

Skills:

Purpose:

Adding skills to MFoN offers a more intuitive way for a player to determine their chances of success at various tasks. It also provides incentive for the Monks to design more varied content that takes advantage of specific skills, and moves us away from an almost single-minded dependence on combat. It also allows for a more detailed character design beyond the basic SMACK stats (which will still play a major role).

This also has the benefit of greatly simplifying the current pseudo-skill system. Instead of spotting a trap being based on a combination of Karma and Mind, it could be tied directly to a Traps skill, for example. The dialog to disarm the trap (based on Mind, Agility and Karma currently) could plainly display the relevant skill and chances of success, thus eliminating questions of “what determines my chances?” entirely.

Summary:

A new character will start with 5 points in each SMACK statistic and 5 points in each skill. SMACK will be based on a 1-10 scale, while skills will be on a 1-100 scale. At the beginning of the game, players will have five attribute points to spend as they see fit. Skills will receive additional starting points equal to the value of their controlling attribute. For example: Haggles is a Charisma skill. If a player starts with a Charisma of 8, Haggles will start at 13 (5 base + Charisma). After setting SMACK, players will be able to “tag” three skills, representing skills acquired during youth. Each tagged skill will get an extra 15 points immediately.

Some skills (IE: trades) are locked until a specific event unlocks it, usually a quest.

When a character gains a level, they will also gain a number of skill points based on their Mind attribute. They can spend these on any skills they like. Players will be allowed to push skills past 100, but at double the cost (two skill points to raise a skill one point). If in the future content is added that would expand this cap beyond 200, the cost will be an additional skill point at every 100 point mark, IE: 3 points above 200, 4 points above 300, etc.).

Attributes will generally not change in the skill model, except by the occasional special event or perk.

Usage:

As mentioned previously, each skill has a controlling attribute, which determines the overall effectiveness of the skill. This makes it harder to master skills in which you have no innate ability and easier for skills with a high controlling attribute. Skill and attribute selection therefore become more strategic, forcing the player to balance different needs and develop a more unique style of play.

Effective Skill:

Every point of a skill’s controlling attribute translates to 10% skill effectiveness. In the previous example for Haggles (starting skill of 13, Charisma of 8), the character gets to use 80% (8 x 10%) of their skill, giving them an effective skill of 10. Conversely, if the same player was trying to hit a boar in the head

with a baseball bat (starting Primitive Weapons skill of 5, Strength of 5), they would only have an effective skill of 3. If they had increased their Primitive Weapons to 13 (like Haggle), they would still only have an effective skill of 7.

Difficulty:

Every skill test would have one of the following difficulty ratings assigned to it:

Difficulty	Target Number
Cakewalk	50
Normal	100
Challenging	150
Difficult	200
Very Difficult	250
Impossible	300

For the sake of simplicity, all skill checks will be assigned one of these ratings (no skill check of “125”, for example).

Most skill checks will be written directly into conversations and encounters. For example, in the conversation with the Meers General Store clerk, there could be a branch that offers the opportunity to Haggle to gain a permanent discount on items (Difficult). There could also be an option to show his special stock (Challenging). Picking a rusty iron lock with a professional locksmith kit would be Easy, but opening a prewar electronic bank vault with a bobby pin would probably be Impossible.

Ranged weapons would have difficulties based on range. The ranges would map to difficulties:

Range	Difficulty
Point Blank	Easy
Short	Normal
Long	Challenging
Extreme	Difficult

Firing beyond Extreme range would simply not be possible with that weapon. Also, a particular weapon range might be simply a dash, which means firing at that range is not possible. All ranges will be counted in map squares, which equate roughly to 3 meters. Ranges are not “real world” ranges, but rather are scaled down to the game.

Skill Check:

Once the Effective Skill and Difficulty are known, a skill check can be made. The actual skill check is simply Effective Skill + d100. If the result is greater than or equal to the Difficulty, then it is a success. Otherwise it is a failure. All skill checks will be handled identically.

Developer Notes:

All skill checks will be performed via the Player or Actor object, ala:

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$player->check("Skill", Difficulty);
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$actor->check("Skill", Difficulty);
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Where "Difficulty" can be a constant-defined number or a string. The method will return the difference between the check and the target.

