

Spore: A Survival Horror RPG

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Inspired by the universe of The Last of Us

Introduction

September 26, 2003. That was the day the world changed. No war, no doomsday asteroid to wipe out humanity, but a mutation. Ophiocordyceps Sinensis, also known as Cordyceps, is a genus of parasitic fungi that has been long known to propagate by infecting insects and spreading its spores after influencing its nervous system. Due to rising global temperatures and environmental instabilities, Cordyceps made an exponential leap in its evolution. This mutation allowed the fungus to not only inhabit humans, but thrive within its new hosts.

The spread of infection began with tainted crops that made their way into stores and markets all across the world. In a matter of days, alarming numbers of people began to convulse, lose control of themselves, and subject others to violent attacks seemingly without provocation. In many cases, infection takes hold in mere hours of ingestion, even faster when introduced through other means, like inhalation or exposure to the bloodstream. The ladder of these infection avenues was most prevalent as the violent outbursts often left victims maimed and infected themselves, following suit mere hours after being attacked.

Efforts to contain this outbreak failed. Cities were quarantined and governments declared martial law before leadership collapsed completely. The American military quickly formed its own semblance of a government, calling themselves FEDRA and being recognized as the last legitimate organized effort to maintain control through force. They built their own quarantine zones, overtook cities, and enforced strict curfews, often with brutal consequences for violating their orders. In response, resistance groups began to form across the country, one prominent organization known as the Fireflies arose claiming to fight for freedom, though the ideology often left a trail of bodies in its conflicts with FEDRA.

Decades later, the world is left changed, reclaimed by nature but Humanity still clings to life. Communities all across the country came together and rebuilt. Others banded together with outlaws and criminals, forming raider gangs thirsty to drink from the cups of the weak. Beyond the normal groups one would expect to come together, others took it further still, developing into various cults that saw Cordyceps as something greater. A punishment, perhaps? A gift? The most fanatical among the groups migrated towards dangerous environments where nuclear power was left unchecked and the subsequent meltdowns warped the environment and worse still, the Cordyceps Fungus itself. This gave rise to new variations of infected and the stories that accompanied them turned into something more akin to folklore and the paranormal.

Now, a new generation has begun to emerge, one that may have no recollection of a life before the collapse. A generation that thrives in the wasteland of the world that came before. You are one of these survivors, and it is up to you to define yourself on your journey.

—Spore is a Survival Horror RPG set in the world of The Last of Us by Naughty Dog Studios. This fan-made system seeks to embrace players in a unique Post Apocalyptic setting ruled by creatures infected with a parasitic fungus, bloodthirsty cultists, a military powerhouse, and many others just looking to survive another day. Players will scavenge, craft, level skills, modify gear, and engage in tactical combat to travel the country and make new discoveries or establish themselves in a like minded community. Whatever your path, Spore will test your ability to fight through injuries and deal with the stresses of the world around you—

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Playing the Game: The Basics

This section will describe the systems used in Spore, other aspects like combat, weapons, armor, perks, and skill advancement will be covered in a separate section in greater detail..

Spore uses a d100 system for Skill Checks, where the player's relevant skill level largely determines the Target Number of a skill check. Skill Checks use a "roll low" approach, and can be affected by Stress Levels that the GM will decide on, covered in a later section. *[ex; A player's Precision skill is 30, the GM calls for a Precision Skill Check without any Stress Levels, the player rolls as close to 30 as possible without going over that number.]* Hitting the exact number of the character's skill level is considered a Critical Success and at times may result in unforeseen benefits, should the GM wish to grant them. *[ex; This could include extra resources from scavenging or scrapping, healing a wound more efficiently, or even being able to reuse an item slightly longer than intended]* Rolling higher than the Player's Skill Level results in failure and rolling a 100 is considered a critical failure unless you have mastered a skill.

