

BREATHLESS CREATOR KIT

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BREATHLESS CREATOR KIT AND SYSTEM REFERENCE DOCUMENT

Written by René-Pier Deshaies-Gélinas

Published by [Fari RPGs](#)

Welcome to the **Breathless Design Document**, a fully open licensed document designed specifically to allow you to design your own tabletop role-playing games based on the original Breathless SRD along with all other Breathless variants published by Fari RPGs.

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THIS GAME IS BREATHLESS

This design document is a combination of guidelines and system reference documents (SRDs) that will assist you in designing your own tabletop RPG based on *Breathless*, a zombie survival horror RPG.

Since the initial publication of *Breathless* in 2022, over 200 *Breathless Games* have been published on [itch.io](#) and [talto.cc](#) (in Japanese), with even more currently in development. The engine that

powers the original game has inspired countless individuals, and my goal since the release of the first SRD has been to enable as many creators as possible. This document represents the culmination of that effort.

Breathless in a Nutshell

Breathless is a survival horror role-playing game in which you play as a survivor trying to stay alive in a walled city full of living dead. The game is designed to fit entirely on two sides of a letter-sized sheet of paper, making it easy to learn and highly customizable. The game's system offers rules-light and survival-based mechanics that create stories with meaningful consequences and highly dramatic narrative threads.

It is well-known for its core mechanic, which creates a continuous tension-and-release gameplay loop.

Basically, when facing a risky situation, you pick one of your **skills** or **items** and roll a die that matches its rating, which ranges from a **d4** to a **d12**.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and something goes wrong or you succeed with a **major complication**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed** with a **minor complication**.
- On a **5+**, you **greatly succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

The twist is that every time you roll a die, that die goes down one step (d12 > d10 > d8 > d6 > d4). The only way for you to reset that die is to **catch your breath**. But you have to be careful since every time you **catch your breath**, the GM has to introduce a new complication to the scene.

Most mechanics in Breathless games rely on this format and use it to create a continuous cycle of suspense.

This Design Document

Since publishing Breathless, I have released many other Breathless Games under the Fari RPGs banner. Each one expands on the original rule set, tuning the rules to fit a different genre or theme. This design document acts as the ultimate collection of game System Reference Documents (SRDs), guidelines, and resources for designing a game based on Breathless and its siblings.

The design document is divided into three parts. The first covers everything you need to know about the toolbox as a whole and the various resources available to you. The second part contains the content of the original Breathless SRD (enhanced), and the third part contains the SRDs for each sibling game.

A New Kind of System Reference Document

Traditionally, an SRD has been viewed as a set of highly themed rules and mechanics that can be easily copied, pasted, and adapted into your own game. While it can help get you started with a particular game design project, I believe there's a way to change the medium to make it more accessible.

For me, and in the context of my design documents, an SRD is two things. First, it's an easy-to-copy and adapt rule set. Coming up with the right words to explain mechanics and systems is hard, especially when English isn't your first language. Since I've already done the job, I don't see why I shouldn't make the result of my labor available to others so that they have a strong foundation for making their game. That's the **rules** section of my SRDs.

Second, there are the **design points**. These are more conversational and aim to explain the intent behind a particular part or rule in the game. They try to guide you towards creating a finished product by explaining what makes the game work and by asking leading questions that will steer you into delving deeper into the design process. Within this design document, **design points** won't be repeated for mechanics that are used across many games. For example, if the **Stunt** mechanic is explained in the **Breathless SRD**, it won't be covered again in the **Nomadic SRD**.

Please note that this is a living document. I intend to continue updating it over time as I publish more Breathless Games, and as the community provides more feedback on the sort of guidelines they would like to see here.

Where to Start

First, think about the kind of game you want to design. What does the world look like? What kind of characters will the players be playing as? What kind of themes should the game focus on?

Once you have a basic idea of what you want to build, read the [Breathless SRD](#). From there, create a new document and get to work. It's important to note that this design document is **not meant to be read from start to finish**, and the original SRD is enough to get you started.

If you are curious about what other Breathless variants, like Nomadic (solo space exploration) or Stoneburner (solo-friendly demon hunting and community building), bring to the table, go give them a read. But do so only in due time. The reason I'm telling you this is that the other games are bigger, more complex, and take the original rule set in very different directions. Understanding the core of "*what makes Breathless Breathless*" will go a long way.

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THIS GAME IS BREATHLESS



Logos

If you want, head over to <https://breathless.farirpgs.com/#license> and download the "This Game is Breathless" high resolution images and vector assets at to identify your game as a "Breathless Game".

FARI RPGS' BREATHLESS GAMES

Here is the current list of Breathless games which have either been published or are being worked on by the team at Fari RPGs.

- [Breathless](#) - A zombie survival horror RPG, and the original game.
- [Renegade](#) - A sci-fi space opera RPG set in the used future.
- Nomadic - A solo sci-fi RPG of exploration and survival
- Stoneburner - A solo-friendly sci-fantasy RPG of demon hunting and community building.
- Tales of the Burned Stones - A solo-friendly dark-fantasy RPG of journeying and dungeon delving.
- GUNSHIP - Work in progress 🚧
- Our Last Stand - Work in progress 🚧

BREATHLESS SRD

Where it all started...

BREATHLESS PREFACE

Breathless is a condensed survival horror RPG that focuses on the stories of people struggling to survive in a dangerous world. Characters will overcome challenges, search for items, and fight for their lives until they become too exhausted to continue and must catch their breath before moving on.

Website: <https://breathless.farirpgs.com/>

BREATHLESS RULES

Before we Start

Content Warning: death, violence, gore.

Before you start, define lines that should not be crossed. Pause or rewind the game if something uncomfortable happens during a session. Always make sure everyone is comfortable with the direction of the story.

Playing the Game

One person is the game moderator (GM), the rest are players.

GM: Guide the story, present challenges to the group. Be a fan of the players. Ask them questions, fill the world with their answers. If it's cool, let them try or split complex challenges into multiple checks.

Player: Narrate what your character does. Make checks when things are risky. Give everyone a time to shine. Fill the world with your ideas. Take risks, and rise up from failures.

Checks

When doing something challenging, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. You only need to roll if what you are doing is risky. The GM first telegraphs the risk of your action. You then pick a **skill** or **item**, and roll the die that matches its rating. If an ally helps you, they also make a **check**, but share the same risks as you. Take the highest die and interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's **** a **complication**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Surviving in this world is hard. Everyone who rolled reduces the rating of the skill they used by one step (**d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4**). **Skills** cannot go lower than a **d4**.

The GM can also disclaim decision-making by testing for luck. To do so, pick a die rating simply based on the odds of a thing happening, roll, and interpret the result as you see fit.

Catch your Breath

To reset all your **skills** to their original rating, you can ask to **catch your breath**. This is a brief break in tension. It can be done at anytime, even during combat. When a character **catches their breath**, the GM looks at the scene and introduces a new **complication** for the group.

Loot Checks

When the fiction allows it, you can make a **loot check** to scavenge for tools, weapons, med kits, etc. You start with a **d12 loot die**, which steps down after each usage. When you **loot**, roll your current **loot die** and interpret the result. You may continue to use the loot die when it is a d4, at your own risk. To reset your loot die to its initial rating, you need to **catch your breath**.

- On a **1-2**, trouble is here...
- On a **3-4**, there's trouble ahead...
- On a **5-6**, you get a **d6 item**.
- On a **7-8**, you get a **d8 item**.
- On a **9-10**, you get a **d10 item** or a **med kit**.
- On a **11-12**, you get a **d12 item** or a **med kit**.

Backpack

Items in your backpack can be used in place of your **skills**. They start with a die rating which decreases after each use. When reduced to a **d4**, the **item** either breaks, gets lost, or fades away from the fiction until it's made relevant again. You can only carry **3 items** and one **med kit** at once.

Stunts

When you try to pull off a **stunt**, you use a **d12** instead of a **skill** rating to do a **check**. You will need to **catch your breath** before attempting another **stunt**.

Stress

When you face a **complication**, you may have to take **stress**. If your character reaches **4 stress**, they become **vulnerable**, which means failing a dangerous action could mean being taken out—or— sudden death. You can use a **med kit** to clear **2 stress**, or lay low someplace secure awhile to clear an amount at the GM's discretion.

Your Character

On your character sheet, write down your character's name, pronouns, and the job they had before society as we knew it collapsed.

