

COMPARISON of TASK RESOLUTION SYSTEMS

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Introduction

In my search for the perfect resolution system to meet my gaming requirements I have looked at many systems. After a time all the information started becoming jumbled in the limited space that is my head, so I created what I felt was a basic rating system to make it easier to discern and define the individual systems that I looked at.

The task resolution systems represented here were offered in full or sample form via free download and may not represent the full or entire rules set available for that particular system. I try to point out which is an incomplete system when I know. The actual comparison is highly subjective in nature and should not be taken as canon. If you are intrigued by a system you see here please do take the time to do more research. I'll add additional systems as time and ambition allow.

The Rating System

The categories that I used suited my own information requirements, they may not meet your needs. They are as follows....

Resolution Type: What mechanic does the system use to resolve tasks. Typically a die type is mentioned.

Character Races (y/n): Does the system have a built in racial template. How is it implemented

Character Classes (y/n): Does the system have a built in class template. How is it implemented

Character Advancement (y/n): Does the system have a form of character improvement and what method is used

Skills (y/n): Does the system account for skill use or learned abilities

Abilities (y/n): This encompasses powers, mutations, spells, feats, any ability out of the mundane

Character Generation: What form of character generation is used, objective, subjective, random, points based, etc.

(The following categories are rated on a scale of 1-4, unless noted 1=worst 4=best)

Genre Flexibility: How well the system is likely to fit across multiple RPG genres

TR Difficulty: How difficult or labor intensive the actual resolution process is. Does it require in-game math, etc. (1=hard, 4=easy)

Comprehension and Format: How well the document relays the necessary information and generally how well the format enhances the understanding.

Completeness: How complete the represented system is. Does it have a resolution process for every situation. May be effected by whether the document represents the full or a limited rules set.

Average: An average of the previous four ratings:

Notes: Just some notes to help me discern individual and specific points within the documentation. Probably the most informational of the entire comparison process.

THE COMPARISONS

by alpha numeric order

D6 RPG

Resolution Type: D6(2D6)
Races: no / GM created templates possible
Classes: no / GM created templates possible
Character Advancement: no
Skills: no
Abilities: no
Character Generation: Objective-random

Genre Flexibility: 2 - just not enough meat to this system. It is so basic that it could be ported to other genres however.

TR Difficulty: 3 - may have been a 4 but the system is incomplete

Comprehension and Format: 3 - some options and examples are in margins

Completeness: 1+ - not very complete at all, barely usable

Average: 2.25 - not very good overall

Notes:

- 8 stats, agility/knowledge/perception/body/size/health/mind/initiative/movement all divided into 3 classes, affective(roll 2d3)/reactive(roll 2d6+15)/fixed(roll 1d3x6)
- inconsistent die use. Supposed to be D6, but other die types are used
- uses 2d6 to determine task success against a success value #
- you can either defend or attack, not both
- armor value is subtracted from damage
- accounts for some weather and terrain effects
- very basic in structure, no skills, no special abilities, no ranged weapon specifics, it would require a lot of work to complete to make usable

FUDGE

Resolution Type: Multi-dice options or diceless (D6/D100 or 4DF Fudge die). Success/scale chart of +4 to -4.

Character Races: No, Templates possible, examples shown

Character Classes: No, Templates possible, examples shown

Character Advancement: Yes, Subjective-Petition GM, or Objective-GM assigned experience used to purchase levels

Skills: Yes, examples given

Abilities: Yes, examples given

Character Generation: Subjective and Objective methods, Gifts and Faults, GM set point values. Templates are encouraged.

