

# L.A.R.S.

Lightweight Allround Roleplaying System

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*L.A.R.S. is a universal roleplaying system designed to be fast and easy to use. The rules are few and flexible, making them perfect if you're just out to play a quick adventure. But, they can also be used for campaigning, and examples are given on how to adapt the system to your own setting.*

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## GETTING STARTED

This roleplaying system is, as indicated by its title, easy and versatile. It doesn't include a setting, being designed to work across existing as well as brand new settings. There is no introduction to roleplaying; it assumes that you already know how RPGs work, but that you need a simple and fast game mechanic to help you run one or more adventures.

There is a generic character sheet included with the rules, but you are encouraged to design your own sheets based on your setting or genre. You will therefore also find two adapted character sheets; one for gaming in the Wild West, and one for horror games.

But let's get started: First there's a quick guide to creating characters, before we move on to the actual mechanics of the game. This should give you enough to run a game session. Good luck!

# THE CHARACTER

## STATS

Your character has three values that help define his/her strengths. These are:

- [BODY]** - Deals with strength, speed, and endurance.
- [MIND]** - Controls the mental aspects: willpower, magic, and memory.
- [SKILL]** - A measure of your ability to handle tools and weapons.

When you start, you get 20 points to be divided freely between these three stats, with two restrictions: No stat can be lower than 2, and none higher than 10. Note the points on your character sheet.

## LIFE AND DEATH

In addition, you've got a fourth attribute called **[LIFEPOINTS]**, which indicates how much damage your character can take before it dies. These points are calculated like this:

$$\mathbf{[LIFEPOINTS] = [BODY] \cdot 3}$$

Should your **[LIFEPOINTS]** reach 0, you become unconscious, and if they drop to -3, either as a result of direct damage or bleeding, your character dies. It might therefore be a good idea to pay some attention to how many **[LIFEPOINTS]** you've got left, to keep you from diving recklessly into situations that have a chance of killing you.

In order to heal your damage, there are three methods to use: Rest (a good night's sleep restores one die (1-6) of **[LIFEPOINTS]**), magic (can restore one die (1-6) of **[LIFEPOINTS]**), and certain herbs and medicines (can restore half a die (1-3, rounded up) of **[LIFEPOINTS]**). It's also a good idea to dress wounds in order to stop them bleeding.

# CHALLENGES

When faced with a challenge, you need to perform a TESTROLL. This is done by first determining which of your three stats you will be using to conquer the challenge. Then, you roll two dice (adding them up) and compare with your stat. If your roll is equal to or below your stat, you succeed. Should you however roll above your stat, you fail, with whatever consequences that might bring. The consequences will vary depending on the challenge.

## DIFFICULTY

Some challenges are harder to overcome than others. Depending on the difficulty of the challenge, the game-master might award a bonus or a penalty to your stat before you

perform your roll. This adjustment will differ with both the difficulty and type of challenge, but here is a rough guide:

DIFFICULTY	ADJUSTMENT
Routine	+1
Easy	0
Medium	-1
Hard	-2 til -3
Very hard	-4 til -5
Extremely hard	-6 til -7

*(Remember: This adjustment is applied to your stat BEFORE you do the testroll.)*

## DIFFERENT TYPES

Challenges can be divided into several different types. Most types follow the three stats, while some may move into the grey zones between them. We'll now examine some of the different types of challenges, sorted by stats:

### Physical challenges (BODY)

These challenges deal with performing acrobatic feats, lifting heavy objects, jumping across chasms, wriggling through narrow openings, pulling yourself onto ledges, climbing walls, and so on. Put shortly, maneuvers that push the limits of what your body can achieve, both in terms of strength, agility and stamina. But: note that such things as wrestling is reckoned a **contest**, and is covered by those rules.

### Mental challenges (MIND)

A lot of different challenges are considered mental: photographic memory (whether the role is able to remember a document or a map after quickly scanning it), perception (discovering details in a picture or a situation that no one else sees), finding hidden doors and traps, arming and disarming traps, and so on. But: note that resisting mind control is considered a **contest**, and is covered by those rules.

### Technical challenges (SKILL)

These challenges deals with the use of different tools, such as: whittling advanced shapes, using (relatively) unknown technology, building things from known materials, performing simple surgical procedures (amputation, for example), and so on.

It is worth noticing that some challenges might prove to combine to stats. This means you have to roll against an average of these two stats (rounded up). For example, an attempt to construct a stone cabin (building, heavy lifting), would demand a roll against an average of [BODY] and [SKILL].

