

# ADVENTURE SQUAD

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Based on *Dungeon Squad* by Jason Morningstar, and related games

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## Introduction

*You're on the run, trying to stay one step ahead of the government that wants you dead...  
You're battling creatures out of myth and legend in a world ravaged by the forces of absolute evil...  
You're on board a starship, exploring far-flung planets, and confronting the dangers you find there...  
You're the hero of a thousand stories you've created yourself. Welcome to Adventure Squad.*

**Adventure Squad** is a pencil and paper, tabletop role playing game (RPG). You use the rules in this book to create a fictional character, a hero with his or her own strengths and weaknesses, then join with the other players to tell a story with your characters. One player takes on the role of the Game Master, or GM, who narrates the story and takes on the roles of the people, creatures and enemies your heroes encounter in the game.

All you need to play is this rulebook, a copy of the character sheet (at the end of the book) for each player other than the Game Master, pencils or pens and at least one set of gaming dice. These are dice with 4 to 20 sides, which you can find at any hobby shop and many bookstores. You need one of each kind of die, but it's best to have one set of dice for each player, including the Game Master.

The dice are measured in "die sizes," from the lowest, called a d4, to d6, d8, d10, d12 and finally d20, the largest die size. During the game, you'll roll one or more dice to determine how successful your character is at accomplishing the actions he or she is taking.

These rules cover a lot of what players might want to do during an adventure, but if there is a question that can't be answered by the rules, the Game Master should answer the question in whatever way makes the game the most fun for the players.

Game Masters can use the "*GM's Friend*" idea, rolling a six-sided die and answering the question with a "yes" on a result of 4, 5 or 6, and answering "no" on a result of 1, 2 or 3.

Game Masters can also use the "*Yes, And*" idea, answering a questions about what a character can do with the words "yes, and," then offering something else to the game, like a description of how the character's action makes the situation more exciting or complicated.

*What if you don't have game dice?  
You can play **Adventure Squad** even without the special dice. You'll just need two regular six-sided dice per player. Whenever you see a die size in the rules, use the following dice instead:*

*D4: roll 1 die, re-rolling results of 5 or 6*

*D6: roll 1 die*

*D8: roll 1 die and add 2*

*D10: roll 2 dice, adding their results together*

*D12: roll 2 dice, add their results together and add 2*

*D20: roll 3 dice (borrow one from another player), adding their results together.*

*This won't give you exactly the same results you'd get from standard gaming dice, but it will be close enough to have fun.*

A game session usually lasts three to five hours, but it only takes a few minutes to create a character. Once your character is ready to play, you can get into the story right away.

## Chapter 1: Basic Rules

As with any tabletop RPG, the "*Rule 0*" idea also applies: any of the rules listed here in the rulebook can be ignored or changed by the Game Master or players, as long as everyone playing the game agrees.

### *I. Character Creation*

Before you learn how to play the game, you'll need to create a character. Pick up a character sheet and a pencil. Each item on the character sheet is described below, along with an example of creating a character.

Name: The character's name.

*Dan is going to create his first character for an **Adventure Squad** game. He decides “Ryan Michaels” sounds like the name of a hero from a novel or movie.*

Player: The player’s name.

*Dan writes “Dan” here.*

Concept: A brief phrase describing the character, like “suave super-spy,” “silent master archer at home in the forest,” or “rough, tough space pirate captain.” This is also a place to describe the character’s appearance, from clothing to hair and facial expressions, and the character’s attitude and behavior, like “makes cynical one-liners” or “always finds the positive in a situation.”

*Dan talks with the Game Master about the setting of their **Adventure Squad** game. She says it uses a fantasy setting, which involves heroes and enemies from a fairy tale world mixing with the modern day real world. Dan decides his character is part of the fairy tale world, and changes his character’s name to something more fantastic: “Rytu Micaya.” His character concept is “bold warrior curious about the new world he’s found himself in.”*

Race/Culture and Gift: The character’s species, like elf or robot. In a game setting where all the characters are human, a character may instead have a culture, like Viking or desert-dweller. In either case, each race or culture provides a gift, a special ability all people of that type have.

The gifts for some races offer a +1 die size modifier, improving a character’s dice rolls during the game. See Modifiers in III. **Doing Things In The Game**, below, for more explanation of this idea. Other races offer a version of an Ability described more fully in **Chapter 2. Abilities**.

Choose a race or culture from the options the Game Master allows. Some familiar races often found in fiction and the gifts they provide are listed below. Use these as guidelines when creating new races.