By default, skills have a **d4** rating. Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think your character is good at. Characters have a total of **6 skills**:

- **Bash**: wreck, move, force.
- **Dash**: run, jump, climb.
- **Sneak**: hide, skulk, lurk.
- **Shoot**: track, throw, fire.
- **Think**: perceive, analyze, repair.
- **Sway**: charm, manipulate, intimidate.

Think of an **item** that you got before leaving for your adventure, and add it to your backpack as a **d10 item**.

Rolling Tables

You may use the following tables to generate details for your game.

Weapons

1. 2x4
2. Baseball Bat
3. Sledge Hammer
4. Crowbar
5. Frying Pan
6. Golf Club
7. Katana
8. Shovel
9. Machete
10. Baton
11. Pitchfork

12. Banjo
13. Chainsaw
14. Skate Board
15. Dumbbell
16. Cricket Bat
17. Fire Axe
18. Pipe
19. Pickaxe
20. Hatchet

Long Range Weapons

1. Revolver
2. 9mm Pistol
3. Hunting Rifle
4. Shotgun
5. Bow
6. Flamethrower
7. Sniper Rifle
8. Assault Rifle
9. Crossbow
10. Molotov Cocktail
11. Grenade
12. Pipe Bomb

Jobs

1. Chef
2. IT Specialist
3. Nurse
4. Personal Trainer
5. Influencer
6. Police Officer
7. Architect
8. School Teacher
9. Military
10. Mechanic
11. Park Ranger
12. College Student
13. DJ
14. Civil Engineer
15. Homeless

16. Contractor
17. Bartender
18. Firefighter
19. Farmer
20. Scientist

Locations

1. Apartment Building
2. Shopping Center
3. Grocery Store
4. Hospital
5. Church
6. Arcade
7. Sewers
8. High-School
9. Hotel
10. Construction Site
11. Dance Club
12. Factory

Complications

1. Another survivor is yelling for help.
2. You've attracted a swarm of Crawlers.
3. Bandits are on your tail.
4. New and nasty kind of Crawler.
5. Maniac shooting everything that moves.
6. You meet another group of survivors.
7. The zone you're in is booby trapped.
8. You're out of munitions.
9. One of your items suddenly breaks.
10. The only way out is blocked.
11. You meet someone you knew before.
12. You face a pack of feral animals.

Missions

1. Your group is almost out of supplies.
2. Someone in your group is very sick.
3. Thugs kicked you out of your safe zone.
4. The military is planning to bomb the city.

5. You've met someone who's immune.
6. The government planned a supply drop.
7. A cult is sacrificing people to Crawlers.
8. You've met a scientist who's found a cure.
9. Someone in your group was captured.
10. You've heard of a sanctuary filled with survivors on the other side of the city.
11. There's a fire raging across the city.
12. Your group has found itself in the middle of a gang war.

BREATHLESS DESIGN POINTS

A Format

The first thing you need to consider when creating any type of game is the format you want to use. Whether it's a bifold pamphlet like *Breathless*, a 20-page zine, or a full-fledged book, the way you write your text, lore, and mechanics will differ greatly.

In formats like bifold or trifold games, every word has to be useful and every sentence must be condensed. Due to space limitations, you may need to rephrase things often to make them fit on the page. Using a small format also means you won't be able to include as many details as you might like, such as world lore, a bestiary, or NPC backgrounds. Space is a luxury you can't often afford in small formats. Creating condensed games requires significant effort, but it can be a rewarding challenge.

If you decide to go with a larger format like a zine or a book, you will need to ask yourself, "how much information is too much?" *Breathless* games oftentimes leave things open-ended for players to discover and provide means to generate dynamic stories through rolling tables and oracles. If you add too many details about the world, what is left to be explored? Try to strike the right balance between necessary information to understand the world and what is superfluous to actually enjoy being a part of it.

A World

Breathless was designed to emulate stories like those in the video game series *The Last Of Us*, where characters live in a harsh world full of challenges. By relying on their skills and gear, they will be able to accomplish what they need to and survive yet another day.

When creating your world, think about what it looks like, what kind of people and creatures inhabit it, and what its current or impending issues are. This will help inform the kind of challenges

the players may face in the game. Is the world broken, or is there something that is looking to cause harm? Consider the latest events in the story and describe them early in the game to give a sense of history and context.

A Goal

In *Breathless*, the characters have a clear goal: survive one more day. This goal was perfect for such a short game, but for bigger games you need something bigger and more complex to drive the show.

When creating your story, think about the goal the main characters of the story have. Are the characters lone explorers, or are they a part of the solution to solving problems in the world? Are they looking for something, or are they on the run? Think about the different factions in your world, and how they relate with the characters to tie everything together.

Your Check

See [Checks](#)

One of the core aspects of *Breathless* is that using a **skill** or **item** always steps down its die. The reason behind this is not to reduce the chances of success, per se.. The dice are swingy anyway. Even with a d4, you still have a 50% chance of success. The goal is to slowly encourage players to **catch their breath**. This creates the pacing and encourages an exchange between the players and the GM. It's more like a countdown that switches the narrative control from one side of the table to the other. Players play and interact with the story, and when one of them **catches their breath**, the GM gets to introduce something new, dramatic, and interesting to the story.

For your game, you may want to consider how skills or items reset or step down to affect the pace of the game. Would you like dice to always step down like in *Breathless*, or perhaps to only step down on failures? Are there other ways to reset the ratings of a **skill** or **item**? Are there other systems that use "die steps" as a currency to activate abilities?

Your “Catch Your Breath”

See [Catch your Breath](#)

The core loop of the game centers around characters becoming breathless from overcoming obstacles, **catching their breath**, and getting back into the action. This tension and release cycle is one of the coolest things about *Breathless* games. This kind of loop works fantastically for any kind of risk-taking adventures.

For your game, consider when and how characters should "**catch their breath**". Can they do it all the time, or do they need to rest or be in a specific location? Think about the cost of the characters catching their breath, as every mechanic should try to move the story forward.

Your Loot

See [Loot Checks](#)

Loot checks provide players an opportunity to acquire **items** that can make their lives easier and reduce the rate at which they get tired. However, looting always carries some risk. The reason for this risk is to prompt players to ask themselves if adding more tension to the current scene is worth the possibility of finding an item at this moment.

For your game, what does the result distribution of looting look like? What are the odds of getting a great item versus risking your life while searching? Are you using a d20 for looting, or is looting a skill that steps down like the others?

Your Skills and Kits

See [Your Character](#)

Skills are how characters interact with the world when things are risky. They tie the mechanical part of the game with the fiction. To make this game your own, you should customize the skill list to fit the aesthetic of your setting. A good way to approach this is to think about the actions characters would do often and assign them a verb or name.

For your game, what actions would characters do the most? Are the initial skill ratings picked by the player during character creation or rolled randomly? Or, perhaps they are part of a character **kit** which assigns skill ratings and other details or items based on a specific archetype?

Your Stunts

See [Stunts](#)

The default Stunt mechanic is a tool players can use to look "awesome" once per "catch your breath". Use this to mimic characters using cool powers or doing something extremely lucky.

Your Stress

See [Stress](#)

Stress is the default health pacing mechanism of the game. If you want characters to feel stronger or weaker, adjust how big is the stress track, what happens when a PC fills it, and how they can recover. Be as generous or harsh as you see fit.

Your Rolling Tables

See [Rolling Tables](#)

Consider adding rolling tables for the things you consider important in your game. Since this game's format is short, rolling tables help in two-way. First, they help put a bigger focus on what is significant in your world. Second, they help facilitate sessions for when the players are in doubt about where the story should go next. Plus, it does all this in a very word efficient way. You could include tables for things like items, locations, allies, enemies, complications, missions, etc.

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RENEGADES

Breathless for grand space opera adventures

PREFACE

Renegades is a Breathless game set in a sci-fi used future where you play as rebels who want to overthrow an evil empire called the Federation. Inspired by Star Wars related medias, this was the first ever Breathless hack I did. This was published it in the scope of the first [Breathless Jam in 2022](#).

Mechanically, this game diverges from Breathless in the following ways:

- There are no concepts of **items**, no **looting**, and no **stunt** mechanics. Those weren't reinforcing the themes of the game, so I got rid of them and replaced them with something else.
- To reinforce space opera tropes as much as possible, the game adds the **declare a truth** mechanic which gives a lot of narrative freedom to the player by allowing them to establish new facts in the fiction once per **refocus** ("catch your breath").

- This is the first Breathless game I designed that is “kit-based”. Here, players have to pick a certain type of character archetype, which determines the kind of die ratings they start with.

