

BRANDON SANDERSON'S

MISTBORN

ADVENTURE GAME





MISTBORN

ROLEPLAYING IN THE FINAL EMPIRE



Based on the Novel Series by
BRANDON SANDERSON



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CONFLICTS PREVIEW



THE CONFLICT ROUND

Conflicts unfold in Conflict Rounds (or “rounds” for short), and each of these rounds is the length of a single Beat. During a round each Hero, Villain, and Extra group may act once, declaring and resolving their actions as follows.

STEP 1: DECLARE ACTIONS & DETERMINE ACTION DICE

At the start of each round, the Narrator and other players describe their characters’ intended actions. They **start with the character with the lowest Wits and end with the character with the highest Wits** (allowing characters who react most quickly to go last). When characters have the same Wits, the Narrator chooses their order, commonly favoring character(s) whose locations are unknown, and those with a logical or plausible chance to react before their opponents. These favored characters describe their actions last (so they know their opponents’ actions before deciding their own).

Regardless of their Wits, characters who are surprised — perhaps due to a failed Contest before the start of the Conflict — always declare their actions before the characters getting the drop on them.

Without surprise, Extras in groups tend to telegraph their actions and rarely get the drop on Heroes and Villains. When a group of Extras includes characters with different Wits scores, *the group declares based on the lowest Wits among them.*

Example: Koel and Thorrow get the drop on the Bylerum Boys, interrupting a private chat they're having with the only Hasting who remained behind, a taciturn bureaucrat named Ignus. Three house guards are posted in the hallway outside.

Brandon breaks down the order: Ignus is the first to declare, with Wits 2 (there's a reason he was the one left behind). Then come Cordal Bylerum (Wits 3), the house guards (Wits 4), Carrow Bylerum (Wits 5), Koel (Wits 3 with surprise), and finally Thorrow (Wits 4 with surprise).

Many Conflict actions will be attacks (harming the opposition is the point, after all), and **whenever an attack is declared the player also has to name one Resilience being targeted**. At first this will likely match the Resilience the Narrator identified while framing the scene but as the Conflict progresses and the action takes on a life of its own players may want to focus their actions elsewhere. For example, a crew trying to capture an enemy might shift gears midway through a physical brawl to talk their outmatching opponent into surrendering (thus shifting from Health to Willpower).

The Narrator may swap any targeted Resilience if he or she feels another is more appropriate for any given action. As a general rule, physical attacks reduce Health, social attacks reduce Reputation, and mental and spiritual attacks reduce Willpower, but there are notable exceptions — like physically beating someone to break their will, Rioting someone into an shameful display of emotion, or tricking someone into physically harming themselves. As long as the targeted Resilience makes sense *within the context of the action and the situation*, you're good.

With this in mind, let's get back to our crew's Conflict...

Brandon (getting things started): "You land inside the room, a few paces away from the Bylerum Boys and a wiry noble with a stern countenance." He continues, speaking for Ignus: "The noble doesn't look like a fighter, and he confirms it by ducking for cover until a heavy table."

Brandon (continuing with the first of the Bylerum Boys): "Cordal flings several coins at Koel, clearly planning to Steelpush. That'll be Steel targeting Health..."

Becky (smiling): "This oughta be good."

Brandon (shifting to the house guards): "Two guards burst in from the hallway. They carry spears but won't be able to attack until next round, as they're taking two steps toward you. You also hear rapid footfalls moving away from the room outside." Brandon's decided the third guard is acting on standing orders from Ignus and is on his way to alert the keep's hazekillers.

Brandon (finishing up with the other Mistborn): "Carrow sizes Thorrow up for a half-moment, draws an obsidian dagger, and steps toward him."

Paul: "Clever boy. Get too close and I won't be able to use my spear. Too bad I go first."

Brandon: "His attack will be Physique targeting Health. You're up, Koel."

Becky: "I also Steelpush Cordal's coins, away from me."

Brandon: "No problem. That's your Steel vs. his attack then, but while Cordal's targeting your Health you're reacting with a defense. What else would you like to do?"

Becky: "I get to do more?"

Brandon: “Countering the Steelpush is a *reaction*. You’re still due your *action* for the round.”

Becky: “Ah. What are the walls made of in here?”

Brandon (thinking on his feet — he hasn’t considered this before): “Wood.”

Becky: “After I Push the coins aside...”

Brandon: “*If* you Push the coins aside...”

Becky: “Sure. Can I fling them through the wall at the fleeing guard?”

