

Tales of the OLD WEST

QuickDraw Rules and Adventure

**CARSON'S FOLLY,
NEW MEXICO TERRITORY**

1873

Pedro Lopez, your friend, is dead.

Killed by a bear, they say. But something don't smell right. You and your friends are determined to discover the truth behind Pedro's fate, to honor the life of one of the last ciboleros.

Welcome to the Old West, where life is hard, life is short, and life don't owe you a goddamn thing.

But you are extraordinary. Neither race not gender can limit what you can become, as you pit your grit and cunning against other folk, and contend with the harsh frontier. It don't matter who you are or where you come from, it's the West that makes you.

This book is the free QuickDraw for the forthcoming TTRPG, Tales of the Old West.

It contains the basic rules you need to play the game, five pregenerated characters, and an exciting introductory adventure, *The Last Cibolero*.

Tales of the Old West is coming to Kickstarter soon. Saddle up for more information at: www.ffehtpublishing.com

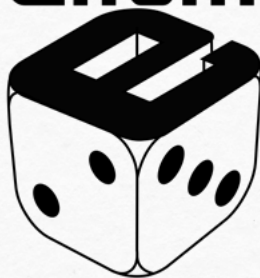
**YEAR
ZERO
ENGINE**



Tales of the OLD WEST

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ENGINE

Effekt



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TALES OF THE OLD WEST

THE QUICKDRAW

"I love it. It is wild with adventure."

—Henry Starr

on life as an outlaw, shortly before
he was shot dead while robbing a bank

WELCOME TO THE OLD WEST

Life is hard. Life is short.

And life don't owe you a goddamn thing.

But you are extraordinary.

Neither race nor gender can limit what you can become. It don't matter where you come from, it's the West that makes you. And it don't matter what you do—you've turned your hand to many a job, and have been many things to many people. There are no

monsters but other folk, and only the dead forget the land is your enemy. Everyone has faith, many in God, but others in the power of the spirits, the strength of their compadres, or simply in themselves—your faith keeps you going when times get tough.

Tales of the Old West is set in the dangerous and competitive world of the 1870s. To thrive you'll need to find good friends, outwit your enemies, and maybe resort to violence to protect what's yours. You will be playing people of the Old West, with no limit on who you can be or what you can become—farmhands or barkeeps, lawmen or outlaws, ranchers or cattle barons, bordello madams or saloon owners, card sharps or rubes, gunslingers or drifters, Native, African or white American, Mexican, Asian, or European.

A ROLEPLAYING GAME IN THE OLD WEST

Tales of the Old West is a roleplaying game about life on the frontier, pitting your wits against other folk and against the land, grasping what the West offers you, or just trying to survive another day. You'll strive to achieve your big dream—whatever that may be—relying on your faith to keep going, as you find a home—your town—and struggle to make it the place you want it to be.

We have long been fans and students of the Old West—the people, the landscape, and the history. Our love and fascination continues to grow as we explore the West through our research, but also through modern media and the written word. We draw great inspiration from the TV stories of Deadwood, The English and Lonesome Dove, the movies Dancing With Wolves, 3:10 to Yuma and Young Guns, and the writing of Larry McMurtry, Pete Dexter and Cormac McCarthy, to name but a few.

This QuickDraw book contains everything you need to start playing. It tells you what you need to know about talents, weapons, horses, and gear, all subjects that are covered in much greater detail in the Tales of the Old West Core Rulebook. Everyone should feel free to read through the rules sections, but if you are a player, beware! Stop before you read the introductory scenario, The Last Cibolero, at the back of the book—this is for the Gamemaster's eyes only.

You may have little more than the shirt on your back, your skill with the iron, or your winning way with people. You may just be looking to stand up for yourself and earn a few bits for whiskey at the saloon, or you may have grand ambitions to make your name ring down the ages.