Website: <https://fari-rpgs.itch.io/reneades>

RENEADES SRD

It Started When...

the Federation took control of the galaxy. They now govern with an iron grasp, leveraging the power of tyranny and propaganda to prevent anyone from overthrowing their ruthless empire. There are rumors in the mists about pockets of rebellion. Renegades who haven't lost hope in the face of impossible odds. The Federation is not invincible. They have flaws, and with a bit of luck, we might overthrow their regime.

Before We Start

Before you start, define lines that should not be crossed. Pause or rewind the game if something uncomfortable happens during a session. Always make sure everyone is comfortable with the direction of the story.

The Game

One person is the game master (GM), the rest are players.

GM : Guide the story, and present challenges to the group. Make them meet friendly and shady NPCs. Design villains who think they are the good guys. Be a fan of the players. Ask them questions, fill the world with their answers. If it's cool, let them try. Split complex challenges into multiple checks. Encourage players to change what is true in the fiction.

Player : Narrate what your renegade does. Make checks when things are risky. Give everyone a time to shine. Fill the world with your ideas. Take risks, and rise up from failures. Interact with the world, and assist the GM in finding interesting complications and plot twists

Checks

When there's a challenge that needs to be overcome, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. You only need to roll if what you are doing is risky.

The GM telegraphs the risk of your action, you then pick a **skill**, and roll the die that matches its rating. If an ally helps you, they also make a **check**, but share the same risks as you.

Take the highest die and interpret the results.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's a **complication**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Fighting the Federation is hard and tedious work. Everyone who rolled reduces the rating of the skill they used by one level: d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4. Skills cannot go lower than a d4.

The GM can disclaim decision-making by testing for luck. To do so, pick a die rating simply based on the odds of a thing happening, roll, and interpret the results.

Refocus

To reset all your **skills** to their original rating, you can ask to "**refocus**".

This is a brief break in tension. It can be done at any time, even during combat, escapes, or dog fights.

When a character refocuses, the GM looks at the scene and introduces a new **complication** to the group.

Choose A Kit

THE PILOT is always aware of their surroundings, and can remain calm under pressure. They are incredible flyers and are accompanied by an astro-droid. Pilots get the extra **Focus skill**, set at a d10.

THE MYTHIC is a member of a strange society, and is connected to the world in ways others just aren't. They are passive, just, and empathetic. They wield peculiar weapons, and wear long robes. Mythics get the extra **Feel skill**, set at a d10.

THE SCAVENGER is smart, practical, and capable. They carry around their tool belt, which gives them many options to solve the many problems coming their way. Scavengers get the extra **Tinker skill**, set at a d10.

THE SENATOR is intellectual, eloquent and emanates trust. They know how to influence people to get what they want, and always have a plan in case things go wrong — which they will. Senators get the extra **Sense skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE SMUGGLER is talented, resourceful, and reckless. They have numerous contacts and relations from their criminal background, which acts as a two-edged sword. Smugglers get an extra **Contacts skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE DROID is knowledgeable, pragmatic, and calculated. They know a lot about the different cultures and customs in the galaxy, and can make complex calculations in record times. Droids get the extra **Lore skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE EX-SOLDIER is loyal, selfless, and courageous. Their military background from the old-days makes them very competent and knowledgeable on the battlefield. Ex-soldiers get an extra **Tactical skill**, set at a **d10**.

Your Renegade

On your character sheet, write down your **kit**, your character's name, and preferred pronouns.

By default, skills have a **d4** rating. Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think your character is good at.

Characters have a total of 6 skills:

- **Bash:** wreck, move, force.
- **Dash:** run, jump, climb.
- **Sneak:** hide, skulk, lurk.
- **Shoot:** track, throw, fire.
- **Think:** perceive, analyze, repair.
- **Sway:** charm, manipulate, intimidate.

Declare A Truth

When the situation is dire, or if you are looking for a way out, you can **declare a new truth** about the world. If your fact is a **small truth**, it just happens, but for **big truths** the GM adds a "but..." afterwards.

The GM gets the final say on this, so work with them to make sure your fact works well with what has already been established. Once used, you'll need to "**refocus**" to declare a new truth.

Stress

When you face a **complication** as a result of one of your actions, the GM can decide that you take **1 stress**. If your character reaches **4 stress**, they become “**vulnerable**”. When **vulnerable**, failing a dangerous action could mean being taken out, being captured, or worse.

Healing

To heal up and clear your **stress track**, you need to lay low someplace secure awhile. Look at the fiction and work with the GM to decide how much stress you clear when you rest.

Rolling Tables

LOCATIONS (d10): 1. Bar | 2. Spaceport | 3. Spaceship | 4. Factory | 5. Underground City | 6. Temple | 7. Arena | 8. Hidden Base | 9. Palace | 10. Government Building

BIOMES (d10): 1. Tropical World | 2. Desert World | 3. Water World | 4. Frozen World | 5. Lava World | 6. Gas World | 7. Swamp World | 8. Forest World | 9. Rocky World | 10. City World

RENEGADES DESIGN POINTS

Your Truths

Declaring new truths is what makes Renegades truly unique. It allows the player to take a lot of agency over the narrative and declare new facts about the fiction. The GM could throw a very complex obstacle, like a heavily guarded checkpoint, and a player could come up with a creative solution on the fly and simply say, "I know one of the guards currently on duty at the checkpoint and actually saved their partner's life from the local raiders. They still owe me for this!"

For your game, think about how truths are introduced. Is there a cost to doing so? How big and impactful can the new fact be? Does it relate only to the player character or can it also affect the setting as a whole?

Your Kits

Kits allow games to easily reinforce the classic tropes and archetypes of a specific genre of media. They are the starting points for players and one of the first things presented to them. Every single option should matter and be a core piece of what makes the world and setting interesting. In

Renegades, they guide players into that archetype even more by providing a unique skill that nobody else has.

For your game, what constitutes a kit? Is it just a description and a unique skill, or does a kit also set the other die ratings like bash, dash, sneak, shoot, think, and sway? How many kits will there be? Can someone design their own kits using tables or other means? Is everything in the kit already pre-established, or can some pieces be randomly generated (like background, details, goals, etc.)?

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NOMADIC

Breathless for solo exploration

PREFACE

Nomadic is a tragic solo tabletop role-playing game focused on exploration and survival. In this game, you play as a pilot exploring the depths of the universe in search of humanity's new home after the Primordials retook Earth. Inspired by No Man's Sky and the eponymous song by Ben Prunty, this game is simultaneously harsh, hopeless, and beautiful.

Nomadic was the first time I felt comfortable enough with the Breathless engine make major changes to it in the hope of fitting a drastically different type of game.

Mechanically, this game diverges from Breathless in the following ways:

- There are two **oracles** used by the player throughout the game. The **question oracle** is used to answer questions about the world where the player character may not be involved. The **risk oracle** is used to answer whether the player should or should not perform a **check** as they attempt to do something risky in the fiction.
- Instead of a single **stress** track, there are four (body, mind, gear, ship) and the game tells you exactly when and how many boxes should be marked. On top of this, each **resource track** is linked to a table full of possible complications.
- There's a strong **gameplay loop** that forces the solo player to go through the same steps over and over again, guiding them both mechanically and in the narrative.

- There's an event that gets triggered when all four resource tracks are filled, which offers a choice to the player and prompts them to choose whether they want to abandon the game or continue.

Website: <https://nomadic.farirpgs.com/>

NOMADIC SRD

Nomadic is a solo tabletop role-playing game of exploration and survival. You study dangerous worlds in a quest to find a new home for humankind. During the game, you use oracles when there are uncertainties, perform dangerous actions, and try to keep your body, mind, equipment, and spaceship in good shape.

Nomadic explores themes of isolation, despair, futility, and mental/physical health. Your safety is more important than anything. Don't hesitate to rewind, rewrite, pause, or take a break as you see fit.

To play, you will need:

- A set of polyhedral dice
- A pencil
- Something to write on or a recording device to use during journaling phases of the game.

Leaving Earth

Humanity abandoned Earth as it was destroyed and retaken by the Primordials. The Earth United Front sent hundreds of pilots into the depths of space to explore, document, and survive the harshness of the void in the hope of finding a new planet where humans could prosper again. During that time, what's left of humanity is waiting in giant cryo ships for a new planet to be discovered.

Your Gear

You are a **nomad**, one of the pilots sent to look for inhabitable worlds. You are equipped with a high-tech exo-suit that lets you survive some of the harshest environments. You carry with you a blaster, a portable drone, scanners, and various sensors. Furthermore, you pilot a NOD class starship equipped with a light engine and an astro-droid.