Critical Success and Failure:

For every 50 points by which the Difficulty is defeated, an extra success is achieved (multiple critical successes are possible). For every 50 points by which a check is missed, a failure is suffered. Not every skill check will have special results for failures and successes, the possibility is there, but the skill check function will return the number of successes (2 = 2 successes, -2 = 2 failures, etc.).

Many weapons will automatically take advantage of success/failures, where extra successes mean extra damage, and failures can mean jams, dud ammo, or premature detonation.

Opposed Checks:

Sometimes instead of a specific Difficulty, a skill must be balanced against another character's skill. Small Arms would be against the opponent's Concealment, Dodge would "resist" Melee Weapons, Intimidate might face Willpower, and Haggle would actually face an opposing Haggle. Instead of comparing against a specific difficulty, the highest result wins.

Skill List:

Skill	Description
Strength	Raw physical power and prowess. Starting Inventory slots = 20 + Strength
Melee Weapons	Baseball bats, swords, knives
Throw	Grenades, molotovs, rocks
Heavy Weapons	Mini-guns, rocket launchers, etc.
Intimidate	Frighten cooperation out of lesser beings
Stamina	Take a lot of abuse (hit points = effective stamina + 10)
Trade: Blacksmithing	Working with iron and steel
Mind	Intellect, cleverness, and wisdom. Number of "remembered" loot items = Mind Skill points per level = 10 + Mind
Energy Weapons	Using lasers, rail guns, plasma weapons, tasers, etc.
Willpower	Resist persuasion, intimidation, other mind-altering
Medicine	Ability to heal self and others
Science	General scientific knowledge, including physics and biology
Concealment	Take cover and master the art of not being seen
Trade: Electronics	Electronic devices like radios and seismographs!
Agility	Finesse and ability to react quickly. Actions per day = 75 + Agility * 5
Small Arms	Pistols, shotguns, and rifles
Acrobatics	Agility and balance

Sleight of Hand	Palm items without people noticing, and perform great card tricks
Unarmed Combat	Hands and feet!
Dodge	Best defense against melee attacks is to not be there
Trade: Goldsmithing	Working with precious metals and jewelry
Charisma	Good looks and charm. Base reputation with new factions = Charisma * 100 Starting cash = Charisma * 10 bits
Haggle	Negotiate with traders for a better deal
Persuade	Talk someone into something they otherwise wouldn't do
Entertain	Amuse through acting, music, etc. for money and good will
Diplomacy	The art of getting along, or helping others to do so
Empathy	Understand others' emotional states and get insight into their thoughts
Trade: Politics	Run for political office or just work the system
Karma	Cosmic good well, general fortune. General effects throughout the game, generally positive. Possibly Karma % chance on any skill check for the resulting check to be doubled.

Power-Ups:

With the new skill system, perks will be replaced with power-ups. Power-ups will be much more straightforward for the most part, and will now have skill and statistic-based requirements. The old perks will be removed completely. Power-ups may have a level, attribute, power-up, or skill requirement. Additionally, a power-up will now be awarded every level.

Power-Ups List:

Perk	Ranks	Requirements	Description
Street Fighting	5	Strength: 6	Years of brawls in dark alleys and bars have made you proficient with baseball bats, broken chairs, and the like. +10 Melee Weapons
Pitcher	5		Baseballs don't hurt as much as grenades, but throwing them is remarkably similar! +10 Throwing
Steady	5	Strength: 7	You have a rock-solid stance that makes it easier to aim weapons with a lot of recoil. +10 Heavy Weapons
Ooga Booga!	5		After years of frightening small children, you're ready for the big leagues. +10 Intimidate
Tough	5	Strength: 8	Quite simply, you are hard to hurt. +10 Stamina
Fine Tuner	5	Mind: 7	You have a knack for making small adjustments to electronic-based weapons, making them more efficient. +10 Energy Weapons

