



Sickness at Daraton

A Talespinner Adventure

Appendix B

Rules

This document contains a limited ruleset for use with *Sickness at Daraton* module for Talespinner.

This document does not need to be printed if you can view it on a tablet or laptop. If you do print, start at page 2.

Copyright © 2019 Kevin Hayes

All rights reserved

Art credits: Kevin Hayes and Rosanna Lam

Appendix B

Rules

The rules for running this module are simple and intuitive. Characters have six Attributes, all represented on the character sheet by a special icon:

-  **Agility**
-  **Awareness**
-  **Endurance**
-  **Intelligence**
-  **Personality**
-  **Strength**

When a character takes an action, the Narrator may call for a *check*. To make a check, roll a d6 and add the result to the most appropriate Attribute. This total is compared to the check's *difficulty*. The following table has a range of common difficulties:

Effortless	6
Easy	8
Average	10
Challenging	12
Hard	14
Formidable	16
Epic	18

If the check result is equal to or higher than the difficulty, the action succeeds. If the result is lower, the action fails. If the result shows a 1 or a 6, something special may happen (see Boons and Banes below).

The **threshold** of a successful check is the difference between the difficulty and the result (for example, an elf gets 18 on a difficulty 14 check, so she has a threshold of 4). Getting a higher threshold might result in a better outcome for a given action.

Boons and Banes

When a check results in a natural 1 or 6 being rolled, a Boon or a Bane may occur.

Boon: If the die shows a 6 make a *Fortune Test* (roll 1 die). If the test results in 4, 5 or 6, a Boon occurs! The player can choose one of the following effects:

- Gain +4 to the check.
- Add a Bonus Die to you or an ally on a related check, this round or the following round.
- Something special happens. The Narrator can come up with something beneficial that happens linked to the action, or the module may offer an option for a Boon result.

Bane: If the die shows a 1 make a *Fortune Test* (roll 1 die). If the Fortune test shows a 1, 2 or 3, a Bane occurs! Something bad happens of the Narrator's choice. A Bane may not be disastrous, but it could complicate matters. Examples include:

- Suffer -4 to the check.
- Inflict a Negative Die on you or an ally for a related check, this round or the next round.
- Something unfortunate happens linked to the action being performed.

Bonus Dice and Negative Dice

In some actions a character will add one or more Bonus Dice, gained from different sources. When using Bonus Dice, roll them together with the normal die, and choose the die with highest number. Bonus Dice give you a much higher chance of succeeding or getting a Boon.

If a character suffers one or more Negative Dice, they are rolled like Bonus Dice, but the lowest die is chosen instead. This increases the chance of failure or suffering a Bane.

Bonus and Negative Dice cancel each other out. For instance, if you have 3 Bonus Dice but suffer 2 Negative Dice, you only gain 1 Bonus Die on the check. If there are an equal number of Bonus and Negative Dice, roll the check as normal.

Scene descriptions in *Sickness at Daraton* include advice for using Bonus and Negative Dice. "Bonus Dice" is shortened to "**BD**" in blue text, while "Negative Dice" is shortened to "**ND**" in red text.

Things that grant Bonus Dice:

- Skills grant 1 Bonus Die when used on appropriate checks.
- Special abilities, spells and Wonders may grant Bonus Dice.
- Enemies who would normally suffer a Negative Die instead grant you a Bonus Die to any resisted check.
- Equipment and circumstances might offer Bonus Dice.

Things that inflict Negative Dice:

- Conditions are special Traits which inflict Negative Dice on one or more Attributes. The effects of Conditions stack.
- Enemies who would normally gain a Bonus Die instead grant you a Negative Die to any resisted check.
- Situations and environments can inflict Negative Dice as the Narrator sees fit.

Scenes and Encounters

Talespinner stories are broken up into scenes. Each scene usually takes place in one location and encompasses events that flow into each other. There are two basic types of scenes in Talespinner: *narrative scenes* and *encounters*.

Narrative scenes are fairly light on rules, and the story flows naturally, each player stating what they want to do when they want to do it. Players can talk to each other, interact with Narrator Characters (NCs), investigate the area, rest, eat a meal, or do anything else within the limits of their abilities. Narrative scenes are not meant to be action-packed scenes. That's where encounters come in.

Encounters are intense scenes full of action and as such require a few systems to let you easily navigate the action. Rules covering movement, time, character actions, environmental terrain and other factors aid the Narrator in keeping everything fair, consistent and practical.

Before running an encounter, you'll need the maps, minis and tokens ready to use. This will require printing and cutting out these elements before the game starts, and keeping them together for ease of use. We recommend using a clip to keep all the enemy tokens together, another clip for the scene's clue tokens, and for the underground scene, a clip for all the tiles as well. Each encounter in the module will list those elements used in the scene.