Intro

Start your adventure on your ship. You've been navigating in the void for weeks and are about to enter a new solar system. This system has planets that are worth exploring, either because of their resources or their potential to become humanity's new home.

Your Nomad

On the character sheet located on the back, write down your character's name and pronouns. There are six **skills** you can use to perform risky tasks in the fiction.

- **Muscle:** overcome, wreck, force.
- **Skulk:** hide, sneak, lurk.
- **Dash:** run, jump, climb.
- **Learn:** analyze, investigate, grasp.
- **Tinker:** repair, revamp, restore.
- **Finesse:** gather, befriend, pilot.

Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think you're particularly good at. The rest are set to a **d4**.

Question Oracle

To disclaim decision-making over something, ask a yes/no question imagining the outcome, and roll a die based on the odds of it being positive.

- If it is **very unlikely**: roll a **d4**.
- If it is **unlikely**: roll a **d6**.
- If it is **likely**: roll a **d8**.
- If it is **very likely**: roll a **d10**.
- If it is **almost certain**: roll a **d12**.

Then, interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, the answer is "**No, and...**".
- On a **3-4**, the answer is "**Yes, but...**".
- On a **5+**, the answer is "**Yes, and...**".

Risk Oracle

When you attempt something challenging, roll a die based on your level of control over the current situation. When in doubt, use a **d6**.

- If the situation is **chaotic**, roll a **d4**.

- If the situation is **precarious**, roll a **d6**.
- If the situation is **manageable**, roll a **d8**.
- If the situation is **predictable**, roll a **d10**.
- If the situation is **stable**, roll a **d12**.

Then, interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, the situation is very risky. Make a **perilous check**.
- On a **3-4**, the situation is risky. Make a **check**.
- On a **5+**, the situation is not risky. You simply do it.

Check

When you use the **risk oracle** and the situation is **risky** or **perilous**, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. Pick the **skill** that best matches what you are trying to accomplish, roll the die that matches its rating, and interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**. Mark **one box** on a **resource track** of your choice. **Two boxes** if the situation was **perilous**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's a **complication**. Mark **one box** on a **resource track** of your choice. **Two boxes** if the situation was **perilous**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Then, step down the rating of the skill you used by one step (**d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4**). Skills cannot go lower than a **d4**.

Determination

Your **skills** aren't all you have to survive the harshness of space. You can also rely on your sheer determination to push forward and to make the mission a success. When you use your **determination**, you use a **d12** instead of a **skill** rating to do a **check**. Once used, you'll need to **focus** to use it again.

Focus

When you **focus**, you quickly take the time to assess the situation, calculate all the variables, and recenter yourself for what's to come. You can do this at any time, even during highly dramatic moments.

When you **focus**, reset all your **skills** to their initial rating. Then, you have to introduce a new **complication** in the story. When that happens, mark **one box** on a **resource track**.

Look at the "complications" section for a list of possible options to use depending on which track you marked. If all your resource tracks are filled, you need to **make a choice**.

Will you abandon the mission, or will you push forward into the unknown?

Resource Tracks

You have **four resources tracks**: **body**, **mind**, **gear**, and **ship**. When a **complication** arises, either as a result of you **focusing** or from a **check**, you mark boxes on one of the tracks. Look at the fiction to decide which track to mark. You can also pick a random one and link it with the fiction later.

If there are no more boxes to mark, you have to **make a choice**.

Make A Choice

When you need to mark a box, and all your **resource tracks** are filled, you have to **make a choice**.

Abandon: You can't go on, and must abandon the mission. As a result, you will die in the coming hours/days. The cause of your death is directly related to the last **resource track** you marked. Make a last log entry to describe what happened, and beam it. The game is over.

Push Forward: You knew this wasn't going to be easy, and you aren't about to give up. Leave the current system, and fast forwards weeks/months in time. Then, **clear all your resource tracks**. You are now in a new system. Make a new log entry, and continue your journey.

Resource Checks

Resources are an abstract value that represents what you scavenge as you explore the cosmos. When you leave a planet, roll a **d20** to know how many **resources** you scavenged.

- On a **1-2**, you find **0 resources**.
- On a **3-4**, you find **1 resource**.
- On a **5-6**, you find **2 resources**.
- On a **7-8**, you find **3 resources**.
- On a **9-10**, you find **5 resources**.
- On a **11-12**, you find **8 resources**.

At anytime, you can consume as many **resources** as you want to clear the **same number of boxes** on any **resource track**.

When you do this, you take the time to heal yourself, and repair your equipment so that you can continue the mission.

Planet Scanner

Scan

Roll a **d10** and interpret the result.

- On a **1-5**, the planet shows signs of life. Roll for region, wild life, and flora.
- On a **6-10**, the planet shows no signs of life. The planet is either dead (6), frozen (7), volcanic (8), irradiated (9), or noxious (10). It may still be worth exploring for its resources.

Region Scanner

Biome (d10)

1. Freshwater (pond, river, lake)
2. Marine (ocean, coral reef, estuary)
3. Grassland (prairie, steppe)
4. Tropical Grassland (savanna)
5. Tropical Forest
6. Temperate Forest
7. Boreal Forest
8. Hot Desert
9. Cold Desert
10. Tundra

Weather (d10)

1. Clear
2. Cloudy
3. Drizzle
4. Rainy
5. Storm
6. Fog
7. Snow
8. Storm
9. Blizzard
10. Sandstorm

Terrain (d4)

1. Mountains
2. Hills
3. Plateaus
4. Plains

Advanced Analysis

Gravity (d6)

1. Minimal gravity
2. Low gravity
3. Earth-like gravity
4. High gravity
5. Crushing gravity
6. Unstable

Gravity (d6)

1. Minimal gravity
2. Low gravity
3. Earth-like gravity
4. High gravity
5. Crushing gravity
6. Unstable

Average Temperature (d6)

1. Frigid
2. Cold
3. Temperate
4. Hot
5. Scorched
6. Unstable

Wild Life Monitor

Size (d6)

1. Tiny
2. Small
3. Normal
4. Large
5. Very Large
6. Gigantic

Diet (d6)

1. Herbivore
2. Carnivore
3. Omnivore
4. Fungivore
5. Photosynthetic

6. Saprotrophic

Behavior (d6)

1. Calm
2. Curious
3. Territorial
4. Aggressive
5. Scared
6. Hunting

Type (d6)

1. Mammal-like
2. Bird-like
3. Reptile-like
4. Amphibian-like
5. Invertebrate-like
6. Fish-like

Trait (d4)

1. With Fur
2. With Scales
3. With Feathers
4. With Slimy Skin

Flora Detector

Biome (d6)

1. Tiny
2. Small
3. Normal
4. Large
5. Very Large
6. Gigantic

Weather (d8)

1. Mushrooms
2. Herbs
3. Flowers
4. Trees
5. Shrubs

6. Climbers
7. Creepers
8. Trees

Body

When traveling through space or exploring new worlds, one certainty remains: everything out there is trying to kill you. The work is dangerous and takes a toll on your body.

Body (d8)

1. You realize you haven't eaten anything in the last three days, and your stomach growls in pain.
2. You made a bad move and sprained your ankle.
3. You feel a huge pressure on your lungs that makes it extremely hard to breathe.
4. Your vision becomes dizzy, and you feel nauseous.
5. You feel like you are on fire as numerous parts of your body start itching.
6. You feel a huge pain across your back.
7. Your ears are constantly ringing, causing a huge feeling of vertigo.
8. You can't feel your hands and feet anymore.

Mind

You sacrificed so much to start this journey, and there are moments where remembering your old life does you more harm than good.

Mind (d6)

1. You're struck by a memory about a hobby you used to love while on Earth. What was it? Did you do this hobby with someone else?
2. You're thinking about a person you will probably never see again in your lifetime. Who is it?
3. Someone dear to you wasn't able to board the last cryo-ship leaving Earth. Who is it? Why couldn't they leave?
4. A long time ago, you met another nomad on your journey. What news did they bring to you?
5. Many people wanted to become nomad, but you did something that made them choose you over many others. What was it?
6. You were allowed to bring one personal object with you. What is it?
7. You're remembering a place you used to visit a lot when you were on Earth. Where is it? Why did you go there that often?
8. You've received a strange transmission from a nearby planet. What does it say? Did you hallucinate it?

Gear

Nothing lasts forever, and your equipment is the ultimate shield against the harshness of space. It is essential you keep your gear in good shape. If damaged, fix it ASAP.

