

ENDURE

A SURVIVAL ROLEPLAYING GAME



ENDURE

by FRED PEDNARSKI

PRINCIPLES

Wrong Place, Wrong Time: This is a game about surviving in harsh situations of both mundane (war, natural or man-made disasters) and fantastical (zombie apocalypse, space castaways) nature. No matter the setting or the genre, player characters are right in the middle of it all, probably trying to get out.

No Heroes: Player characters are not specialists trained to deal with the threats they are about to face. There are just ordinary people who have to find a way to survive against all odds. They will struggle, suffer, and be forced to make tough choices.

Nothing Lasts Forever: The characters get tired, resources dwindle, things break, people die. All of this is a part of the game. On the other hand, nothing stays bad forever, characters will recover, find hope and overcome their obstacles. However, they can't count on those victories lasting forever.

PLAYING THE GAME

Endure is a survival roleplaying game about ordinary people in extraordinary situations. The Judge controls and describes the world to players who then narrate how their characters act.

RISK ROLL

When you are attempting something risky, decide how many points (if any) of Endurance you want to spend. Roll 2d6, add the spent Endurance and a point for each relevant item. If the total is equal or greater than the Difficulty Score, the action goes your way. Otherwise, the Judge decides the outcome. This might mean a failure, mixed success, getting a negative Condition, etc.

Difficulty Scores (DS) Guidelines: Easy: 8 Average: 10 Tricky: 12

Some obstacles (mostly living creatures: enemies, monsters and NPCs) are rated as a Difficulty Score. In such cases, DS functions also as their "health." When they take damage, their DS drops. When the DS reaches 0, the obstacle is eliminated. You don't always have to eliminate an obstacle to overcome it.

If you beat the DS, subtract the difference from the obstacle's value (if any). If you miss the DS, subtract it from your Endurance.

ADVANTAGE AND DISADVANTAGE

When Traits or situational factors affect your action, the Judge may tell you to roll with Advantage (roll additional d6 and calculate the sum using the highest two dice results) or Disadvantage (roll additional d6 and calculate the sum using the lowest two dice results).

Advantage and disadvantage cancel each other out. If you have equal of both you roll with neither. If you have more advantages than disadvantages roll with advantage and vice versa.

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+ Endurance spent
+ Helpful items



ENDURANCE

Endurance is your character's will to live, grit, stamina, and adrenaline combined into one. Spend endurance on 1-to-1 basis before a roll to add to that roll. You recover Endurance by resting and using supplies. Endurance can never drop below 0 or go above your character's Endurance Score.

INVENTORY

Your Inventory Score is how many items you can carry comfortably. You get an encumbered condition (disadvantage when applicable) if you're carrying more items than your Inventory Score.

When you need to quickly retrieve a piece of gear, roll 2d6 (you may spend Endurance as normal). If the total is equal or greater than the index at which it is stored, you got it. Otherwise, it will take a few moments.

TRAITS

Each character has a number of permanent Traits which describe who the character is, and temporary Conditions that describe how the character is doing right now (wounds, status effects, etc.) Traits are used when deciding advantage and disadvantage. The Judge has the final say on which Traits affect the action.

The Judge assigns Conditions during the game. This usually happens as a result of a failed roll and follows the narrative. If you get stabbed, you're "bleeding," if you are exposed to the elements for too long you are "freezing" or getting a "heat stroke," etc.

TEAMWORK

Other players may spend their Endurance to help on your roll. If you didn't beat the DS, all involved lose Endurance as per normal rules and suffer any narrative consequences.

RECOVERY

Characters can recover Endurance by capturing moments of "normality." Being able to relax, have a drink, eat a meal or sleep in relative comfort keep the characters going in this harsh world.

Each time you rest, roll a d6 for each supply you spend (food, water, etc.). Recover Endurance based on how long you rest:

- » Resting for several minutes recovers the highest d6.
- » Resting for couple hours recovers the highest 2d6.
- » Spending the night in a safe spot lets you recover the sum of all the dice you rolled. During a long rest you may also use other, non-supply items (+1 for each item that helps you rest).