Running encounters

Unlike narrative scenes where players describe what their characters do in a natural flow, encounters break time into *rounds*. Each round represents about six seconds. Characters take *actions* in each round. An action is any activity that results in a specific outcome and could be completed within a few seconds.



You can take up to two actions in a round. You don't have to use all your actions. Doing nothing and simply waiting is perfectly fine if the situation calls for it. Actions include moving, searching an area, hiding, wrestling with an enemy, casting a spell, climbing a tree, and so forth. A list of sample actions is included on the next page.

Most actions require a check to be made. In many cases, the player has the option of using one of two Attributes. The difficulty is usually listed in the action description. The Narrator has the final say.

Some things you may do will not require an action. These are usually checks to avoid getting Conditions, or to avoid an attack. Certain special abilities may use an action, or they may be used as part of another action.

Spaces and terrain



In an encounter the play area is made up of *spaces*. Each space represents an area roughly 5 metres across. Outdoor spaces are bordered with a faint hexagonal line, while indoor spaces have cracks in the ground to indicate their borders. Maps and game tiles are supplied in *Appendix C* to represent spaces. Spaces are rarely featureless. Some spaces are more difficult to navigate than others. Talespinner breaks down terrain into four basic types:


- **Open ground** is clear of obstacles and can be moved through with ease. You can move through open ground at no penalty.
- **Difficult terrain** represents a space covered in undergrowth, snow, mud, tall grass, crowds, debris or furniture. Using a second movement action in the same round through difficult terrain requires making an  **Agility** or  **Strength** check. The Narrator sets the difficulty, but it is usually 12. *Success:* You can proceed normally. *Failure:* You are forced to stop. *Bane:* You are knocked down and suffer the *Obvious Condition*.

- **Obstructions** block or hinder access to another space and are placed where two spaces meet. Some obstructions might require a check to get past, but in many cases it is just easier to go around. In this module, there are three kinds of obstructions:

Creeks require an  **Agility** or  **Strength** (Jump) check, difficulty 10, to leap over.

Fail: you make splashing sounds, gaining the *Obvious Condition*. Fairies and acrobats can ignore this obstruction.

Bushes require a  **Strength** check (Power) to push through (gain the *Obvious Condition*) or an  **Agility** check (Tumble) to dart through, both difficulty 12. *Fail:* you are unable to move past and must end your turn. *Bane:* you get a nasty gash and suffer an *Injured Condition*. Bushes also provide cover for sneaking (see page 5). Fairies and acrobats can ignore this obstruction.

Doors require a key, or a  **Strength** check (Power), difficulty 14, to break through (suffer an *Obvious Condition*). *Success:* you break through. *Fail:* you cannot break through. *Bane:* you fail to break through and suffer an *Injured Condition*.

- **Miscellaneous terrain** make up various scene elements that might help or hinder character movement. In this module, trees and boulders are the only terrain of this type and both provide cover for sneaking around. Trees also provide a way into the upper levels of branches (see *Using the trees*, page 6).

Time and actions

Unlike narrative scenes, where players describe what their characters do with relative freedom, encounters break time into *rounds*. Each round represents six seconds. **Characters can take two actions in a round.** An action is any activity that results in a specific outcome and could be completed within a few seconds. Here are a few options:

Move

You move to an adjacent space. If you move more than once in a round you gain the *Obvious Condition*. You have several options when moving:

- **Walk:** Move 1 space. If you use this option twice in a round you are running. If you run through difficult terrain, make an 🏃 **Agility** or 🦊 **Strength** check (Run). *Success:* move 1 space. *Fail:* you cannot move this round. *Bane:* you trip and become prone.
- **Jump:** Vault over an obstruction. Make an 🏃 **Agility** or 🦊 **Strength** check (Jump), difficulty 10. *Success:* move up or down one level. *Fail:* you cannot climb this round. *Bane:* you fall and become prone, suffering an *Injured Condition* if falling from a height.
- **Climb:** Move up or down one level (3 metres). Make an 🏃 **Agility** or 🦊 **Strength** check (Climb), difficulty 10. *Success:* move up or down one level. *Fail:* you cannot climb this round. *Bane:* you become prone and take one *Injured Condition* if falling from a height.
- **Sneak:** You move quietly in the shadows. Move 1 space. Make an 🏃 **Agility** or 👁 **Awareness** check (Sneak). The result replaces your normal base stealth rating for the round. See the full rules for stealth, cover and concealment on page 5.