Indomitable	5	Mind: 8	Keen insight protects you from efforts to persuade or intimidate you. +10 Willpower
Doctor	5	Mind: 6	You've studied anatomy and how to fix it, either by books and training, or by doing. +10 Medicine
Curious	5		From the day you were born you were always poking your nose into things or taking them apart to see how they worked. +10 Science
Camouflage	5		Grease paints, terrain conscious patterned clothing, and just good old-fashioned sneakiness; you've picked up a bit of all of these. +10 Concealment
Kung Fu	5	Agility: 7	A strange old man has taught you the secrets of improvised fighting. +10 Unarmed Combat
Shooter	5	Agility: 6	Cans, rabbits, or mean people: it's all just a chance for more target practice. +10 Small Arms
Locksmith	5		You have an unhealthy interest in getting into places others people want left alone. While it's gotten you in trouble before, it's also proven helpful to others at times. +10 Pick Locks
Nimble Fingers	5		You have a knack for misdirection, speed, and subtlety that can fool most people. +10 Sleight of Hand
Evasive	5	Agility: 8	You really don't like to get hit, and have spent a lot of time practicing. +10 Dodge
Merchant	5	Charisma: 6	Years of trading have helped you spot good deals and how to make your own stuff look a little better. +10 Haggle
Slick	5	Charisma: 8	You have a silver tongue, which people have a hard time resisting. +10 Persuade
Understudy	5		You've received the rare opportunity of studying acting under a professional. +10 Entertain
Cool-Headed	5		The worse the situation gets, the more calm your exterior and thoughts. You are unflappable in conversations. +10 Diplomacy

Insightful	5	Charisma: 7	You have a natural gift for reading subtleties of expression and shifts in mood. +10 Empathy
Kung Fu	3	Unarmed Combat: 75	The arts of improvised fighting. Having this power-up unlocks specific attacks.
Flying Kick	1	Kung Fu: 1	A mighty leap and a strong heel planted in your opponent. Damage: 10-15
Lightning Punch	1	Kung Fu: 1	A series of very fast punches that can disorient your opponent. Damage: 5-10 chance to stun
Spinning Back Kick	1	Kung Fu: 2	A powerful kick thrown in a wide circle. Damage: 17-25
Windmill Punch	1	Kung Fu: 2	A rotating attack that launches three fists at the enemy in quick succession. Damage: 15-20 chance for knockback
Five-Fingered Palm	1	Kung Fu: 3	A lightning-fast finger stab at five nerve clusters designed to disrupt the target's nervous system. Damage 10-15 chance to stun chance for instant death
Sharpshooter	3	Small Arms: 75	You've taken the skill of shooting to a fine art. Having this power-up unlocks specific attacks.
Kneecap Buster	1	Sharpshooter: 1	Any shot has a chance to immobilize your opponent.
Double Fire	1	Sharpshooter: 1	While a normal double fire can actually be dangerous, in this case it's just two shots in rapid succession (new attack mode).
Head Shot	1	Sharpshooter: 2	You can take the shot at two levels of difficulty higher, but if you hit you do triple damage (new attack mode).
Critical Shot	1	Sharpshooter: 2	You can take a shot at one level of difficulty higher, but if you hit you do double damage (new attack mode).
Sniper	1	Sharpshooter: 3	All ranged attacks are one difficulty.
Weapon Master	3	Melee Weapons: 75	Swords, baseball bats, and chains: you've become very good with all of them. Having this power-up unlocks special talents with melee weapons.
Bone Breaker	1	Weapon Master: 1	All melee attacks have a chance to inflict double damage.
Lightning Parry	1	Weapon Master: 1	You have a chance to completely block any melee attack.
Crippling Strike	1	Weapon Master: 2	One level of difficulty higher than normal, but has a chance to immobilize the target.
Disabling Blow	1	Weapon Master: 2	All attacks have a chance to temporarily stun the target.
Whirling Dervish	1	Weapon Master: 3	A normal attack against every adjacent enemy in a single action. Available once per combat.
Researcher	5	Level: 5 Mind: 8	You have a gift for research and study. +5 Science +5 Medicine +5 Willpower

