

Veera RPG

A system experiment

Note: comments enabled, feedback and criticism welcome!

Disclaimer:

This document is an incomplete version of Veera. That means that I might change it erratically and without warning. Comments are enabled and any feedback would be much appreciated. Thanks!

Last Edited: 4/12/16 - Cleaned things up a bit

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Getting Started

This is an early playtest doc. You probably know what a tabletop rpg is, and this is a pretty standard setup for one. There is one GM who manages the whole thing, and multiple players each playing their own character. Let's dive right into business shall we?

What you need:

Each Player Needs:

- **1 twelve-sided die (or d12)** - Called the Success die, this is used every time the game requires a roll.
- **10 white six-sided dice** - These are your boost dice and are used for skills and situational advantages.
- **10 red six-sided dice** - These are your risk dice. We will get into them later.
- **A set of about 20 poker chips per player (optional)** - Stones, types of coins or strips of paper can be used in a pinch. Used for tracking Spirit and stress.
- **Paper and Pencils** - For marking down the details of your character, their changes and for scrap.

The GM Also Needs:

- **10 black six-sided dice** - These dice, called setback dice are used to represent situational disadvantages and negative traits.

Using This Document

The table of contents should be up one page. If you are reading this in google docs, it should be hyperlinked as well. Comments are enabled, and I would really appreciate any feedback, comments or criticism you have. Thanks!

The Core Mechanic

When there is actually something opposing your characters action and the outcome is uncertain, you make a check to determine the outcome.

The Short Version

Say what you want to do. Roll your success die along with some boost/risk dice. If the number on the d12 is higher than the difficulty, you succeed. Any 1s or 2s you get on your boost and risk dice give you pips. Spend pips to reduce the difficulty or use special abilities.

The Full Version

1. Say what you want to do and how you want to do it.
2. Decide with the GM what the **difficulty** you have to beat is, and how many **setbacks** are in your way
3. Roll the Success die plus any appropriate boost, risk or setback dice. This is your **dice pool**.
 - white **boost dice** are added for positive qualities or situational benefits that apply.
 - red **risk** dice are added when you push yourself, or the situation is dangerous
 - black **setback** dice are added for negative traits and situational hazards
4. The number you rolled on your Success die is your **total**.
5. Each **1** or **2** rolled on a boost or risk die gives you that many **pips**. Each **1** or **2** rolled on a black setback die subtracts that many pips.
 - Spend any number of pip to reduce the difficulty of your task by that much.
 - Spend pips to activate special abilities your character has.
 - If you have **negative pips** (Due to setbacks), each pip **subtracts 1** from your **total**.
6. If your **total** is higher than the difficulty set by the GM, you succeed at your task.
 - As a general guideline, a difficulty of X is average, Y is challenging and Z is really hard
7. The type of die with the highest number **dominates** and determines if you have any consequences.
 - If risk (red dice) dominates there is an additional cost or complication associated with your action. The GM can either impose a consequence, or have you take 2 stress.
 - If boost dice (white) dominates, you get one additional pip.
 - Setback dice count as red dice when determining which type dominates.

Pushing yourself

A player can add up to 4 risk dice on any roll. (This number will change as I adjust things, but this is to get the general idea)

Critical Success and Failure

If you roll a 12 on your success die, it is a critical success. You lose 1 stress and get a major positive effect associated with your action. Likewise, if you roll a 1 on your success die, it is a critical failure and there is a major negative effect associated with your action. Both are used in the game to trigger additional effects, usually by character's unique abilities.

Character Breakdown

To play, each player makes and plays their own character. In addition, Veera uses a group sheet to keep track of things that are useful to the entire group. Here is a breakdown of the aspects of a character.

Level


Your character's level is a measurement of a character's power, renown and advancement. Every character starts the game with a level of 1, and can advance up to 6 as your character gains experience and makes a name for themselves. While you don't normally make checks using your character's level, a higher persona enables you to gain better abilities.