Search

You focus your attention on an area, trying to detect anything hidden. Pick a space and make an 👁 **Awareness** or 🧠 **Intelligence** check (Search). The search difficulty is listed for each clue or NC in the adventure module. If you are searching a space you are not in you suffer **1 ND**.

Success: hidden Narrator Characters (NCs) and clues are revealed.

Fail: you are unable to find anything this time.

Bane: you think you've found something and waste time checking it out. Lose your next action.

Investigate

You take a closer look at something of interest. Turn a clue token over if in line of sight. Some clues require you to be in the same space. The Narrator reveals information about the clue, including any events that can be triggered.

You can use this action to trigger an event, including one you have just investigated with the same action. Some clues require your character to be in the same space. You may also have to make a check in order to successfully trigger the event. The exact triggering requirements are listed in the clue descriptions in the adventure module.

Aid

You help one of your allies. You grant **1 BD** to an ally's action or resistance check against an enemy or hazard (but not a disease, poison, curse or spell). A skill can be used if one has not already been used by the target. Up to two Aid actions can be applied to a single ally.

Capture

You attempt to wrestle and pin an enemy. Make an 🏃 **Agility** or 🦊 **Strength** check (Wrestle), difficulty of the enemy's Defence vs Wrestle.

Success: the target suffers the *Trapped Condition*. You can maintain the hold each round by repeating the check with **1 BD**.

Fail: you are unable to capture the target.

Bane: you miscalculate and open yourself up to an enemy's attack. You suffer **1 ND** on any defence checks this round.

Intimidate

You make enemies think twice about attacking. Make a 😬 **Personality** or 🦊 **Strength** check (Intimidate), with a difficulty of the highest Defence vs Intimidate in the target space. Gain **1 BD** if you outnumber enemies in the same space, suffer **1 ND** if the opposite is true.

Success: inflict a *Shaken Condition* on all targets in the target space.

Fail: you do not impress the enemies.

Bane: you enrage one of the targets, granting them 1 Resolve.

Other actions

You can do things not covered by the above actions, such as opening a door, picking up an object, moving furniture, or just waiting. Some characters also have special actions granted by their abilities. The Narrator will tell you what checks should be made on miscellaneous actions.

Stealth

There are times when avoiding notice is the best option. Moving unseen can be challenging, especially with more than one enemy, but if you use your environment and don't draw attention, your enemies will never catch a glimpse.

Use the **Sneak** action whenever you want to avoid notice. Make an 🕒 **Agility** or 👁️ **Awareness** check (Sneak). Remember that moving more than one space a round reduces your stealth rating by 2. Compare the result to the NC's alertness rating and see the results below.

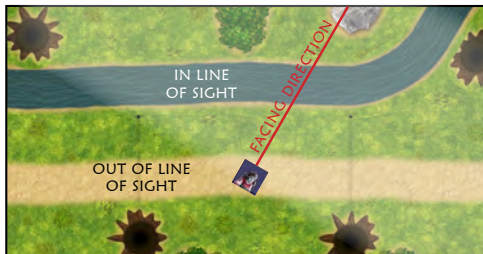
When in concealment:

- If your stealth is higher you remain hidden.
- If your stealth is lower you are detected.
- If you suffer a Bane on a Sneak action you gain the *Obvious* Condition.

When in plain view:

- If your stealth is higher check the NC's line of sight (see below). You are spotted if in line of sight, otherwise you are hidden.
- If your stealth is lower you are spotted.

Line of sight and facing: An NC who moves, uses an action, speaks to someone, or detects something will face a specific direction. Characters in front of the NC are in line of sight. Characters behind the NC cannot be spotted unless they are detected.



If it is not clear which direction an NC should face (perhaps they are not engaged in an action), roll a d6 and use the result to choose one of the six borders of the NC's space. This is the direction they are facing that round.

Hidden, detected or spotted?

- **Hidden:** you remain unseen and undetected.
- **Detected:** your movements have drawn attention but you are not yet spotted. NCs will investigate the disturbance, either by taking a **Watch** action (see below), or by moving to investigate. If you are using a play map, the Narrator should place an **Alert marker** on your space.
- **Spotted:** an NC who sees you will act accordingly, either calling out, moving to attack, or taking any other appropriate action.

Concealment

Concealment keeps a character out of plain view, making them much harder to spot. The following things provide concealment.

- **Cover:** Any cover that is the same size category as the character. A person's cover does not affect their own ability to see, unless it is too large to see past, like a high wall.
- **Poor visibility:** Smoke, fog, tall grass, treetop foliage, dense crowds, all provide concealment for everyone in the space as well as anyone trying to see through it.
- **Darkness:** In **dim light**, the character has concealment if they are one or more spaces away from an NC. In **full darkness**, no-one can be spotted. Sources of light like torches or magic can eliminate darkness.
- **Treetops:** Treetop spaces provide **cover**. For full rules on using treetops, see next page.