Trickster	5	Level: 5 Agility: 8	You were always getting in trouble with the neighbors and your parents for getting into places and things you shouldn't. +5 Acrobatics +5 Sleight of Hand +5 Dodge
Brute	5	Level: 5 Strength: 8	Your motto is the bigger and heavier, the better it is for crushing things. +5 Heavy Weapons +5 Melee Weapons +5 Intimidate
Actor	5	Level: 5 Charisma: 8	Comedy, drama, singing, and music...they're all just ways to entertain your adoring public! +5 Entertain +5 Empathy +5 Diplomacy
Stalker	3	Level: 10	One shot, one kill, no witnesses: that's how you like to handle business. +10 Concealment +10 Small Arms
Wrestler	3	Level: 10	Nobody can escape your Grip of Ultimate Death! +10 Unarmed Combat +10 Intimidate
Natural Leader	3	Level: 10	People always look to you for leadership in any crisis, and know you'll be unwavering in pursuit of your chosen goals. +10 Diplomacy +10 Willpower
Unbreakable	3	Level: 10	You never seem to get sick, and are strangely difficult to injure. +10 Stamina +10 Medicine
Laser Physicist	3	Level: 10	You know more about lasers, plasma dischargers, and ion generators than anybody else you know. +10 Energy Weapons +10 Science
Inspired Speaker	1	Diplomacy: 50 Empathy: 50 Persuade: 50	Once in a while, you really get into the mind of your audience and can talk them into almost anything. You have a chance to double your persuade and diplomacy checks.
Healthy	5		You can take more damage than most people. +10 Stamina
Artisan	5		You are naturally talented in a wide variety of activities. +10 to all unlocked Trades
Inheritance	10		A relative passed away, and by some miracle, they liked you! You get \$10 x your current level when you select this power-up.
Quick Reflexes	5	Level: 10 Agility: 8	You have reflexes that border on precognition. To others it almost looks like you're predicting their movements. +10 Acrobatics +10 Dodge

			+5 Unarmed Combat
Improved Relations	5	Level: 5	Somebody started a rumor about you, but this time it was actually positive! +100 Reputation with all known factions
Pack Rat	5		You can always find a little more room in your pocket or backpack to stash something. +1 Slots
Pistol Cache	1	Level: 5	You find an unguarded weapon cache (9mm Pistol, 100 9mm Rounds)
Archer's Cache	1	Level: 3	You find an unguarded weapon cache (Bow, 200 arrows)
Shotgun Cache	1	Level: 5	You find an unguarded weapon cache (20 Gauge Shotgun, 100 20 Gauge Shells)
First Aid Kit	5		5 Stim Shots, 5 Antidotes, 10 Bandages, 2 Sulfa Powder
Uber Strength	3	1 Uber Token	+1 Strength
Uber Mind	3	1 Uber Token	+1 Mind
Uber Agility	3	1 Uber Token	+1 Agility
Uber Charisma	3	1 Uber Token	+1 Charisma
Uber Karma	3	1 Uber Token	+1 Karma
Wealth	5	1 Uber Token	\$100 * current level
Pack Mule	3	2 Uber Tokens	+5 Slots
Serenity Now!	5	5 Uber Tokens	Immediately gain a level
Custom Portrait	1	5 Uber Tokens	You can give your character a custom portrait
Custom Sprite	1	5 Uber Tokens	You can give your character a custom sprite
Precise Aim	1	3 Uber Tokens	All ranged attacks are one level of difficulty easier
Martial Artist	1	3 Uber Tokens	All melee attacks are one level of difficulty easier
Amazing Endurance	5	5 Uber Tokens	+20 actions per day
Dragon Strike	1	5 Uber Tokens	(special attack mode) You can use this attack twice per day, at any range, against any target in your line of sight. The attack will instantly kill the target. Note that some special/boss characters may be immune or have a chance to resist.
Gift of Leather	1	3 Uber Tokens	An uncle gives you a gift for your travels: a full set of leather clothing (Long Leather Jacket, Leather Boots, Leather Leggings, and Leather Utility Belt).
Mother's Recipe Book	1	4 Uber Tokens	You learn five new random recipes.
Ursine Suit	1	4 Uber Tokens	Somebody gave you a set of clothing made from bear skins (Bear Skin Leggings, Bear Skin Cloak, and Bear Claw Necklace)
Hunting Gear	1	5 Uber Tokens	You learned the basics of hunting from your father, who gave you a good set of hunting gear when you left home (Bow, 200 Arrows, 5 Hunting Nets, Bowie Knife, Campfire Kit)
Military Cache	1	10 Uber Tokens	You found a prewar armory (M16 Rifle, 500 5.56mm Rounds, 10 Fragmentation Grenades)

Migration:

Players will have all of their perks removed. All their attributes will be set to 5, but they will have 5 points to spend on them. They will then be automatically forced to level up repeatedly until they're back to their earned level.