DEATH

Your character can die at any moment. An unfortunate fall, a random gunshot or even untreated sickness is all it takes to snuff out your character's life. The Judge will tell you if an action you're attempting has deadly consequences. If you fail such action, roll for your life. It is a normal Risk Roll on which you can (and should!) spend your Endurance. Success means you get to see another day, but will probably suffer a wound or some other negative effect.

ADVANCEMENT

At the end of a game session choose & raise either your Character's Endurance or Inventory Score by 1.

When a Goal is resolved, give your Character a new Trait based on what they went through.

JUDGE'S GUIDE

As the Judge, you don't need to roll dice. Risk Rolls work for both the player's actions & responding to the dangers of the world. Call for a Risk Roll when a player attempts something with clear consequences. Otherwise, just say what happens - and when you decide that something bad happens, let the player roll to avoid it.

Risk Rolls can be called to resolve a whole scene, or just a single action - there is a balance between the two. More frequent and granular rolls create more pressure on the players, and are great in tense situations (combat, chase, etc.) On the other hand, when the characters are in relative safety, you can reinforce that feeling by calling rolls less often and letting a single roll resolve a whole scene. Be fair in when and how often you call for rolls.

Roll 1d6 when you want to let fate decide something that players don't have a clear influence over (NPC attitude, weather, how many zombies are out there, does the explosion collapse the building, etc.) Interpret the outcome: high is good, low is bad. Use it when it would be interesting to not be in control, or when you don't want to be responsible for the answer.





CRISIS CREATION

The game takes place during a Crisis - a time and place when things really went to shit. The characters are fighting against an inhospitable environment, dealing with threats while struggling to reach a goal that will turn their tide. It is up to each group to decide what kind of Crisis the game will be about.

ENVIRONMENT

The main setting element of the game and the backdrop for the characters' struggles. The Environment can be a physical location, like a jungle, secluded hotel or a derelict ship, or something more abstract like war or a robot uprising. Choose a single environment.

Example Environments: Alien Planet, Private Island, Jungle, Dimensional Rift, Frozen North, Metro, Zombie Apocalypse, War, Wasteland, Backwoods, Totalitarian State, Ocean Liner

THREATS

The dangers the players will encounter during play; the things, creatures and events that will hurt the players and force them to make difficult decisions. Games usually center around one big threat, with smaller background threats. Each player (including the Judge) may choose a Threat to incorporate into the game.

Example Threats: Weather, Animals, Zombies, Dinosaurs, Floods, Aliens, Fire, Earthquakes, Sickness, Foreign Soldiers, Other Survivors, Radiation, Killer Machines, Frost.

GOAL

What the characters are trying to achieve. Survival is an obvious choice, but a more nuanced goal may lead to a more unique game. A good goal should be achievable within few sessions. Choose a single goal as a group. Once a goal is reached, finish the game or escalate the situation, choose a new goal and continue the story.

Example Goals: Escape this place, Retrieve important files, Map this land, Save the kid, Destroy the source, Find the wreck, Reach the enclave, Collect specimen, Get rescued, Gather supplies, Restore power, Track down the fugitive.

PREPARING A GAME

As the Judge, you don't have to prepare a whole story ahead of time. The game flows better when you prepare situations instead of finished plots - few locations and NPCs, some obstacles and a danger that will escalate if left unchecked is enough to get a game going. Don't be afraid to change your ideas & improvise as you go. Dice rolls introduce complications and chaos that will change the course of the fiction - roll with it. Let your players impact what happens. It's their story after all.



- » Name your character.
- » Endurance Score is 10.
- » Inventory Score is 8.
- » You have adequate clothing.
- » Choose 3 useful items.
- » Come up with your Traits:

- **Background** describes who you were before the Crisis. It can be a profession, field of expertise or anything else that summarizes who the character was before. It anchors the character in the setting and occasionally affects rolls.
- **Asset** is something that can prove useful during the Crisis. It can be a skill, physical trait or other noticeable feature the character has. Asset can grant the character an advantage.
- **Trouble** makes your life more complicated. It can be a physical weakness, personality trait, or other complication. Trouble can cause the character to roll with a disadvantage.