Each Skill is governed by an Attribute, which will add a bonus to the skills in that category. An Attribute Bonus is determined by your Attribute Level, where 2 is the absolute lowest, and 20, the highest. 10 is the baseline, or Normal, level for your attributes. You gain a +1 to an Attribute Bonus for every 2 points above the baseline and -1 for every 2 points below the baseline. *[ex; Having a Strength Attribute of 14 provides a +2 Bonus to all Strength Based Skills]* The Attributes used in Spore are; **Strength (STR)**, **Dexterity (DEX)**, **Grit (GRT)**, **Intellect (INT)**, **Instinct (NST)**, and **Presence (PRS)** and are defined in more detail in a later section of this guide. Your attributes will largely go unchanged aside from certain milestones in your character's level, this will be covered in a section breaking down Attributes, the Skills associated with the Attributes, and level and Skill progression.

Skill levels can be increased through multiple avenues and will receive bonuses based on Character Proficiencies, which are determined by the Character's Background and, occasionally, Perks. Perks add additional elements to your character build and will be covered in a later section.

Characters do not have an armor rating in Spore. Instead, each character has 2 different aspects of their defensive capabilities; Evasion Rating (EV) and Damage Reduction (DR). EV is determined uniquely, where the Attribute Modifier is applied normally (+1 for every 2 points in the Attribute), the Skill Modifier is determined by increments of 10 in the relevant skill *[ex; For every 10 levels in the Finesse Skill, the character receives a +1 to their EV]* The DR of a character is determined entirely by the armor they are wearing and provides a direct reduction in damage a character receives in the event they are unable to Evade an attack

Encounters and Action Economy

An Encounter is a situation in which your actions and movements could lead to conflict or are already involved in conflict. While typically combat oriented, encounters can be anything your GM decides will require tactful movements and deliberate actions to get you through to the other side of the situation in front of you. The action economy during an Encounter consists of 2 Actions, 1 Bonus Action, and a number of Free Actions per round of an Encounter, each round is approximately 10-15 seconds in real time. An Action is used when a player or NPC attempts to do something that requires a substantial effort like attacking, steadying their aim, reloading complex weapons, or applying aid beyond just shoving your thumb in a gunshot wound.

When in combat, there are 3 types of Attack Actions; Melee, Ranged, and Firearm. The type of weapon a character is using determines the Attack Type (assuming the weapon is being used as intended):

[ex; Making a melee attack with the buttstock of your rifle would not use the Firearm Attack Action]

Each weapon has an Attack Value (AV) assigned to it, as well as an Effective Maximum Range and Damage modifiers that depend on an associated Skill, this will be covered in more detail in the Weapons section. When using the Attack Action, the **Target** must make an EV check to see if they are able to evade the attack outright. If the target is unable to evade, the attacker rolls the damage die associated with the weapon used. The target subtracts their Damage Reduction (DR) from the roll and applies the remainder to their Health Pool (HP).

[ex; Joel uses the Firearm Attack Action to shoot at a Raider (his Revolver's AV is 15 + Firearm Handling Skill) and the Raider only rolls a 12 on their EV check. Joel rolls a 14 on his damage die. The Raider subtracts their DR from the Damage Total. Damage is reduced by 8 and the Raider applies the remaining 6 points of damage to their Health Pool]

Bonus actions are less focus oriented actions you can take in combat, such as, throwing an object, or using a simple item like an inhaler or adrenaline booster. Bonus actions are the mid-point between an Action and a Free Action.

Free actions include simple things that don't require much (if any) effort such as dropping a weapon/item you are holding, turning a flashlight on or off, yelling or whispering to an ally, or unhooking a clasp on your backpack. Your GM will largely determine what counts as a Free Action and how many of these Free actions you can take in a round.

Some other Actions are represented in the following Table. Players may improvise and take actions not listed below, it should be at the GM's discretion for what kind of action cost should be associated with the action.

Action	Type	Description
Sneak	One Full Action	Attempt to hide or move while already behind cover.
Sprint	One Full Action	Increase your movement speed, allowing a character to move farther and raise EV when sprinting through enemy fire.
Assist	One Full Action	Help another character complete their action.
Ready	One Full Action	Allows a character to pre-emptively take an action when a specific thing happens, such as taking a shot at an enemy as soon as they move from behind cover.
Interact	One Full Action	Utilize something in the environment like a crane system or door control panel.
Reload	One Full Action	Reloads a firearm during combat.

