

DIESEL EMPIRES

Reference Sheet v31 | By Jefferson Lee | UpTooLateGames.com

BASE CARD VALUES

Base Value	Card Type
+0	Pip cards (cards numbered 2 through 10)
+1	Royal cards (Queens, Kings, Jacks)
+2	Aces
+3	Jokers

CHECKS

One Trait

- The player picks *one* (1) Trait for their Check, which determines the *suit* of the Check: Spades (S♠), Hearts (H♥), Diamonds (D♦), or Clubs (C♣).
- The Base Value of all cards (except Jokers) matching the suit of the Check are increased by one (+1), so in a Clubs (C♣)
- An outcome is *Messy*, the character will always suffer *one* (1) extra Strain at the end of a Check.

One Ability

- The player also chooses *one* (1) Ability for the Check, but the GM decides if it actually *applies* to the challenge, and a character might have *no usable* Abilities for a Check.
- If the GM decides that an Ability is *only partially applicable*, the player can still use *half its rank, rounded down*.

The Opposing Cards

- The GM draws Opposing Cards (*face-down*) equal to the *total* difficulty level.
- All of the character's *current Strain* are added to the Opposing Cards.
- Opposing Cards stay *face down* until the *outcome* is revealed, but the player *always* gets a chance to play *more* cards if the GM adds *additional* Opposing Cards.

Draw, Play, Discard

- The *total rank* of the player's chosen Trait and Ability is the number of cards that player gets to draw and play from the deck.
- You can play *any card* from your hand for your character.
- You can *discard* cards from your hand and *each discard* allows you to draw and play *one* (1) card from the deck.
- Players can play or discard cards *one* at a time until they *choose to stop* or *run out of cards*.
- Other characters can *help* with a Check, but *every helper* suffers the *same consequences* and rewards, even in *Messy* outcomes.

Check Outcome

Once the player has finished playing their cards, *reveal then subtract* the total value of the Opposing Cards from the total value of the character's cards. The *final total* determines the *outcome*:

Total	Outcome	
1+	Good	All Success, no drawbacks.
0	Mediocre	1 Success, but the character gains one (1) Strain.
-1 or lower	Bad	1 Success, but the character suffers one (1) Hit.

After a Check

- If you have *zero* (0) cards in your hand, you may *draw one* (1) card from the deck.
- On *any outcome*, you *gain one* (1) additional Strain if the outcome was *Messy*.

REST

Rest		Hand Size	Strain Left
Half	Enough safety to eat a quick meal or take a similar level of rest.	Three (3)	One (1)
Full	Enough to rest, but enough of a delay to cause problems.	Five (5)	Zero (0)

HITS

- Hits represent the *lasting physical* (injuries, poison, disease) or *mental* (panic, anxiety, psychosis) trauma inflicted on a character.
- The trauma level of a character affects the *difficulty* level of their Checks.

Trauma Level	Hits	Effect
Wounded	1 Hit	+1 Difficulty
Critical	3 Hits	+2 Difficulty

Healing Wounds

Once during a Full rest, a character can make a Check to heal Hits, and each Success heals *one* (1) Hit. Other characters *can help*, but only medical Abilities can be used.

COMBAT

- Combat Checks are *no different than regular* Checks, but the GM might sometimes *require* a Trait with the combat keyword, usually when a character is *fighting* a character that has a combat Trait.
- The combat keyword also includes a *focus* (in parenthesis), and the GM may *decide that a combat* Ability is *only partially applicable* if an action does not fit the *focus*.

MAGIC

- Ritual magic requires a *prepared* body, like a *ritual circle* or *consecrated sacrifice*. Preparing a body takes *time* and adds *extra Success* requirements, or it can be *rushed, increasing the difficulty*.
- Evocation channels magic through the *caster's body*. This allows a caster to shape effects by *simply concentrating and speaking* a rite, but it always causes *one* (1) extra Strain after the Check (even if they *succeed*). However, evocation rites can be cast as a ritual instead.
- Psychic evocation also channels magic through the *caster's body*, but *without a spoken* component, and the effects are usually *instant*. Psychic rites still cause *one* (1) extra Strain after the Check (even if they *succeed*), but psychics *cannot inscribe their rites as a ritual*.

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

Equipment and weapons modify Checks in different ways, but they can *only be used when the GM feels it is appropriate*.

Modifier	Abbreviation	Effect
Difficulty	-/+Xdf	Decreases or increases the difficulty of a Check by X.
Successes	+/-XS	Increases or decreases the number of Successes of a Check's outcome by X, <i>regardless</i> of the outcome.
Outcome	+/-XCh	Increases or decreases the <i>final total</i> of a Check by X.

These modifiers can be *combined*, so -1df/+1S will reduce the difficulty of a Check by *one* (1), and add *one* (1) Success to the outcome.