



1d6

Levity

Universal RPG System

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Version 2.0.8

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*To Paola and Cesare.
Without them
all these things
would mean nothing*

*To Marzia, Marco e Luca,
to play the 'map'
even without their uncle*

This manual will undergo continuous verification and improvements.

Please, report any error, bug or enhancement to:

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Levity – Version 2.0.8

Introduction	4
General Notes	4
Player Section.....	5
Life points, Classes and Races	5
Skills.....	5
Combat and Damage	6
Storyteller section.....	9
Premise	9
Game Handling	9
Game and narration modes	9
Non player characters.....	11
Actions and results.....	11
Credits	13
License	14

Introduction

Levity is a universal system to create and play RPG settings and adventures.

The main features are ease of use and a great focus to group dynamics (even if it can be used for single player adventures, too).

For this reasons Levity can be considered a good introductory system for kids or for newbies.

This version (2.0) has many differences with respect the previous one (1.1). As every thing, infact, Levity too feels the need to be modified through time and adapt to the ever changing needs of its players and creator.

Hope you'll like it.

Ciao,

Roberto Grassi

General Notes

Levity provides a simple set of rules to handle game elements, using one 6 sided die.

The rules are split, for clarity purposes, in two sections.

The Player section covers the following topics:

- Character creation and evolution
- Skills and “Roll for success”
- Combat Handling and Damage

The Storyteller section covers the following topics:

- Handling game turns
- Narration Modes
- Non player characters
- Actions and Results

The system will try to keep an ‘universal’ treatment in order to allow an easy creation of scenarios and modules based on it.



Player Section

Life points, Classes and Races

The player creates the character rolling the die twice, summing the results and adding 12. (**2d6+12**).

The resulting value will be between 14 and 24 and represents the character **Life Points, LP** in the next chapters. When the **LP** reaches zero the character dies. During the game the character can restore lost **LP** but can never exceed the starting value.

Each player can assign his/her character the desired sex, class and race, but this aspect must be agreed with and allowed by the storyteller, who must check for consistency with respect the game world and scenario. In any case, the last word is for the storyteller.

Equipment

Each player is allowed to carry equipment (foods, weapons...) but must handle the transportation, the quantity and the obstruction, agreeing it with the storyteller, for he/she could face issues during the moves and the combat because of this (in the end, some thing could never be transported).

When it is needed, the storyteller checks if the equipment affects the success of a move with a “bonus” or a “minus” (refer to “The “Roll for success” and “Combat and Damage”).



Skills

Each playing character can have a maximum of three skills. Each skills has a degree of knowledge according to the following table.

Value	Degree of knowledge
6	Master
5	Teacher
4	Connoisseur
3	Initiate
2	Disciple
1	Novice

To determine the skill each player describes a draft background of his/her character and submits three skills to the approval of the storyteller.



Levity - Version 2.0.8

The type of skill is agreed between the player and the storyteller, which checks for the consistency of the skills within the gameworld and the story to be played.

After this phase the player rolls three times the dice and freely allocates, the three results to the owned skills.

The increasing or decreasing of the degree of knowledge is communicated from the storyteller to the player, according to the behaviour of the playing character, during the game session or at the end.



The skills and the degree of knowledge are useful during the combat and “roll for success”. Refer to corresponding paragraphs for further details.

The “Roll for success”

During the game, the storyteller could ask, for the success of a particular action a “Roll for success”.

If that is the case, the storyteller communicates a number between 3 and 23.

The storyteller considers, too, if a “minus” must be applied, for whatever reason, and tells the player the entity of the negative modifier.

The player rolls a die three times and sums the results.

If, for success, the storyteller allows to use one skill then the following modifiers are applied.

Degree of knowledge	Modifier
Master	+ 6
Teacher	+ 5
Connoisseur	+ 4
Initiate	+ 3
Disciple	+ 2
Novice	+ 1

If the sum is above the requested number then the action is successful.

If it is equal or lower then the action is not successful.



Combat and Damage

In case of combat the following aspects must be considered by the storyteller.

At first, he/she must consider if the initiative or the surprise effect must be granted to one side, calculating and

Levity – Version 2.0.8

communicating, at his/her own will, a loss in life points.

Moreover, surprise attack can be performed from the distance and can be successful. In this case too, the damage in lifepoints is communicated by the storyteller, at his/her own will.

If the weapons used do not ask for a refined mechanism of damage calculation then the storyteller, again, communicates the damage at his/her own will.

