

Players

Players create a character that will go on a fantastical journey in a world of beasts. Characters are typically called **handlers** because of their connection to beasts, but feel free to use a different term for yours (ranger, explorer, or trainer are other good fits). They choose a look and name for their character and then choose one quality that's their strength (2 dice), one that's neutral (1 die) and one that's their weakness (0 dice). There are three qualities: Heart, Cunning, and Drive. Each action that your handler takes is influenced by one of these three qualities. Then you pick a move from the handler move list. The first move you pick is your specialty, and you will keep this move forever.

Once you've made your handler, you then pick your first beast, either by creating it yourself or choosing a beast from the GM's bestiary. More information can be found in the Beasts section. Though you will be collecting more beasts throughout the game, your first beast is special. You have a special bond with your beast. Your first beast begins with a bond of 1. Nicknaming your first beast is important but not necessary.

It's up to the GM whether you begin the game with your first beast or if you have to accomplish some small task to get it. Once you are bonded with your first beast, your adventure can begin in earnest.

Talk back and forth with the GM, narrating or describing your handler's actions and reactions. When your actions are difficult or create conflict, the GM may ask you to roll to determine the outcome of the roll. Read more about that in the **Action Rolls** section. Your actions will have consequences, but by pushing yourself you can change outcomes and resist some of the consequences. Read more about that in the **Push and Stress** section.

At the end of the session, ask yourself these questions and mark Potential for each question you can answer with a yes.

- Did I make a new friend?
- Did I defeat a powerful enemy?
- Did I encounter or learn about a new beast?

After you answer these questions, if you have marked Potential equal to 3 + the number of Moves you have, you earn an advancement. Unmark all of your Potential, learn a new Move, and increase the Bond of one of your beasts by 1. When you earn an advancement you have the option of changing your specialty to another move you already have instead of learning a new move. Your new specialty cannot be an advanced move.

Rolling the Dice

Beast Dream uses six-sided dice. You roll several at once and read the single highest result.

- If the highest die is a 6, it's a **full success**—things go well. If you roll more than one 6, it's a **critical success**—you gain some additional advantage.
- If the highest die is a 4 or 5, that's a **partial success**—you do what you were trying to do, but prepare for trouble: danger, harm, reduced effect, etc.
- If the highest die is 1-3, it's a bad outcome. Things go poorly. You probably don't achieve your goal and you suffer complications, too.

If you ever need to roll but you have zero (or negative) dice, roll two dice and take the single lowest result. You can't roll a critical when you have zero dice.

All the dice systems in the game are expressions of this basic format. When you're first learning the game, you can always make a simple roll to judge how things go. Look up the exact rule later when you have time.

To create a dice pool for a roll, you'll use one of your three qualities and take dice equal to its score (2 dice for a strength, 1 die for neutral, and 0 dice for a weakness). Certain moves may increase your dice pool, and situations may increase your dice pool at the GM's discretion.

Action Rolls

When you take an action that poses significant danger or risk, you make an **action roll**. The GM determines the appropriate position, you choose which quality you are rolling, then the GM determines the appropriate effect. You can roll any quality you want, but the GM may determine that one quality is less effective than the other based on the action.

When you act with empathy and compassion, roll **heart**. When you act with guile and wit, roll **cunning**. When you act with passion and determination, roll **drive**.

Position is the narrative stakes of the action. There are three positions: controlled, risky, and desperate. If you're in a **controlled** position, the possible consequences are less serious. If you're in a **desperate** position, the consequences can be severe. If you're somewhere in between, it's **risky**—usually considered the "default" position for most actions.

Effect determines how much your action roll will accomplish on a success.

Controlled—You act on your terms. You exploit a dominant advantage.

- **Critical:** You do it with increased effect.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You hesitate. Withdraw and try a different approach, or else do it with a minor consequence: a minor complication occurs, you have reduced effect, you suffer lesser harm, you end up in a risky position.
- **1-3:** You falter. Press on by seizing a risky opportunity, or withdraw and try a different approach.

Risky—You go head to head. You act under fire. You take a chance.

- **Critical:** You do it with increased effect.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You do it, but there's a consequence: you suffer harm, a complication occurs, you have reduced effect, you end up in a desperate position.
- **1-3:** Things go badly. You suffer harm, a complication occurs, you end up in a desperate position, you lose this opportunity.

Desperate—You overreach your capabilities. You're in serious trouble.

- **Critical:** You do it with increased effect.
- **6:** You do it.
- **4/5:** You do it, but there's a consequence: you suffer severe harm, a serious complication occurs, you have reduced effect.
- **1-3:** It's the worst outcome. You suffer severe harm, a serious complication occurs, you lose this opportunity for action.