Gear (d10)

1. Your suit's radioactive shield is degrading. You only have a couple of hours of protection left.
2. A crack has formed in the outer layer of your helmet's visor, making it harder to see and weakening its protection.
3. The air quality inside your suit has just gotten a lot worse.
4. The heat/cold protections of the suit are failing.
5. A part of your suit is showing signs of wear and tear.
6. There's an oxygen leak in the breathing system, cutting your oxygen supply in half.
7. Your suit's numerous sensors aren't sending any signals to your HUD anymore.
8. Your blaster's battery is drained.
9. There are interferences rendering your suit's scanners useless.
10. Your drone's controls are fried and need to be replaced.

Ship

Traveling across the stars would be impossible without your ship, and you never know if the next planet is going to be the last one you ever visit.

Ship (d10)

1. You are almost out of fuel and will need resources to fill up the ship.
2. There are interferences causing the ship's scanners to malfunction.
3. The ship's light engine travel calculator is uncalibrated.
4. Toxic gas has damaged the ship's outer frame.
5. Something is blocking the ventilation system in the ship.
6. Numerous systems have started to overheat as of late.
7. The water filtering systems seem to be having issues.
8. The astro-droid's battery drains awfully quickly. It will need to be replaced.
9. Something has entered the docking bay and is hidden in the storage room.
10. The electrical systems are acting up, and half of the ship has lost power.

NOMADIC DESIGN POINTS

Your Oracles

The **oracles** are one of the main components that make Nomadic a truly enjoyable solo experience. The **question oracle** allows the player to disclaim the decision-making process over basically anything, while the **risk oracle** helps guide the player as to whether or not they should make **checks**. Their goal is to help remove indecisiveness as much as possible.

For your game, consider these two oracles and think about whether you may need other tools to help the player make decisions. Are the odds of your oracles decided by the player, or are they tied to the location in which they are used?

Your Resource Tracks

Nomadic is part solo experience, part resource management. The **resource tracks** help pace the different phases and narrative triggers of the game over time. Additionally, these tracks are amazing at guiding the types of consequences you get from trying to perform a dangerous asking.

For your game, consider the types of tracks you want to have. What are the core aspects that the character can sacrifice to pursue their journey? Are all tracks the same length, or are some shorter or longer? What happens when a track is filled? Are there ways to clear the tracks over time, or is marking a box a permanent action until all of them are filled?

Your Resources

[GO BACK TO THE GAME LIST](#) 🙌

BREATHLESS SRD

BREATHLESS

Where it all started...

BREATHLESS PREFACE

Breathless is a condensed survival horror RPG that focuses on the stories of people struggling to survive in a dangerous world. Characters will overcome challenges, search for items, and fight for their lives until they become too exhausted to continue and must catch their breath before moving on.

Website: <https://breathless.farirpgs.com/>

BREATHLESS RULES

Before we Start

Content Warning: death, violence, gore.

Before you start, define lines that should not be crossed. Pause or rewind the game if something uncomfortable happens during a session. Always make sure everyone is comfortable with the direction of the story.

Playing the Game

One person is the game moderator (GM), the rest are players.

GM: Guide the story, present challenges to the group. Be a fan of the players. Ask them questions, fill the world with their answers. If it's cool, let them try or split complex challenges into multiple checks.

Player: Narrate what your character does. Make checks when things are risky. Give everyone a time to shine. Fill the world with your ideas. Take risks, and rise up from failures.

Checks

When doing something challenging, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. You only need to roll if what you are doing is risky. The GM first telegraphs the risk of your action. You then pick a **skill** or **item**, and roll the die that matches its rating. If an ally helps you, they also make a **check**, but share the same risks as you. Take the highest die and interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's **** a **complication**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Surviving in this world is hard. Everyone who rolled reduces the rating of the skill they used by one step (**d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4**). **Skills** cannot go lower than a **d4**.

The GM can also disclaim decision-making by testing for luck. To do so, pick a die rating simply based on the odds of a thing happening, roll, and interpret the result as you see fit.

Catch your Breath

To reset all your **skills** to their original rating, you can ask to **catch your breath**. This is a brief break in tension. It can be done at anytime, even during combat. When a character **catches their breath**, the GM looks at the scene and introduces a new **complication** for the group.

Loot Checks

When the fiction allows it, you can make a **loot check** to scavenge for tools, weapons, med kits, etc. You start with a **d12 loot die**, which steps down after each usage. When you **loot**, roll your current **loot die** and interpret the result. You may continue to use the loot die when it is a **d4**, at your own risk. To reset your loot die to its initial rating, you need to **catch your breath**.

- On a **1-2**, trouble is here...
- On a **3-4**, there's trouble ahead...
- On a **5-6**, you get a **d6 item**.
- On a **7-8**, you get a **d8 item**.
- On a **9-10**, you get a **d10 item** or a **med kit**.
- On a **11-12**, you get a **d12 item** or a **med kit**.

Backpack

Items in your backpack can be used in place of your **skills**. They start with a die rating which decreases after each use. When reduced to a **d4**, the **item** either breaks, gets lost, or fades away from the fiction until it's made relevant again. You can only carry **3 items** and one **med kit** at once.

Stunts

When you try to pull off a **stunt**, you use a **d12** instead of a **skill** rating to do a **check**. You will need to **catch your breath** before attempting another **stunt**.

Stress

When you face a **complication**, you may have to take **stress**. If your character reaches **4 stress**, they become **vulnerable**, which means failing a dangerous action could mean being taken out—or— sudden death. You can use a **med kit** to clear **2 stress**, or lay low someplace secure awhile to clear an amount at the GM's discretion.

Your Character

On your character sheet, write down your character's name, pronouns, and the job they had before society as we knew it collapsed.

By default, skills have a **d4** rating. Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think your character is good at. Characters have a total of **6 skills**:

- **Bash**: wreck, move, force.
- **Dash**: run, jump, climb.
- **Sneak**: hide, skulk, lurk.
- **Shoot**: track, throw, fire.
- **Think**: perceive, analyze, repair.
- **Sway**: charm, manipulate, intimidate.

Think of an **item** that you got before leaving for your adventure, and add it to your backpack as a **d10 item**.

Rolling Tables

You may use the following tables to generate details for your game.

Weapons

1. 2x4
2. Baseball Bat
3. Sledge Hammer
4. Crowbar
5. Frying Pan

6. Golf Club
7. Katana
8. Shovel
9. Machete
10. Baton
11. Pitchfork
12. Banjo
13. Chainsaw
14. Skate Board
15. Dumbbell
16. Cricket Bat
17. Fire Axe
18. Pipe
19. Pickaxe
20. Hatchet

Long Range Weapons

1. Revolver
2. 9mm Pistol
3. Hunting Rifle
4. Shotgun
5. Bow
6. Flamethrower
7. Sniper Rifle
8. Assault Rifle
9. Crossbow
10. Molotov Cocktail
11. Grenade
12. Pipe Bomb

Jobs

1. Chef
2. IT Specialist
3. Nurse
4. Personal Trainer
5. Influencer
6. Police Officer
7. Architect
8. School Teacher
9. Military

10. Mechanic
11. Park Ranger
12. College Student
13. DJ
14. Civil Engineer
15. Homeless
16. Contractor
17. Bartender
18. Firefighter
19. Farmer
20. Scientist

Locations

1. Apartment Building
2. Shopping Center
3. Grocery Store
4. Hospital
5. Church
6. Arcade
7. Sewers
8. High-School
9. Hotel
10. Construction Site
11. Dance Club
12. Factory

Complications

1. Another survivor is yelling for help.
2. You've attracted a swarm of Crawlers.
3. Bandits are on your tail.
4. New and nasty kind of Crawler.
5. Maniac shooting everything that moves.
6. You meet another group of survivors.
7. The zone you're in is booby trapped.
8. You're out of munitions.
9. One of your items suddenly breaks.
10. The only way out is blocked.
11. You meet someone you knew before.
12. You face a pack of feral animals.

Missions

1. Your group is almost out of supplies.
2. Someone in your group is very sick.
3. Thugs kicked you out of your safe zone.
4. The military is planning to bomb the city.
5. You've met someone who's immune.
6. The government planned a supply drop.
7. A cult is sacrificing people to Crawlers.
8. You've met a scientist who's found a cure.
9. Someone in your group was captured.
10. You've heard of a sanctuary filled with survivors on the other side of the city.
11. There's a fire raging across the city.
12. Your group has found itself in the middle of a gang war.

