



THE UNDERSTANDING

The Understanding is the central philosophy that unifies players and the Galactic Orchestrator (GO) in a cohesive and flexible agreement of what should be possible. The Understanding has three pillars:

The *Responsibility for Narrative* is defined as the onus to create interesting moments of narrative, tension and resolution, in the agreed fashion of the collective team. The *Examination of Plausibility* is defined as the group's assessment of the probability of an action, event, or moment occurring within the context of a situation. The *Determination of Logic* is defined as the group's agreement on the logical results or consequences of any given event or moment based on the context of the situation.

THE THREE APTITUDES

The *Body Aptitude* is the representation of a creature's physical attributes. The *Mind Aptitude* is the summary of a creature's mental attributes. The *Specialty Aptitude* is the summary of a creature's learned knowledge, and is used when attempting an action that requires specialty training. Each Aptitude has its own *Aptitude Dice*.

Using the Terminal Velocity Dice System, these three dice will each grow from a d6-d20 as you invest into their corresponding Aptitudes.

THE EXPERTISE

An *Expertise* is the representation of a raw skillset. All Expertise fall within one of the Three Aptitudes. There are twenty-four Expertise in total. Each Aptitude has eight unique Expertise that can be used to perform actions. The table below shows all twenty-four Expertise and their respective Aptitudes.

| Body | Mind | Specialty |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Adrenaline | Abstraction | Creativity |
| Brawn | Focus | Culture |
| Coordination | Influence | Engineering |
| Flexibility | Intuition | Medical |
| Immunity | Logic | Oddities |
| Precision | Memory | Piloting |
| Reflexes | Mettle | Science |
| Stamina | Perception | Software |

Modifiers

A *Modifier* is a number that is either added to or subtracted from the value of a dice roll to change the final result. The presence of a Modifier represents either the context of the scenario or the well-trained nature of an Expertise.

Using Specialty Expertise

Mind and Body Dice can be used at any point in time, however the Specialty Dice is unusable for all Specialty Expertise that have a +0 as you are untrained.

Expertise Check

When attempting an action that has the potential to fail, the player will choose one Expertise and roll the corresponding Aptitude Dice. All Expertise Checks involve four parts: *choosing the Expertise*, *rolling the Aptitude Dice*, *adding the Expertise Modifier*, and *determining the result*. Once they have selected the Expertise, and describe how they want to use it to perform the action, they must roll the corresponding Aptitude Dice and add in the Expertise Modifier. The total result determines the success or failure of the Check, and therefore the success or failure of the intended action and the nature of any subsequent developments in the narrative.

Dice Challenge

A *Dice Challenge*, or a *DC*, is a pre-established value that acts as the threshold for whether an action is successful or not. The DC represents the difficulty of the action within the specific context of the situation and is announced by the GO before any Expertise Checks are made. If the result of the creature's Expertise Check is equal to or higher than the DC then the Check, and therefore the action, is successful. If the result is lower than the DC then the Expertise Check, and therefore the action, is a failure. Both outcomes will result in a change to the narrative depending on what the character intended to do, their subsequent execution of the action, and the surrounding context of the narrative at large.

The Scale Of Difficulty

The *Scale of Difficulty* is the universal metric for judging the difficulty of an action. It is a sliding scale used to determine the DC of an Expertise Check.

| DIFFICULTY | DC |
|--|-------|
| This action is <i>possible for anyone</i> . | 1-6 |
| This action is <i>a challenge</i> . | 7-9 |
| This action is <i>hard</i> . | 10-12 |
| This action is <i>difficult</i> . | 13-15 |
| This action is <i>very difficult</i> . | 16-19 |
| This action is <i>extremely difficult</i> . | 20-23 |
| This action is <i>a death defying stunt of stupidity and luck</i> . | 24-27 |
| This action is <i>an awe-inspiring feat of insanity</i> . | 28-34 |
| This action <i>represents the pinnacle of what is possible</i> . | 35-44 |
| This action is <i>impossible</i> . Perform only to fulfil Tenet Seven. | 45+ |

Contested Checks

A *Contested Expertise Check* is an Expertise Check where one creature is attempting to perform an action in competition with another. A Contested Expertise Check has no DC. Instead, the two competing creatures choose a relevant Expertise each and roll their Expertise Checks against each other. If the instigating creature has a higher result, then the intended action is successful. If the defending creature has an equal or higher result than the instigating creature, then the intended action is a failure.

Criticals

A Critical represents the epitome of success or failure on an Expertise Check.

When a creature rolls the maximum value of their dice, it is a *Critical Success*, meaning something distinctly positive or opportune occurs in addition to, or as part of, the action that shifts their situation for the better. When a creature rolls the minimum value of their dice, it is a *Critical Failure*, meaning something distinctly negative or dangerous occurs in addition to, or as part of, the action that shifts their situation for the worse. The narrative weight of a Critical is proportional to the size of the rolled Aptitude Dice.