Difficulty Class and Stress Levels

The Difficulty Class (DC) is a gauge of how much skill an action requires. The DC of Skill Check is determined by the Skill used for the Check. *[ex; The GM calls for a Medical Check. The character's Medical Skill is 25 and the situation is Calm, so the player must roll a d100 without going over 25]* The difficulty of a Skill check is influenced by Stress Levels. Depending on the situation, stress levels accumulate a -10 penalty per level, detailed in the table below with descriptions of what may influence the level of Stress.

<u>Stress Level</u>	<u>DC Modifier</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<u>0 - Calm</u>	-0	Clear-headed and steady. No distractions. Ideal conditions for decision-making and execution.
<u>1 - Tense</u>	-10	Slightly tense or cautious. Environment is suspicious but not actively dangerous.
<u>2 - Pressured</u>	-20	In a stressful environment (stealth with risk of being caught, open gunfight, or high-stakes negotiation).
<u>3 - Threatened</u>	-30	Actively endangered. Under direct fire, clear and present threats are persistent.
<u>4 - Panicked</u>	-40	Fight-or-flight response kicks in. Adrenaline surges, but fine control and reasoning suffer.
<u>5 - Critical</u>	-50	Mental strain overwhelms the character. Checks are extremely difficult; only raw instinct remains. Roleplay consequences may occur.

Defense

A Character's effective defense is displayed as Damage Reduction (DR) on their character sheet. Damage reduction is granted by Body Armor, which any character can wear. Heavier armor requires a higher Strength (STR) Skill to wear effectively without hindering movement speed and Dexterity Skills, however, any armor can be worn by a character as long as they do not have a negative Strength Modifier. A lower Strength modifier means you cannot physically wear some categories of armor. Having a -1 STR Modifier removes the ability to wear Heavyweight Armor and a -2 STR Modifier removes the ability to wear Reinforced Armor. Light, Medium, and Military armor can be worn by anyone, regardless of their STR Modifier. A character's DR is cumulative from all pieces of armor currently equipped and directly negates damage by the value of a Character's DR rating.

Evasion

A character's Evasion Rating (EV) is determined by the Dexterity (DEX) Attribute and the Finesse Skill. In this instance, the Finesse skill rating allows a +1 Modifier per 10 levels in the skill. *[ex; A character with a DEX Modifier of +4 and Finesse Skill of 30, giving a +3 modifier, gives the character an EV rating of 7. Roll 1d20 + 7 to evade]* While a character's EV rating gives an advantage to characters when they are attacked, this is directly affected by the negative modifiers from Stress Levels, Injuries, and Armor/Inventory weight. Negative modifiers added by Heavier armors will be explicitly highlighted on the armor piece.

Injuries

Injuries can be sustained in a multitude of different ways, crawling through a broken window too hastily, jumping from a high place, combat wounds, just to name a few. While many injuries are superficial, others could be described from a slight hindrance to an outright liability to your companions. Most injuries can be treated in some capacity, both with quick fixes and more in depth procedures. SHown here is a table of potential injuries and the negative effects, for those that wish to have more gritty realism in their games.

Injury Severity	Description & Examples	Gameplay Effects / Modifiers
<u>Superficial</u>	Scratches, bruises, shallow cuts, minor burns	No penalty
<u>Mild</u>	Deeper cuts, sprained joints, light concussion, minor flesh wound	-1 to Rolls
<u>Moderate</u>	Puncture wounds, fractured fingers, deep lacerations, minor bullet graze	-5 to Rolls, limited implications for certain actions related to the injury
<u>Severe</u>	Broken limbs, deep stab wounds, major burns, non-lethal gunshots	-10 to Rolls, more limitations for physical actions, potential persistent damage (1-15 damage per round), movement speed halved
<u>Critical</u>	Compound fractures, collapsed lung, torn muscles, serious internal bleeding	-20 to Rolls, severe limitations to actions, larger persistent damage penalty (1-25 per round), movement limited to 10ft, requires medical attention
<u>Catastrophic</u>	Severed limb, skull fracture, multiple organ trauma, arterial bleeding	Unable to make dice rolls, removes movement speed in most cases, major persistent damage (10-50 damage per round), death imminent without major medical attention

Attributes & Skills

Attributes are as your character's stats, characteristics that govern your ability to complete a given task. These attributes are **Strength**, **Dexterity**, **Grit**, **Intellect**, **Instinct**, and **Presence**.

