Taernica Core

Taernica is a role-playing system meant to be easy to pick up and extend. These rules assume some knowledge of role-playing games.

To play, you need dice and some imagination. Players each control one in-game character, and the Referee controls everything else in the game, be it other characters, monsters, situations, the weather, and interprets the rules. There can be any number of players but typically only one Referee.

Game mechanics

Taernica revolves around four primary **feats** and any number of **skills**, which can be acquired and evolved during the game. Every character has the same feats, but the skills differ.

- *Agility (shortened to A)* represents movement and athletic talent.
- *Charisma (C)* covers personality, likeability and influence.
- *Mind (M)* represents mental strength, ability to focus, and sanity.
- *Strength (S)* is for all things concerning physical strength.

Every feat has a pool of six-sided dice. When you need to check if an action is successful or not, you roll the number of the dice in the relevant feat and pick a result, the higher the better.

Skills represent special talents, knowledge, or similar. It's a specific thing and can't be too broad, they're not professions. They can be almost anything, from *Horseback riding* to *Cooking*. Skills are a positive number, such as *Skiing +2*. Whenever an action is performed and there's a relevant skill, that number will be added to the result.

Tests

Whenever something happens that might not always have a positive outcome, you do a check against a **difficulty**. The difficulty is a value that has to be met or exceeded by the dice roll in the relevant feat, adding the value of any skill relevant to the action taken. The player roll all the dice in the feat chosen, but only the highest value counts. Add the value of a relevant skill, if there is one, and hopefully this is **the same or higher than the difficulty** of the test.

So what happens? That depends on the situation and is up to the Referee to interpret, but the results give us something to go on. The closer the call, the smaller the success or failure. The Referee decides what happens, if damage is dealt, or how successful a test is based on the result.

> **Example:** Agent Anna is fleeing from evil henchmen down the mountain on skis, and wants to jump a gorge. The Referee declares the difficulty to be 5. She rolls her Agility dice and the highest value is 4, which would've meant that Anna would've plummeted to her death. Luckily, Agent Anna has the skill Skiing +2 so she adds two to her four, bringing the total value up to 6. That's more than 5 so she clear the jump, leaving the henchmen behind.

Difficulty

The Referee decides how difficult a test is. The following guidelines can help:

2 - Very easy
3 - Easy
4 - Somewhat challenging
5 - Challenging
6 - Difficult
7 - Hard
8 - Very hard
9+ - Nigh impossible

As you can see, skills are necessary to manage the higher difficulties.

Perfect results

If you roll two dice or more and get the same value on any of the dice, you get to count all of the same value if you like, whichever is higher. That means that rolling three dice and getting two 3s counts as 6 (2x3=6). If you roll three 2s that'd also be 6 (3x2=6). If you roll two 3s and two 5s, you would count the two 5s as they're the higher result, you can't combine different pairs.

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Perfect results only apply to tests (including combat), not other rolls such as determining damage.

Combat

All combat situations are tests but rather than using a set difficulty, the combatants all roll dice and compare results. The winner inflicts damage on the loser, and the difference between the results decide by how much.

Combat is hectic and reactive, so who moves first should matter. At the start of the first round, all combatants roll a dice. The one with the highest value wins the initiative, and has an automatic +1 on the result this round. If combat continues, no one has the initiative (unless otherwise stated) and no such roll is necessary.

If there are more than two combatants, you need to declare who's attacking who at the start of each round.

Close combat

Close combat uses either Strength (heavy weapons) or Agility (light weapons). Unarmored combat can use either feat. All combatants roll their dice and add any relevant skill. The highest result wins, dealing damage to their opponent (see Health below). If it's a tie, nothing happens and you move on to the next round.

Long range combat

Long range combat is a little different because all participants might not be firing a weapon. When firing, the Mind feat is used, and any relevant skill. When being fired upon, Agility is used, and any relevant skill can be added if the target is actively trying to avoid being hit (otherwise no skill can be used, but Agility is still rolled). If all combatants are firing at each other, use Mind rather than Agility as the focus is deemed more important, and the relevant skill for firing.

Other than that, it's the same as close combat: The highest result wins, dealing damage on their opponent (see Health below), and ties does nothing.

