Rules for the Game

In Spellwoven you will sometimes need to resolve actions where the outcome is unclear. The rules presented here are to help provide a framework for resolution of actions...

Overview: The Basic Mechanic

Spellwoven uses a small set (3d10) dice pool roll-under skill mechanic. What this means is that whenever an action might be in question and you need to test your skill, you roll 3d10 and compare the results to a target number, usually your Skill level. Each d10 that rolls equal to or under a Skill value counts as a success, and you add up successes to get a success level. Each 1 you roll adds a bonus success. This generates a bell-shaped distribution of successes that is biased towards low numbers of successes if you Skill is less than 5, middle scores at Skill 5-6 and high scores at Skill 7 or over. Skills cannot exceed 9. The default (untrained) roll is against a Skill Level of 3, so that trained Skills start at a level of 4. So, if your Skill Level is 5:

1, 1, 2 = 5 successes (3 under or equal to 5 and two 1s)

3, 3, 5 = 3 successes (3 under or equal to 5)

1, 3, 6 = 3 successes (2 under or equal to 5 and one 1)

2, 3, 7 = 2 successes (2 under or equal to 5)

5, 7, 9 = 1 success (1 under or equal to 5)

6, 7, 7 = 0 successes (0 under or equal to 5)

Attributes and Effort

In addition to Skills you also have five Attributes. These are **Behest** (force of mind, used for magic), **Fortitude** (physical strength and endurance), **Presence** (allure, charm, social talent), **Quickness** (agility, speed and eye-hand coordination), and **Wits** (intellect and general awareness). Each Skill is linked to an Attribute. For example, the Skill **Climb** is linked to **Quickness**, whereas **Swim** is liked to **Fortitude**. When you test your Skill you have the option to expend extra **Effort** and add bonus successes. When you do this, you spend a point of **Effort** (a pool representing your state of exhaustion, this refreshes with a night's sleep), and add the relevant Attribute bonus to your number of successes. So, if you have two successes and have a relevant Attribute of three, you could spend a point of Effort to add the three plus two, and obtain five successes.

When to Roll

As a Player you will need to roll dice when the Gamesmaster calls for it. This will usually be in a situation where the outcome is chancy and dangerous, such as combat, or at least unclear, such as an argument. If an action does not have serious repercussions in the game, and if everyone at the table can agree that the outcome is reasonably obvious, then no dice rolls are required. However, the final say rests with the Gamesmaster as to when a dice roll is needed.

Types of Rolls

You will either be rolling against a static difficulty set by the Gamesmaster. For example: *everyone needs to test your Climb and Quickness against Difficult to climb the cliff quickly and safely*. This is called an unopposed roll, or a **Test of Skill**. Alternatively, you may be testing your Skill against another Character. This is called an opposed roll, a **Contest of Skill**. In this case, both Characters roll and whoever gets the highest score of successes wins.

Static Difficulty
(Test of Skill)

Static difficulties tend to be quite low, with one success needed for most tasks. Use the following as a guide:

1 = Normal difficulty

2 = Difficult

3 = Very difficult

4 = Daunting

Opposed Roll
(Contest of Skill)

In this instance, both Characters make a Skill Roll and whichever Character scores the most successes wins. If both Characters score the same number of successes, the result is a draw.

Degrees of Failure

One thing to keep in mind is that a failed roll doesn't necessarily mean that the outcome has to be narrated as an unmitigated failure. For example, when climbing a cliff there are multiple ways to fail. You could fall from the cliff and be seriously injured or killed, but this is quite drastic. Instead, you could fail in terms of speed of completion, or getting stuck half-way. Maybe you do reach the top but you take twice as long as everyone else, and they are forced to wait for you. Or you could fail in terms of the quality of success. So, you reach the top but you do so in such an ungainly way that any bystanders find your efforts amusing. Potentially, you could fail in terms of other expenses or losses: it costs you an Effort to reach the top, or you drop something valuable half-way up, or you twist your arm, making it hard to hold a weapon for a couple hours. Usually, it is up to the Gamesmaster to narrate how a failure pans out, although sometimes this can be negotiated, or even just handed to the Player to narrate, where the Gamesmaster thinks this is appropriate.

Test of Skill

An unopposed **Test of Skill** occurs when a Character attempts to do something, or react to something, that the Gamesmaster thinks is sufficiently risky or difficult to warrant a roll of the dice. Tests of Skill can provide graduations of success.

In a Test ion Skill the Gamesmaster typically calls for a 'static' or 'uncontested' **Test of Skill** and nominates a **Difficulty Level**. The Player then tests their Skill level against the nominated level. To Test your Skill roll 3d10 against your **Skill Level** or relevant **Attribute Level**, whichever is higher. Then count the number of dice that show a score equal to or under your Skill level. If you don't have the relevant Skill (i.e. if you are untrained in an area), the test defaults to the relevant Attribute Level. For each 1 you roll, gain an extra bonus success.

Difficulty levels

Use the following as a guide for static difficulty levels:

1 success required = Normal difficulty
2 successes required = Difficult
3 successes required = Very difficult
4 successes required = Daunting

Weaknesses

If you have a **Weakness**, and the weakness is used against you, your opponent gets to rolls 4d10 and take the three dice rolls that he or she wants (i.e. the opponent is allowed to 'roll at advantage'). Characters start play with one **Combat Weakness** and one **Social Weakness**, so that Weakness will tend to come into play during fights or social interactions.

