

# Rhythm-Based RPG Combat System

**By Michael Murray**

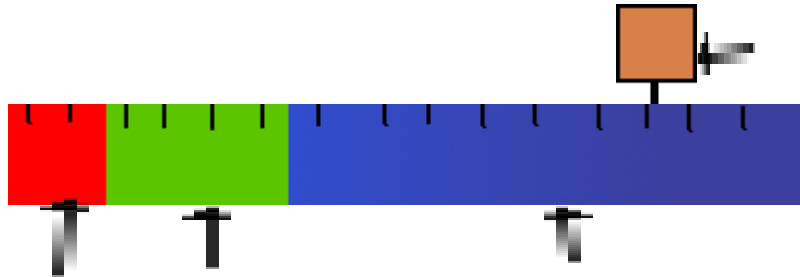
This is a prototype combat system that may be used in a future game if it turns out to be fun. For now, I will just design the combat and share it to get reactions.

This battle system is based on music rhythm games, as well as games such as Grandia that use gauges in its combat system. The goal of this combat system is to provide something fast-paced, and keep the player on their toes as they need to be paying attention at all times.

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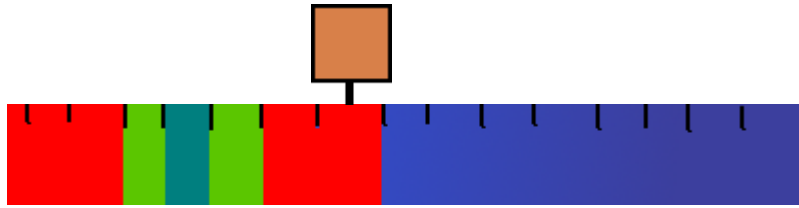
## The Action Gauge



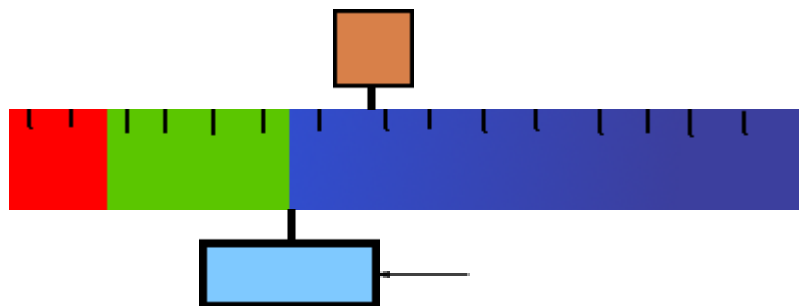
The above gauge is how the player performs actions. The gauge can change depending on the equipped weapon, as well as any skills that affect hit chance or damage, or even the movement speed/amount of tokens.

The number of action tokens varies by weapon or skill. The standard number of tokens is **3**, and the combat should be balanced around that number.

The Action Token moves along the gauge from right to left. If the player presses the button during the prep phase, they will get a less than desired result (50%). If the action token lands anywhere in the green portion, they will get a 100% result. If the token lands in the red portion, then the desired action fails (0%). Depending on the action, the gauge could have a wider green meter, or it could have an all red meter, with a sliver of green!



The meter above is an example of a weapon that can provide potential bonus damage. The bluish portion in between the green area is not only 100%, but bonus damage (3x). Landing on the critical area carries much more risk. And this isn't the only wrinkle the gauge can have...



The sky blue token under the gauge is the enemy shield. If the action token lands anywhere in the same area as the shield, the action is blocked no matter what. The shield moves from side to side, and can come in different sizes and speeds. While shields are a nuisance, they can be eventually destroyed. If the colour of the action token matches that of the shield, and the action token lands on the green or critical meter, then the shield will take damage and shrink in size. If the shield is destroyed, the player will be awarded bonuses, such as a wider crit area, or the elimination of the Miss meter. Shields do not return, except in special cases. Enemies can have more than 1 shield.

- If a shield is hit, it will be stunned for a moment, allowing the player to either hit it some more, or bypass it in order to land a token outside of its range! The stun duration will be in real time, so the player cannot take their time to land on the shield token again.

Every time the player lands on a beneficial area (normal, critical, or special), the next token will speed up by 20%.

### After a Shield Token is destroyed

If a player manages to destroy a shield, the enemy will become guard crushed, which results in the enemy losing turns. Additionally, the player will receive bonuses; the bonuses are random and temporary, but they are all beneficial. The following bonuses can be attained:

- All panels except Special become Critical panels
- Party is fully restored, ailments removed, and dead heroes are revived (rarest bonus)
- Bonus EXP and money (does not stack)
- 100% chance of a rare drop
- Enemy buffs are removed
- Action Gauge is slowed down considerably
- All heroes gain a 20% buff to all stats (except HP and MP)
- Skills cost 0 mana

While the bonuses are random, some bonuses have a lower chance of activation.

### Other Shield Token Types

Besides the standard shield, enemies may come with other shield token types that could even be more dangerous to deal with. Examples of other shield tokens:

- Counter: any time it's struck, the enemy deals damage to the attacker.
- Ailment: causes an ailment when struck. The ailment is predetermined.
- Healing: enemy gets HP equal to the amount of damage that would have been dealt.
- MP Drain: MP is lost.

### Mystery Nodes

The player may encounter nodes with a question mark on them. If the player touches this node, a random effect will occur. Here are the effects:

- All heroes' XP to the next level becomes 1.
- More map enemies are added, including one major enemy. The major enemy blocks the exit if able.
- All opened treasure chests are given new items, and the items are from a loot table 1 level higher.
- Heroes' HP are restored fully
- Heroes' current MP is reduced by half.
- Party receives a small global buff for a random stat that lasts for the entire run. This is stackable.