BREATHLESS DESIGN POINTS

A Format

The first thing you need to consider when creating any type of game is the format you want to use. Whether it's a bifold pamphlet like *Breathless*, a 20-page zine, or a full-fledged book, the way you write your text, lore, and mechanics will differ greatly.

In formats like bifold or trifold games, every word has to be useful and every sentence must be condensed. Due to space limitations, you may need to rephrase things often to make them fit on the page. Using a small format also means you won't be able to include as many details as you might like, such as world lore, a bestiary, or NPC backgrounds. Space is a luxury you can't often afford in small formats. Creating condensed games requires significant effort, but it can be a rewarding challenge.

If you decide to go with a larger format like a zine or a book, you will need to ask yourself, "how much information is too much?" *Breathless* games oftentimes leave things open-ended for players to discover and provide means to generate dynamic stories through rolling tables and oracles. If you add too many details about the world, what is left to be explored? Try to strike the right balance between necessary information to understand the world and what is superfluous to actually enjoy being a part of it.

A World

Breathless was designed to emulate stories like those in the video game series *The Last Of Us*, where characters live in a harsh world full of challenges. By relying on their skills and gear, they will be able to accomplish what they need to and survive yet another day.

When creating your world, think about what it looks like, what kind of people and creatures inhabit it, and what its current or impending issues are. This will help inform the kind of challenges the players may face in the game. Is the world broken, or is there something that is looking to cause harm? Consider the latest events in the story and describe them early in the game to give a sense of history and context.

A Goal

In *Breathless*, the characters have a clear goal: survive one more day. This goal was perfect for such a short game, but for bigger games you need something bigger and more complex to drive the show.

When creating your story, think about the goal the main characters of the story have. Are the characters lone explorers, or are they a part of the solution to solving problems in the world? Are they looking for something, or are they on the run? Think about the different factions in your world, and how they relate with the characters to tie everything together.

Your Check

See [Checks](#)

One of the core aspects of *Breathless* is that using a **skill** or **item** always steps down its die. The reason behind this is not to reduce the chances of success, per se.. The dice are swingy anyway. Even with a d4, you still have a 50% chance of success. The goal is to slowly encourage players to **catch their breath**. This creates the pacing and encourages an exchange between the players and the GM. It's more like a countdown that switches the narrative control from one side of the table to the other. Players play and interact with the story, and when one of them **catches their breath**, the GM gets to introduce something new, dramatic, and interesting to the story.

For your game, you may want to consider how skills or items reset or step down to affect the pace of the game. Would you like dice to always step down like in *Breathless*, or perhaps to only step down on failures? Are there other ways to reset the ratings of a **skill** or **item**? Are there other systems that use "die steps" as a currency to activate abilities?

Your “Catch Your Breath”

See [Catch your Breath](#)

The core loop of the game centers around characters becoming breathless from overcoming obstacles, **catching their breath**, and getting back into the action. This tension and release cycle is one of the coolest things about Breathless games. This kind of loop works fantastically for any kind of risk-taking adventures.

For your game, consider when and how characters should "**catch their breath**". Can they do it all the time, or do they need to rest or be in a specific location? Think about the cost of the characters catching their breath, as every mechanic should try to move the story forward.

Your Loot

See [Loot Checks](#)

Loot checks provide players an opportunity to acquire **items** that can make their lives easier and reduce the rate at which they get tired. However, looting always carries some risk. The reason for this risk is to prompt players to ask themselves if adding more tension to the current scene is worth the possibility of finding an item at this moment.

For your game, what does the result distribution of looting look like? What are the odds of getting a great item versus risking your life while searching? Are you using a d20 for looting, or is looting a skill that steps down like the others?

Your Skills and Kits

See [Your Character](#)

Skills are how characters interact with the world when things are risky. They tie the mechanical part of the game with the fiction. To make this game your own, you should customize the skill list to fit the aesthetic of your setting. A good way to approach this is to think about the actions characters would do often and assign them a verb or name.

For your game, what actions would characters do the most? Are the initial skill ratings picked by the player during character creation or rolled randomly? Or, perhaps they are part of a character **kit** which assigns skill ratings and other details or items based on a specific archetype?

Your Stunts

See [Stunts](#)

The default Stunt mechanic is a tool players can use to look “awesome” once per “catch your breath”. Use this to mimic characters using cool powers or doing something extremely lucky.

Your Stress

See [Stress](#)

Stress is the default health pacing mechanism of the game. If you want characters to feel stronger or weaker, adjust how big is the stress track, what happens when a PC fills it, and how they can recover. Be as generous or harsh as you see fit.

Your Rolling Tables

See [Rolling Tables](#)

Consider adding rolling tables for the things you consider important in your game. Since this game’s format is short, rolling tables help in two-way. First, they help put a bigger focus on what is significant in your world. Second, they help facilitate sessions for when the players are in doubt about where the story should go next. Plus, it does all this in a very word efficient way. You could include tables for things like items, locations, allies, enemies, complications, missions, etc.

RENEGADES

RENEGADES

Breathless for grand space opera adventures

PREFACE

Renegades is a Breathless game set in a sci-fi used future where you play as rebels who want to overthrow an evil empire called the Federation. Inspired by Star Wars related medias, this was the first ever Breathless hack I did. This was published it in the scope of the first [Breathless Jam in 2022](#).

Mechanically, this game diverges from Breathless in the following ways:

- There are no concepts of **items**, no **looting**, and no **stunt** mechanics. Those weren't reinforcing the themes of the game, so I got rid of them and replaced them with something else.
- To reinforce space opera tropes as much as possible, the game adds the **declare a truth** mechanic which gives a lot of narrative freedom to the player by allowing them to establish new facts in the fiction once per **refocus** ("catch your breath").
- This is the first Breathless game I designed that is "kit-based". Here, players have to pick a certain type of character archetype, which determines the kind of die ratings they start with.

Website: <https://fari-rpgs.itch.io/reneades>

RENEGADES SRD

It Started When...

the Federation took control of the galaxy. They now govern with an iron grasp, leveraging the power of tyranny and propaganda to prevent anyone from overthrowing their ruthless empire. There are rumors in the mists about pockets of rebellion. Renegades who haven't lost hope in the

face of impossible odds. The Federation is not invincible. They have flaws, and with a bit of luck, we might overthrow their regime.

Before We Start

Before you start, define lines that should not be crossed. Pause or rewind the game if something uncomfortable happens during a session. Always make sure everyone is comfortable with the direction of the story.

The Game

One person is the game master (GM), the rest are players.

GM : Guide the story, and present challenges to the group. Make them meet friendly and shady NPCs. Design villains who think they are the good guys. Be a fan of the players. Ask them questions, fill the world with their answers. If it's cool, let them try. Split complex challenges into multiple checks. Encourage players to change what is true in the fiction.

Player : Narrate what your renegade does. Make checks when things are risky. Give everyone a time to shine. Fill the world with your ideas. Take risks, and rise up from failures. Interact with the world, and assist the GM in finding interesting complications and plot twists

Checks

When there's a challenge that needs to be overcome, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. You only need to roll if what you are doing is risky.

The GM telegraphs the risk of your action, you then pick a **skill**, and roll the die that matches its rating. If an ally helps you, they also make a **check**, but share the same risks as you.

Take the highest die and interpret the results.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's a **complication**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Fighting the Federation is hard and tedious work. Everyone who rolled reduces the rating of the skill they used by one level: d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4. Skills cannot go lower than a d4.

The GM can disclaim decision-making by testing for luck. To do so, pick a die rating simply based on the odds of a thing happening, roll, and interpret the results.

Refocus

To reset all your **skills** to their original rating, you can ask to “**refocus**”.

This is a brief break in tension. It can be done at any time, even during combat, escapes, or dog fights.

When a character refocuses, the GM looks at the scene and introduces a new **complication** to the group.

Choose A Kit

THE PILOT is always aware of their surroundings, and can remain calm under pressure. They are incredible flyers and are accompanied by an astro-droid. Pilots get the extra **Focus skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE MYTHIC is a member of a strange society, and is connected to the world in ways others just aren't. They are passive, just, and empathetic. They wield peculiar weapons, and wear long robes. Mythics get the extra **Feel skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE SCAVENGER is smart, practical, and capable. They carry around their tool belt, which gives them many options to solve the many problems coming their way. Scavengers get the extra **Tinker skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE SENATOR is intellectual, eloquent and emanates trust. They know how to influence people to get what they want, and always have a plan in case things go wrong — which they will. Senators get the extra **Sense skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE SMUGGLER is talented, resourceful, and reckless. They have numerous contacts and relations from their criminal background, which acts as a two-edged sword. Smugglers get an extra **Contacts skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE DROID is knowledgeable, pragmatic, and calculated. They know a lot about the different cultures and customs in the galaxy, and can make complex calculations in record times. Droids get the extra **Lore skill**, set at a **d10**.