Prosperity

Prosperity Points are a scarce resource that allows a creature to wildly transcend their limitations. Each player has a *Prosperity Point* pool of three. These can be spent to perform a *Combination Execution*, which is a special Expertise Check where a player chooses two relevant Expertise from different Aptitudes and rolls both dice. They then combine the results, and add the higher of the two Modifiers, to determine the result of the Check.

Assists

An *Assist* is a Combination Execution that is performed by two creatures instead of one and therefore it does not require a Prosperity Point. Both creatures choose a single Expertise and a single Aptitude Dice, adding the instigating creature's Modifier only. When performing an Assist, players can select the same Expertise or Aptitude if they wish.

DESIGNATIONS

The Core Cybernetic is the ultimate hedge for power. They are invasive, whole body, integrated, bio-linked machine-implants capable of achieving the impossible. This is the central unit that defines a character's class, or Designation in Terminus, and runs their Programs. *Programs* are powerful reusable abilities that transcend the natural limitations of a creature.

Whenever a creature runs a Program they must make a relevant Expertise Check from their Core Aptitude. This Expertise is based on the context of their situation and how the creature is attempting to use the Program. In the event of a failure, the Program either misses, doesn't run, backfires, misfires, or the execution of the Program does not happen as intended.

The Toll of Programs

Each use of a Program puts a massive amount of strain on the body. Each time a User runs a Program they must spend the relevant amount of Uncycled Points. UP represents a User's ability to withstand the Core Cybernetic's relentless onslaught to the body. An unchecked abuse of UP can result in serious injury to the User, see *Overcycling, Combat Quickstart Rules*.

The Range of Programs

The standard reliable range of all Programs is 20m unless the Program specifies that it requires touch to run. Programs can be run on targets beyond their recommended distance but they become dramatically more difficult to successfully and safely run as the distance increases.

Unwilling Creatures

Targeting an unwilling creature with any Program will always require a Contested Expertise Check.

Concentration Programs

Most Programs run for an instant, however there are some Programs that will run for an extended period of time, known as *Concentration Programs*. These programs are maintained automatically until the User experiences a moment that is life-threatening, jarring, demands all-consuming focus, or forces them to exceed their limitations, at which point they will need to succeed on an Expertise Check to keep the Program Running or it will stop.



There are twenty-four Expertise across the three Aptitudes. Where one Expertise may fail to solve a problem, another might succeed. What Expertise a character selects will determine how they attempt to execute an action, and so is intrinsically linked to the plausibility of the action in that particular situation. The Expertise that the player chooses to use to resolve the outcome, and the manner in which the character performs the given action, always has contextual implications on the resulting consequences.

| BODY | MIND | SPECIALTY |
|--|--|---|
| ADRENALINE represents a creature's capacity for bursts of intense activity. Affects any task that requires an immediate extreme exertion or surges of energy. | ABSTRACTION represents a creature's abstract reasoning. Affects any task that involves abstract thought, visualisation, and conceptualisation. | CREATIVE represents a creature's creative skills and capacity for original thought. Affects any task that involves artistic expression or labour, innovation, and spontaneous ideas. |
| BRAWN represents a creature's raw strength. Affects any task that requires muscular power, force or vigour. | FOCUS represents a creature's ability to centre their attention on a given subject. Affects any task that requires concentration or sustained mental activity. | CULTURE represents a creature's knowledge of different cultures, groups, or collectives. Affects any task that involves cultural understanding, customs, diplomacy, or history. |
| COORDINATION represents a creature's ability to use their gross motor skills. Affects any task that involves using different parts of the body together smoothly and efficiently. | INFLUENCE represents a creature's ability to affect another creature's thoughts or feelings. Affects any task where a creature is attempting to impact, change, or control another creature's internal or external behaviour. | ENGINEERING represents a creature's capacity for understanding and interacting with hardware and mechanics. Affects any task that involves creating, changing, destroying, repairing, or modifying mechanical objects. |
| FLEXIBILITY represents a creature's ability to bend and change their shape. Affects any task that involves supple movements or the contortion of limbs and joints. | INTUITION represents a creature's ability to understand something instinctively. Affects any task that involves interpreting behaviour and emotions, trust, or processing subconscious information. | MEDICINE represents a creature's capacity for effectively utilising medicine and related fields of study. Affects any task that involves identifying, applying, or performing medical knowledge, practises, or procedures. |
| IMMUNITY represents a creature's ability to resist infection and toxins, and how resilient their body is. Affects any task that involves dealing with foreign matter in the body, or regulating natural bodily functions. | LOGIC represents how capable a creature is at logical thinking. Affects any task that involves reasoning conducted or assessed according to the principles of strict validity or drawing conclusions based on empirical evidence. | ODDITIES represents a creature's learned tendency for tapping into the inexplicable forces of the cosmos. Affects any task that involves dealing with, accessing, shaping, or controlling extra-rational curiosities. |
| PRECISION represents a creature's ability to perform an exact action. Affects any task that requires stable fine motor skills, acute accuracy, care, repetition, and reliability. | MEMORY represents how sharp and effective a creature's memory is. Affects any task that involves the quality or depth of their retention or recollection of information. | PILOTING represents a creature's aptitude for operating all types of vehicles or machines. Affects any task that involves the expert control of any pilotable object. |
| REFLEXES represents a creature's rapid response to unexpected stimuli. Affects any task that is reactionary, instinctual, subconscious, or automatic. | METTLE represents a creature's ability to control and regulate their emotions. Affects any task that involves mental resilience, dealing with overwhelming stimuli, or coping with difficulties. | SCIENCE represents a creature's understanding of the natural sciences. Affects any task that involves the command of scientific knowledge, theories, or applications. |
| STAMINA represents a creature's level of fitness, endurance, and vitality. Affects any task that requires a creature to sustain a physical action, gruelling activity, or prolonged effort. | PERCEPTION represents the quality of a creature's senses and their mastery over them. Affects any task that involves the detection or recognition of an external stimuli. | SOFTWARE represents a creature's capacity for understanding and interacting with software and code. Affects any task that involves creating, changing, destroying, repairing, or modifying digital systems. |