Spheres

Every character has three main spheres - Body, Voice and Mind that are broad description of a character's abilities. Each attribute is rated on a scale from 1 to 6.

- **Body** - A character's physical capabilities. A character with high body is in good physical shape.
- **Mind** - A character's mental capabilities. Smart, witty or perceptive characters have high Mind ratings.
- **Voice** - A character's Social capability. Characters who are, charismatic, empathetic, good at manipulating people or are very composed have high Voice ratings.

Spirit

A character's spirit is a measure of a character's inner energy, resilience and supernatural potential. Spirit is usually on a scale between 5 and 20 and has both a permanent rating and a pool of temporary points. Your permanent score is written down as a number on your character sheet, while the temporary points are tracked using chips or the corresponding unfilled circles  that follow.

Temporary Points

While the permanent rating serves as a measure of a character's maximum capability, their temporary points represent their current inner resources they can bring to the table. For example a character with spirit equal to their rating is sharp and ready to go, while a character with only one or no points left is exhausted or drained. Characters can power their own unique abilities with spirit points, but all characters can do the following:

- Spend 1 spirit point ⇒ Add boost dice equal to the appropriate sphere to a check. (once per check)
- Spend 1 spirit point ⇒ Remove a setback die from any check.

Regaining Temporary Points

Whenever your character takes a long rest (at least 8 hours), they recover all of their spirit points. Under normal circumstances, can't gain spirit point past your rating by resting, just up to it's maximum. All temporary points beyond your rating are lost when you take a long rest.

Spirit Damage

When your spirit is temporarily reduced, mark one of your circles with an X (⊗). Your spirit rating is reduced by one for each circle marked this way until your next long rest. All point over your rating are lost. More sustained damage is marked with a filled in circle (●). This functions like a temporary reduction, except you can't erase this until the underlying cause or condition is dealt with.

Qualities

Qualities are descriptions of your character, and come in two main kinds: Attributes and Traits.

Attributes

Attributes are 1 to 2 word descriptions of your character. Examples include adjectives (swift, clumsy, megalomaniacal) or backgrounds (Starship captain, Desert Nomad, Accountant). Whenever an attribute would help in a check, add 2 boost dice. Whenever an attribute would hurt in a check, add 2 setback dice. Up to 2 attributes can be added to a given check.

Traits

Traits are short phrases about your character that cover things like your character's beliefs, motivations, relationships and events in their life. They are rated from 1 to 3. If a trait helps you during a check, you can add boost dice equal to its rating. If it hinders you, add that many setback dice instead.

Marking Qualities

Whenever your qualities are tested, you can put a checkmark next to it. Each mark next to a quality reduces the number of dice it adds by 1 until your next short or long rest. If a rating is reduced to 0, it becomes *depleted* you can't place any more marks next to it. You can mark a quality in the following circumstances:

- **Push the Limit** - If a quality applies to a check, you can mark it to push the limit and either double it's bonus or reduce the checks difficulty by it's rating.
- **Acting against a trait** - If a quality would hinder you in a situation, you can mark it to ignore that penalty and gain a spirit point.
- **Shrug off** - When you take damage, you can mark a trait to downgrade it from trauma to stress, or reduce it by up to the qualities rating.
- **Trouble** - If a quality causes your character to get into trouble, you can mark it and gain a spirit point.

Flags

Flags are a special kind of quality that exist only to be marked. In real life, certain things, like sales on a particular PC game service or a crying child, pull you towards them. Flags are a way to emphasize certain behaviours and actions in the same way.

Whenever the action on an unmarked flag is completed mark it. Depending on the type of flag, it could have you, or everyone in your group gain a spirit point.

Damage Tracks

Harm your character takes is divided into 2 categories: **Stress** and **Wounds**. **Stress** is the result of wear and tear on your character while wounds are the result of serious mental, physical and social harm. The higher their **Stress Limit** and **Wound Limit** the more they can endure without consequence.