***Beast Man** [a shaggy, muscular mix between a human and a bull, dog or cat]: Gains a +1 die size modifier when intimidating others or lifting heavy objects.*

***Dwarf**: Gains a +1 die size modifier when attempting to physically resist someone or something (not including losing Hit Points).*

***Elf**: Gains a +1 die size modifier when in forests or working with magic (not including using spell Abilities).*

***Halfling**: Gains a +1 die size modifier with domestic skills like cooking and crafting, or when attempting to hide or sneak.*

***Robot**: Always has the Armor Ability worth 1 point. If the character selects Armor as one of his Abilities, add +1 to every roll of the Armor die.*

***Super-Soldier** [a genetically enhanced or highly trained warrior]: Always has the Super-Strength Ability at the die size d4. If the character selects Super-Strength as one of his Abilities, roll the d4 and the Ability’s die and add their results together when using the Super-Strength Ability.*

***Toon** [a living cartoon character]: When this character falls to 0 (zero) Hit Points, he collapses to the ground, losing a turn (in combat) or pausing for 5 minutes (outside of combat). He then returns to action wherever the player wants, with a number of Hit Points equal to his Body die size. This can happen once per game session.*

***Vampire**: Gains a +1 die size modifier when searching for blood or convincing non-vampires to do what he wants.*

***Werewolf**: Changes into a wolf for a number of turns per day equal to half his Body die size (so 2, 4 or 6 turns per day). These turns do not all have to be at the same time.*

If most or all characters in the game are the same species, characters may select a culture instead of a race - or one of each! The game rules work the same way, with each culture providing a gift to the character. Some common cultures in fiction and RPGs include:

***Desert-Dweller**: Gains a +1 die size modifier when using any Trait or Ability which involves a desert environment when the character is in a desert.*

***Fantasy Asian**: Always has the Martial Arts Ability at d4. If the character selects Martial Arts as one of his Abilities, roll the d4 and the Ability’s die and add their results together when using the Martial Arts Ability.*

***Tropical Islander**: Can swim at the same speed the character can move on land, and gains a +1 die size modifier when sailing a ship or searching for food or supplies in any kind of environment.*

*Viking*: Gains a +1 die size modifier when intimidating others or surviving cold temperatures.

If a player wants his character's race to be human, and not have a specific culture, humans have the following gift.

*Human*: Reroll one or all of the dice (if more than one is used) when performing an action, making an attack, rolling damage or making any other kind of roll. Add the results of both rolls together to determine the final roll result. This can be done once per game session.

*Dan's character Rytu is a human, and he doesn't like any of the gifts offered by the cultures Tracy suggests. He writes "Human" next to Race/Culture on his character sheet, and makes a note of the gift for human characters: He can reroll the dice and add the result when Rytu attempts one action per game session.*

*Scale* (optional): In most game settings, all the characters are roughly the same size - usually, the size of a human being. In others, however, giant robots battle armies of humans, and in still others, insects rule the world. To represent this, you'll need to determine a scale for each individual in the adventure. There are three sizes: small, like an insect or a pistol; medium, like a housecat or human; and large, like a semi-truck or elephant.

A small creature has a +2 modifier to hit a medium creature, while a small creature has a +4 modifier to hit a large creature. In the same way, a medium creature has a +2 modifier to hit a large creature. If the Game Master chooses, these modifiers may also be used for other Trait rolls: for example, a small creature has a +2 modifier to its Body Trait rolls to sneak past a medium creature.

Scale also applies to damage results. A large creature causes an additional +5 damage to a medium creature, and +10 damage to a small creature. A medium creature causes an additional +5 damage to a small creature. This damage modifier usually only is used when the creature attacks with a natural weapon like a claw or horn, or a hand weapon like a sword or club, but not a gun.

## II. Traits And Abilities

Characters have five statistics: three Traits, which show the character's physical and mental capabilities, and two Abilities, which represent special training, equipment, or unusual powers the character possesses.

The d4, d6, d8, d10 and d12 are used when creating characters. The d20 is only used when increasing a d12 by +1 die size.

Traits: Every character is represented by three Traits. They are:

**BODY** – the character's knack with physical stuff, like lifting heavy things, driving a car, sneaking past an observant guard, climbing a cliff, and so on.

**FIGHT** – the character's talent with fists, swords, guns, clubs, knives, karate chops, and so on.

**MIND** – the character's capability with his brains, including spotting clues, inventing and even social niceties like fast-talk, languages and etiquette. The Mind Trait is also used for using supernatural Abilities like magic spells. All characters can speak and write in their native language, and the Game Master may allow the characters to speak and/or write in other languages as well.

Assign the d4, d8 and d12 to the three Traits, and write the appropriate die size in the indicated space on the character sheet. The larger the die size, the better the Trait, though a d4 Trait isn't really "bad," just less important to the character. A basketball star and a surgeon are both intelligent, but the basketball player has spent more time working on his physical abilities than his mental ones. The basketball player might have a Mind Trait of d4, while the surgeon's Mind Trait would probably be at least a d8.