EQUIPMENT

In Terminus, all equipment types from armour to weapons to items and more, all comprise three basic elements: their frame, modifications, and stats. A frame is the basic shape and function of the piece, the modifications provide additional effects, and the stats are the numerical specifics such as the damage of a weapon.

Damage

Damage is the quantification of destruction something receives. The larger the number is, the more likely it is to cause injury or destruction to the recipient.

Penetration Rating

Penetration Ratings (PR) are the universal system that quantifies an armour or material's ability to mitigate damage, and a weapon's ability to bypass that mitigation. All physical matter, including equipment, has a Penetration Rating. They range from PR0 to PR6. If a weapon has a PR greater than a material's PR, the weapon will cause full damage to it. If the PR of a weapon is equal to a material's PR, the weapon will cause half damage. If the PR of a weapon is less than a material's PR, the weapon will cause no damage.

Integrity Points

Integrity Points (IP) are the numerical depiction of the amount of damage that inorganic material is capable of absorbing before it breaks.

Slots

You have a limited capacity to carry equipment on your person, denoted by a number of *Slots*. Different objects will take up different numbers of slots based on their size and weight.

TRAUMAS

Terminus uses a revolutionary Trauma system rather than traditional Hit Points.

Sections of the Body

The *Sections Of The Body* represent a creature's actual unique physical form in its most basic divisions. You are playing a Human character, but Terminus has other Species with other anatomical makeups. A Human has 4 sections: Head, Torso, Arms, and Legs.

Traumas

A Trauma is a physical injury to a specific section of the body. There are four degrees: Minor, Major, Extreme and Lethal. *Minor Traumas* are injuries that limit your body's capacity to operate effectively. *Major Traumas* are injuries that render a section of your body inoperable. *Extreme Traumas* are grievous injuries that are guaranteed to become Lethal if not immediately treated. *Lethal Traumas* are fatal injuries that instantly kill a creature. Once a creature gains a Lethal Trauma they are dead and nothing can save them.

Gaining Traumas

When a creature sustains damage directly to their body that is not blocked by armour, they must make a *Trauma Check*. A Trauma Check is an Expertise Check that determines the severity of the injury, where the Expertise chosen is relevant to the nature of the injury and its cause. Any unblocked damage taken by a creature results in a negative Modifier to their Trauma Check, equal to the value of the unblocked damage. Due to the vulnerable nature of the brain, whenever you perform a Trauma Check on the Head section of the body, the negative modifier is equal to two times the unblocked damage. The lower the result of the Trauma Check, the more severe the resulting injury is, as shown by the table below.

| DC Result | Degree Of Trauma |
|-------------|------------------|
| 1 and below | Extreme |
| 2-6 | Major |
| 7+ | Minor |

Effects of Pre-Existing Traumas

A *Pre-Existing Trauma* is any Trauma that a creature currently has in a specific section of the body. When gaining a new Trauma to a section of the body that has any Pre-Existing Traumas, creatures will receive a negative modifier to their Trauma Check for each Pre-Existing Traumas in that section, shown by the table below.

| Pre-Existing Trauma | Modifier to Check |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Minor | -2 |
| Major | -4 |
| Extreme | -8 |

Dying

After receiving an Extreme Trauma, a creature's Deathclock begins. A *Deathclock* is the countdown from when a creature begins dying to when they finally die. Once a Deathclock has started, the only way to stop it is to reduce the degree of the Trauma out of Extreme.

