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- Skill Checks: Resolution using dice assigned to Stats (FORT, WILL, REX, INT, CHA, PROW)
- Difficulty Classes and roll outcomes.
- Archetype system, including the generic Archetypes and their Aptitudes/Impediments.
- The process of selecting Stats, Archetypes, Aptitudes, and Impediments.
- Fate Point economy: earning through narrative play and dramatic choices.
- Fate Point spends (Vision Recall, Temporal Shuffle, Fate's Favor, Shared Destiny, Destiny's Sacrifice, Divine Intervention).
- Rules for integrating Visions into play: foreshadowing, evolving visions, player agency, clarity, divergence
- Player characters begin with unique or shared Visions.
- Harbinger creation guidelines: nature, motives, behaviors, escalation.
- Harbinger behavior, motives, complications, escalation tables.
- Stopping the Harbinger table (methods such as confrontation, appeasement, banishment, timeline rewrite, alliance).
- Countdown framework (escalating tension over early, mid, and final acts).
- Vision management and GM prompts for dynamic integration.

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HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This System Reference Document (SRD) contains all open-licensed rules for the Outrunners™ game engine — core dice mechanics, character creation, Fate Point economy, Visions of Death, Harbinger framework, conditions, and GM tools.

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This SRD is intended as a toolkit for designers — a stripped-down rules reference, not a complete playbook. For narrative context, Harbinger examples, and full adventure support, see the Outrunners Core Rulebook.

CORE MECHANICS

SKILL CHECKS

When a character attempts a risky or uncertain action, the GM calls for a Skill Check.

1. **Describe the Situation:** GM frames; player selects the most relevant Stat.
2. **Assign DC:** GM sets a Difficulty Check (DC) the roll must meet or exceed.
3. **Roll or Pass:**
   - If ½ the maximum value of the Stat's die ≥ DC, automatic success (no roll).
   - Otherwise, roll that Stat's die and compare to the DC.
4. **Compare the Roll:**
   - ≥ DC: success.
   - **Max-but-short:** if the die shows its maximum and still fails, trigger Twist of Fate.
5. **Twist of Fate (Step-Up Explode):**
   - Roll the next larger die (e.g., d6→d8→d10→d12→d20).
   - Add the previous die's max to the new result.
   - If the new die also hits max and is still short, repeat (total added bonus caps at +20).
6. **Apply Modifiers:** Add Aptitude bonuses. Players may spend Fate Points (Hands of Fate) and must briefly narrate how the aid manifests.
7. **Outcome:**
   - Success: player/GM narrate per Narrative Control.
   - Failure: GM narrates consequences; the player gains 1 Fate Point.

FAILURE AS STORYTELLING

- Failure advances the fiction: introduce complications, reveal new information, shift positions, or press time pressure.
- Award 1 Fate Point on a failed Skill Check.

NARRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Shared Storytelling

- **Authority by Outcome:**
  - On success, the player may describe the outcome within reasonable, fiction-appropriate bounds.
  - On failure, the GM describes the consequences and advances the situation.
- **Reasonableness:** Player narration cannot contradict established facts, violate scope of the roll, or preempt other characters' agency.

Narrative Control (Guidance)

Use Roll Difference = (final roll) − (DC) to guide who leads narration:

- +10 or more: Player narrates with notable flourish/extra benefit.
- +5 to +9: Player narrates a strong success.
- +1 to +4: Player + GM co-narrate; small cost/limitation allowed.
- 0: GM narrates a narrow success; player may add a brief mitigation detail.
- –1 to –4: GM narrates a setback; player may add a softening detail.
- –5 to –9: GM narrates a hard setback.
- –10 or worse: GM narrates disaster with lasting fallout.

FATE POINTS & HANDS OF FATE

Fate Points

- **Pool:** Each character may hold up to 5 Fate Points.
- **Earning:** Award for (a) creative or heroic solutions, (b) embracing failure to move the story forward, (c) dramatic contributions that enrich the table's fiction.

Hands of Fate (1 Fate Point each)

- **Vision Recall:** Ask one specific question about your Vision of Death; roll 1d6 for clarity: 1–2 vague, 3–4 useful, 5–6 strong guidance.
- **Temporal Shuffle:** Reroll any one roll (yours or an NPC's) or force a successful enemy reroll; the next challenge's DC increases by +2.
- **Fate's Favor:** Discover a useful item/clue/resource; the GM introduces an unexpected adversary or complication.
- **Shared Destiny:** When a Vision is imminent, all PCs gain +1 to rolls to counter it; the next major challenge DC increases by +3.
- **Destiny's Sacrifice:** Take on another PC's Vision; gain +2 to rolls to prevent it; your next Vision-based challenge DC increases by +4 and the Vision intensifies.
- **Divine Intervention:** Gain +2 to a crucial roll or call on a helpful NPC; within the next two sessions, the GM introduces a significant complication.

