

Kids with Dreidels: A Hanukkah RPG

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Intro

Kids with Dreidels is a rules-light TTRPG inspired by *Kids on Bikes*. Instead of rolling dice, players spin dreidels to determine the outcome of the story. Each time a player fails, they take 1 gelt, which can be spent to get another chance on a future check.

Creating a Character

There are 6 attributes that help make your character unique: **Shlep**, **Ruach**, **Chochmah**, **Chutzpah**, **Schmooze**, and **Glitch**. Assign a bonus to 2 of these attributes, indicating each with a “+” sign on your character sheet. Assign a penalty to 1 of these attributes, indicating it with a “-” sign on your character sheet.

Shlep (Strength) reflects your character’s ability to lift, push, and grapple. It often applies to strength-based attacks.

Ruach (Spirit) reflects your character’s ability to endure, both physically and emotionally.

Chochmah (Brains) reflects your character’s ability to notice, remember, and deduce.

Chutzpah (Courage) reflects your character’s ability to act boldly and resist fear.

Shmooze (Charm) reflects your character’s ability to persuade, befriend, and deceive.

Glitch (Agility) reflects your character’s ability to evade, sneak, and be nimble. It often applies to dodges and dexterity-based attacks.

Once you have assigned 2 bonuses and 1 penalty among your 6 attributes, further customize your character by giving them a name, motivation, affinity, and flaw. If you want to add complexity, you can give your character multiple motivations, affinities, or flaws.

A *motivation* is a goal, muse, or tenet that drives your character.

An *affinity* is a person, organization, skill, or concept that your character has a connection to.

A *flaw* is a shortcoming that can serve as an obstacle for your character.

Finally, add any other details that feel important to you in the “description” section of your character sheet.

Playing the Game

One player serves as the **Maggid** (GM) and the other players create characters. The Maggid describes the in-game world, plays all of the NPCs, arbitrates the rules, and describes the consequences of actions. The players assume the roles of their characters and interact with the world, making choices based on their circumstances and character traits.

Basic Check

When a player wants to attempt something and the Maggid determines that it is not guaranteed to succeed, but that it is still possible, the Maggid will call for a **basic check**. The Maggid can determine the attribute associated with this basic check, or challenge the player to convince them of the appropriate attribute.

If a player has no bonus or penalty associated with a basic check, the player rolls 1 dreidel. The side that lands face up determines the result of the check. If a player has a bonus (“+”) associated with a basic check, the player spins two dreidels and takes the better result. If a player has a penalty (“-”) associated with a basic check, the player spins two dreidels and takes the worse result.

ג (Gimmel) is a critical success. Not only does the character succeed, but additional good things can happen.

ה (Hey) is a success. A character succeeds at what they attempt to do.

נ (Nun) is a failure. A character fails at what they attempt to do.

ש (Shin) is a critical failure. A character fails at what they attempt to do, and additional bad things can happen.

Opposed Check

If two characters (player character and/or NPC) are acting against each other, they make an **opposed check**, applying a bonus or penalty if applicable. The character with the better result succeeds and the character with the worse result fails. In the case of a tie, the Maggid determines some sort of neutral outcome or calls for another check.

Gelt

If a player fails, getting a נ (nun) or ש (shin) on a basic check, or losing an opposed check, the player takes 1 **gelt**. On future checks, a player can spend 1 gelt to spin a dreidel 1 more time, taking the best result. A player can do this multiple times on a single check until they run out of gelt.

Adjusting for Difficulty

For emphasis, the Maggid may adjust a check based on the difficulty of the task.

Menial tasks require no roll, and automatically succeed.

Easy tasks succeed on anything but a critical failure (ש), and only a critical failure rewards 1 gelt.

Standard tasks succeed on a critical success (ג) or a success (ה). Most checks fit within this category.

Hard tasks only succeed on a critical success (⚡), and any other letter rewards 1 gelt.

Impossible tasks require no roll, and automatically fail. This should be the rarest category, but it allows the Maggid to set limits and encourage players to think creatively and justify their strategies.

The Maggid may also add or remove a bonus or penalty on a check based on a character's traits (motivation, flaw, affinity, or description), the results of previous checks, or other circumstances that emerge in the world of the game.

Group Check

If multiple players are making the same check, the Maggid can either require them to roll individually or call for a **group check**. In a group check, if half or more of the players succeed, the whole group succeeds, and if more than half of the group fails, the whole group fails. If the group fails a group check, every player receives 1 gelt regardless of individual results; if the group succeeds a group check, no players receive any gelt regardless of individual results.

Collaborative Storytelling

Kids with Dreidels does not feature inventories, hit points, combat rounds, or levels. The shared reality of the in-game world and the flow of time are determined by the Maggid and the other players. Though the Maggid has the final say, they can encourage the players to add to the story itself.

Tell your own version of the story of Hanukkah or dive into a tale inspired by Jewish folklore. The only limit is your imagination.