Focus zone

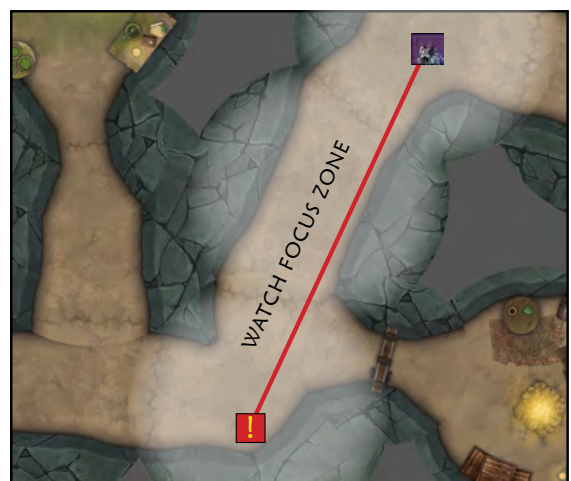
Every NC has a **focus zone** which includes their space and all adjacent spaces. NC's receive a +2 bonus to their alertness ratings in their focus zone.

In the treetops, the NC's focus zone is the treetop space and all adjacent normal spaces. See the rules for using trees on the next page.

NC special action: Watch

This special action is used to search for whatever drew the NC's attention, such as an Alert marker. The NC's focus zone changes. Instead of all adjacent spaces, draw an invisible line between the NC and the alert marker. All spaces that touch this line are now part of the new focus zone.

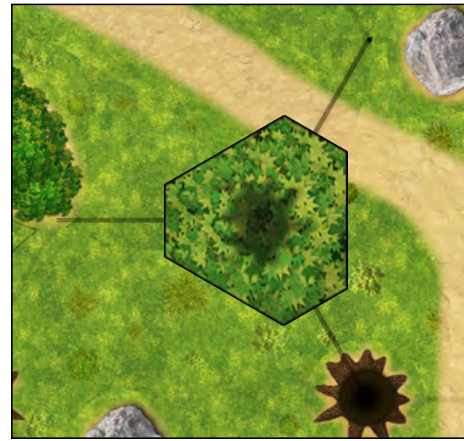
If the NC fails to spot anything for one round, they will likely move toward the alert marker on their turn. If the NC moves to the marker, the marker is removed and the Narrator decides what the NC does next.



Using the trees


Treetop tiles are placed when needed over trees at *junctions* (the point where three spaces meet). Make sure the narrow edges of the tile point in the same direction as the border lines beneath them, as in the example opposite.

The Narrator also uses treetop tiles when placing NCs or clue tokens that are in the treetop level. Treetop tiles should only be used when needed, and can be taken off the map if there is nothing on them. Removing unneeded treetop tiles reduces clutter on the play map.

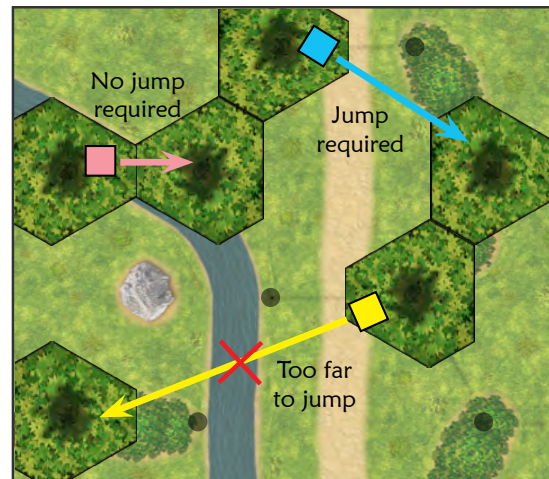


Trees and movement

Climbing a tree: You can climb into or out of a tree using the climb option of the Move action.

Moving in the treetops: You can use a Move action to shift to an adjacent treetop tile. Moving more than one space through the treetops requires an  **Agility** check (Balance or Climb), difficulty 10.

Jumping between trees: Use a Move (jump) action to leap or swing to a treetop space two junctions away. Treetop spaces that are three or more junctions away are too far to jump. Champions can use their *Amazing Display* ability to increase their jumping distance to three junctions instead of two.



Trees and stealth

On the ground: Tree trunks provide cover.

In the treetops: Treetop spaces provide cover. Additionally, surrounding tree foliage is difficult to see through. All normal intervening spaces that border trees count as poor visibility, both ways.