Brandon: “Or you can throw your own, yes. The Difficulty will be high; the coins may not even get through to the hallway.”

Becky: “Is the Difficulty from the wall or the fact that I can’t see through it?”

Brandon: “Both.”

Becky: “Will the heightened senses from burning Tin help?”

Brandon: “You’d normally need the Blindsight Stunt here, but because it amuses me” — this being one of the most powerful Narrator justifications of all — “I’ll lower the Difficulty by 1 if you burn Tin. The louder echoes off the door and hallway walls will help you pinpoint the guard’s location through the wall.”

Becky: “Excellent. I’ll do that.”

Brandon: “Alright. Thorrow?”

Paul: “I sweep my spear at Carrow’s legs. Hopefully I’ll trip him before he gets to me.”

Brandon: “Physique targeting Health, and you’ll need two Nudges for the trip. Let’s grab some dice.”

Notice the variety of actions being taken there. Conflicts can involve lots of characters and it won’t always be important that everyone focus exclusively on hurting the opposition; some characters will take unrelated actions that still support their side. As another example, in a pitched battle deep in a noble house basement a Lurcher may choose not to attack the hazekillers coming after his crew so he can instead Pull open the cell holding their captured ally. Remember, in a roleplaying game you can attempt practically anything so long as it makes sense given the details already in play.

As each action is described, the Narrator makes the choices necessary to form a dice pool, just as with any other roll. Working with the player, the Narrator decides which Attribute, Standing, or Power is most pivotal and determines whether any Traits, Tools, Circumstances, and other rules apply. Remember that catching a Beat does not grant any additional dice.

IMPORTANT: These dice are not yet a pool and you may have any number of them. They’re called Action Dice and are used to form pools for various actions you take throughout the Conflict Round. Place the dice on or near the labeled part of your character sheet.

Some common sources of Action Dice, based on intended actions:

- Physically attacking another character: Physique
- Attacking with Allomancy or Feruchemy: Appropriate metal
- Taunting an enemy: Charm
- Performing a feint or stalling for time: Wits

- Wrestling with a foe: Physique
- Controlling a koloss or kandra with emotional Allomancy: Brass or Zinc
- Distracting someone: Charm
- Torturing someone: Wits or Physique
- Leveraging a mark's poverty to shame him (or her): Resources
- Slandering someone: Influence
- Threatening an enemy: Spirit
- Bribery: Resources
- Rallying support in a crowd: Influence
- Belittling someone: Spirit

Active Defense: A character may sometimes choose not to take any overt action, instead committing all of his or her effort to defending from incoming attacks. In this case the character gains no Action Dice. Instead, he or she receives Defense Dice, which are figured just like Action Dice and are based on how the character is guarding against attacks. For example, dodging or hunkering behind a shield are governed by Physique, while guarding against tricks relies on Wits, and steeling oneself against emotional trauma falls to Spirit. Traits, Tools, and Circumstances are applied just as with any other action.

Actions that Produce No Dice: Some actions require no roll at all (e.g. reading when quick or precise comprehension isn't an issue, turning a crank that doesn't require a great deal of strength, and so on). These actions don't produce Action Dice, so the character gains none of those, and he or she only gains Defense Dice if attacked. These Defense Dice are always based on the type of attack, as a character preoccupied by other actions isn't able to focus attention on guarding, and can't choose how to defend. Physical attacks produce the defender's Physique in Defense Dice, social attacks produce the defender's Charm in Defense Dice, and mental attacks produce the defender's Wits in Defense Dice. Traits, Tools, and Circumstances are applied as with any other action, but are defined by the character's *reaction* to the attack.

With all this in mind, let's take a look at what this means for our friends in Keep Hasting...

Example: Brandon runs down the line with everyone's first actions, in the order they're declared...

Ignus is actively defending under the table, so he doesn't get Action Dice. Instead, he receives a pile of Defense Dice based on his Physique of 3. His "sniveling coward" Trait applies here, and Brandon gives him an additional Tool die for the table, so Ignus has 5 Defense Dice.

Cordal Bylerum is using Steel to Push coins at Koel. His Steel is 6 and he has no applicable Traits. The coins are necessary for the action, so they don't count as Tools (without them the action simply isn't possible), and Brandon rules that no other Circumstances apply either (Cordal being surprised is covered by the adjusted order in which everyone declared actions). Cordal has 6 Action Dice.