## Stats

**Hit Points (HP):** Hero's life. Hero dies when this value is 0

**Mana Points (MP):** Spend this to use skills.

**Attack Power (ATP):** Physical strength against the target's DFP.

**Defence Power (DFP):** Ability to resist ATP. High value = lower damage.

**Magic Power (MAG):** Skill's strength against target's RES.

**Resistance (RES):** Ability to withstand magic attacks and status ailments.

**Speed (SPD):** Determines when a hero or enemy can act.

## Hero Skills

### Barbarian

- Intimidate: Reduces a target's ATP by 10%. Landing on crit panel reduces ATP by 30%.
- Berserk: Barbarian's ATP is greatly increased, but DFP is reduced and Barbarian is uncontrollable. Strength of ATP boost is based on panel. Crit panel provides the highest boost, but also reduces DFP the most.
- Remedy: Removes blind and poison status. Crit panel restores a little HP.
- Shout: Stuns all enemies for 1 turn. Crit panel increases success rate.
- Decapitate: Instantly kills a target. Success is based on hero's ATP vs target's ATP. Crit panel increases success rate.

## Rogue

- Steal: Take an item from the target if there's an item to steal. Taking the item removes it from the enemy so it can't be earned after combat ends. However, there's a 100% success rate if the player lands on the correct panel.
  - Normal panel: steal a common item
  - Critical panel: steal a rare item
- Shadowbind: stuns a target for 3 turns.
- Persuade: charm a target for 3 turns.
- Hide: forfeit a turn. Rogue can't be targeted or damaged until next turn. On next turn, a random panel is transformed into a critical panel.
- Fan of Daggers: Deal physical damage to all enemies.

## Cleric

- Healing Light: Restore HP to a target. Crit panel restores HP and temporarily raises max HP (max HP increase is applied first).
- Holy Aura: Raises DFP of all allies by 10%, up to 30%. Landing on crit panel raises Dfp by 15%.
- Revive: Restores a dead hero to life. Crit panel restores more HP.
- Cleanse: Removes all ailments. Crit panel prevents ailments for a duration.
- Great Heal: Restores HP to all heroes. Crit panel restores more HP.

## Mage

- Light Arrow: Non-elemental attack that targets a single enemy.
- Fire Bolt: Inflicts fire damage on a target. Crit panel targets all other enemies for less damage.
- Blizzard: cold damage on all enemies. Crit panel has a chance to inflict stun for 1 turn.
- Thunder Strike: Lightning damage on a single target. Crit panel has a chance to inflict stun for 5 turns.
- Dark Mist: Chance to inflict Blind on all enemies. Crit panel increases success rate.
- Haste: Increases target's SPD by 30% for 3 turns. Crit Panel increases SPD by 50%.
- Corrode: Reduces target's DFP by 30%. Crit panel reduces RES by 30%.
- Sharpen: Increases target ATP by 30%. Crit Panel increases ATP by 50%.
- Meteor: Non-elemental attack that deals damage to random targets 3 times. Crit panel raises the number of hits to 5.

## Items

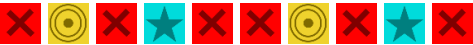
The following items can be found throughout the game. They can be dropped by enemies, or they can be contained in treasure chests. The deeper the player advances, the more valuable the items become.

## Consumables

| Name         | Min. table level<br>(min = 0, max = 4) | Effect                                                                |
|--------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Herb         | 0                                      | Restores 33% HP                                                       |
| Life Potion  | 1                                      | Revives a hero with 50% HP                                            |
| Mana Potion  | 1                                      | Restores 33% MP                                                       |
| Mystery Seed | 2                                      | Permanently raises a random stat (ATP, DFP, MAG, RES, SPD) by 1 point |
| Medicine     | 2                                      | Removes status ailment                                                |
| Lost Journal | 3                                      | Reduces XP to next level to 1                                         |
| Elixir       | 4                                      | Restores HP and MP to full                                            |

## Weapons

| Name                | Min. table level | Action Gauge Panels | Effect                                          |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Sword               | 0                |                     |                                                 |
| Dagger              | 0                |                     |                                                 |
| Axe                 | 0                |                     |                                                 |
| Staff               | 0                |                     | Comes with random skill when found              |
| Golden Axe          | 0                |                     | Raises ATP by 10%, up to 30%                    |
| Bow                 | 1                |                     |                                                 |
| Venom Dagger        | 2                |                     | Chance to poison on hit. Critical = 100% chance |
| Staff of Extinction | 4                |                     | Non elemental damage to all enemies             |

|             |   |                                                                                    |                                       |
|-------------|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Killer Bow  | 4 |  | Can instantly kill target             |
| Blood Sword | 3 |  | 25% of damage dealt is restored as HP |

## Armour

| Name             | Min. table level | Effect                                     |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Undershirt       | 0                |                                            |
| Vest             | 1                |                                            |
| Robe             | 1                | Raises elemental resistance by 10%         |
| Leather Armour   | 2                |                                            |
| Plate Mail       | 3                | RES - 5, Elemental resists -10%            |
| Sorcerer's Cloak | 4                | Resist stun and charm; element resist +15% |

## Trinkets

| Name         | Min. table level | Effect                    |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Leather Band | 1                | Raises HP by 20           |
| Regen Ring   | 2                | Restores 15% HP each turn |
| Speed Boots  | 2                | Raises SPD by 2           |
| Sword Charm  | 3                | Raises ATP by 10%         |
| Turtle Charm | 3                | Raises DFP by 10%         |
| Visor        | 3                | Resists Blind             |
| Cure Pendant | 3                | Resists Poison            |