For example, a magical burglar-type character might have Mind d12, Body d8 and Fight d4. Let's hope he has someone along to keep him out of harm's way in a fight!

*Since Dan's character Rytu was described as a "bold warrior" in his character concept, he decides to assign the highest die size, d12, to Fight. He writes "d12" in the space labeled "Fight" on the left side of the character sheet. Since his character concept also called Rytu "curious," Dan decides to make his character's*

*Mind Trait pretty important, and assigns it the d8. That leaves d4 for the Body Trait.*

**Abilities:** Every character has two special Abilities: skills, equipment and special talents which are used with Traits to do things in the game. Like Traits, Abilities have die sizes. Choose two Abilities from the list in **Chapter 2. Abilities**, and assign one the die size d6 and the other the die size d10. There's space on the character sheet to list the Abilities and describe their effects, so players don't have to keep turning back to the rulebook during the game.

There are three types of Abilities:

- Combat Abilities provide a character with equipment or skills needed for battle.
- Spell Abilities provide the character with a supernatural talent. To use a "spell," a player must first make a successful Mind Trait roll - see **IV. Doing Things In The Game**, below. Some spell Abilities are also combat Abilities.
- Regular Abilities include everything else a character might be able to do, including some supernatural abilities that aren't spells.

In some game settings, the Game Master might limit the Abilities a character can select. For example, in a "real-world" adventure, no one can use magic powers, so the Game Master might say players can only choose combat or regular, non-supernatural Abilities. In a game setting where fighting is essential, the Game Master might say characters must have at least one combat Ability, or might even require each player to pick both Abilities from the list of combat Abilities.

Players can describe Abilities any way they like; for example, a character with the Armor Ability could be wearing a suit of chain mail or a bulletproof vest, or may even have the supernatural gift of instantly healing minor cuts and bruises. In the same way, a character with a spell Ability may not be a wizard casting a spell from a magical tome. Instead, his "spell" might actually be a psychic discipline, a superhuman power or a special piece of gear.

If a player does use a different name for an Ability, make sure that player indicates which Ability from **Chapter 2. Abilities** the character has. For example, a character could Dodge (Armor Ability) d6, carry a Boomerang (Bow Ability) d6, be able to Summon The Thunder Spirits (Rage Ability) d10, or even somehow hear his own

Encouraging Action-Adventure Theme Music (Weapon Mastery Ability) d10.

Feel free to make up new Abilities, using the ones from **Chapter 2. Abilities** as a guide.

*Dan picks his two Abilities: Sword, since his character is a fantasy warrior, and Inspiration, so Rytu can lead the way if there's a battle against villainous fairy tale creatures. But Dan wants to change one thing: he wants Rytu to use an axe instead of a sword. The rules aren't any different, so Dan simply writes "Axe (Sword)" on his character sheet, and since he decides that Rytu is more of an axeman than a leader, the "Axe" Ability goes in the space next to d10 on the character sheet. "Inspiration" goes next to the d6. Dan can summarize what those Abilities do on the character sheet as well, if he wants. The Sword Ability (which he's calling "Axe") causes extra damage when in battle. "Inspiration" helps Rytu and his friends when they're attacking enemies.*

### **III. Other Characteristics**

**Hit Points:** These are a measure of a character's physical and mental health. There are two listings for Hit Points (HP) on the character sheet. Starting Hit Points are the character's maximum HP. A character begins with this number, and when healed, can never have more than this number. Current Hit Points is a space to keep track of HP when taking damage.

To determine a character's Starting Hit Points, add 14 + half the character's Body die size, so a starting character's Hit Points will be 16, 18 or 20.

*Since Rytu's Body die size is a d4, half that is 2. Adding 2 to 14 means Rytu has 16 Starting Hit Points.*

**Basic Weapon:** Fighting the bad guys is a major part of almost every RPG, and all game characters seem to carry some kind of weapon, even ones who don't have any combat skill. The player decides exactly what his character's basic weapon is when creating the character and writes it down on the character sheet. It has a *damage die of d4*.

In a fantasy world, for example, a basic weapon could be a dagger or staff, while in a modern-day setting, a character's basic weapon could be a pistol. It doesn't matter what the player calls it - the basic weapon could be a punch, a laser sword

or even a belt-fed machine gun, but it will still only cause d4 damage. To have a more powerful weapon, choose it as the Bow, Gun, Sword or other Ability at die size d6 or d10. Refer to the combat Abilities in **Chapter 2. Abilities** for details on each kind of weapon.