You'll have a town to call home, a place full of ne'er-do-wells, con artists and thieves, with a few good folk thrown in there somewhere, that will grow with the turn of the seasons. You might care about this town, where you have your outfit, your business, your living. Or perhaps it's a place to scavenge and exploit—but then don't expect help when you most need it. Your town, and how it affects your life in the West, will be explained fully in the Tales of the Old West Core Rulebook.

But it is also a game set in the time of colonial expansion into Native lands, and a nation grappling with the effects of the emancipation of millions of men, women and children. It's about the impact of greed, capital and so-called "civilized" society on the West, and how the people of the time learned to live in this land. Your character has a part to play in this story, and as you send them on their adventures, you will forge your own Tales of the Old West.

THE WILD WEST OF 1873

The West of 1873 is a newly painted picture splashed across an ancient landscape.

The annexation of Texas into the Union, and the subsequent Mexican-American War, is still fresh in people's minds. It transformed the political landscape: US territory expanded enormously, bringing Texas, and the Mexican territories of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and parts of New Mexico and Colorado, into US hands. The wounds of the American Civil War are still raw—it ended only eight years ago. The Union victory has brought earth-shattering change: the emancipation of all those once held in bondage; the economic crises left by the war's destruction; and the humiliation of the former Confederate states. Settlers are flooding west, first in their tens of thousands, then hundreds of thousands, then millions, an explosive expansion that is far out-stripping the government's ability to cope—political chaos, corruption and cronyism are rife.

All this, imposed upon land already populated by Native American tribes and formerly Mexican citizens. Political realism has seen many Mexican

A NOTE ON HISTORY

The nineteenth century American West is a challenging place to set a roleplaying game. It's a period that includes a civil war dominated by the clash over whether dark-skinned people were people or not, and which is marked by the treatment of Native Americans as "savages". It sidelines the millennia of Native American influence on the land, along with that of Mexican and Hispanic cultures. The myth of the West, particularly in cinema, has tended to portray the protagonists as exclusively of white European descent. The history is overlaid with iconic representations that whitewash the cowboy, and for the most part portrayed Native American culture as antithetical to Anglo civilization. As two white boys from England, we can't expect to do justice to all these issues, but we hope to make this game accessible to as wide an audience as possible. So, we have done our best to be respectful of the real history, and to reflect all the people in the US and the western territories at that time, without stereotyping anyone. We are, however, making a game that is intended to be fun, and we hope we have got the balance right. If you think we can do better, tell us. We are keen to learn. — Dave & Matthew

citizens—now US citizens—mollified by the US government, although it doesn't reduce the prejudice shown towards them. The same can't be said of the Native American tribes. The precedent set in the previous two hundred years of colonization has not changed, and tribes are exploited, marginalized, hunted, moved, deceived, betrayed and destroyed. Many are fighting back, and in 1873 there are still so-called "Indian Wars" playing out, with more to come.

Towns are springing up anywhere people think they can make a fast buck, from digging up gold and silver, lumber, farming or cattle ranching. As these places attract speculators seeking a quick fortune, they also attract everyone else looking to make a living, and before long there are saloons, bawdy houses and hotels, general stores, blacksmiths and livery stables, beef outfits and horse traders. Places like Deadwood, Dakota, Silver City in New Mexico, Carson City, Nevada, Dodge City, Kansas, and Cheyenne in Wyoming, will soon become infamous as they grow and develop on the promise of gold, silver or beef.

These towns are diverse melting pots of all the cultures that have flocked to the West. Men and

A NOTE ON FAITH

Religious faith, and mostly Christian faith at that, was an ever-present fact of life in nineteenth century America. To reflect that, the push mechanic in Tales of the Old West is called Faith. But we don't want faith to be a barrier to players enjoying the game. Your character can be of any faith, or none at all, in which case their "faith" comes from something else entirely—perhaps their own self-belief, their reliance upon friends and family, or their connection with nature. Faith can be anything you want, it's your choice.



women, young and old, rich and poor, from every European background, the indigenous Native American heritage of the West itself, Mexican and Hispanic peoples, and the Chinese workers who came to build the railroads and decided to stay.

