

Ultramicrolite 20

By greywulf 7-28-08, Last revised by Domino Writing 9-22-11

This is Microlite 20 boiled down even further. It's suitable for gaming while out walking or when you've forgotten your gamebooks. If you don't have 1d20, use 3d6 to get close enough.

There are 3 stats: STrength, DEXterity, MIND. Share a total of 5 points between them with a maximum of 4 a single stat. You can reduce 1 stat to -1 to get an extra point. These are your stat bonuses.

Choose 1 skill (Physical, Subterfuge, Communication or Knowledge). Your character has a +4 bonus to do anything relating to that skill. The other skills have a +1 bonus.

Actions are resolved by rolling 1d20 + relevant skill bonus + relevant stat bonus. Roll equal or higher than the given Difficulty Class (DC) or higher than the opponent's roll to succeed. DC is usually 10 (average action) or 15 (challenging action). Describe what your character is doing in an entertaining way, and add +1 or +2 to your action roll.

Combat is an action roll using Physical + STR bonus (for melee/hand-to-hand), Physical + DEX bonus (for missile/ranged) or Knowledge + MIND bonus (for magic/supernatural). Call your weapons whatever you want. To-hit is what matters, not the amount of damage it causes. Roll 1d20 without bonuses to determine initiative.

The DC (for melee or ranged) is the opponent's Armor Class: 10 + DEX bonus + Armor bonus. Leather is +2, Chain is +4, Plate is +7. A shield can add a further +1.

The DC (for magic) is the opponent's Will Save: 10 + (MIND bonus x2).

Wounds: If you get hit 3 times in a single combat encounter, you're unconscious. Roll Physical + STR bonus (DC 15) to recover from the battle without serious injury; if you fail this roll, you may have an impressive battle scar, one missing eye, or even a severe fear of some horrifying type of creature. After a combat encounter, you reset to 0 (zero) Wounds. Larger critters can take more hits before dying; that's up to the GM. In the same way, mooks (easily defeated foes) may be able to take one hit each.

If you survive 10 combats, add +1 to all of your skills.

For a *modern-day* game, read "bulletproof vest" for Chain and "riot gear" for Plate. Add +2 to missile/ranged attacks when using a pistol and +4 when using a rifle or shotgun.

For a game with more *social combat*, add the stat CHARisma, and start with 7 points to divide among stats. In social combat, each combatant makes a stat + skill roll, using the same pair of stat bonuses and skills. If the attacker's result is equal or higher, he or she causes a wound. For a game with much more social than physical (standard) combat, players may not even determine Armor Class or Will Save, instead using Physical + STR for fights with blades or fists.

Keep track of physical wounds (caused by swords, guns, fire, psychic blasts, etc.) and social wounds (caused by insults, intimidation, etc.) separately. Gaining 3 physical wounds means you're unconscious; gaining 3 social wounds means you've been outwitted. You lose the combat and it's up to the winner to decide what happens. Immediately after the combat encounter, you reset to zero (0) social wounds.

For example, a hero tries to sweet-talk her way past a nightclub bouncer to get inside. She rolls Communication + CHA bonus against the bouncer's Communication + CHA bonus and succeeds. The bouncer "suffers" one social wound – he's falling for her smooth lines.