associated loss of Agility, and that the second gunman’s eyes are beginning to slightly milk over, perhaps as a precursor to using a psychic attack.

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Example: Riley moves across the narrow catwalk slowly, on all fours... and easily moves towards her safe ledge. Suddenly, the metal of the catwalk erupts into sparks as the thugs open fire on her!

She knows she can't stay out on this ledge, and so decides to run the rest of the way. The GM decides that this is a difficult task, and so applies a -20% modifier to Riley's skill roll. This means her modified chance of success is now only 50%. Riley's player rolls, and gets a 45!

Riley gets up and screams as bullets ricochet around her. She dashes to safety behind a bulkhead, narrowly avoiding a fall off the catwalk as she does so.

Automatic Success and Failure

Regardless of skill modifiers, a character will always succeed on a roll of 01 or 02, and will always fail on a roll of 00 or 99.

Opposed Tests

So, what if someone wants to sneak past someone else? Or two individuals make a mad dash towards the same target? In this case, both characters make an *opposed test*, with the victor achieving success over the other.

Both characters make their relevant skill check (in the first example, one character's stealth check against the other's perception check; in the second, both would make an athletics check).

If one character succeeds and the other fails, then it is obvious who won the challenge. However, if both succeed on their test, whoever rolled the highest wins the challenge. Likewise, if both characters failed, whoever rolled the highest result would win.

Degree of Success

The skill system of The Awakening is typically a "Yes/no" system – either the character succeeds on a task, or fails. However, it is possible to determine a character's degree of success, though it should rarely come up in play.

If a character rolls a success on a skill check, take the roll from the "tens" die column and add 1 – this is the number of *Degrees* the character has achieved with the skill. So, a character that rolled a 42 would have 5 Degrees of Success.

Degrees of Success come into play most commonly with skill use in combat, and with Extended Tests (see below).

Extended Tests

Sometimes, it takes longer than a few seconds or minutes to attempt a skill – such as when a character is fixing an engine, or using the survival skill to find a suitable campsite. In such situations, a character must make an *Extended skill test*.

Extended skill tests can only be attempted when there is little to be lost from a failed check, beyond time. A character cannot make an extended climbing check, for example, because failure would mean he fell.

Each test has an *interval* – a GM-determined length of time used during the skill test (usually one hour or one day). Each time a character makes a skill test, this is the amount of time the attempt consumes.

A character makes cumulative skill tests, counting each Degree of Success (see above) as one "point". Once a character achieves a certain number of points (or decides to quit), he succeeds on his test.

Example: Carlisle is holed up in an abandoned garage, trying to fix the engine on his old Police Cruiser. He has plenty of time, and the tools for the job, and so gets to work.

The GM sets an interval of two hours per check, and determines that Carlisle needs 8 points to fix the car.

Carlisle's modified chance of success is 50% (30% base skill, +10% from his repair skill, and +10% from repair's related Intuition attribute, against an average difficulty). On his first roll, he gets a 47, gaining Carlisle 5 points.

He fails on his second roll, and gets a 17 on his third – another 2 points. After six hours, Carlisle has accumulated 7 points – he's almost finished fixing up that battered engine!