Overflow

Each character can take a number of both stress and wounds up to their respective limit without consequence. After that, any additional stress or wounds goes into **overflow**. If a character's stress or wounds are in overflow and they take additional harm, or if their stress or wound overflow is more than the respective limit they leave the scene.

How this happens will depend on the circumstance and which track went into overflow. If a character has too much stress, they might not have anything more to say in a court case, be too frazzled to continue trying to solve a puzzle, or being knocked out in a fight. If a character has too much wounds, they might have had a breakdown or something more serious. Once the dust has settled, look at each track to determine what **consequences**, your character received.

Damage Checks

If a character would leave the scene due to stress or trauma, they can attempt to keep going by making a check with a difficulty equal to the amount of overflow they have. If they succeed, they can keep going. However, if they take more harm, they will need to make an additional check. The spheres and attributes for this check depend on the type of damage inflicted.

Consequences

When you leave a scene, or take a short rest, you deal with the consequences of all the damage you took. While stress generally has short term consequences that last until your next long rest, wounds usually have larger consequences that last until they are narratively dealt with.

1. If you have no overflow

- You have no consequences. Awesome!

2. If you have stress overflow less than your limit

Your character only suffers short term consequences. Pick one of these things:

- Lower the rating of an appropriate sphere or quality by 1 until your next long rest
- Raise the rating of trauma trait or trait that hindered you by 1 until your next long rest.
- Gain a new negative trait with a rating of 1 until your next long rest.

- Change a depleted quality.

3. If you have stress overflow over your limit

Your character has gone through a rough time, and grown a little as a result. Pick two things from list 2 and gain one of the following:

- Raise the rating of a depleted quality by 1 permanently.
- Lower the rating of a depleted quality by 1 permanently.
- Replenish 1 spirit point
- Gain a new quality with a rating of 1 that relates to the events you just went through.

4. If you have Trauma overflow less than your limit.

Your character takes lasting harm. Take negative traits or raise the rating of existing negative traits until the total rating is equal to your overflow. These trauma traits don't go away until they are dealt with narratively. Then gain a new quality with a rating of 2 that relates to what you just went through, or pick 2 benefits from list 3. If the total rating, or total number of your trauma traits is ever over twice your limit, your character is no longer a playable character.

Talents

Talents are tricks, maneuvers and techniques that improve your capabilities or let you do things other characters can't. They can only be selected by a character that has meets the talent's prerequisites. This is usually having a particular sphere at a high enough rating. **This is mostly because I haven't thought of a class system or similar yet. For playtest, each character will have a "class" with 3 talents to test.**

The Group Sheet

Knowing why the group is working together and what your shared goals are will help set the stage for everything else. (Plus, it sucks to be the guy who made an awesome pirate character only to find out your entire campaign is corporate espionage.) The group sheet is used to keep track of the details that everyone at the table should know and set the tone and themes of the game. The GM might already have ideas for what the group entails, or everyone can jot it down and do this together.

As your group progresses, the group sheet will advance much like an individual character sheet. Eventually you might even get group abilities. Write the following down on the group sheet.

1. The setup

Why are you a group, and what are you here to do? Come up with a quick and short setup for your group and the game (Three sentences max. One sentence preferred.)

2. Shared Characteristics

Shared characteristics are things that are, at least partially, inherited by every member of the group. They function as a way of starting everyone on the same page, and as statements of intent that show what kind of game you want to play through. Group characteristics can be used and marked by anyone in the group, and when they would give spirit points, they give one to everyone. Pick the following:

Group Flags

Write down 3 flags for the group. These should be group goals, genre tropes, a highlight of recurring antagonists, or types of scenes you would like to see. All flags should be active achievements. That way you can actually tell when a flag is completed. Ideally, at least one of these should be a short term goal, and you should aim to complete at least one of these per game session.