In the example (right), Ellomayne is in the treetops two spaces away from a goblin. Both she and the goblin have concealment from each other due to the intervening tree foliage in the space between them.

When the goblin moves toward Ellomayne, he comes into full view because there is no longer an intervening space, though Ellomayne is still in cover thanks to the treetop space she occupies.



Clues and Events

In *Sickness at Daraton*, scenes will contain certain clues that reveal information about the scene. Clues may not be immediately obvious but they can be revealed by searching the area. To look for clues, take a Search action. A character can search for clues in their space at no penalty or in another space in line of sight at **1 ND**. The Narrator compares the check result to each clue's search difficulty (if any), which is noted in the adventure module. If a clue is detected, the Narrator places the clue's token on the space. A character can then investigate a clue by using an action. If the character investigates the clue, the Narrator reveals the clue to be either information or an event trigger:



Information aids the character by revealing important details in the scene.




Event Triggers can be activated to change one or more elements in a scene. See below for details on triggering events.

Triggering an event

Once a player has identified a trigger, they can activate it as part of the same action, such as pushing a boulder down a hill, using a key to open a door, or saying an incantation to activate a magical portal. This might require a check to be made. The boulder may need a Strength check, while an incantation could call for an Intelligence check.

Some events can be activated in a series or chain, whereby one event will trigger a second event, which triggers a third, and so on. Part of the fun of puzzle-solving in *Talespinner* is identifying chained events and setting them off. Most chained events can be partially activated by activating the second or third in the chain.

To figure out whether a triggered event is part of a chain, you can make an  **Intelligence** check (difficulty 10-14, as indicated in the module). Success will automatically reveal the next trigger in the chain.

Inner Qualities and special abilities

Characters have certain traits that can be used in their adventures:

Inner Qualities are characteristics that express your spirit. Exhausting a Quality is called *Focusing*.

Enhancements are permanent effects and are always active. They don't cost anything to use.

Talents must be activated either as an action or as part of another action. Talents can be Exhausted, or a character can use it by Focusing instead.

Wonders are magical items that can be used to expand a character's abilities. They must be Exhausted to access their abilities.

Companions are magical creatures that have allied themselves to a Warden and serve as friends and guardians. Companions can be Exhausted to tap into a special ability.

Special abilities may require you to expend some of your power in one of two ways:

- **Exhaust:** Turn over the card or mark off the circle next to the trait on the sheet.
- **Focus:** Exhaust an Inner Quality.
- **Focus or Exhaust:** Choose whichever you wish.

An Exhausted ability or item cannot be used again until it is *Recovered*. To Exhaust something, simply turn the appropriate card over to reveal the Exhausted side, or else mark on your character sheet that the ability or item has been Exhausted.

Many special abilities call on you to **Focus** instead, allowing you to Exhaust an Inner Quality in place of the ability. See *Recovery and Rest*, below, for rules on Recovering special abilities and Inner Qualities.

Rest and Recovery

You can Recover Exhausted special abilities and Inner Qualities simply by resting. Rest also allows you to recover from Conditions (see next page). When instructed to make a **Recovery Test**, roll a single d6. On a 4 or better, you can Recover the trait or remove the Condition. There are three types of rest a character can take:

- A **quick break** lasts for ten minutes. Make a Recovery Test for each Exhausted Inner Quality. Additionally, make a Recovery Test for all Conditions that are not *Serious* or *Persistent*.
- A **long rest** lasts one hour. You automatically Recover all Inner Qualities and remove all Conditions that are not *Serious* or *Persistent*. Make a Recovery Test for each Exhausted special ability.
- A **sleep** lasts at least six hours. You automatically Recover all Inner Qualities and special abilities, and remove all Conditions that are not *Serious* or *Persistent*. Make a Recovery Test for each *Serious* Condition (see Conditions, next page). *Persistent* Conditions are not affected.

Note: if you sleep on bare ground in the cold, you suffer **1 ND** to Recovery Tests. If you have a bedroll and blanket, test as normal. If you sleep in a comfortable bed in the warm, you gain **1 BD** to Recovery Tests. This is in addition to any Bonus Dice on Recovery gained from eating food.

Characters can rest at any time, but be aware that resting might not always be a good idea. Linger in a hazardous area might attract lurking dangers, and the quest might need to be completed in a short time. Use rests only when you need them.

Conditions

Instead of "hit points" or a "health" rating, the wellbeing of characters in *Talespinner* is tracked using Conditions. Conditions are various effects that hamper a character's ability to function. Many hazards can result in a Condition, either through mishap or through other characters inflicting them.