During a game session, a character may pick up a weapon dropped by an enemy, pull a backup knife out of his boot, or even create an improvised weapon by tossing a chair at someone, for example. Any weapon not listed on the character sheet does the basic weapon d4 damage, unless the Game Master decides otherwise.

*Rytu has an axe, which is his d10 Ability. But he gets a basic weapon too, and Dan decides that Rytu might need to shoot someone far away once in a while. He describes Rytu's basic weapon as a "crossbow." It will use a d4 if Dan decides Rytu uses it during a battle. He doesn't have to worry about keeping track of ammunition for the crossbow. If Dan decides to put his axe and crossbow aside and get into a fist-fight, his punches, a broken bottle, and any other attack he makes will use the d4 as well. He could also throw his opponent through a plate-glass window. That would cause d4 damage, though the Game Master might rule that the damage die is bigger (say, a d6 or d8) for such a dramatic attack.*

**Money:** A character's wealth and possessions are handled very simply, unless the Game Master and players want to go through the trouble of collecting gold pieces or spending galactic credits. All characters have a *Money die* size of d6, and characters with the wealth Ability can roll a that Ability die along with the Money die when buying something.

All characters begin with a basic weapon, as noted above, and whatever clothing and other adventuring gear the Game Master sees fit to give them (typically, the kind of stuff they'll need to do their job). There's no limit to the amount of equipment a character can have, but players should be reasonable about what the character possesses and can carry at one time. Characters also have a place to live and enough money to pay their living expenses.

A player can write down on the character sheet any equipment his character possesses, but it's not necessary, since it's assumed characters have whatever items are reasonable for them to own and use.

When a character wants to buy something cheap or common, the Game Master should allow it (unless it makes for a better story if the character *doesn't* have a common item - where's that rope when it's time to use it?!). When a character wants to buy something that has a significant price or is rare, the player will make a roll using the Money die, which is always a d6, and a second d6 or a d10, if the character has the Wealth Ability. The Difficulty (see **IV. Doing Things In The Game**) is 4 or more, depending on the item - buying a gun has a Difficulty of 4, buying a car has a Difficulty of 6, and buying a house has a Difficulty of 12. On a success, the character can have the item.

Valuable gear can improve a Trait or die roll in situations where the gear is useful. See **Modifiers** in section **IV. Doing Things In The Game**, below. A character can carry at most five items that are also Abilities or with modifiers assigned to them (for example, a crossbow using the Bow Ability, elven boots that provide a +2 modifier to Body die rolls when sneaking, and three others).

*Dan decides Rytu is wearing a coat of silver chain mail, wears a red cloak, and carries a small bag of gold coins in addition to his axe and crossbow. He's also got a backpack with a blanket, traveling food and magical fire-starting materials in it. None of those items are connected to an Ability or provide any other kind of modifier, so they're simply descriptive, and listed as equipment. If Dan had selected the Armor Ability, Rytu's silver chain mail could prevent damage. Since he didn't, Rytu's suit of mail won't provide any extra protection - but it sure looks good!*

**Experience Points:** A character starts the game with 0 (zero) Experience Points. He'll gain them by taking actions, and spends them to improve Traits and Abilities. See **VI. Experience Points**, below.

#### **IV. Doing Things In The Game**

When a player describes an action his character is taking, the Game Master will choose the Trait which best fits that action, and will decide on a Difficulty (**3 - Easy, 5 - Average, 7 - Hard, 9 - Very Hard**), or may roll a die for the person or creature opposing the character (**d6 - Easy, d10 - Average, d6 + d6 - Hard, d10 + d6 - Very Hard**). It's up to the Game Master to decide which

Difficulty he wants to use, and if he wants to tell the player the Difficulty he's settled on.

*During a game session, Rytu and the other characters discover a heavy, leather-bound tome with strange letters written in fading ink. They know it has some value to a wicked warlock who's been causing trouble in their city, and the characters have decided that they want to know what the book says. Dan says Rytu wants to try and figure out what's in the book.*

*The Game Master says that action calls for the Mind Trait. If Rytu had an Ability that would help him read ancient languages, Dan could use that Ability. But neither "Axe" nor "Inspiration" fits in this situation, so all Dan can do is roll a d8 (his Mind Trait die size). The Game Master decides that the book's writing is old-fashioned and complicated, but he doesn't want the characters to get stuck trying to figure out what the book says - it's just a small part of the story the characters are involved in. He decides the Difficulty is 5, Average.*

**Modifiers:** The Game Master may also assign a modifier or modifiers to the final die roll, selected from the following list. Some racial or cultural gifts, equipment, Abilities and other characteristics may also provide modifiers. There is no limit to the number of modifiers that can be included in a dice roll.