Health

Health is measured in the number of **wounds** a character can take before becoming unconscious and ultimately dying. A healthy character has no wounds at all, and the more wounds you get, the closer to death you are. You heal (i.e., remove) a wound per day of rest in a healthy environment.

Effects of wounds

The closer you get to your limit of wounds, the more severe negative effect affect your tests (including combat).

- 2 wounds left: -1 to all tests
- 1 wound left: skills can't be used in tests

These are cumulative, so if you have 1 wound left you have -1 to your result, and even if you have relevant skills you can't use them.

If you have no wounds left, you pass out and you can't defend yourself (i.e., no dice rolls in combat/tests). Left unattended, or damaged again, will kill you. You never get negative wounds, you just reach your limit, no matter the amount of wounds dealt, unless the Referee declares you dead on the spot due to overwhelming damage.

Taking and dealing damage

Damage is decided based on the amount you lose a test by. This can be failure to overcome a difficulty, or a result of combat.

When taking damage, the one dealing rolls as many dice as the difference was. If you lost by two in close combat, for example, the winner will roll two dice, and count the highest value. The result will decide how many wounds you'll get, depending on what sort of damage it is. Different things are more likely to inflict more wounds. Getting punched in a fistfight is bad enough, but getting stabbed by a knife is worse. That's why each type of damage does different amounts of wounds depending on the result.

- *Unarmed:* 1-3 = 1 wound, 4-5 = 2 wounds, 6 = 3 wounds.
- *Light weapons:* 1-2 = 1 wound, 3-4 = 2 wounds, 5 = 3 wounds, 6 = 4 wounds.
- *Medium weapons:* 1 = 1 wound, 2-3 = 2 wounds, 4 = 3 wounds, 5 = 4 wounds, 6 = 5 wounds.

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- *Heavy weapons:* 1 = 1 wound, 2 = 2 wounds, 3 = 3 wounds, 4 = 4 wounds, 5 = 5 wounds, 6 = 6 wounds.

Unarmed attacks include punches, kicks, and similar attacks. Light weapons include knives, daggers, small clubs, and small firearms. Medium weapons include swords, axes, bows, handguns, and standard rifles. Heavy weapons include two-handed weapons, crossbows, shotguns, powerful rifles, and heavy weapons overall. Note that specific weapons will have their own damage range.

If you're wearing any kind of armor, that can negate one or more wounds, possibly removing damage altogether.

- *Light armor (leather, kevlar):* -1 wound
- *Medium armor (chainmail, combat armor):* -2 wounds
- *Heavy armor (plate, steel):* -3 wounds

The Referee might decide that armor has no effect against inflicted damage due to the situation.

Example: Agent Anna is in a shootout and rolls a 3 on her Mind-dice. She has the skill *Pistols +2* so that brings her up to a total of 5. Unfortunately, the evil henchman shooting at her has a total of 8, so she loses by 3 (8-5=3). The Referee rolls three dice to determine how many wounds are being dealt and the highest value is a 4. The henchman has a handgun (medium projectile weapon above), so that means that it does 3 wounds. Luckily Anna's wearing her kevlar vest that negates 1 wound, so she only takes 2 wounds in damage (3-1=2).

Creating a character

You get 10 dice to spend on feats and 10 points to spend on skills. No feat can have more than 4 dice, nor less than 1. Each +1 to a skill cost 1 point up to +3, then each additional +1 above that costs 2 points. When picking skills, remember that they are specific things, not too broad. The Referee has to approve chosen skills.

It's recommended to write a few lines about why your character has the skills he or she has.

To determine your health and how many wounds you can take, roll two dice. You may re-roll the lowest dice one if you like. This is your total amount of wounds.

Example:
Name: Anna Anderson
Occupation: Secret agent
Feats:

- Agility: 3 dice
- Charisma: 3 dice
- Mind: 3 dice
- Strength: 1 dice

Skills:

- Pistols +2
- Skiing +2
- Computers +1
- Diplomacy +3
- Sneaking +2

Background: Anna was headhunted in Chamonix after having blackmailed her competition in the downhill competition. She got training at a black ops facility and excelled at both social gatherings and breaking and entering jobs. Now she's out on the field for the first time.

Using Taernica

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