Skills are specific to each attribute, while they are governed by the **Attribute** they fall under, your **skills** are specific to actions you want to attempt. Whether you are attempting to hold on to a ledge for dear life, disassemble a piece of tech for parts without destroying it, or attempting to intimidate a captive, your **skills** are what you will rely on to achieve your goals.

STRENGTH

Strength measures your raw physical power. It governs how much weight you can carry, how tightly you can hold on, and how hard you can push, shove, or charge through obstacles. Strength will also influence the damage output of melee weapons.

—Strength based Skills—

- **Grip** – Your ability to hold onto things like ropes, ledges, enemies, or weapons during a struggle.
 - **Sturdy** – Your capacity to physically resist force such as bracing a door or standing your ground against an aggressive enemy.
 - **Brawn** – Your strength when lifting, carrying, or using heavy objects, including improvised weapons and gear.
 - **Momentum** – Your ability to generate and maintain force while moving, like sprinting through enemies or bursting through barriers and obstacles.
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DEXTERITY

Dexterity is your agility, coordination, guile, and precision. It oversees your ability to evade attacks, sneak past enemies, traverse the environment, and handle firearms adequately

—Dexterity based Skills—

- **Finesse** – How quickly you react to sudden danger or changes in your environment.
- **Stealth** – Your ability to move quietly and remain undetected.
- **Precision** – Your accuracy with long ranged firearms and thrown objects.
- **Acrobatics** – Your coordination when jumping, balancing, or climbing.
- **Firearm Handling** – Your ability to load, aim, fire, and maintain guns effectively in combat.

GRIT

Grit is your capacity to endure physically, mentally, and emotionally. Grit allows you to survive in harsh environments, fight and travel long distances while injured, and keep horrors of the world from breaking your mind.

—Grit based Skills—

- **Survival** – Your capacity to withstand extreme environments and conditions such as freezing and sweltering temperatures or irradiated areas.
- **Pain Threshold** – Your resistance to injury, torture, and the ability to fight through the pain of your injuries.
- **Stamina** – Your ability to keep going physically like sprinting long distances and working or training nonstop.
- **Focus** – Your mental discipline allows you to resist panic, maintain composure in stressful situations, and not break down during traumatic events.

INTELLECT

Intellect reflects your ability to analyze, problem-solve, recall information, and understand the world around you. It governs crafting, medical knowledge, dismantling and salvaging items, and your ability to use complex systems like electric locks and computers.

–Intellect based Skills–

- **Crafting** – Building useful items from scrap including tools, weapon modifications, or traps.
 - **Scrapping** – Deconstructing gear or scavenged materials for useful components.
 - **Hacking** – Bypassing electronic systems such as locks, computers, and security systems.
 - **Medical** – Your knowledge of wounds, treatment, and basic field medicine.
 - **Experience** - Your life as you have known it, the ability to recall situations and information
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PRESENCE

Presence is your personality, it governs how you influence or manipulate others, how effective you are at negotiating, and how effective you are at interrogating.

–Presence based Skills–

- **Intimidation** – Forcing others to back down, submit, or act through fear.
 - **Persuasion** – Convincing others through logic, empathy, or charm.
 - **Deception** – Lying, bluffing, and manipulating others around you.
 - **Negotiation** - Bartering and getting through otherwise tense situations that may require concessions to be made.
 - **Interrogation** - Coerce information from someone, through whatever means you deem fit.
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INSTINCT

Instinct is your gut sense for danger, detail, and opportunity. It measures how perceptive you are, how efficient you are attempting digging resources, and your ability to track a target.

