

SETUP

First, decide what kind of story you want to tell. When and where will it take place? Will it be silly, dramatic, thrilling, heroic, or spooky? Who are the main characters, and what will they be doing? You can play as bold adventurers, desperate soldiers, mystery-solving kids, or anything else you can think of. The only limit is your imagination!

Choose one player to be the **Game Master (GM)**. The GM narrates the story. They also design and control the fictional world of your story. Everyone else creates and plays the role of a **Player Character (PC)**. The PCs are the main characters of the story.

CREATING A PC

Write a **Bio** for your PC by filling in this template:
“My name is _____. I am a _____ from _____. To others, I seem _____. My greatest strength is _____. My hidden talent is _____. My worst flaw is _____. I believe that _____. My goal is to _____.”

Your Bio is a guide to playing your PC. It tells you what you're good at, how you behave, and what you care about. Only you can ever change your Bio. Add, update, or remove sentences whenever your traits, skills, flaws, motivations, or beliefs change as a result of the story.

Write down all the **Gear** you have. You can carry as much as makes sense. For anything else, write down where you are keeping it. If you don't have the right Gear for an action, you can't do it. Gear can be lost, broken, or stolen.

You can make or find custom Bio templates for your game. Your group can also limit starting Bios and Gear (*“no super powers”, “you all start with nothing but rags”*).

PLAYING A PC

- Act like the main characters! Describe the actions you take to overcome challenges, set and accomplish goals, and make your mark on the world of the story.
- Interact with the game world as if it were a real place. How would you really react to danger or drama? What would you do to increase your power or effectiveness? Where would you go for help or information?
- Make notes and maps to keep track of the story so far.

PLAYING THE GM

- Design your story's fictional world, and bring it to life by describing what the PCs see, hear, smell, and feel.
- Populate the world with potential friends, enemies, mentors, challenges, and rewards.
- Test the PCs' beliefs, let their flaws complicate the story, and give them opportunities to pursue their motivations.
- Play the role of any supporting characters in the story.
- Moderate the conversation and the game rules. Make rulings when there is confusion or disagreement.

GAMEPLAY

A role playing game is just a conversation about a story. The GM describes a scene, says what is happening around or to the PCs, and asks them to respond (*“a pit trap opens beneath you, what do you do?”*, *“the bad guys start to run away, what do you do?”*). The players can ask questions to clarify the situation. Then, they tell the GM what their PCs say and do. The GM decides the outcome of their actions, says what happens next, and asks them to respond again.

The GM starts the game by describing the situation the PCs find themselves in, making something interesting happen to set the story in motion, and asking *“what do you do?”*

When PCs act, the GM decides what happens based on the PC's situation, Bio, Gear, Conditions, and intent (*“are you trying to slow it or hurt it?”*, *“what exactly is your goal?”*):

- It just happens (*“as a language expert, you read the text easily”, “the owner trusts you, so they let you right in”*).
- It's impossible for now (*“normal weapons seem to have no effect”, “you're too exhausted to jump that far”*).
- Break up or reduce the action (*“to reach the mayor, you must first navigate the angry crowd, distract the guard, and climb the platform”, “you can do some damage, but it'll take at least three direct hits to destroy this ship”*).
- If the outcome is uncertain, ask players to roll dice (*“that might work, but it's risky; roll to see how it goes!”*).

The GM never rolls dice. The GM ask other players to roll, and then assigns a **Difficulty** to their PC's action:

- 4 if it's going to need a little luck or skill.
- 5 if it's risky or difficult.
- 6 if it's dangerous or complex.
- Double 6s if it's foolhardy or incredible.

To roll, start with 1 die. Add 1 die if you explain how your Bio helps. Add 1 die if you have an **Advantage** due to your position, preparation, or help offered by another character. You only get 1 die from your Bio and 1 die from Advantage, and the GM decides if they make sense. Now roll the dice!

Keep the highest die (or 2 dice for a double 6s Difficulty). If it meets or beats the Difficulty, you succeed! If you fail, you may still get what you want... at a price. The GM describes the outcome of the action, and any consequences of failure:

- A new detrimental Condition.
- A lesser version of what the PC wanted.
- Side effects or complications in the story.
- Loss of Gear or other resources.
- Any other cost or sacrifice that makes sense.

Describe and respond, back and forth. Roll dice when the stakes are meaningful. That's the whole game! Play a short story in one session or an epic saga that lasts months; just pick up where you left off each time you play. The story ends when everyone says it does. **Be nice and have fun!**

CONDITIONS

Conditions are temporary effects that make certain actions easier, harder, or impossible. The GM gives PCs Conditions when they fail rolls, when they take actions or use Gear that would grant Conditions, or any other time it makes sense in the story.