Will To Live

After a creature's Deathclock begins, it can stay conscious for a number of seconds up to ten times x , where x is equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ its Mind Dice.

Fatality

After a creature's Deathclock begins, they will stay alive for a number of seconds up to $10x$, where x is equal to $\frac{1}{4}$ their Body Dice. Once their Deathclock reaches zero, the Extreme Trauma will become a Lethal Trauma. Death is final, there is nothing in the game that can bring a dead creature back to life.

Overkill

Once a creature's Deathclock is on, the gaining of a second Extreme Trauma will always result in a Lethal Trauma instead

THE “DIE IN STYLE” COMBAT SYSTEM

Terminus uses the brand new Die In Style Combat System, a resource-based system that minimises the importance of turns and allows anyone to take actions at any point in the encounter.

Action Points

Action Points (AP) represent both the time and the effort required to perform an action within a Combat Encounter. They are refreshed at the start of a creature’s turn, causing any unspent points to be lost.

The Gambit

The Gambit refers to the manner in which a fight kicks off, including determining the order of turns in a round and the number of AP each creature starts with.

A *Scramble* occurs when no party involved was expecting a fight to break out at this moment. The Turn Order is established by all involved creatures rolling either Reflexes or Intuition, and the starting AP of each creature is determined by them rolling a dice equivalent in size to their AP max, rounded down.

An *Escalation* occurs when all parties involved were expecting to fight. The Turn Order is established by the context of each individual, their preparedness to act, and the situation that led up to the fight. All creatures start with full AP.

An *Ambush* occurs when a party initiates a fight where another party is unaware or unprepared. The Turn Order is first ordered by party, with the prepared party or parties going first, and the unprepared going last. The Ambushing party chooses their individual turn order, while the Ambushed party’s turn order is determined by context. Creatures of ambushing parties start with full AP, while creatures of ambushed parties start with 0AP.

Movements

Most types of movement that a creature can perform in combat are based on their Movement Speed. There are three types of movement a creature can perform. A *Sprint* is where a creature moves their Movement Speed in metres, and costs 3AP. A *Dash* is where a creature moves half their Movement Speed in metres, and costs 2AP. A *Shuffle* is where a creature moves one quarter their Movement Speed, and costs 1AP.

If a creature is crawling or has been knocked prone, they can usually only Shuffle. To deliberately go prone, or to stand up from prone or another position, is considered a Shuffle.

Once a creature has taken a Movement action, they can perform any number of additional actions during the movement. The creature may also pause their movement to perform the additional action, or may perform it while still in motion.

Attacks

An *Attack* is any action where a creature intends to directly cause damage through use of an object or piece of equipment they are already wielding, and costs 3AP.

After taking an Attack, it must be determined whether the Attack hits or misses through a contested roll called a *Hit Check*, where both the attacker and defender roll a dice to see if the attack hits. In a Hit Check, both the attacker and defender select a relevant Expertise that best fits their method of attack or defence, then they roll. If the attacker’s result is higher than the target’s, then the Attack hits. If the attacker’s result is equal or lower to the target’s result, then the Attack misses or fails to affect the target.

Aiming at Sections of the Body

When taking the Attack, the attack is always aimed at Torso unless the attacking creature deliberately aims at a different section. Aiming at other Sections of the Body are more difficult to achieve. The attacking creature incurs a modifier of -1 when targeting limbs, -2 when targeting held items or extremities, and -3 when targeting the head.

Creature Interactions

A *Creature Interaction* is any action where a creature interacts with another creature without the intention of directly causing damage, and costs 2AP.

Object Interactions

An *Object Interaction* is any action where a creature interacts with an object or the environment, and costs 1AP.

Communication

Communication costs 0AP, unless the communication is lengthy, involved, or demanding, in which case it will incur an AP cost commensurate with the time the communication takes.

The Cost of Using Equipment

When using a piece of equipment, the type of action you take is based on your intended use of it. If the intended use is most similar to an Attack, Creature Interaction, or Object Interaction, then the action is considered an action of that type.

Area of Effect

An *Area of Effect* is an effect that spreads over an area of specific size and shape, such as an explosion. Any creature caught inside an Area of Effect is immediately affected by its damage and/or its effects. The most common type are Circular Areas of Effect, which are represented by the size of their diameter.

Reactions

A *Reaction* is any action taken in response to another action, event or occurrence at any time within the Combat Encounter. The Reaction can occur at any point in the duration of the action or event that it is reacting to, and will resolve in its entirety within that initial action.