If a modifier calls for a character's d8 Trait to increase one die size, for example, the Trait die becomes a d10 for that roll, and if the character's d10 Ability increases two die sizes, it is improved to a d20. Die sizes never go below d4 or above d20.

A -1 modifier to a d6 die roll means the player rolls a d6 and subtracts 1, for a result between 0 (zero) and 5, for example.

**+1 die size:** Extremely Simple (for example, following an animal's fresh tracks through newly fallen snow)

**+2 to the result:** Very Simple (for example, negotiating a business deal that will make money for both companies)

**+1 to the result:** Simple (for example, shooting the broad side of a barn)

**-1 to the result:** Challenging (for example, shooting an animal racing away from the sound of gunfire)

**-2 to the result:** Very Challenging (for example, negotiating a truce between two nations that have been at war for years)

**-1 die size:** Extremely Challenging (for example, following an animal's week-old tracks across rocks)

*The Game Master decides that though the Difficulty is average, some of the pages in the book aren't completely there - they've been damaged over the years. That makes Rytu's "reading the book" action challenging, and gives him a -1 to his die result, once he rolls his Mind Trait die.*

The player rolls his character's Trait die, an Ability die if one is appropriate for the action he's attempting, and any modifiers applied to the die roll, adding the results together. Each die roll will use only one Trait but can include any number of modifiers. Characters can use any number of Abilities on a roll of the dice, as long as each one is useful for the action the character is attempting. Several Abilities allow characters to use two or more Abilities at the same time. See **Chapter 2. Abilities.**

If the total result on the dice, along with modifiers, is *greater than or equal to* the Difficulty, the character succeeds at the action. If it's *less than* the Difficulty, the character fails.

Compare the result of the roll to the Difficulty. The bigger the difference between the two numbers, the greater the success or failure. For example, a character attempting to cross a shaky, broken-down rope bridge over a canyon might have to make a Body Trait roll with a Difficulty of 7, hard. If the die roll result is a 6, that's failure, but only by a difference of 1. The Game Master might say the character stepped on a rope that snapped, but was able to run back off the bridge in time. If the die roll result in the same example was a 2, that's failure by a difference of 5. In this case, the Game Master might say the character didn't get off the bridge, and is in fact falling into the canyon!

*It's time to roll. Dan rolls a d8 for his Mind Trait, the only die he has for this action. He gets an 8. He subtracts -1 from his result because of the -1 modifier the Game Master assigned, making his final die result a 7. That's more than the Difficulty of 5, so he succeeds at the "reading the book" action he's trying. The Game Master describes what Rytu reads in the book.*

*In another example, say a character with the Charisma Ability at d6 tries to fast-talk a security guard into letting him pass by. The Game Master says this will use the Charisma Ability and the Mind Trait, which the character has at d8, and because the security guard is half-asleep, it's a simple action, providing a +1 modifier. The Game Master decides the action has an average Difficulty, and since it involves a person (the guard), he'll roll a d10 to determine the final Difficulty.*

*The player rolls a 4 on the d8 and a 6 on the d6, and adds +1 for his modifier for a total of 11. The Game Master rolls a 5 on his d10. The player's total is greater than the Difficulty, so the character successfully fast-talks the guard.*

**Helping Each Other Out:** If one player tells the Game Master his character is trying something, and all the other characters want to help the character by doing the same thing at the same time, add +1 to the die result of that first player's roll for each successful roll by another player. Players can use this rule even in combat (see below), but each can only attempt to help another character in one attack per battle.

*Rytu is searching a room, and his three allies decide to search too. The Game Master says this is a Mind Trait roll, and he decides the Difficulty is 5. Dan rolls a 2 on his die, and the other players roll 6, 1 and 2. One friend succeeded at the roll (with a result of 6), so Dan gets to add +1 to his die result, for a total of 3. That's less than the Difficulty, so the group finds nothing, even with four people searching.*

**Critical Success and Critical Failure (optional):** If the Trait die used when attempting an action shows a result of the highest number on that die (for example, 8 on a d8), the action is automatically a success, even if the total result isn't equal to greater than the Difficulty for that action. If the Trait die shows a result of 1, the action is automatically a failure. This optional rule does not apply to Ability dice or any other dice used when attempting an action.

**Combat: Initiative:** First, each player rolls his character's Fight die, and the Game Master rolls the Fight die for each of the

enemies or groups of enemies, like a swarm of rats or a horde of ninjas. The character or enemy with the highest result goes first (reroll ties).

**To Hit:** Second, the character can move any distance the Game Master determines is appropriate, and, during the same turn, can perform a single action that requires a die roll. This action is usually making an attack, but could also be something that helps the heroes in combat, like unlocking a door or driving away from the scene.