Anyone in the group can mark a group flag with a check when it is completed. When they do, everyone in the group gets one spirit point. In addition, if a group flag applies, any group member can use it as a quality.

Examples:

Technobabble - Explain something using convincing sounding fake science.

Heroic Story - Rescue an innocent person.

Tokyo Drift - Have a chase scene

The Evil Overlord - Make progress towards overthrowing the evil overlord.

2 Other Traits or Attributes

These can be anything from a shared background to contacts, group mottos or affiliations.

3. Other Details

Add anything that everyone in the party should know, including assets everyone is assumed access to, any particular guidelines for characters or topics that make group members uncomfortable and should be avoided.

4. After Character Creation.

After finishing the group sheet, go make your characters! After character creation, each player should come back and add one flag that they personally want to see happen. These flags can specifically reference their character, or remain like the flags above.

Examples:

Kung Fu Master - Apply One of Nicole's sayings in a practical situation.

Human Ingenuity- Outsmart robots or a mechanical system during a conflict.

Braggart - Challenge Amir to prove that he isn't just bragging when he claims something.

Creating a Character

1) Spheres

You get 4 points to distribute between your three spheres - Mind, Body and Voice. Each sphere starts at 1 and each point increases its rating by 1.

2) Qualities

Your character's qualities are narrative statements that describe who your character is, what they do and how they relate to the world. You should try to pick qualities that describe a specific aspect of your character, like "manipulative" or "brave" instead of cover-alls like "genius". (Remember that qualities that can hinder your character can serve as a decent source of spirit points.)

Attributes

Pick 3 positive adjectives that describe your character. Try to pick attributes that are spread out between your mental, physical and social aspects. Then pick 1 negative one. Note that having negative traits apply can replenish your spirit.

Backgrounds

Pick 2 one or two word backgrounds for your character. These represent broad areas of expertise, like being a doctor or a desert nomad, rather than individual skills like first aid or horseback riding.

Traits

Traits are short descriptive phrases, and should contain a link to the world. For example "Learned swordfighting from my older sister " is a better trait than "Good at swordfighting" Write down the following traits for your character.

- a. **Internal Drive:** Write down something that drives your character. This should contain a belief, conviction, or other internal pressure, and be coupled with a concrete thing that they want to do because of that internal drive. Consider the group concept when writing this.
- b. **External Drive:** Write down one external thing that pushes your character to act coupled with a concrete thing that they want to do because of that drive.
- c. **3 of your choice:** Examples include: Motto, Dispositions, Relationships, Physical, Mental and Social characteristics, education, important experiences or something from the above categories.

5) Abilities and Finishing Touches

You start with a spirit of 6, and stress and wound limits of 6. Pick a class from the following page.

7) Go Play?

Temporary Classes

Honestly, this is just as a quick example. Each class is 3 combat/mechanics focused talents mostly to give an idea of what is possible. Assume that a basic attack does 2-4 damage. I don't intend to be super mechanics focused in the actual thing.

Warrior

- **Power Attack** - When making an attack, spend a pip to deal 2 extra damage.
- **Iron Will**- If you fail a damage check, you can spend a spirit point to redo it. You must keep the second result.
- **Push on Through**- You can gain 1 stress to reduce the difficulty of a check by 1. This ability may be used after a check is rolled but before the results. You can only use this ability so long as you remain under your stress limit.

Rogue

- **Sabotage** - When making an attack, you can spend a pip to sabotage your opponent. They add one setback die to their next roll for each pip you spent.
- **Cool Under Pressure**- You can spend a spirit point to remove the highest risk die from a check.
- **When the going gets tough**- If the escalation is 3 or higher, you can move 2 zones as an action instead of 1.

Mage

- **Magic Missile** - When making an attack, you can spend a pip to add an additional target to your attack
- **Mind over Matter**- When you make a check, you can spend a spirit point to reduce the difficulty by an amount equal to your mind sphere.
- **Entropic Shield**- Anyone trying to hit you adds one setback die to their roll. You add one boost die to any defence checks.