–Instinct based Skills–

- **Scavenging** – Locating useful materials, tools, ammo, or food in ruined or dangerous environments.
 - **Foraging** – Identifying edible plants, water sources, and natural resources in the wild.
 - **Tracking** – Your ability to follow creatures, people, or infected by identifying signs they left behind.
 - **Awareness** – Detecting hidden threats or noticing environmental details quickly.
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Attributes, Proficiencies, & Skill Advancement

A character's Attributes are determined in the creation of that character, with a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 20. A character's Attributes will go largely unchanged. There are a couple ways for players to increase their attribute levels, one of which is Milestone Points. An Attribute Point (AP) will be granted to a character once at the following levels: 3rd, 6th, 10th, 15th, and 20th. Certain Perks can raise an Attribute by 1-2 points, though the Perks that grant these additional AP have requirements that must be met in order to obtain them, and are few in number.

When making a character, each background provides 2 Major Skill Proficiencies and 3 Minor Skill Proficiencies, allowing a character to perform better in certain situations to begin with. Major Skills begin at Adept - level 40, Minor Skills begin at Apprentice - Level 20, and all other skills begin at level 10. This allows for players with virtually no experience in a particular skill to still be able to succeed a skill check. Major Skill Proficiencies also allow the character to perform those specific actions better in stressful situations. *[ex; When making a skill check with one of a character's Major Skills and in a stressful situation, reduce the stress level by 1 for that check]*

Skills have multiple avenues toward advancement. **First**, every 2nd level the character gains, they also obtain 1 skill point to allocate as they see fit. This is passive and applies to every background.

Second, Practice makes perfect (or, at least, nearly perfect.) The Character Sheet is accompanied by a Skill Advancement Sheet, in which players are able to track their skill usage. There are six tiers of Skill Level; Novice, Apprentice, Adept, Skilled, Expert, and Master. The table on this page will illustrate the range for these tiers and the requirements for skill advancement

Third, Training is available from certain NPCs. While each training session may raise a specific skill by one point, it comes with a cost. NPCs will require payment in the form of Resources, Favors, or cold hard Currency. Some skills will require Training to progress past the "Expert" tier, such as Medical, Hacking, or Precision.

Additionally, a player may come across a particularly useful Book that will teach them more about a Skill or find an item that helps with a Skill Check. While knowledge always stays with you in Spore, items certainly do not. If an item provides a Skill Bonus, it must be kept in the character's inventory and used for its express purpose. It should be at the GM's discretion whether or not a player must state they are using the item for the Skill Check, or if simply having it in their inventory gives them the Skill Bonus. It is recommended the Skill Bonus be plainly stated to avoid losing an item but retaining the bonus it allowed.

<u>Skill Tier</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Skill Advancement</u>
Novice	10 – 19	3 Skill Checks = 1 point
Apprentice	20 – 39	4 Skill Chcks = 1 point
Adept	40 – 59	5 skill checks = 1 point
Skilled	60 – 79	6 skill checks = 1 point
Expert	80 – 94	7 skill checks = 1 point
Master	95 – 100	Special narrative requirement

Character Creation

In Spore players will choose from a variety of Backgrounds that best fits their character's upbringing, instead of traditional classes. Each Background has 2 Major Skill Proficiencies and 3 Minor Skill proficiencies to highlight what kind of Survivor they are. You will also find a list of Perks later in this section that player's will be able to choose from to further personalize their character

Attribute Points

To begin with, the GM will decide if they prefer a different system for Attribute Points. It is recommended to use the Point Array options below.

Lenient	15 / 14 / 12 / 12 / 10 / 8
Standard	14 / 12 / 10 / 10 / 8 / 6
Difficult	12 / 10 / 10 / 6 / 4 / 4

The Point Arrays above should allow the GM to set the overall difficulty of the game before any stress levels are applied.

Backgrounds

Survivor
Scavenger
Smuggler
Enforcer
Fixer
Soldier
Stalker
Hunter
Medic
Engineer
Analyst