Characters can have multiple Conditions, but only Conditions marked as [Cumulative] can be taken more than once. Therefore if a character is *Dazzled*, they cannot receive another *Dazzled* Condition.

Some Conditions carry a Negative Die penalty. If a character has 4 or more Negative Dice on a single Attribute gained from any combination of Conditions, the character becomes **Overwhelmed**. The character has fallen unconscious or is hampered so much that they are unable to take any actions or move by themselves. When a character has less than 4 Negative Dice on a single Attribute, they are no longer Overwhelmed.


If you are using Condition cards, place any you receive next to your character sheet in line with your Attributes. This allows you to keep track of how many Negative Dice you have on each Attribute for the purposes of making checks and to track how close you are to being Overwhelmed.

Condition Keywords

Certain Conditions are marked with keywords in square brackets, which indicates something special.

[Cumulative] Conditions can be taken multiple times, stacking their effects. Many cumulative Conditions are also marked [Hardship].

[Fleeting] Conditions will only last a few seconds. At the end of each round, make a Recovery Test for each Fleeting Condition. On a 4 or more, the Condition ends.








[Hardship] Conditions can be resisted with an  **Endurance** check (Resist Hardship), difficulty 12. If the check is successful, the Condition is avoided. The Narrator may increase the difficulty of this check, depending on the circumstances. Many hardship Conditions are also marked [Cumulative].

[Serious] Conditions last much longer than normal and can be dangerous to your health. Only sleep, medicine or treatment can remove Serious Conditions. If the Condition has no duration, the character can make a Recovery Test after they sleep.

[Persistent] Conditions cannot be removed by resting. Only special treatments and medicines, or magical remedies, can remove these Conditions.

Sample Conditions

Player characters apply the following Conditions as they are written. For Conditions on NCs, simply apply any listed Negative Dice as Bonus Dice on player character actions if resisted by an NC. For example, add 2 BD to wrestle a goblin who has the *Clumsy* Condition.

- **Bewildered:** Your sense of direction is scrambled. Your next action will be directed at a random space (if moving) or a random valid target.
- **Blind:** You cannot see. All checks where seeing could affect the outcome suffer **2 ND**. This does not count towards becoming Overwhelmed.
- **Clumsy:** You stumble around and drop things due to poor coordination. You suffer **2 ND** on all  **Agility** checks.
- **Dazzled:** Your senses are overpowered and you have trouble seeing or hearing anything around you. You suffer **2 ND** on all  **Awareness** checks.
- **Dizzy:** Your sense of balance shifts and you stumble about. You suffer **1 ND** to all  **Agility** and  **Awareness** checks.
- **Drained:** [Cumulative, Fleeting] You have expended great amounts of energy. You suffer **1 ND** to all Attributes.
- **Fatigued:** Your limbs feel very heavy, they are so tired. You suffer **1 ND** on all  **Strength** and  **Endurance** checks.
- **Frail:** Your resistance to hardship has been severely hampered. You suffer **2 ND** on all  **Endurance** checks.
- **Injured:** [Hardship, Cumulative, Serious] You are hurt and have sustained an injury. You suffer **1 ND** to all Attributes.
- **Obvious:** [1 round] Your actions are drawing attention to yourself. You suffer -4 to your stealth rating.
- **Shaken:** [1 round] You are startled or surprised. You suffer **1 ND** to all checks until the beginning of your next turn.
- **Slow:** [Special] Your movements have been hampered. You can use only one action per round.
- **Trapped:** You are caught and cannot move. You suffer **2 ND** on all physical actions. This does not count towards being Overwhelmed.

Recovering from Conditions

Many Conditions can be removed with rest. Some Conditions require specialised treatment or certain medicines and healing techniques. Certain serious Conditions can only be treated magically or they simply fade away in a set time.

Conditions on enemies

Some actions and special abilities allow a character to inflict Conditions on enemies. Many enemies will retreat if they take Conditions. Instead of using the Condition cards for enemies you can keep track of their Conditions with the NC Status Sheet found in *Appendix C: Cards & Handouts*, page 11.

Narrator Characters (NCs)

Any creatures or Freefolk, including enemies, not controlled by a player are called Narrator Characters (NCs for short). NCs are controlled by the Narrator and can offer information or serve as enemies or allies to the characters in their adventures.

NCs have a trait called *Attitude*, which indicates how they react to the characters when they first meet them. Attitude can change if there is enough reason.

Loyal NCs will do almost anything for the character, even if it is dangerous. Player characters are loyal to each other and to their families.

Friendly NCs will do many things without the need for payment, such as share information or offer directions, even provide a free meal or two.