Conflict

Usually, character interactions and results are determined through collaborative storytelling. However, something particularly intense is going on, or the disagreement risks characters taking stress or trauma, you might want to “zoom” in and resolve it using the conflict rules. Examples of conflicts can include physical fights, tough courtroom debates, chase scenes or even a race to solve a puzzle.

The Short Version

1. Set the Scene
2. Determine Turn Order
3. On each player's turn, they can take two actions.
4. On other players turns, players can respond to other actions as needed.
5. Repeat until the conflict is over.

Setting the Scene

Before anything starts, everyone should establish and agree on what is going on.

- What is going on, and what are the stakes?
- What is the opposition?
- What does the group want to accomplish? If there are multiple sides, what does each side want to accomplish?
- Where is everyone, and what is the environment like?

While you don't need to ask and answer all of these questions formally (It would get a bit annoying), everyone should be on the same page about what is going on.

Determining Escalation

The GM can set an escalation level from 1 to 6 that indicates the general risk of the situation. 1 being low, but still some risk of failure, and 6 being life or death. All rolls add a number of risk dice equal to the current escalation level.

Zones

The GM should establish loosely defined zones that tell you where characters are if the situation is complex enough. A character can interact with all other character in the same zone they are in, and can interact with other zones if they have some means of doing so. For example, if the characters were fighting over a bridge, the GM might define three zones. One for each side of the bridge, and one for the bridge itself.

The Turn Order

In order to keep things organized, gameplay is divided into turns, rounds and actions. During a round, each player gets a turn. Once everyone has taken a turn, continue to the next round until the conflict is over.

The turn order and how long a single turn takes depends on context and is up to the GM. Exploring the jungle might be relatively free form, and have each turn cover a few hour worth of exploration. On the other hand, a chase might call for a stricter turn order and each turn covering a few seconds of intense action.

Your Turn

On your turn, you can do up to 2 actions. An action is any one thing that a character or something does that affects the story. If you want, you can forgo one or more of your actions and do nothing. The actions you can take are divided into four categories:

Normal Actions. A normal action is any one thing that a character or something does within a single turn that affects the story.

Simple Actions. A simple action is an action that isn't really important like opening doors or moving around. You can do as many simple actions during, before or after your turn as would logically make sense given the situation.

Ongoing Actions. An ongoing action is one that takes longer than one turn to finish. You spend an action to start an ongoing action, and continue to spend one action every turn that you choose to maintain it.

When you make a check for a continuous action, it counts for the whole action unless the situation changes drastically.

Prepared Actions. You can spend one of your actions to prepare to do something in the future. Decide what condition you are waiting for, and what action you will take in that circumstance. For example, you could prepare an action to knock over your food as a distraction when another player attempts to pickpocket. When the condition happens, you can either take your prepared action immediately afterwards, or choose to ignore the condition.

Your preparation is treated as an ongoing action, and remains prepared until the condition is met or you decide to stop.

Reactions

When it is not your turn, certain abilities and situations will let you take special action called a reaction. Reactions are typically an instant response to some kind of trigger. You have one reaction per round, although you can forgo actions during your turn for additional reactions, or use a prepared action to turn a normal action into a reaction.

Page Title

Title

Layout Sample

Lorem Ipsum is simply dummy text of the printing and typesetting industry. Lorem Ipsum has been the industry's standard dummy text ever since the 1500s, when an unknown printer took a galley of type and scrambled it to make a type specimen book. It has survived not only five centuries, but also the leap into electronic typesetting, remaining essentially unchanged. It was popularised in the 1960s with the release of Letraset sheets containing Lorem Ipsum passages, and more recently with desktop publishing software like Aldus PageMaker including versions of Lorem Ipsum.

Title 2

Some Secondary Tile

Tertiary Title

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