Write it all down on a sheet of paper. You don't need a special character sheet, any paper will do. Just make sure to leave space to track your Endurance & number your inventory slots.

PLAYER ADVICE

Your character is not a hero. They are just an everyday person caught in a bad situation, not prepared for the dangers they are about to face. Creative problem solving and cunning will get you further than relying on any bonuses your Traits or Items provide. Don't stress about creating "the best" character. Make a character that fits the setting & will be interesting to play.

Combat is ugly, chaotic, and can turn deadly really fast. It is much safer to try to sneak, run or talk your way out of it. If you resort to violence, be prepared for scrapes, bruises, wounds and a whole plethora of other negative Conditions. Such Traits give disadvantage to most rolls and get removed only if it makes sense in the narrative (wounds are healed, sickness is medicated, thirst is quenched, etc.) This usually happens when your character rests or between adventures.

Think about your resources. Look for creative uses for the Items and Traits you have to get a bonus to a roll. Don't be afraid to spend Endurance, it can be recovered quite easily. It is much better to risk it on a roll, than accepting a Condition you will need to find a way to get rid of. Food and water are always worth having.

Personal Goals

Players may choose a personal goal for their characters at any point before or during the game. A character can only have one such goal over their career. It should be something important & independent of the group's goal.

When a character resolves their personal goal, they gain a new trait.



GEAR & EQUIPMENT

Items help you survive. What items are available to the characters depends on the setting the Crisis takes place in. Preparing a list of sample items before the game is a good idea.

Most items take one Inventory slot. Some bulkier items might take more, and small items take less (you can fit couple items into a single slot). Follow common sense. If that fails, The Judge has the final say.

Unless noted otherwise, each item adds a +1 bonus to actions associated with it as long as the character knows how to use it (traits are a good indicator, e.g. only a trained locksmith or a burglar would know how to use lockpicks). The bonus only applies if it is clear that the item would be beneficial.

SCAVENGING

When you take time to search the area for resources, describe how you do it, and make a Risk Roll. If you beat the DS, spend the difference as you like on the options below:

- » Spend 1 point so it doesn't take long time.
- » Spend 1 point to avoid running into trouble.
- » Spend 1 point and find something useful (Judge's choice).
- » Spend 3 to find an item of your choice (within reason).

6D6 USEFUL ITEMS

When you need to come up with a random useful item, roll 2d6. One die indicates the column, the other indicates row in that column. Use the table below or make a new one that better fits your game.

1. hunting knife	1. map of the area	1. bandages
2. whistle	2. chain, d6 yards	2. scissors
3. revolver, d6 shots	3. spray deodorant	3. bag of snacks
4. dehydrated food	4. canned food, d6	4. duct tape
5. painkillers	5. flashlight	5. gas mask
6. wire, d6 feet	6. crowbar	6. fishing line
1. cast iron pan	1. bottle of vodka	1. sleeping bag
2. flares, d6	2. binoculars	2. lighter
3. beach towel	3. fireworks, d6	3. energy bars, d6
4. water bottle	4. 2-way radio	4. can of gasoline
5. baseball bat	5. shovel	5. fire axe
6. ramen, d6 packs	6. canned soda, d6	6. hammer

Items can have additional rules. See below for examples:

Backpack: Any container that you can comfortably keep on your person. Backpacks (and by extent any items they hold) can be easily removed before a roll to avoid disadvantage from carrying too many items. Items inside a backpack require a few moments to retrieve (can't roll to get them quickly).

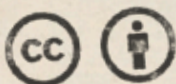
Meal Ration: Prepared meal. Contains all the food and water you need for one day. Takes 1 Inventory slot, recovers 2d6 Endurance when consumed during rest.

Supplies: Anything that can be consumed or otherwise used up: food, drink, ammo, gas, oxygen etc. Often you can fit a couple units of supplies into a single inventory slot. Track them individually or with a usage die mechanic if this type of item is not scarce.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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