Genre Flexibility: 4+

TR Difficulty: 4

Comprehension and Format: 4

Completeness: 3, missing environment and vehicle rules, otherwise has it all.
Average: 3.75 – One of the best

Notes:

- this is a players game system, easy going and generous
- skill driven system
- traits, anything that describes a character, attrib, skill, gifts, powers, etc.
- description and subjective resolution chart
 - Superb
 - Great
 - Good
 - Fair (succeeds 62%)
 - Mediocre
 - Poor
 - Terrible

This system is fully scalable based on mass of antagonists, a normal character who has a GOOD ability in something is better than an ant who is GOOD in that same ability.

i.e. the ant may be super strong for his size, but a man can still carry more weight

- Uses a series of gifts and faults to help define the character
- customizable attributes in 4 broad categories: body/mind/soul/other
- customizable skills in several broad categories
- Fudge points to alter game play results
- Character are designed by limits placed by the GM, nothing is random and all traits are rated by one of the descriptive levels. There are alternate generation methods offered. Subjective and Objective
- very elegant, easy die system
- races and classes are available as templates, examples given
- the most complicated aspect of combat involves the wound and healing system
- no equipment, weapon or armor charts. Examples listed
- an active defense (i.e. dodge) counts as a combat action so a character could defend or attack but not both.

FUZION

Resolution Type: multi-dice (3d6 or 1d10)

Character Races: no, GM templates

Character Classes: no, GM templates

Character Advancement: yes, character development points

Skills: yes, purchased and talents

Abilities: no, but alluded to in text and examples

Character Generation: point pool, perks, life path, talents, skills, complications

Genre Flexibility: 4, flexibility is this games forte

TR Difficulty: 3, only occasionally does it get difficult if your not paying attention

Comprehension and Format: 3, generally well written explanations with examples in the margins, format can get a little eye weary

Completeness: 3 has basic coverage of most everything accept powers, mutations, feats, etc.

Average: 3.25 pretty good, has a lot of strong points

Notes:

- character stats=characteristics (by groups)
 - Mental – Int/Will/Presence
 - Physical – Con/Str/Body
 - Combat – Technique/Reflex/Dex
 - Movement – Movement
 - +5 Derived stun/hits/stundefense/recovery/run
- character generation can get unwieldy
- has 'options' – inherent/bought
- taking complications can increase your character creation points
- perks cost cp's
- has basic equipment lists
- treats meters and yards as interchangeable
- terrain movement reductions
- some basic vehicle rules
- consideration for separate structural hit point system + big guns do big damage called 'kills'
- mecha concepts and rules
- very versatile system but a heavily laden points based creation system with some calculations required during game play

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GURPS_lite

Resolution Type: d6x# +/- , roll under a target #

Character Races: no, GM templates

Character Classes: no, GM templates

Character Development: yes, character development points

Skills: yes

Abilities: yes, minor mental and physical feats, basic magic system

Character Generation: character points, trade advantages/disadvantages/quirks, etc.

Genre Flexibility: 3 – not bad

TR Difficulty: 3 – character generation can be lengthy

Comprehension and Format – 4 very well written, easy to understand

Completeness: 3 - missing powers, environment and vehicle rules

Average: 3.25 – pretty decent, easy to grasp quick to use

Notes:

- One type of die (d6), nice and simple
- 3 basic game mechanics, success rolls/reaction rolls/damage rolls
- critical success and failure
- contests of skills, quick/regular
- trade disadvantages and quirks for more CP's
- attributes, st/dx/in/ht-variable point cost
- armor adds to 'to-hit' difficulty and to damage reduction
- weapons divided into group types (impaling/cutting/crushing) weapon damage is based on associated stat +/-, basic hand to hand rules
- missile weapons based on st or if firearm a fixed #, basic ranged effects
- npc/creature development process
- basic combat effects +fatigue+ healing

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JAGS

Resolution Type: 4d6-4 for a range of 0-20

Character Races:

Character Classes:

Character Advancement:

Skills: yes, purchased

Abilities:

Character Generation: Character points base amount assigned by Gm

Genre Flexibility: 4, easily adapted to any system

TR Difficulty: 2, holy crap, there's a lot of variables and in-game math

Comprehension and Format: 3, complicated system not always explained the best way

Completeness: 4+, they've got EVERYTHING

Average: 3.25

Notes:

-primary (physique/reflex/intellect) and secondary stats (str/build/con/siz/dampoints/ coord/react/agi/reas/mem/wil) and tertiary derived stats (wounds/, increasing costs for higher stats

-uses enhancements, defects, and weird traits

-skills are purchased n has a skill level and a skill competency level, concentration for some skills, skills based on secondary stats. Skill level cost variable with previous score and difficulty of skill.