A character can only make one attack per turn, but can move before or after attempting an attack. Making an attack uses whichever Trait, Abilities and modifiers that fit the type of attack the character is making, usually Fight, or Mind to cast spells. The player will need to name a target or targets his character could reasonably attack with his weapon or spell.

The Difficulty needed to successfully hit an enemy is listed in **V. Enemies**, below. The Difficulty for any opponent or character to hit any player character is always 5. If the die roll to hit is less than the Difficulty of the enemy, the attack is a miss, and the attacker's turn in combat is over. The player with the next highest Initiative takes a turn. When everyone involved in the combat has taken a turn or has left the battle, return to the character who rolled the very highest Initiative result.

**Damage:** Third, if the character successfully hits its target, determine the attack's damage (either d4 for basic damage or as described for an Ability), and subtract it from the enemy's Hit Points. Some Abilities decrease the amount of damage caused by an attack. Enemies are out of action (unconscious, dead, seriously wounded, or whatever is appropriate) when they fall to 0 (zero) Hit Points. Characters are unconscious at 0 (zero) HP, and dead for good at -5 HP.

*Later in the game, Rytu finds himself face-to-face with an enemy: a demonic minion of the warlord the heroes have been trying to stop. Combat begins, with the Game Master playing the part of the demon. He decides it has a Fight die of d8, causes d6 damage with its claws, a Difficulty of 5*

to hit it, and 10 Hit Points. This information comes from **Section V. Enemies**.

First, Dan and the Game Master roll their Fight dice. There are no modifiers or Abilities that come into play for this roll. Dan's result is 6, and the Game Master's is also a 6, so they roll again. Dan gets 4 for Initiative, and the Game Master's result is a 2. Dan's character Rytu attacks first.

Second, Dan says Rytu pulls out his axe and swings at the demon. The Game Master says the two opponents are close enough that the axe could hit the monster, and there are no other modifiers. Dan rolls his Fight die to hit, with a result of 7. Since that's higher than the demon's Difficulty of 5, Rytu has drawn demonic blood!

Third, since he's made a successful hit, Dan can roll damage. Rytu's Axe Ability has the die size d10, so Dan rolls that die. It's a lucky hit, and Dan rolls a 9. The Game Master subtracts 9 from the demon's 10 Hit Points. It only has 1 HP left - it's not out of the fight yet, but it will probably only get one chance to attack Rytu. Dan's turn is over, and now it's the Game Master's turn to make an attack, starting with combat step two. After the demon attacks, the combat returns to the highest Initiative result, and Rytu can attack again, if the demon is still standing.

**Cover (optional):** If an enemy or character is more than half-hidden behind some obstacle, like behind a wall or in a ditch, there is a -1 modifier to rolls to hit that enemy or character.

**Critical Hits (optional):** If the Game Master and players are using the optional Critical Success and Critical Failure rule (above), and a player rolls a critical success, a character determines the attack's damage and doubles the result before subtracting that damage from the enemy's Hit Points.

**Serious Wounds (optional):** A character who has only 1 to 5 Current Hit Points after suffering damage can be considered seriously wounded. He has a -1 modifier to all Trait, to hit and damage rolls. This modifier disappears once the character has 6 or more HP. It's up to the Game Master to decide which, if any, enemies use this optional rule.

**Recovering Hit Points:** Every character will recover 1 Hit Point after each battle in the form of first aid, and pausing to relax for a few minutes after the fury of combat. Characters with the Healing Ability can provide even more

Hit Points during or after a battle. A character can only recover HP up to his Starting Hit Points amount. Any HP recovered that would take the character's Hit Points above his Starting amount are lost.

Characters can also rest for an hour or more, performing no action more challenging than walking and talking. They will regain 5 Hit Points each time they rest. A character who wakes up to start a new day regains all of his Hit Points.

## V. Enemies

All opponents are called enemies, even if they're more like traps or just nasty people. They are found in five different ranks. Each rank suggests a Fight die for the enemy, a Difficulty to hit it, and typical Hit Points for that rank of enemy. A few example enemies and their characteristics are listed below. Enemies may be able to attack more than once per turn. Ranged enemy attacks (like a rifle or a dragon's fire breath) follow the same rules as the Bow and Gun Abilities (see **Chapter 2. Abilities**).

**Very Weak:** Fight d4, Difficulty 2, Hit Points 3 - Note: Enemies of this rank can't hurt a player's character on their own, without modifiers. They have to team up (see **Helping Each Other Out** in section IV. **Doing Things In The Game**), or use the optional Critical Hit rules (see **Combat** in section IV. **Doing Things In The Game**).