Neutral NCs have no particular feelings about the characters and can be convinced to share information or items if they are rewarded for it. Most Freefolk are neutral to the characters.

Suspicious NCs are unfriendly, but can be convinced to share information or items for a hefty reward or careful negotiation. They will avoid the characters if they can help it, and will watch their every move.


Hostile NCs are actively opposed to the characters and work to thwart their objectives, or capture them for their own reasons. Such NCs are considered the enemies of the characters.


Enemies and conflict

Some scenes will involve the characters going up against hostile NCs. Making checks for large numbers of enemies could become cumbersome so in order to minimise this problem the Narrator doesn't roll for most NC actions. Instead, checks directed at the characters will often allow resistance checks to avoid them. The module will advise the Narrator about any checks needed to resist NC actions.

Instead of harming enemies (which the Silver Geas of the Wardens forbids), characters must find other ways to defeat them. Enemies in Talespinner have a trait called *Resolve*, which measures their morale and willingness to keep fighting. Draining an opponent's Resolve is the key to defeating them by exploiting their *Weaknesses*.

Weaknesses represent fears and vulnerabilities that can be exploited by characters to drain Resolve. Enemies usually have a number of Weaknesses, which can differ between creature types. Some enemies give up when they see their leader retreating, while others will lose Resolve if they are confronted by something they instinctively fear. Environmental elements (like event triggers) may offer even more ways to Defeat an opponent during a scene.

When entering an encounter, the first thing for characters to do is identify any opponents and determine their Weaknesses. Characters can use their knowledge by making an  **Intelligence** check, difficulty 10 (for common enemies like goblins), 12 (for famous named characters) or higher (for obscure, rare or unique enemies shrouded in mystery). If successful, the Narrator can advise the character on the general nature of their weaknesses and let the players work out how best to defeat them.

Even if knowledge fails or isn't used, a character can observe an opponent for a full minute to determine their Weaknesses. After a minute of observation, make an  **Awareness** check, difficulty 12. A character can spend more time observing, making a check each minute. Each successful check reveals a Weakness.

Defeat Test: When an enemy's Weakness is triggered, the player or Narrator makes a Defeat Test. Roll a d6, adding any Bonus Dice listed in the enemy's Weakness. Consult the table below:

1-3: nothing happens.

4-6: the opponent loses 1 point of Resolve.

Once an opponent's Resolve is reduced to zero they are Defeated. A Defeated opponent is no longer a threat and will attempt to flee, taking the quickest, safest route to exit the scene, or towards a hiding spot if they have a good chance of hiding. An opponent who cannot flee, or who feels that fleeing is not the best option, will surrender instead. Remove the Defeated enemy's mini from the map.

See the next page for rules on NC packs and a breakdown of the NC cards used in this module.

Packs

A pack of NCs is treated in most ways as a single creature with multiple Resolve (1 for each member). A pack takes actions as a single unit.

Pack actions: The pack makes one group action together. For every 2 members (round down), the pack inflicts **1 ND** on rolls to resist its actions, in addition to modifiers from skills, equipment, etc.

Stealth and Alertness: A pack is treated as a single individual for the purposes of stealth, though some pieces of cover will not hide it. A pack using the Watch action can watch multiple directions at once (as many directions as it has members).

Intimidation and influence: An **Intimidate** action used on a pack works as normal and if successful inflicts the Shaken Condition on all members, disbanding the pack (see *leaving a pack*, opposite). An **Influence** action (bard only) targeting a pack suffers **1 ND** for each Resolve in the pack. If successful, all pack members change their Attitude.

Suffering Conditions: Any member of a pack who receives a Condition is removed from the pack and treated as an individual. See below for the rules on what happens when an NC leaves a pack.

Leaving a pack: Pack members are forced out of a pack by receiving Conditions. For each member forced out, reduce the pack's Resolve by one and place a single enemy token on the map next to the pack. Creatures forced out of a pack take independent actions but suffer the *Demoralised* Condition for as long as they are not part of the pack. Once an individual no longer suffers a Condition it is free to rejoin the pack. If the pack is down to two members the pack is disbanded and all members act as individuals.

Pack members can choose to leave the pack for short periods ("scatter and hide!" "go look in that room!"). If an individual leaves a pack by their own choice (they were not forced to leave) they do not suffer the *Demoralised* Condition.

NC cards

The NC cards (found in *Appendix F - Cards and Tokens*) are straightforward and have all the information necessary to use them during scenes. NCs have a number of Traits, and it's a good idea to familiarise yourself with them before you begin a scene.

1. Resolve measures the NC's starting Resolve rating. **Alertness** and **Stealth** rate the NC's ability find hidden characters and to remain hidden themselves.