CONFLICT & COMBAT

- **Assess:** GM describes the encounter; players choose a Stat that fits their approach (e.g., INT for tactics, FORT for force).
- **Set DC or Contest:**
  - Non-physical actions: GM assigns a DC and resolve as a Skill Check.
  - **Direct physical clashes:** Contested roll—Attacker: PROW, Defender: FORT. Higher roll wins; ties go to the defender. If the attacker rolled max-but-lost, they may trigger Twist of Fate.
- **Apply Modifiers:** Aptitudes and Fate options may be used; players must narrate the assist.
- **Narrate & Consequences:** Winning side describes success; losing side (or GM) narrates setbacks, including Injuries when appropriate.

INJURIES

- Harm is tracked as Injuries applied by the GM when fiction or rolls warrant it (combat or otherwise).
- Severity is chosen to match the situation and stakes; discuss briefly at the table to keep intent clear.

Default Severities

- Minor Injury: Noticeable impairment; does not incapacitate.
- Major Injury: Severe impairment; risks escalation if untreated.
- Fatal Injury: Imminent death; can only be delayed/redirected by extraordinary means.

CHARACTER DEATH

- **Permanent Death:** Allowed; ends a character's arc and raises stakes.
- **Ghostly Presence:** A deceased character may linger as a spirit with limited influence (GM adjudicates scope).
- **Replacement Character:** Introduce a new PC with a clear tie to the party or current arc.

ENDGAME: FACING THE VISION

- The game's climax centers on confronting each character's Vision of Death.
- Use standard rules (Skill Checks, Shared Destiny, Destiny's Sacrifice, etc.) to adjudicate attempts to divert, delay, or fulfill the Vision.
- Outcomes define character legacies and campaign closure.

CHARACTER CREATION

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

1. Assign Stat Dice: Distribute d20, d12, d10, d8, d6, d4 across six core stats.
2. Choose an Archetype: Pick a role (e.g., Enforcer, Innovator, Wanderer).
3. Pick Aptitudes & Impediments: Select 2 Aptitudes from your Archetype's list and 2 Impediments from the global list.
4. Determine Identity & Appearance: Narrative details only.
5. Choose Tools of Survival: Start with practical, personal gear.
6. Craft the Outrunner's Vision: Collaborate with the GM to define your premonition of death.
7. Establish Character Relationships: Define past connections and a shared background with the group.

STEP 1: ASSIGN STAT DICE

- Each character starts with the dice set d20, d12, d10, d8, d6, d4. Assign one die to each Stat:
  - Fortitude — Physical resilience and endurance.
  - Will — Mental and emotional resolve.
  - Reflex — Speed, agility, and reaction.
  - Intellect — Analysis, problem-solving, knowledge.
  - Charm — Presence, persuasion, social influence.
  - Prowess — Combat technique, offense/defense.
- Rule: Once assigned, that die is used whenever a check calls for that Stat (including combat and contests). Higher dice represent stronger capability.

STEP 2: CHOOSE ARCHETYPE

- Select 1 Archetype.
  - Your Archetype grants access to a specific Aptitudes list (choose 2) and may suggest thematic Impediments (choose 2 total from the global list).
  - Archetypes define role and expertise; exact flavor is not required for SRD use.

STEP 3: APTITUDES & IMPEDIMENTS

- Global Aptitude Option: Magic
  - You may select Magic in place of one listed Aptitude for your Archetype. When you use Magic to solve a problem, the GM sets the DC and you choose one Stat (Will, Intellect, or Charm) as the basis for the roll (declare which applies for that use).

Aptitudes and Impediments

Select an Archetype (generic role). Archetypes provide Aptitudes and may suggest Impediments. The SRD does not provide named examples—designers should create their own.

SRD Note: "Once per session" means per character, per play session. Fate Point spends require brief narration of how the benefit manifests.

STEP 4: IDENTITY & APPEARANCE

Define who your character is (name, origins, look, demeanor). These details have no direct mechanical effect but inform roleplay and GM framing.

STEP 5: TOOLS OF SURVIVAL

Procedure:

1. Choose 3–6 mundane items that reflect background and profession.
2. Optional modest funds if fictionally appropriate (GM adjudicates).
3. Items must be practical and portable; unique relics/advanced tech are not starting gear unless granted by the scenario or GM.

STEP 6: CRAFT THE VISION

Procedure:

1. Scope: Individual or shared (group) Vision.
2. Prompts: What do you hear? What symbol/face stands out? How do you feel?
3. Record key sensory details, location cues, and emotional tone.
4. The Vision ties into Hands of Fate features (e.g., Vision Recall, Shared Destiny) during play.

GAME MASTERS

Role of the GM

- The GM presents challenges, interprets rules, and guides the narrative.
- They frame environments, control NPCs, and escalate tension through the Countdown and Harbinger mechanics.
- The GM balances spotlight time, ensures fair play, and applies consequences consistently.