-TR system could get ugly, a lot of dice math (4d6-4) with conditional modifiers. Resisted same as opposed rolls.

-a unique armor system that subtracts from the to-hit and damage

-a fairly complicated wounds system

-variable move rate based on reaction stat

-an enhancements system that effects the primary stats

-combat-pc reaction score determines number of actions, there are short, medium and long actions. Looks overly complicated to me, about on level with or slightly worse than the d20 mechanic. Then you get into the 'advanced rules', I mean, HOLY CRAP! They even joke about how complicated it can get.

-if you like extremes of detail, this game mechanic is for you. Reminds me of the combat system for Aftermath.

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One

Incomplete rules: still under development

Resolution Type: 2d6

Character Races: no

Character Classes: no

Character Advancement: no

Skills: yes

Abilities: no

Character Generation: Objective, character point allocation

Genre Flexibility: 3, about the same as any comparable d6 system
TR Difficulty: 3
Comprehension and Format: 3, text is often assuming prior knowledge
Completeness: 1, missing some key elements
Average: 2.5

Notes:

- 3 types of stats, purchased/calculated/derived. Purchased use character points. Calculated uses averages of purchased stats. Derived uses combinations of other stats
- skills divided into groups based on associated stat
- task resolution. 2 types: opposed – roll 2die(2d6) ad skill mod if greater than target# then success. Difficulty chart used as well; 5 step – 1=trivial / 5=impossible. Critical success = 12 critical failure = 2
- combat divided into 12 segments
- pc speed = #of actions, based on chart. Pc can do either 2 short actions or 1 long action
- armor decreases damage. Shields = harder to hit
- ranged attacks are opposed actions
- this system looks promising but is incomplete. Future expansions are planned; encumbrance, weapon and equipment lists, drowning, environment...vehicle system not planned.

SAVAGE WORLDS

Incomplete rules: Test drive version

Resolution Type: multi-dice (d4/d6/d8/d12) against a standard of 4 or opposed
Character Races: no
Character Classes: no
Character Advancement: yes, ability, skill and edges increased
Skills: yes
Abilities: yes
Character Generation: no, shows advancement but not character generation, talks about how character creation is a breeze in the margin information

Genre Flexibility: 3, best with wahoo games
TR Difficulty 3, as shown, very simple rules
Comprehension and Format: 3, occasionally not explained well
Completeness: 1, unusable in its presented form, it is an incomplete resolution system
Average: 2.5 – this system showed promise, but is unusable as shown

Notes:

- beat a standard of 4 with the chosen die type
- 5 stats (agility/smarts/spirit/strength/vigor)
- uses Edges, like D20 Feats
you can over succeed which are called 'raises', for every +4 over required minimum you get a raise.
- uses 'bennies', allows for rerolls or healing, etc
- uses a standard deck of cards to determine initiative, Jokers are wild and confer +2/+2
- basic movement of 6 or run +1d6 at –2 penalty on actions
- withdraw from combat confers opponent attacks
- ranged weapons= -2 per range increment over short, basic modifiers
- melee weapons do st+# in damage, ranged weapons do a fixed damage
- damage+attacks may have basic special effects

- uses a rank system and can increase abilities, skills or edges
- handles powers, magic by using a power points
- looks interesting and might be fun for use in wahoo settings. Serious GMs and players may not enjoy this system as much