Carrow Bylerum has Physique 4 (boosted to 9 because he's burning Pewter), and benefits from the "agile tumbler" Trait. Again, the dagger doesn't so much help his attack as facilitate it, so it doesn't offer a Tools bonus, but he's both attacking a character with greater reach and taking a step this round, and two adverse conditions cost him a die. Carrow has 9 Action Dice.

The guards are all moving (one toward the hazekillers and the other two through the door and into the room). None of them have to roll, so they gain no Action Dice and will only gain Defense Dice if attacked.

Koel is reacting to Cordal's Steelpush and then Pushing on her own. The reaction is ignored when gathering Action Dice, so Brandon focuses on her action. She has Steel 4 with no help from Traits or Tools, and she doesn't benefit from Circumstances either. Koel has 4 Action Dice.

Finally, Thorow has a whopping 12 Action Dice (6 for Physique, increased to 11 because he's burning Pewter, and 1 for his "spear fighter" Trait).

Of course, all this is usually determined as each character declares an action. We only break it down separately here so you can clearly see what's involved with each part of the process.

At this time the Narrator also declares whether each action is a Challenge (uncontested by the target) or a Contest (opposed by the target). This is important when applying additional rules and when determining what options are available to each target (i.e. whether they can react or defend). In general, any attack is automatically a Contest unless there's a reason the target can't fight back (he or she is unconscious or restrained, for example).

The Narrator may also assign a Difficulty if there's more than a small chance the action may not succeed at all.

Both these factors play a role during Step 2.

Example: Again briefly running through the declared actions in the Crew's diversionary attack...

Ignus' action is purely defensive. He only rolls as a reaction if someone attacks him.

Thorow and Carrow's actions are each Contests targeting the other, and neither has a Difficulty (as pretty straightforward attacks, it's merely an issue of whether they hit).

Cordal's Steelpush is also a Contest, in this case against Koel's Steel. There's no Difficulty here — the coins are definitely going somewhere; all that's in question is where they wind up.

Koel's attack is a Contest as well (her Steel against the guard's Physique), but in her case there is a Difficulty as the coins are being shot blind and through the wall. Brandon had originally planned to assign a Difficulty of 4 but since Koel is burning Tin he reduces it to 3.

The guards' actions don't demand rolls.

Once again, all this generally happens as actions are declared, but we've separated the various decisions in our example so you can see how each piece works.

STEP 2: RESOLVE ACTIONS

Actions are taken in a different order than they're declared. They **start with the character or group with the most Action Dice and end with the character or group with the least Action Dice** (allowing characters with the greatest ability to go first). Characters with the same number of Action Dice act simultaneously.

Example: Thorrow's attack is resolved first, as he has 12 Action Dice, and then Carrow moves to attack him with 9 Action Dice. Cordal's Steelpush is resolved next as he has 6 Action Dice, and Koel follows with 4 Action Dice. Ignus and the guards aren't doing anything that needs to be resolved, so they're left out until and unless they have to defend.

As each character's turn comes up, the player may react to all the declarations and actions so far. There are three options:

1. TAKE THE DECLARED ACTION

In this case the player **forms a pool for the declared action from his or her available Action Dice**. Like any other pool, this one **must fall between 2 and 10 dice**.

Even if the player has 10 or less Action Dice he or she may still want to hold some back, as any dice left after forming a pool are used to defend against incoming attacks. Especially when facing several hostile declared actions, it can be extremely helpful to withhold Action Dice for defense rather than go with the bigger pool to get something done.

Action Dice remaining after forming a pool become Defense Dice and are moved to that area on the character sheet.

Example: Thorrow forms a pool of 8 dice to attack Carrow, converting the other 4 to Defense Dice. That's probably plenty given that only Carrow might attack him this round — assuming, of course, that Thorrow's attack doesn't take him down first (all the more reason to go big with the attack pool).

2. DECLARE A NEW ACTION

Alternately, the player may declare a new action instead (the action declared in Step 1 doesn't happen). This is dangerous, as it costs the character precious moments and dramatically impacts his or her performance. **The character's Action Dice are immediately refigured for the new action and halved (rounding up), and the character now goes at the very end of the round (as if he or she has only 1 Action Die)**. Defense Dice are what remains after this new action is taken, per the rules described earlier in this section.

Each character may do this **only once per round**, and **no character may do this if their new action produces only 2 Action Dice** (as they would only have 1 die after their new total is halved, and that's not enough to form a pool).