2. Defences show the difficulty of common character actions targeting the NC. Negative Dice are applied to player character actions.

3. Attributes have two values. The first is the base Attribute rating. The second value in brackets (the more important one) is the static rating used in player character's checks not covered by the defence scores.

4. Actions detail the various actions the NC can make. They are listed in the most likely order the creature will act. Some of these actions allow the target to make resistance checks.

5. Weaknesses list the number of ways you can make a Defeat Test to drain the NC's Resolve.

Kobold Traits

- ① **Resolve:** 1 **Alertness:** 10 **Stealth:** 12
- ② **Defences:** Capture: 12 Intimidate: 10 Influence: 10
- ③ **Attributes:** 🌀 **Agility** 8 (12), all others 6 (10)
- ④ **Actions:** A kobold has 2 actions each round:
 - **Move:** as normal.
 - **Hide:** roll 1d6, adding **1 BD**. Increase stealth by the result for the round.
 - **Active Watch:** Draw an invisible line in one direction. For all spaces that touch that line, gain +2 alertness. For all other spaces, suffer -2 alertness.
 - **Throw net:** *Target:* up to three characters in the same space. Resist with 🌀 **Agility** (Tumbling), difficulty 12, at **1 ND**. *Success:* avoid the net. *Fail:* suffer the *Trapped* Condition.
 - **Throw dart:** *Range:* 1 space. Fairies are immune to thrown darts. Resist with 🌀 **Agility** (Tumbling), difficulty 12 (**1 BD** if 1 space away). Partial cover grants **1 BD**. *Success:* the dart misses. *Fail:* the dart hits. If hit, the target makes an 🟢 **Endurance** check. *Success:* suffer the *Dizzy* Condition. *Fail:* suffer the *Dizzy* Condition for one round, then become *Overwhelmed* the following round. The toxin lasts for ten minutes.
 - **Throw powder:** *Target:* a single fairy. *Range:* 1 space. As *Throw Dart* but effective against fairies. Resist at **1 BD** but cover is ineffective. Each kobold has one pellet of powder.
 - **Illusory Escape (Talent):** Once per scene the kobold can appear to have run to a different space. This includes illusory sounds of running feet, footprints and disturbed foliage. The illusion lasts for 5 minutes.
- ⑤ **Weaknesses:** Make a Defeat Test whenever one of the following is triggered:
 - **Cowardly:** The kobold suffers a Condition (**1 BD** per current Condition).
 - **Daunted:** The kobold fails an attempt to inflict a Condition.
 - **Clannish:** All allies in the kobold's space are Defeated (**1 BD**).

Using Challenge Cards

As an alternative to rolling dice for checks, a player can opt to take a *Challenge*. This involves the *player* (not the character) completing a set task within a short time. There are a number of Challenge cards found in *Appendix D: Cards & Handouts*, page 3-4.

At the beginning of the game, shuffle the Challenge deck. When taking a Challenge, draw the top card from the deck and read out the card's text. Complete the challenge, timed by the Narrator or another player (use a stopwatch or phone to time the challenge, or count out seconds starting at zero). The card is placed in the discard pile next to the deck. Once the Challenge deck is empty, reshuffle the discard pile. There are a couple of blank cards for you to fill in with your own ideas.

Effects of Bonus Dice on Challenges

If a character would normally have Bonus Dice on a check they can choose one of the following effects for each BD they have:

- Gain +1 to the final check result.
- Gain 1 bonus second on the challenge time.
- Draw an additional card, choosing the one they wish to perform.

Effects of Negative Dice on Challenges

If a character would normally suffer Negative Dice on a check they can choose one of the following effects for each ND they have:

- Suffer -1 to the final check result.
- Lose 1 second on the challenge time.
- Draw an additional card, letting the Narrator choose which one they must perform.

Final word: the Rule of Thumb

The rules presented in this kit should be used as guidelines to help the Narrator run a *Talespinner* game. Players will occasionally but inevitably attempt things that aren't covered by these systems.

As a rule of thumb for any given action, just choose an appropriate Attribute (with a skill you think fits, if any) and choose a difficulty using the charts at the start of this document. Give Bonus and Negative Dice as you see fit (there are some examples on page 2), but an action shouldn't have more than 3 BD/ND from a combination of equipment and environmental effects. Bonus Dice from special abilities and Negative Dice from Conditions are not counted in this restriction.

Don't stress too much about the actual system, just play it by ear, and don't be afraid to say "no" to an outlandish or unlikely action if it presents too much difficulty. The rule of thumb is that the rules support play, but not at the expense of fun.