There are three effect levels: super effective, standard, and not very effective. If your effect is **super effective**, you achieve more than usual. If your effect is **not very effective**, you have a partial or weak effect. If your effect is **standard**, then it accomplishes what you'd expect it to accomplish. Since NPCs don't roll for their actions, an action roll does double-duty: it resolves the action of the PC as well as any NPCs that are involved. The single roll tells us how those actions interact and which consequences result. On a 6, the PC wins and has their effect. On a 4/5, it's a mix—both the PC and the NPC have their effect. On a 1-3, the NPC wins and has their effect as a consequence on the PC.

Group Actions

When you lead a group action, you coordinate multiple members of the team to tackle a problem together. Describe how your character leads the team in a coordinated effort. Do you appeal to them gently and encouragingly, do

you push them to go above and beyond, or do you guide them with strategic plans and ideas?

Each handler who's involved makes an action roll (using the same quality) and the team counts the single best result as the overall effort for everyone who rolled. However, the handler leading the group action takes 1 stress for each handler that rolled 1-3 as their best result.

This is how you do the "we all sneak into the building" scene. Everyone who wants to sneak in rolls their action, and the best result counts for the whole team. The leader expends push for everyone who does poorly. It's tough covering for the stragglers.

The group action result covers everyone who rolled. If you don't roll, your handler doesn't get the effects of the action.

Progress Tracks

A **progress track** is a way to measure progress on an ongoing effort against an obstacle or other trouble. Draw out a track like below and mark boxes off the track whenever you successfully make progress.



Generally, the more complex or difficult a task, the more boxes are in the track. The GM will decide the total number of boxes before you start making progress on it. Typically, progress tracks will have no less than four boxes (the exception being certain battle tracks, see in the Beasts section), with the most complex having no more than ten boxes. Typically, a successful action with standard effect will mark off one or two boxes, while a not very effective or super effective action will mark off less or more.

Fortune Rolls

Sometimes you take an action that has a chance of failure but without much risk or danger involved. When that happens, the GM might call for a **fortune roll**. A fortune roll works a lot like an action roll, but the only consequence of failure is that you do not succeed.

Push and Stress

Handlers have a special ability called **Push** that allows them to exert themselves to gain an advantage or avoid consequences. A handler has eight Push to spend.

Before you roll, you may choose to spend one Push to roll an additional die (or roll a single die if the roll is using your weakness) or to increase the

effect (from not very effective to standard or from standard to super effective). You can also resist consequences by describing how you resist it and then rolling 1d6. You spend Push equal to 6 minus the result of this roll. If there are more than one players, it costs two Push to add an additional die to your own rolls, but you can also spend one Push to help another handler and add an additional die to theirs. Teamwork is important! Pushing yourself is risky and can lead to overexerting yourself. If you spend all of your Push, you become **Stressed** and are temporarily taken out of the action. When you are Stressed, you are feeling overwhelmed and it takes a toll on you. Lose one of your Moves or reduce your Bond with one of your beasts by 1. You cannot lose your Specialty. Describe how your partner beasts and your friends help you get back on your feet as soon as there's a break in the action and regain all of your Push. You also regain all of your Push when you can safely relax.

Coin and Gear

Handlers shouldn't travel with just their beast companions and the clothes on their backs. Gear and the coin to buy it with are important for any handler.

Coin is an abstraction that represents a small sum of whatever currency is used in your world. Don't worry about coin when buying day-to-day items; as long as you have coin then you can afford basic necessities without spending enough to impact your amount of coin. Coin is for buying important things like adventuring gear, healing items, capture devices, and more.

Handler Moves

Here are some basic handler moves. Game Masters should come up with more if they want more variety in their games.

Connections: You know people. Once per session you can call on a connection to get a piece of useful or valuable equipment or information without spending coin.

Domineering: You are skilled at capturing beasts. Spend one push to treat a beast's capture score as if it were 1 less.

Fast Friends: You make friends quickly. All beasts you capture or befriend begin with a Bond of 1. If this move is your specialty, increase your bond with your first beast by 1.

Type Hunter: Choose a type. Your first attack in a battle against a beast of that type has improved effect. This move can be taken multiple times, but you cannot choose the same type twice.

Optional: Advanced Moves

When you have five or more moves, the Game Master may allow you to take Advanced Moves. These moves are generally stronger or more useful than regular moves, but they cost a lot of Potential because of how many moves you have. They might require you to have other moves as a prerequisite. If an advanced move has another move as a prerequisite, you must lose the advanced move before you can lose the prerequisite move.

Character Growth: Treat your weakness as if it were a neutral quality.

Faster Friends (Prerequisite: Fast Friends): All beasts you capture or befriend begin with a bond of 2.

THIS DOCUMENT IS A DEMO! It only contains the player rules section. The complete version of the game includes rules for beasts, GMs, and creating your own content.

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