The GM decides when and how Conditions affect actions (*“your broken arm makes this climb foolhardy”, “the flight potion lets you get over the wall automatically”*).

The GM also decides what will end Conditions: how much time, and/or what other steps or actions (*“broken arm: medical attention”, “flight potion: 10 minutes”*).

XP & LEVELS

At the end of each game session, the GM awards each PC 1 **Experience Point (XP)** for each of these things they did at least once during the session:

- Completed a significant story objective.
- Failed a roll and suffered the consequences.
- Learned, found, or gained something important.
- Solved a problem by using their Bio or Gear creatively.
- Acted according to a flaw, belief, or goal.

Spend 7 XP to gain a **Level**. Levels permanently grant you the ability to reroll any or all of your dice, once per session per Level. Multiple Levels can be used on the same roll. Whenever you gain a Level, take a minute to reflect on how you've grown or changed, and update your Bio accordingly.

OTHER RULES

If PCs oppose each other, all players involved roll dice as normal. The player with the best result gets what they want, and the GM decides the fate of the losers. Reroll ties.

To leave something completely to chance, roll a single **Die of Fate**. A higher result is more favorable for the PCs.

Keep track of what the PCs are doing in their downtime (*“learning a language”, “target practice”, “building a ship”*). The GM determines the time or steps required. When you finish, update your Bio or Gear accordingly.

Decide as a group if PCs can die or otherwise be removed from the story as a result of a failed roll. PCs can also leave the story voluntarily at any time; just say how it happens.

The GM can never decide a PC's actions, thoughts, or words for them, and they can't assign a Difficulty before hearing the intent and a description of the action.

If a player is absent, their PC takes a background role for that session. They can't be controlled or targeted. They are still affected by story events, and they can still earn XP.

PLAYER TIPS

Try to really get into the role of your PC. Draw a picture, or give them a unique voice or mannerism if it helps.

Use sticky notes to track your Conditions and downtime activities, and the time or steps remaining to finish them.

The game world follows rules similar to the real world. Some ideas are dangerous. Actions have consequences. Characters don't forget how they are treated.

You only ever get 1 die from your Bio. So, if you want to grow in power, you'll have to seek new skills, traits, allies, and Gear in the game world, rather than the game rules.

How you approach challenges makes a big difference. Using brute strength to bash down a door might be a Difficulty 4 or 5, but using a laser cutter might just work automatically. Use your Bio and Gear thoughtfully. Create Advantages and work together to overcome great obstacles.

GM TIPS

Your job is to let the PCs shine, not write their story. If you already know what will happen, you don't need PCs at all! Let their decisions shape the story, ask them questions, and use the answers to design new challenges and rewards.

Try to keep the spotlight moving between the PCs and give everyone roughly equal opportunities to speak and act.

The other players can't be expected to read your mind or understand your world perfectly. If something would be obvious to a PC, make sure it's obvious to their player. Tell them what might happen before they act, and make sure they understand the risks of failure. Don't let the PCs miss important things, either. If a clue or item is hidden or they are about to walk into danger, give them a hint or prompt; just enough info to get them talking about what to do!

There are many ways to make challenges more dramatic. You can make them more active, forcing the PCs to react more often. You can use complex challenges with minions, immunities, or hazards that must be dealt with before they can be engaged directly. You can break up and reduce PC actions, or say they're impossible. You can give harsher consequences on failed rolls. These tools can crank up the tension when it matters, but use them sparingly!

Give your non-player characters a unique trait, a voice or mannerism, and a motivation. Let their quirks and desires inform their interactions with the PCs.

Between sessions, imagine what your important characters and factions are doing behind the scenes. When the PCs return to a place or character they know, tell them what has changed. Drop hints of new challenges and goals!

THE BACK PAGE

OK RPG! is a **role playing game**. The *role playing* part means you and your friends will take on the roles of fictional characters and tell a story together. The *game* part means there are rules to follow, points to earn, and dice rolling to find out what happens!

All you need to play is this pamphlet, three normal six-sided dice, and something to write with. Find some players, think of a cool story idea, and you're ready to go!

These rules are free to use and distribute. For questions, comments, or more information, visit www.okrpg.cc.

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BIO

My name is...

I am a... from...

To others, I seem...

My greatest strength is...

My hidden talent is...

My worst flaw is...

I believe that...

My goal is to...

Gear:

XP:

Levels:



OK RPG!

a simple & versatile role playing game
for two or more players

by **Skip Rainsmyth**

art by **Tom Rogers**
Trifold Edition – v22.4.7