THE EX-SOLDIER is loyal, selfless, and courageous. Their military background from the old-days makes them very competent and knowledgeable on the battlefield. Ex-soldiers get an extra **Tactical skill**, set at a **d10**.

Your Renegade

On your character sheet, write down your **kit**, your character's name, and preferred pronouns.

By default, skills have a **d4** rating. Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think your character is good at.

Characters have a total of 6 skills:

- **Bash:** wreck, move, force.
- **Dash:** run, jump, climb.
- **Sneak:** hide, skulk, lurk.
- **Shoot:** track, throw, fire.
- **Think:** perceive, analyze, repair.
- **Sway:** charm, manipulate, intimidate.

Declare A Truth

When the situation is dire, or if you are looking for a way out, you can **declare a new truth** about the world. If your fact is a **small truth**, it just happens, but for **big truths** the GM adds a “but...” afterwards.

The GM gets the final say on this, so work with them to make sure your fact works well with what has already been established. Once used, you'll need to “**refocus**” to declare a new truth.

Stress

When you face a **complication** as a result of one of your actions, the GM can decide that you take **1 stress**. If your character reaches **4 stress**, they become “**vulnerable**”. When **vulnerable**, failing a dangerous action could mean being taken out, being captured, or worse.

Healing

To heal up and clear your **stress track**, you need to lay low someplace secure awhile. Look at the fiction and work with the GM to decide how much stress you clear when you rest.

Rolling Tables

LOCATIONS (d10): 1. Bar | 2. Spaceport | 3. Spaceship | 4. Factory | 5. Underground City | 6. Temple | 7. Arena | 8. Hidden Base | 9. Palace | 10. Government Building

BIOMES (d10): 1. Tropical World | 2. Desert World | 3. Water World | 4. Frozen World | 5. Lava World | 6. Gas World | 7. Swamp World | 8. Forest World | 9. Rocky World | 10. City World

RENEGADES DESIGN POINTS

Your Truths

Declaring new truths is what makes Renegades truly unique. It allows the player to take a lot of agency over the narrative and declare new facts about the fiction. The GM could throw a very complex obstacle, like a heavily guarded checkpoint, and a player could come up with a creative solution on the fly and simply say, "I know one of the guards currently on duty at the checkpoint and actually saved their partner's life from the local raiders. They still owe me for this!"

For your game, think about how truths are introduced. Is there a cost to doing so? How big and impactful can the new fact be? Does it relate only to the player character or can it also affect the setting as a whole?

Your Kits

Kits allow games to easily reinforce the classic tropes and archetypes of a specific genre of media. They are the starting points for players and one of the first things presented to them. Every single option should matter and be a core piece of what makes the world and setting interesting. In Renegades, they guide players into that archetype even more by providing a unique skill that nobody else has.

For your game, what constitutes a kit? Is it just a description and a unique skill, or does a kit also set the other die ratings like bash, dash, sneak, shoot, think, and sway? How many kits will there be? Can someone design their own kits using tables or other means? Is everything in the kit already pre-established, or can some pieces be randomly generated (like background, details, goals, etc.)?

NOMADIC

NOMADIC

Breathless for solo exploration

PREFACE

Nomadic is a tragic solo tabletop role-playing game focused on exploration and survival. In this game, you play as a pilot exploring the depths of the universe in search of humanity's new home after the Primordials retook Earth. Inspired by No Man's Sky and the eponymous song by Ben Prunty, this game is simultaneously harsh, hopeless, and beautiful.

Nomadic was the first time I felt comfortable enough with the Breathless engine make major changes to it in the hope of fitting a drastically different type of game.

Mechanically, this game diverges from Breathless in the following ways:

- There are two **oracles** used by the player throughout the game. The **question oracle** is used to answer questions about the world where the player character may not be involved. The **risk oracle** is used to answer whether the player should or should not perform a **check** as they attempt to do something risky in the fiction.
- Instead of a single **stress** track, there are four (body, mind, gear, ship) and the game tells you exactly when and how many boxes should be marked. On top of this, each **resource track** is linked to a table full of possible complications.
- There's a strong **gameplay loop** that forces the solo player to go through the same steps over and over again, guiding them both mechanically and in the narrative.
- There's an event that gets triggered when all four resource tracks are filled, which offers a choice to the player and prompts them to choose whether they want to abandon the game or continue.

Website: <https://nomadic.farirpgs.com/>

NOMADIC SRD

Nomadic is a solo tabletop role-playing game of exploration and survival. You study dangerous worlds in a quest to find a new home for humankind. During the game, you use oracles when there are uncertainties, perform dangerous actions, and try to keep your body, mind, equipment, and spaceship in good shape.

Nomadic explores themes of isolation, despair, futility, and mental/physical health. Your safety is more important than anything. Don't hesitate to rewind, rewrite, pause, or take a break as you see fit.

To play, you will need:

- A set of polyhedral dice
- A pencil
- Something to write on or a recording device to use during journaling phases of the game.

Leaving Earth

Humanity abandoned Earth as it was destroyed and retaken by the Primordials. The Earth United Front sent hundreds of pilots into the depths of space to explore, document, and survive the harshness of the void in the hope of finding a new planet where humans could prosper again. During that time, what's left of humanity is waiting in giant cryo ships for a new planet to be discovered.

Your Gear

You are a **nomad**, one of the pilots sent to look for inhabitable worlds. You are equipped with a high-tech exo-suit that lets you survive some of the harshest environments. You carry with you a blaster, a portable drone, scanners, and various sensors. Furthermore, you pilot a NOD class starship equipped with a light engine and an astro-droid.

Intro

Start your adventure on your ship. You've been navigating in the void for weeks and are about to enter a new solar system. This system has planets that are worth exploring, either because of their resources or their potential to become humanity's new home.

Your Nomad

On the character sheet located on the back, write down your character's name and pronouns. There are six **skills** you can use to perform risky tasks in the fiction.

- **Muscle:** overcome, wreck, force.
- **Skulk:** hide, sneak, lurk.
- **Dash:** run, jump, climb.
- **Learn:** analyze, investigate, grasp.
- **Tinker:** repair, revamp, restore.
- **Finesse:** gather, befriend, pilot.

Assign a **d10**, a **d8**, and a **d6** to three skills you think you're particularly good at. The rest are set to a **d4**.

Question Oracle

To disclaim decision-making over something, ask a yes/no question imagining the outcome, and roll a die based on the odds of it being positive.

- If it is **very unlikely**: roll a **d4**.
- If it is **unlikely**: roll a **d6**.
- If it is **likely**: roll a **d8**.
- If it is **very likely**: roll a **d10**.
- If it is **almost certain**: roll a **d12**.

Then, interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, the answer is "**No, and...**".
- On a **3-4**, the answer is "**Yes, but...**".
- On a **5+**, the answer is "**Yes, and...**".

Risk Oracle

When you attempt something challenging, roll a die based on your level of control over the current situation. When in doubt, use a **d6**.

- If the situation is **chaotic**, roll a **d4**.
- If the situation is **precarious**, roll a **d6**.
- If the situation is **manageable**, roll a **d8**.
- If the situation is **predictable**, roll a **d10**.
- If the situation is **stable**, roll a **d12**.

Then, interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, the situation is very risky. Make a **perilous check**.
- On a **3-4**, the situation is risky. Make a **check**.
- On a **5+**, the situation is not risky. You simply do it.

Check

When you use the **risk oracle** and the situation is **risky** or **perilous**, you make a **check** to see how it plays out. Pick the **skill** that best matches what you are trying to accomplish, roll the die that matches its rating, and interpret the result.

- On a **1-2**, you **fail**, and there's an additional **complication**. Mark **one box** on a **resource track** of your choice. **Two boxes** if the situation was **perilous**.
- On a **3-4**, you **succeed**, but there's a **complication**. Mark **one box** on a **resource track** of your choice. **Two boxes** if the situation was **perilous**.
- On a **5+**, you **succeed**. The higher the result, the better the effect.

Then, step down the rating of the skill you used by one step (**d12 » d10 » d8 » d6 » d4**). Skills cannot go lower than a **d4**.