Example: Rather than go through with his attack on Carrow, Thorrow might choose to help Koel take out the running guard, throwing his spear through the wall (it's only wood and he's a Pewterarm). As this would be a new action, Thorrow's Action Dice would be refigured — also to 12, as all the same factors are in play for this alternate attack — and then halved, rounding up (to 6). The throw would also occur at the end of the round.

3. CHOOSE NOT TO ACT

Whether performing the action originally declared in Step 1 or a new action declared since, the player may always choose not to act at all. **This ends the character's chance to act in this round, and converts all of his or her Action Dice into Defense Dice.**

Example: Thorrow could also choose not to attack Carrow or do anything else, converting all 12 of his Action Dice into Defense Dice.

As each action occurs, first look at whether it's a Challenge or Contest, as the rules vary a bit for each. **A Challenge is resolved like any basic roll** — that is, a matching set that also beats the Difficulty (if any) is a success.

Example: If the door to the guest room were locked from the inside, the guards in the hallway would have to break it down to enter. This would be a Challenge and therefore an unopposed roll, likely with a Difficulty based on the sturdiness of the door.

If the action is a Contest the target may defend, though it isn't required. The dice used to defend are based on whether the target has acted yet in this round:

- **If the target has not yet acted**, he or she may spend between 2 and 10 **Action Dice** to defend, and the new (lower) Action Dice total is immediately used to refigure his or her spot in the turn order. As you may already have surmised, this makes attacking a target an excellent way to keep them occupied, thus preventing them from doing anything else.
- **If the target has already acted**, he or she may spend between 2 and 10 **Defense Dice** to defend (assuming of course he or she has any Defense Dice left, or started with any in the first place).

Any target may choose *not* to defend, in which case the attack is automatically successful so long as the attacker rolls a matching set.

In any case the choice to defend and the number of dice spent must be settled before anyone rolls any dice (no one gets to wait and see what their opponent rolls before committing their dice).

A character may only defend once against each action, though he or she may defend against any number of actions in each round (so long as there are dice available to do so, of course).

The Contest succeeds if the attacker scores a higher Result than the target and beats the Difficulty (if any). Nudges break ties as usual, and tied Nudges mean the struggle continues into the next Conflict Round.

Example: Thorrow's target Carrow has not yet acted in this round, so he can devote between 2 and all 9 of his Action Dice to defending. He wants to get an attack of his own in, so he only devotes 4 of his Action Dice to defending.

Both characters roll, Thorrow getting a Result of 3 with four Nudges — more than enough to knock Carrow off his feet, as planned. This assumes that Thorrow's attack hits,

of course, which brings us to Carrow's roll: a Result of 3 with one Nudge. With a tied roll Nudges decide the victor, so Thorrow's attack hits and Carrow goes down.

Most successful actions are handled the same as any basic Challenge or Contest, and all the rules and guidance for determining their Outcomes, impacts on the story, and descriptions still apply in a Conflict.

Attacks have a special Outcome, which is detailed under Damage and Defeat. Remember, an attack can be any Challenge or Contest intended to harm another character.



GAINING AND SPENDING DICE

The process of gaining and spending Action and Defense Dice can be confusing at first but in practice it's pretty easy. The process boils down to...

- Player declares action
- Narrator identifies items on character sheet and any modifiers used to generate Action Dice (if the character is doing something that produces dice, like attacking or actively defending)
- (Optional) Player may change action, in which case the Narrator repeats process to generate Action Dice, halving them (rounding up)
- (Optional) Player may act, spending between 2 and 10 Action Dice; the rest become Defense Dice
- Action or Defense Dice may be spent in pools of 2 to 10 to defend against any incoming attacks

At any time you'll only have only one pile of dice on your sheet, its size determined by the primary thing you're trying to accomplish in the round (attacking, actively defending, or something else). The only exception is when you perform an action that produces no Action Dice, in which case you'll only need dice when attacked, and those (Defense Dice) will be determined by the incoming attack.

Your dice pile may move around and sometimes get renamed but at the end of the day that's just to make things easier for you to grasp, and for us to explain. The most important thing to remember is this...

Once dice are spent for anything, they're out of play. This means that Action Dice used to defend may not be later used to act or defend, and Defense Dice used to defend may not be later used to defend again. Every character has only so much attention to pay to the task at hand and all the things going on nearby, and eventually the chaos overwhelms even the greatest Heroes (and Villains, and Extras). Knowing when to spend dice and how long to hold on to them is a key element in getting ahead in the rough and tumble world of Scadrial.