Static Difficulty from Attributes

The Attributes, **Behest**, **Fortitude**, **Presence**, **Quickness**, **Wits**, are all rated on a scale of 1 to 4. This makes them convenient as Difficulty levels to employ versus **Skills**. That is, if a character is 'attacked' the **Difficulty** for success can be based off the target Character's most relevant **Attribute**. However, using Attributes as a static difficulty level works best when the Difficulty level is scaled back by one. So, if your Attribute is 4, then 3 successes would be needed to 'hit' you. If your Attribute is 1, then Difficulty reduces to zero and no roll is needed: you are 'hit' automatically. This is the exact same way that **Evasion** is calculated.

Difficulty to 'hit' = Attribute -1

- **Behest:** resisting supernatural fear, illusion or charm
- **Fortitude:** resisting physical overpowering or concussion
- **Presence:** shrugging off insults or social manipulation
- **Quickness:** dodging a physical attack
- **Wits:** Seeing through trickery, bluffs and lies

*Nimble Jen gets up from her tumble, and finds an irate housewife with an iron poker trying to block her escape. The woman is also screaming for help, so Jen needs to get away quick, before anyone else arrives. The Gamesmaster decides that Jen needs to best the housewife in a Contest of Skill to slip past and escape. The Gamesmaster states that Jen can either use **Manoeuvre** or **Sprint** to try and get around the woman. Jen's **Manoeuvre** skill is slightly higher (Rank 6), so Catherine opts for this.*

Catherine rolls 3d10 and scores a 2, 7 and 8. The roll of 2 is less than or equal to six, so this is one success.

*The housewife does not have any relevant Specialisations (either **Brawling** or **One-Handed Bludgeon** might have been suitable) so rolls against her Fighting Skill of 2. She is very lucky and rolls a 1, 2 and 8. The 1 counts for an extra bonus, so she scores three successes (1 = two successes + 2 = one success).*

This means the housewife blocks Jen's escape. However, Catherine decides to use Effort. She spends 1 Effort and adds +3 from Quickness (Jen's Quickness is 3). One success plus three is four, which allows her to beat the housewife's three successes. Jen dodges out of the room.

Example Contests of Skill

An opposed **Contest of Skill** is invoked when two characters are at odds with each other. This can be triggered during interpersonal conflicts where there is a struggle, such as a chase, argument, game or similar. In a **Contest of Skill**, both Characters test their skill, and highest score wins. The following are examples of 10 contested rolls. Each is a set of successes based on randomly generated 3d10 rolls.

Two Moderately Skilled Characters

Skill = 5	versus	Skill = 5
Successes		Successes
2	win / lose	1
3	lose / win	4
3	win / lose	0
2	draw	2
4	win / lose	3
2	win / lose	0
2	lose / win	4
0	lose / win	1
2	lose / win	3
0	lose / win	2

More Skilled versus Less Skilled

Skill = 6	versus	Skill = 4
Successes		Successes
4	win / lose	3
2	draw	2
3	win / lose	2
0	draw	0
2	draw	2
1	win / lose	0
1	win / lose	0
1	lose / win	2
0	lose / win	1
2	draw	2

Very Skilled versus Unskilled

Skill = 7	versus	Skill = 3
Successes		Successes
3	win / lose	0
4	win / lose	0
1	lose/win	2
1	win / lose	0
5	win / lose	1
1	win / lose	0
3	win / lose	2
2	draw	2
0	draw	0
2	win / lose	1

Advantage & Disadvantage

Under certain narrative situations, a Character may be at a strong **Advantage** or **Disadvantage**. In such an instance, the Gamesmaster can decide that any **Tests of Skill** (or likewise, **Contests of Skill**), be rolled 'at advantage' or 'at disadvantage'. This involves rolling 4d10 instead of 3d10 and taking the three rolls of your choice (if rolling at **Advantage**) or the three highest rolls (if rolling at **Disadvantage**).

Basic Distributions

If you are curious to see the distributions that result from changing the Skill Level, you can go to the Troll dice roller online (**http://topps.diku.dk/torbenm/troll.msp**) and enter the following code:

Note that although an option is provided to alter the number of dice in the dice pool, in practise this is extremely unusual, and would typically only happen at the Gamesmaster's discretion when something powerful and magical is either augmenting a Character beyond typical mortal limits (adding dice) or leaving a Character wretchedly weak and incapable (removing dice).

Troll Dice Code

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\ Spellwoven Core Resolution

\ Change N to alter the number of
dice (typically set at 3d10)

\ Change S to alter the Skill
Rank (typically 3-9)

N:=3d10;

S:=4;

(count S> N) + (count 1= N)
```

Skill level 10+

Skills can be increased to 10 and above. At level 10, the roll is still made against a threshold of 9, but now a roll of 1-2 scores two successes. At level 11, the roll is still made against a threshold of 9, but a roll of 1-3 counts for two successes, and so on. The upper threshold for success is always 9, so that even extraordinarily skilled Characters still stand some (albeit remote) chance of completely fumbling a roll. i.e. rolls of 10 never count towards successes.

Skill Rank	Two Successes	One Success
7	1	2-7
8	1	2-8
9	1	2-9
10	1-2	3-9
11	1-3	4-9
12	1-4	5-9
13	1-5	6-9
14	1-6	7-9
15	1-7	8-9
16	1-8	9
17	1-9	

The way this is recorded on a Character Sheet is:

Skill: 12 (4/9)

In principal, you could exceed a Skill of 18, in which case you start accumulating triple successes.

Skill Rank	Three Successes	Two Success
18	1	2-9
19	1-2	3-9
20	1-3	4-9

In practise, skills of these levels are unlikely to ever be attained during normal gameplay, and where the are it may be time to consider retiring a Character.