Determination

Your **skills** aren't all you have to survive the harshness of space. You can also rely on your sheer determination to push forward and to make the mission a success. When you use your **determination**, you use a **d12** instead of a **skill** rating to do a **check**. Once used, you'll need to **focus** to use it again.

Focus

When you **focus**, you quickly take the time to assess the situation, calculate all the variables, and recenter yourself for what's to come. You can do this at any time, even during highly dramatic moments.

When you **focus**, reset all your **skills** to their initial rating. Then, you have to introduce a new **complication** in the story. When that happens, mark **one box** on a **resource track**.

Look at the "complications" section for a list of possible options to use depending on which track you marked. If all your resource tracks are filled, you need to **make a choice**.

Will you abandon the mission, or will you push forward into the unknown?

Resource Tracks

You have **four resources tracks**: **body**, **mind**, **gear**, and **ship**. When a **complication** arises, either as a result of you **focusing** or from a **check**, you mark boxes on one of the tracks. Look at the fiction to decide which track to mark. You can also pick a random one and link it with the fiction later.

If there are no more boxes to mark, you have to **make a choice**.

Make A Choice

When you need to mark a box, and all your **resource tracks** are filled, you have to **make a choice**.

Abandon: You can't go on, and must abandon the mission. As a result, you will die in the coming hours/days. The cause of your death is directly related to the last **resource track** you marked. Make a last log entry to describe what happened, and beam it. The game is over.

Push Forward: You knew this wasn't going to be easy, and you aren't about to give up. Leave the current system, and fast forwards weeks/months in time. Then, **clear all your resource tracks**. You are now in a new system. Make a new log entry, and continue your journey.

Resource Checks

Resources are an abstract value that represents what you scavenge as you explore the cosmos. When you leave a planet, roll a **d20** to know how many **resources** you scavenged.

- On a **1-2**, you find **0 resources**.
- On a **3-4**, you find **1 resource**.
- On a **5-6**, you find **2 resources**.
- On a **7-8**, you find **3 resources**.
- On a **9-10**, you find **5 resources**.
- On a **11-12**, you find **8 resources**.

At anytime, you can consume as many **resources** as you want to clear the **same number of boxes** on any **resource track**.

When you do this, you take the time to heal yourself, and repair your equipment so that you can continue the mission.

Planet Scanner

Scan

Roll a **d10** and interpret the result.

- On a **1-5**, the planet shows signs of life. Roll for region, wild life, and flora.
- On a **6-10**, the planet shows no signs of life. The planet is either dead (6), frozen (7), volcanic (8), irradiated (9), or noxious (10). It may still be worth exploring for its resources.

Region Scanner

Biome (d10)

1. Freshwater (pond, river, lake)
2. Marine (ocean, coral reef, estuary)
3. Grassland (prairie, steppe)
4. Tropical Grassland (savanna)
5. Tropical Forest
6. Temperate Forest
7. Boreal Forest
8. Hot Desert
9. Cold Desert
10. Tundra

Weather (d10)

1. Clear
2. Cloudy
3. Drizzle
4. Rainy
5. Storm
6. Fog
7. Snow
8. Storm
9. Blizzard
10. Sandstorm

Terrain (d4)

1. Mountains
2. Hills
3. Plateaus
4. Plains

Advanced Analysis

Gravity (d6)

1. Minimal gravity
2. Low gravity
3. Earth-like gravity
4. High gravity
5. Crushing gravity
6. Unstable

Gravity (d6)

1. Minimal gravity
2. Low gravity
3. Earth-like gravity
4. High gravity
5. Crushing gravity
6. Unstable

Average Temperature (d6)

1. Frigid
2. Cold
3. Temperate
4. Hot
5. Scorched
6. Unstable

Wild Life Monitor

Size (d6)

1. Tiny
2. Small
3. Normal
4. Large
5. Very Large
6. Gigantic

Diet (d6)

1. Herbivore
2. Carnivore
3. Omnivore
4. Fungivore
5. Photosynthetic
6. Saprotrophic

Behavior (d6)

1. Calm
2. Curious
3. Territorial
4. Aggressive
5. Scared
6. Hunting

Type (d6)

1. Mammal-like
2. Bird-like
3. Reptile-like
4. Amphibian-like
5. Invertebrate-like
6. Fish-like

Trait (d4)

1. With Fur
2. With Scales
3. With Feathers
4. With Slimy Skin

Flora Detector**Biome (d6)**

1. Tiny
2. Small
3. Normal
4. Large
5. Very Large
6. Gigantic

Weather (d8)

1. Mushrooms
2. Herbs
3. Flowers
4. Trees
5. Shrubs
6. Climbers
7. Creepers

8. Trees

Body

When traveling through space or exploring new worlds, one certainty remains: everything out there is trying to kill you. The work is dangerous and takes a toll on your body.

Body (d8)

1. You realize you haven't eaten anything in the last three days, and your stomach growls in pain.
2. You made a bad move and sprained your ankle.
3. You feel a huge pressure on your lungs that makes it extremely hard to breathe.
4. Your vision becomes dizzy, and you feel nauseous.
5. You feel like you are on fire as numerous parts of your body start itching.
6. You feel a huge pain across your back.
7. Your ears are constantly ringing, causing a huge feeling of vertigo.
8. You can't feel your hands and feet anymore.

Mind

You sacrificed so much to start this journey, and there are moments where remembering your old life does you more harm than good.

Mind (d6)

1. You're struck by a memory about a hobby you used to love while on Earth. What was it? Did you do this hobby with someone else?
2. You're thinking about a person you will probably never see again in your lifetime. Who is it?
3. Someone dear to you wasn't able to board the last cryo-ship leaving Earth. Who is it? Why couldn't they leave?
4. A long time ago, you met another nomad on your journey. What news did they bring to you?
5. Many people wanted to become nomad, but you did something that made them choose you over many others. What was it?
6. You were allowed to bring one personal object with you. What is it?
7. You're remembering a place you used to visit a lot when you were on Earth. Where is it? Why did you go there that often?
8. You've received a strange transmission from a nearby planet. What does it say? Did you hallucinate it?

Gear

Nothing lasts forever, and your equipment is the ultimate shield against the harshness of space. It is essential you keep your gear in good shape. If damaged, fix it ASAP.

Gear (d10)

1. Your suit's radioactive shield is degrading. You only have a couple of hours of protection left.
2. A crack has formed in the outer layer of your helmet's visor, making it harder to see and weakening its protection.
3. The air quality inside your suit has just gotten a lot worse.
4. The heat/cold protections of the suit are failing.
5. A part of your suit is showing signs of wear and tear.
6. There's an oxygen leak in the breathing system, cutting your oxygen supply in half.
7. Your suit's numerous sensors aren't sending any signals to your HUD anymore.
8. Your blaster's battery is drained.
9. There are interferences rendering your suit's scanners useless.
10. Your drone's controls are fried and need to be replaced.

Ship

Traveling across the stars would be impossible without your ship, and you never know if the next planet is going to be the last one you ever visit.

Ship (d10)

1. You are almost out of fuel and will need resources to fill up the ship.
2. There are interferences causing the ship's scanners to malfunction.
3. The ship's light engine travel calculator is uncalibrated.
4. Toxic gas has damaged the ship's outer frame.
5. Something is blocking the ventilation system in the ship.
6. Numerous systems have started to overheat as of late.
7. The water filtering systems seem to be having issues.
8. The astro-droid's battery drains awfully quickly. It will need to be replaced.
9. Something has entered the docking bay and is hidden in the storage room.
10. The electrical systems are acting up, and half of the ship has lost power.

NOMADIC DESIGN POINTS

Your Oracles

The **oracles** are one of the main components that make Nomadic a truly enjoyable solo experience. The **question oracle** allows the player to disclaim the decision-making process over basically anything, while the **risk oracle** helps guide the player as to whether or not they should make **checks**. Their goal is to help remove indecisiveness as much as possible.

For your game, consider these two oracles and think about whether you may need other tools to help the player make decisions. Are the odds of your oracles decided by the player, or are they tied to the location in which they are used?

Your Resource Tracks

Nomadic is part solo experience, part resource management. The **resource tracks** help pace the different phases and narrative triggers of the game over time. Additionally, these tracks are amazing at guiding the types of consequences you get from trying to perform a dangerous asking.

For your game, consider the types of tracks you want to have. What are the core aspects that the character can sacrifice to pursue their journey? Are all tracks the same length, or are some shorter or longer? What happens when a track is filled? Are there ways to clear the tracks over time, or is marking a box a permanent action until all of them are filled?

Your Resources