HARBINGER FRAMEWORK

Use these tools:

Guided Questions

1. Nature: Entity, group, or environmental force?
2. Connection: How is it tied to players or their Visions?
3. Strengths/Weaknesses: What makes it dangerous? What can be exploited?
4. Escalation: How does it become more threatening over time?

Behavior & Tactics Table (d6)

1. Relentless Tracker
2. Subtle Manipulator
3. Explosive Arrival
4. Divide and Conquer
5. Psychological Torment
6. Bait and Switch

Motives Table (d8)

Examples: Restore balance, revenge, guard an artifact, punishment for trespass, testing the worthy.

Complication Table (d6)

Environmental hazards, betrayals, ominous warnings, indirect attacks, or early arrival.

Countdowns

Track rising tension in three stages—Early (ominous signs), Mid (increased threats), Final (direct confrontation). Failure or delay advances the Countdown.

Escalation Framework

- Early Game: Indirect actions—omens, minions, hazards.
- Mid Game: Increased presence and pressure.
- Final Act: Fully active; drives confrontation linked to Visions.

Stopping the Harbinger (d8)

1. Confrontation (direct defeat).
2. Appeasement (offer sacrifice).
3. Complete the Vision (controlled fulfillment).

4. Banishment Ritual.
5. Destroy the Anchor (object/place/NPC).
6. Rewrite the Timeline.
7. Forge an Alliance.
8. Other (GM's discretion).

Endgame & Resolution

- Defiance of Fate: Characters avert their visions.
- Acceptance of the End: Characters meet their fate head-on.
- Cycle of Visions: Burden passed on; consequences ripple.
- GM uses reflective questions to close the story: Did they truly escape fate? What legacy remains?

APPENDICES

Glossary of Conditions & Tags

These are mechanical states that may be applied during play. The GM uses them to clarify outcomes, simplify narration, or track effects. They are temporary unless escalated by Injuries or narrative choices.

- Distracted — –1 to next roll; focus pulled away.
- Exhausted — Roll the next Stat die one size lower (e.g., d10 → d8).
- Injured (Minor) — Impairment appropriate to Injury Level; reduce mobility, effectiveness, or focus.
- Injured (Major) — Severe impairment; adds +2 DC to relevant checks.
- Injured (Fatal) — Imminent death unless delayed/redirected.
- Panicked — Must act to escape or defend; cannot take deliberate, complex actions.
- Pinned/Restrained — Limited or no movement until freed.
- Staggered — Loses next action, or suffers –2 to rolls until recovered.
- Unarmed/Disarmed — Lacks a weapon or key tool; improvisation required.

Note: GMs may create new tags as shorthand for narrative states. Tags should always have a clear, mechanical consequence (penalty, restriction, or forced action). GM may clear Conditions when fictionally resolved (rest, treatment, downtime).

CHANGELOG

SRD Version History

- Version 1.0 — Release Date: 2025-10-01
- Initial publication of the Outrunners SRD.
- Includes: Legal Section, Core Resolution System, Character Creation, GM Framework, Appendices.
- Future updates should be logged here with date, version number, and summary of changes.

TABLES

Difficulty Check (DC) Table

DC Range	Difficulty	Example Task
1-3	Trivial	Tie shoelaces in a breeze
4-6	Easy	Climb a wall with handholds
7-9	Moderate	Persuade a reluctant NPC
10-12	Challenging	Decipher a code under pressure
13-15	Difficult	Spot a hidden figure in a crowd
16-18	Very Difficult	Disarm a trap as enemies close in
19-20	Near Impossible	Leap rooftops while dodging obstacles

Stat Dice Assignment Example

Stat	Dice	Function
Fortitude	d12	Physical resilience & endurance
Will	d8	Mental & emotional resolve
Reflex	d20	Agility & speed
Intellect	d10	Problem-solving & knowledge
Charm	d6	Social influence & persuasion
Prowess	d4	Combat technique, offense/defense

Narrative Control Table

Difference	Who Narrates
10+	Player narrates, with flourish
+5 thru +9	Player narrates strong success
+1 thru +4	Player + GM co-narrate
0	GM narrates narrow success; player mitigates
-1 thru -4	GM narrates setback; player softens detail
-5 thru -9	GM narrates, with minimal player input.
-10 or lower	GM narrates

Injury Level Table

Injury Level	Repercussions
Minor	Impairs but does not incapacitate
Major	Severe impairment; may escalate if untreated
Fatal	Imminent death

Hands of Fate

Action	Effect
Vision Recall	Ask GM about your Vision; roll 1d6 for clarity
Temporal Shuffle	Reroll (yours/NPC's); next DC +2
Fate's Favor	Find resource/clue; complication introduced
Shared Destiny	Group +1 vs Vision; next challenge DC +3
Destiny's Sacrifice	Take another's Vision (+2 vs it); your next Vision DC +4
Divine Intervention	+2 to crucial roll or call on NPC; major complication within 2 sessions