Bat: Bite 2 damage, flies

Mook [enemy soldier meant to be defeated with one hit]: Sword or Rifle d4 damage, 1 Hit Point

Rat, Spider: Bite 1 damage

Wooden Door: Causes no damage, 5 Hit Points

**Weak:** Fight d6, Difficulty 3, Hit Points 6

Locked Door: Causes no damage, 3 Hit Points

Rodent of Unusual Size, Guard Dog: Bite d4 damage

Thug, Goblin: Knife d6 damage, 8 Hit Points

Wolf: Bite d6 damage

*Average:* Fight d8, Difficulty 5, Hit Points 10

Castle Guard: Sword d8 damage, Shield d4 armor

Giant Spider: Bite d4 damage and automatic poison d4 damage per turn for 4 turns

Infantry Soldier: Rifle d8 damage, Body Armor d6 armor

Orc: Axe d6 damage

Skeleton: Sword d8 damage, take half damage (round up) from sharp weapons, 4 Hit Points

Warlock: Magic Blast d8 damage

Zombie: Claws d6 damage, take half damage (round up) from clubs and other blunt weapons, 5 Hit Points

*Tough:* Fight d10, Difficulty 7, Hit Points 20

Bear: Claws d8 damage, Bite d10 damage

War Robot: Fist d8 damage, Laser Blaster d10 damage, Metal Plating d6 armor

Young Dragon: Claws d6 damage, Bite d8 damage, Fire Breath d10 damage, Scales d6 armor, flies, 35 Hit Points

*Very Tough:* Fight d12, Difficulty 9, Hit Points 50

Arch-Mage: Two spells (choose from the spell Abilities list in **Chapter 2. Abilities**) that are always available to the enemy - Mind Trait of d8, immune to all damage except spells and magic weapons

Dragon: Claws d8 damage, Bite d10 damage, Fire Breath d20 damage, Scales d8 armor, flies, 70 Hit Points

Vampire: Bite d10 damage and regains Hit Points equal to damage it caused

Wraith: Death Touch d6 damage, Energy Drain d6 damage to Starting Hit Points and Current Hit Points, flies

## **VI. Experience Points**

Every time a character accomplishes a task, the character earns a number of Experience Points equal to the final Difficulty of the action. Each character who does damage or otherwise contributes to the defeat of an enemy earns Experience Points equal to the Difficulty of the enemy. Characters who find treasure earn a number of Experience Points based on the value of the treasure, usually 1 or 2 Experience Points per character.

Players keep track of the Experience Points their character has collected during a game session, and can spend those points between adventures to improve their characters. Alternately, the Game Master can award a set number of Experience Points to each character equally at the end of the game session (usually about 30 per character).

Characters can have any number of Abilities, but only carry five items that have die sizes or modifiers.

Some Abilities like Gun and Sword also represent items.

*Add 1 to Starting Hit Points:* 10 Experience Points

*Item offering a +1 modifier to a specific type of action (in the form of a magic weapon, special tool, etc.):* 15 Experience Points

*Item offering a +2 modifier to a specific type of action:* 30 Experience Points

*Item offering a +1 die size modifier to a specific type of action:* 50 Experience Points

*Permanently increase one Ability one die size:* 75 Experience Points (to a maximum of d12)

*Add a new Ability at die size d6:* 100 Experience Points

*Permanently increase one Trait one die size:* 150 Experience Points (to a maximum of d12)

### *Character Power Levels (optional)*

In the standard Adventure Squad rules, the half-human son of a god and a simple squirrel trying to get a nut are equally talented. They both have Traits of d4, d8 and d12, a racial gift and two Abilities. If characters of wildly varied amounts of power are in a game together, there are two ways to represent the differences between them. It's up to the Game Master to decide which option applies, or if both will be in the game.

*Size:* Assign a permanent modifier to Trait, Ability and any other dice rolls made by a character. It applies to every action the character attempts. This may be used instead of or along

with the Scale rules (see **I. Character Creation**, above).

*In a world of humans, the small, simple Flower Folk are at a disadvantage, and have a -2 modifier to all Trait, Ability and damage dice rolls. The Rock-Men are bigger and stronger than the average human, so they have a +1 modifier to all dice rolls. A Flower Folk and a Rock-Man can work together, but it's clear there's a difference between them.*

**Starting Experience Points:** When creating characters, give each player 200 Experience Points, or more, to spend on extra Abilities, increased die sizes, and so on, as if the character had been through several game sessions and earned the points. Any Experience Points not spent can be saved for later.