## CONTESTS

As mentioned, some challenges might take the form of contests, where two opponents battle for the same outcome. If this is so, both of them have to make a roll

against the appropriate stat. The one who succeeds by the largest margin (i.e. rolls the most under his/her stat), wins the contest. Time for an example:

*Arti and Borom are wrestling, so they both do a testroll. Arti rolls a 6, and with a [BODY] of 9 she gets a margin of 3. Borom also rolls a 6, but with a [BODY] of 7 he only gets a margin of 1. Arti comes out on top, with a margin of 3 to Borom's 1, and wins the wrestling match.*

Some conditions (surprise, special circumstances) might lead to one the participants in a contest being given a penalty to their stat before the roll is made, but this has to be determined by the game-master in each individual case. Should one of the participants fail their roll all together, they lose. If both fail their rolls, the one closest to succeeding wins.

## BATTLE

When you want to attack someone with a weapon, you need to make roll against [SKILL]. If your roll succeeds, you hit, and the weapon gives the opponent one die's worth (1-6) of damage. The opponent has to deduct this from his/her [LIFEPOINTS]. During battle the fighters attack alternately, until one of them dies, or they agree to stop. The one who initiates the attack rolls first, but if there's doubt as to who starts a fight, they each roll a die. Whoever gets the highest roll, attacks first.

## MAGIC

Most things can be achieved through the use of magic, and there are no set spells or formulas. You need only concentrate on what you want to achieve, and release the energy through a single short word (for example "burn", "dig", "sweep" etc.). If you want to use magic, you need to make a roll versus [MIND]. If you get equal to or below [MIND] the magic succeeds, and your desired effect is achieved. If you should fail, however, the magical energies will backfire, and you lose 1 [LIFEPOINT] from the backlash.

Magic has different degrees of difficulty, and can provoke a bonus or penalty to your [MIND] before you make the roll. The same scale is used here as for challenges. It is up to the game-master to award bonuses or penalties in each separate case, depending on how advanced the magic attempted is.

# ADAPTING THE GAME

We have now covered how the basic mechanics of L.A.R.S. works, and you should be able to use it for all kinds of games and genres. However, it might be advisable to make some adjustments depending on the type of game you want to run. So, we'll take a look at some general tips, as well as some examples of genre-specific adjustments.

1. **Genre adaptation.** This doesn't necessarily warrant big changes, perhaps only replacing a few words or removing some possibilities. Star Wars, you say? Replace the word "magic" with "the Force". A Lemmings-inspired survival adventure, you say? Replace "LIFEPOINTS" with "LEMMINGS". A socio-realistic game of economics and media-power, you say? Cut out magic and battle, and replace "LIFEPOINTS" with a measure for success.
2. **Setting adaption.** Perhaps you're playing in a setting where magic is rare, and hard to accomplish? Adjust the difficulty levels of magic 2 points up, and let failed magic deal damage equal to the difficulty bonus/penalty. Everyone uses guns, and every shot deals equal damage? Set [LIFEPOINTS] to for instance 3, and make the characters lose a point each time they're hit. Look at what sets your setting apart, and adjust the mechanics to reflect the particularities.
3. **Proficiencies.** Let each player chose 3 things their role is proficient in (riding, climbing, swimming, weaving, flying spaceships, arming traps, pole vaulting, sneaking, etc.). If they should try something they're not proficient in, give them an extra -2 penalty to their stat. Allow the roles to gain one new proficiency after each adventure.

These were some examples on how to adapt the rules to your own vision. Here now comes two examples of genre adaptations. The character sheets can be found further along in this leaflet:

**WESTERN:** Magic doesn't exist. Instead, there's a rule for dueling: Each of the duelists roll two dice, and then deducts their [MIND] from the roll. Whoever gets the lowest total, fires first in the duel. Battle and damage are then run as normal.

**HORROR:** [LIFEPOINTS] are replaced with [SANITY], and is calculated as [MIND]\*3. The character may lose [SANITY] by experiencing horrible things. Should this stat hit zero, the character goes mad. Battle damage isn't counted; if the character is hit, it dies. We assume that all monsters are superior in strength, and will kill the characters with a single hit. In addition, we add another stat, [MYTHOS LORE], that's calculated as an average between [MIND] and [SKILL], rounded up. This stat is used for interpreting clues and objects from the horror dimensions.

# L.A.R.S.

## CHARACTER SHEET

Name:

Age:

Description:

BODY	MIND	SKILL	LIFEPOINTS

POSSESSIONS		

# L.A.R.S.

## CHARACTER SHEET

HORROR

Name:

Age:

Description:

BODY	MIND	SKILL	MYTHOS LORE	SANITY

POSSESSIONS		

# L.A.R.S.

## CHARACTER SHEET

**WESTERN**

Name:

Age:

Description:

BODY	MIND	SKILL

LIFEPOINTS

POSSESSIONS		