This is the picture of the West in 1873: a landscape of opportunity, risk, and danger, and one in which only the clever, the fast, or the cunning will survive.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PLAY?

Other than your imagination and a burning desire to experience life in the Old West of the 1870s, each player will need one of the pre-generated player characters (PCs) at the back of this book, a pencil, and some dice. Each player controls their PC, decides what they think and how they feel, and how they react in the tale that unfolds before them.

In addition to the players, one person will be the Gamemaster (or GM). Their job is to read the Introductory Tale at the back of this book, *The Last Cibolero*, describe the game world to the players and lead them into the action of the tale itself. The GM portrays all the people the PCs meet, and controls the enemies they fight. The game is a conversation between the players and the GM, back and forth, until a critical situation arises where the outcome is uncertain. Then it's time to break out the dice.

Tales of the Old West uses a modified version of Free League Publishing's Year Zero Engine, with D6 dice pools and the reroll, or push, mechanic. So, you only need six-sided dice (known as D6) to play. You will need a handful of dice, five of which must all be one color—these five are your 'Trouble' dice (we explain how these work on page 8).

ROLLING DICE

The rules will sometimes ask you to roll D3, 2D6 and D66. D3 means you roll a D6 and divide the result by two, rounding up. 2D6 means you roll two six-sided dice and add the results. D66 means you roll two D6. The first die represents the tens digit and the second die represents the ones digit. That generates a result between 11 and 66. You can even roll D666, by rolling three six-sided dice. The first die then counts as the hundreds digit, the second as the tens digit and the third as the ones digit.

CHARACTERS OF THE OLD WEST

*"I see a good many enemies around,
and mighty few friends."*

—'Wild' Bill Longley
just before his hanging for murder
on October 11th, 1878

There are many different people you can play in Tales of the Old West. The pre-generated characters at the back of this book give a flavor of the possibilities available in the full game. But, whoever you are, your character is defined by their attributes, their abilities, and their Faith.

ATTRIBUTES

Your character has four attributes that indicate your basic physical and mental capabilities, each rated on a scale from 1 to 5 (healthy characters don't have any attribute below 2).

- ☛ **GRIT**—Grit represents resilience, strength and sheer physical presence. Damage to Grit is called Hurts.
- ☛ **QUICK**—Quick represents your physical agility, manual dexterity and hand/eye coordination. Damage to Quick is called Shakes.
- ☛ **CUNNING**—Cunning represents instinct, common sense and an understanding of how the world works. Damage to Cunning is called Vexes.
- ☛ **DOCITY**—Docity represents your ability to learn. Damage to Docity is called Doubts.

ABILITIES

Your abilities are the knowledge and skills you have acquired during your life. Along with your attributes, they determine how effectively you can perform certain actions in the game. Abilities are measured on a scale from 0 to 5. The higher the number, the better. There are 16 abilities, each tied to a specific attribute.

- ☛ **LABOR** (Grit)—When you have to dig a grave, lift a cart to put a wheel back on, carry a wounded compadre to safety, chop down a tree, or unload bullion from a train you are robbing, you make a LABOR roll.
- ☛ **PRESENCE** (Grit)—There are times when the way you carry yourself says more than words could—if you are looking to demonstrate your authority, intimidate someone, make them back down or add weight to your teaching, make a PRESENCE roll.
- ☛ **FIGHTIN'** (Grit)—There are times when your presence or your words are not enough, and things come to blows. Roll FIGHTIN' when punching, wrestling or brawling with your opponent, or when using melee weapons.
- ☛ **RESILIENCE** (Grit)—When your physical endurance is tested, when the cold bites, infection strikes, or you need to resist the effects of whiskey or a rattlesnake bite, it's RESILIENCE you need to roll.