*Hero-Guy has a number of superhuman powers and a colorful costume he wears when fighting crime. His player selected Super-Strength as his d10 Ability and Heat Ray Eyes (Bow Ability) as his d6 Ability, but Hero-Guy needs to be Invulnerable (Armor Ability) too. The Game Master says Hero-Guy can spend 200 Experience Points, since he's a superhuman hero. His player spends 100 Experience Points to add the Armor Ability at d6, and boosts it to a d8 by spending another 75 Experience Points. He spends 20 Experience Points to add 2 Starting Hit Points. That leaves 5 Experience Points on Hero-Guy's character sheet.*

### **VII. Movement**

If the players and Game Master are using miniature figures on the table top or with battle maps from other RPGs, each figure that's roughly human size moves 30 feet (6 inches/spaces) per turn in any direction, including diagonally. Spells, bows, guns and other distance attacks have a maximum range of 100 feet (20 inches/spaces). Difficult terrain, like rubble or thick forest, cuts a character or enemy's movement in half (round down). Games can also use full-size action figures; simply double movement rates, so a figure moves 12 inches per turn.

Flying might sound like an Ability, but it's actually just an extra benefit. Either a character can fly or he can't. Decide this, and other details like flight speed and how a character flies (jetpack, wings, etc.), with the Game Master when creating a character. The same rule applies to other forms of movement, like swimming or digging through rock.

Moving super-humanly fast, however, is an Ability (see Super-Speed in **Chapter 2. Abilities**).

The Game Master may allow characters to have different types of movement as a racial or cultural gift, or may "balance" the benefit by requiring characters to take the Transport Ability once for each kind of movement. Another option is to decrease the character's Traits by -1 die size, so the character begins with Trait dice of d4, d6 and d12, or d4, d8 and d10.

### **IX. Hero Points (optional)**

If the players and Game Master agree, give each player three "Hero Point" markers of some kind, like poker chips or small candies, when the game session begins. The Game Master also begins with Hero Point markers equal to two per player in the game session, which can be used for enemies, or to reward players in addition to or instead of Experience Points.

A player can spend a Hero Point (discard a marker out of the game) on any of his turns to reroll all of the dice used when attempting an action, determining damage or in any other situation. The player uses the best of the two results to determine success or failure of an action, the final amount of damage, etc. If spent on a reroll, the reroll must be for the most recent die roll made by the player.

A player can spend a Hero Point to force the Game Master to reroll the damage caused by an enemy against that player's character, or to force the Game Master to reroll one of his other die rolls. In that case, the Game Master uses the lesser of the two die results (the result that is better for the character).

A player can spend a Hero Point to add a story element to the adventure (for example, the sudden discovery of a tool needed to open a stuck door, or a friend who knows the exact password to get into a computer system). The Game Master can reject a story element added by a player, and if he does, the player gets his Hero Point marker back for later use.

Once a player or Game Master's Hero Points are spent, he cannot use Hero Points again for the rest of the game session, unless the Game Master or another player gives him more from their own set of Hero Points.

### ***X. Aspects (optional)***

Another way to earn Experience Points is by role-playing “in character.” Write down two aspects, like “loyal to his friends,” “cares only about the money” or “driven to avenge the death of his parents.” Aspects may be personality characteristics included in the character’s concept (see **I. Character Creation**), motivations or reasons why the character is a hero, or could even be catch phrases that the character says all the time.

Each time an aspect fits a situation a character is in during a game session, the Game Master can award that character Experience Points, usually 5 each time, or more if the aspect is really relevant to the situation.

For example, the Game Master might describe a situation where a gangster offers the heroes a suitcase full of cash in exchange for private information about their boss. Most of the characters turn down the offer, but the player of a character with the aspect “Cares only about the money” says his character secretly meets with the gangster later. Since the player is “in character”

doing something that fits one of his character’s aspects, he earns 5 Experience Points.

### ***XI. Simplified Adventure Squad (optional)***

To get playing even more quickly, simply assign the d4, d8 and d12 to each character’s Traits, and ignore

Abilities, Hit Points, Basic Weapon and Money. In combat, every character and enemy causes 1 point of damage with a successful Fight Trait roll. Each character can be hit 3 times before being knocked out of the fight, and most enemies only need to be hit 1 time. After each battle, all player characters ignore all damage, as if they had never been hit during the battle at all.

Using this rule is a good way to introduce **Adventure Squad** and even RPGs themselves to brand-new players - all they have to do is describe what their character is doing, and roll a single die.

# ADVENTURE SQUAD Character Sheet

Name:

Player:

Concept:

Race/Culture:

Gift:

TRAITS	Die Size
Body	
Fight	
Mind	

	Die Size
Basic Weapon	d4
Money	d6

Experience Points

ABILITIES	Die Size
Name: Effects:	d10
Name: Effects:	d6

Starting Hit Points

Current Hit Points