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TITLE

How to Play the Year Zero Engine: Step Dice, Health, and Resolve
without Gear Dice

VERSION

1.01

DATE

09 October 2024

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SOURCE MATERIAL

This guide adapts rules and mechanics detailed in the [Year Zero Engine Standard \(YZE\) Reference Document \(SRD\)](#) that apply to multiple YZE games.

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PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is designed as a quick primer that Game Masters (GMs) can send to new players (or new players can obtain themselves) before their first session. Players who read through this before their first session should have general knowledge of how the game and basic mechanics work. This document is not exhaustive and details only what new players need to know for a session to go relatively smoothly. Items and mechanics not covered in this document should be covered by the GM when appropriate.

SYSTEM

This document specifically covers Year Zero Engine (YZE) games that utilize step dice, health, and resolve, but not gear dice.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

1. 1 d6, 1 d8, 1 d10, and 1 d12 (though two of each is ideal)
2. Pencil and eraser
3. Scrap paper for notes
4. Dice tray (not required, but useful)
5. Cards numbered 1-10 (just one set for all players; GM usually provides)

GAME BASICS FOR PLAYERS

SYSTEM AND ROLLING DICE

The Year Zero Engine (YZE) utilizes four core Attributes, each with a letter (A, B, C, or D) assigned as a score. Each Attribute is composed of three different Skills, which also have one of the same letters assigned as a score.

- A - d12
- B - d10
- C - d8
- D - d6

When you need to roll a Skill, you roll the die for the Skill and the die for its corresponding Attribute.

For example, the GM asks you to roll INSIGHT. You have a B in the INSIGHT skill and C in its parent EMPATHY attribute. You would roll a d10 (for INSIGHT) and a d8 (for EMPATHY).

A 6 or above on a single die is always a Success. You do not total the values of the two dice together. Rather, each die is evaluated on its own.

For example, on your INSIGHT roll, you show a 1 on the d10 and a 7 on the d8. The value on the d10 is below 6, but the value on the d8 is 6 or above. Therefore, the roll is a Success.

A roll of 10 or higher on a single die counts as two Successes. Most rolls require only one Success. Additional Successes can get you bonuses depending on the skill rolled and the situation in which the skill was rolled.

You may Push a failed roll one time, re-rolling all dice that did not show a result of 1, but you will immediately acquire a point of damage to your Health (for Strength or Agility-based (physical) rolls) or a point of Stress (for the other two Attribute-based (mental) rolls) for each 1 showing on a die. (See below for more info on Health and Resolve/Stress)

For example, you roll for INSIGHT with a d10 and d8. The d8 shows a 1 and the d10 shows a 5. You Push the roll and reroll the d10 and get an 8. Though the roll is now a Success, you take a point of Stress (Resolve damage) because of the 1 on the d8.

TAKING DAMAGE TO HEALTH AND RESOLVE

Health and Resolve have separate scores and are tracked separately.

PHYSICAL DAMAGE (TO HEALTH)

Your Player Character (PC) has a numerical score for Health. Taking damage decreases the Health score. If your PC reaches 0 Health they are Broken and may die (see below).

MENTAL DAMAGE (TO RESOLVE)

Your PC has a numerical score for Resolve. Taking Stress decreases the Resolve score. If your PC reaches 0 Resolve they are Broken and may die (see below).

BROKEN

If you exhaust your Health or your Resolve, you become Broken and are functionally incapacitated for the remainder of the scene/the combat.

You must also make a d66 roll (will be explained by the GM if the situation arises). The result of the roll ranges from a survivable injury or an injury so severe it requires immediate medical intervention to prevent death.

RECOVERY

Health and Resolve can be recovered. The GM will explain when appropriate.

COMBAT

Combat is played out in Rounds.

Initiative is drawn by both players (for their PCs) and the GM (for NPCs) using cards numbered 1 to 10. The combatant with the lowest card goes first, the second lowest card goes second, and so on. Once all initiatives have been resolved, the Round ends and a new Round starts.

On your turn, you can take one Fast Action and one Slow Action or 2 Fast Actions. You may hold one Fast Action if you wish to be able to dodge/parry an attack made against you on another combatant's turn. You may dodge/parry before your turn, but that will count as your Fast Action for your turn. You must decide to

dodge/parry before you know if your opponent's roll is successful.

You may also take a Free Action (something simple like dropping to the ground or shouting a few words) on your turn only. These do not count against your Fast/Slow Actions for the combat Round.

ZONES AND RANGES

A Zone is generally defined as the room you are in, the hallway you are in, or a 25 square foot (around 10 square meter) area (if outside). Ranges and Zones are interrelated.

RANGES

Engaged - combatant is right next to you
Short - within a few meters, in the same zone as you
Medium - up to 25 meters away, in an adjacent zone
Long - up to 100 meters away, up to four zones away
Extreme - up to 1 kilometer away

SPECIALTIES

Each character has a specialty unique to their archetype that allows them to do things others cannot. This ranges from advantage on certain skill rolls to increasing your maximum Health.