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TALISLANTA

Resolution Type: D20+action table

Character Races: yes

Character Classes: yes, archetypes, none listed in rules

Character Advancement: yes, may only apply to skill levels, uncertain

Skills: yes, none listed

Abilities: yes, magic only

Character Generation: choose an archetype, attribute manipulation

Genre Flexibility: 2, has a magic/fantasy focus, but adaptable with some work

TR Difficulty: 4-, you have to double an associated attribute every roll

Comprehension and Format: 3

Completeness: 2+, no special abilities other than magic, no terrain or vehicle system

Average: 2.75, interesting, has some good ideas but needs some work

Notes:

-basic rules are very simple and easy

-attribute base =0 average. 11 fixed attributes (some derived)

-skills have associated attributes

-modifiers or 'degree of difficulty' range from +10 to -10 subtracted or added to the actual die roll

-you have to double the attribute rating before every roll-bad process

-movement is terrain reliant (base-terrain factors) but has no modifiers chart associated with it

-no roll for weapon damage, each weapon does a fixed amount of damage +/- action table roll

-armor subtracts from damage

-handles magic but no other special abilities

-very basic equipment list with only a few weapons and armor

-does not actually list any skills and no special abilities

-no terrain, hazard or vehicle rules

-very basic rules system which is simple to use and implement but no supporting material except for magic. Would require a bit of work to adapt another game to this system

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TARE: The Awakening

Resolution Type: Dice pool (2 die typical)

Character Races: yes as a GM created template

Character Classes: yes as a GM created template

Character Advancement: yes, assigned character points

Skills: yes

Abilities: yes + traits, very flexible

Character Generation: Objective, select weakness which give points for character building

Genre Flexibility: 4, excellent flexibility, easily portable
TR Difficulty: 2, not explained well
Comprehension and Format: 3, could have been better but isn't bad
Completeness: 3, has most elements, missing terrain and vehicles systems
Average: 3

Notes:

- take weakness to earn character points to buy abilities(traits, stats, skills, powers) + GM granted development points
- 7 primary stats (st/dx/end/manip/presen/perc/wis/) + 3 secondary (move/enc/hp)
- 4 basic skill types, (crafts/knowledge/profession/talents)
- powers = substances, what a character can manipulate –variable(any substance in campaign). Shapes-how the substance is manipulated, (alter/control/counter/create/destroy/detect/transform) VERY flexible
- resolution of tasks depends on type: stat/trait/skill/power/weakness/multi-ability also opposed and unopposed.
- has basic and advanced character generation
- trait: can use package deals-a template form that allows for GM created races or classes or anything else the GM dreams up
- good situational modifiers list, but no terrain, weather or vehicle systems
- no dice recommended, no damage for weapons, makes the system scalable by GM but makes for a lot of creation work for a GM. Overall, it is a very flexible system.

TRI-STAT

Resolution Type: multi-dice (d4/d6/d8/d10/d12/d20) - scalable
Character Races: no
Character Classes: no
Character Advancement: yes, character points
Skills: yes
Abilities: yes
Character Generation: Objective: Character point allocation

Genre Flexibility: 4, very impressive
TR Difficulty: 4, nice and simple
Comprehension and Format: 4, beautifully laid out
Completeness: 3, no terrain and environment or carry weight system
Average: 3.75

Notes:

- flexible dice use for campaign power scaling
- point system character generation
- flexible skill system, genre specific changes
- general attributes/powers that can be easily added to
- has a defect system that can be increase cdp's
- 3 stat system, body/mind/soul
- some derived values, health points, combat, defense
- ranged weapons system is very basic-short range is anything up to 50'
- movement is inexact
- defense is good

- no real vehicles rules, treats it like pc/npc move and combat
- no method of determining 'mega-damage' to large or powerful objects-you have to wear them down via hitpoint reduction
- no equipment encumbrance or weight carry capacity system, no terrain or weather system.
- very impressive, needs some work but overall quite a flexible system