In some cases the storyteller can even skip the combat, negotiating an amount of life points loss for the characters.

If the relation between attackers and defenders is different from 1:1 then the storyteller will manage the combat dividing it in single turns or in an unique move per side

In every case in which the combat needs a more complex mechanism of handling (for instance, fast attack and counterattack) the following rules apply.

Both the players, in attack and defense, roll one six sided die and apply, if any, the following bonuses.

If the skill and the degree of knowledge apply, the following modifiers apply.

Degree of knowledge	Modifier
Master	+ 6
Teacher	+ 5
Connoisseur	+ 4
Initiate	+ 3
Disciple	+ 2
Novice	+ 1

If the character holds usefuls equipment or items the following modifiers apply.

Weapon / Shield	Modifier
Heavy / Powerful	+ 3
Medium / Normal	+ 2
Light / Feeble	+ 1

The storyteller considers, too, if a “minus” must be applied, for whatever reason, and communicates it to the player.

Now, the difference between the attacker and the defender determines who has lost the turn and how many life points must be scaled down.

	Attacker	Defender
Dice Roll	5	4
Skill	+ 2	+ 3
Weapon/ Shield	+ 2	+ 3
Minus	- 1	//
Total	8	10



Levity - Version 2.0.8

The defender wins, because of the higher total. The attacker subtracts two life points (10-8).

The storyteller, after some turns of combat, has the possibility to subtract LP from the fighters, to simulate the endeavour and fatigue of the characters.



Storyteller section

Premise

The aim of Levity is to provide a light and simple set of rules to play and handle an RPG game.

The aims of a game are to let people have fun, think, relax and socialize.

The storyteller should always remember this “golden rules”, in order to be able to suit Levity to his/her needs.

Everything included in this manual can be overridden by the storyteller for game and narrative purposes.

The most important thing is to have fun.



Game Handling

The sequence of the game should be the following.

The storyteller describe the scene to the players and awaits for their moves and interactions with the environment (refer to “Game and Narration Modes”)

The players declare their move and the storyteller checks if it is a legal move. If it's the case, the storyteller handles the action and its result (refer to “Actions and Results” in the storyteller section, “Skills” and “Combat and Damage” in the player section).

And so on, until the end of the game.



Game and narration modes

This is the heart of Levity.

A good storyteller makes the difference. The better the storyteller the better the game. The storyteller must have a solid prose, great fantasy and a strong dialectics.

He must handle the game sessions, play the NPCs, which must have personal and independent objectives, with respect the story or the plot.

The plot and the narration background must be carefully studied and prepared, before start the game.

Game and narration modes described hereafter are just examples. Other possibilities cannot be excluded.

Text Adventure

One things I had in mind while I was thinking at Levity was to make connections between text adventures and role-playing games.

In a text adventure, usually, it is not important the race of the player. Or how many life points he/she has. Nor if he/she has some specific equipment and skills or not.

The assumption is that the playing character has an average intelligence and physique, because intelligence and physique are not important at all.

What is really important is the ‘cerebral’ side about the player who moves the playing character.

Levity – Version 2.0.8

To proceed in a text adventure it's important to make the right moves and, usually, this happens after a deep thought.

From this point of view, the chance for success of an action are 0% or 100%. Levity should tend to this. In almost all cases there shouldn't be the need to throw the dice and roll for success.

If there are no reasons for the failure of the action, then the action will succeed. If the success depends from previous successful actions then every try will have a bad result.

A good storyteller should never relate the success of an action to a specific skill, race or special characteristic.

Moreover, text adventures are always played in stand-alone. In other words, the playing character, excluding exceptions, is always one.

This can allow the storyteller to handle some situations in which all players are forced to move only ONE character.

The storyteller can ask to ALL players, in the same time, to move only one character, according to a voting mechanism.

Furthermore, the storyteller can 'suspend' the move for some players and proceed with only one of them, but the game-time, for the others, is frozen.

This aspect can give a 'movie-like' aspect to the game and moves the game mode towards an interactive text adventure between the storyteller and the player.

Gamebook

Another interesting interactive fiction mode is the gamebook, whose paper

examples are the "Choose Your Own Adventure" books.

The storyteller is allowed to use this mode, too. For instance, the players can be given the chance to choose between a predefined set of choices instead of moving their characters at will.

One for all

An interesting mode, to be used carefully, is to let a single player move ALL or SOME of the other playing characters.



This could lead to troubles, because no-one will like to see his character moved, even if temporarily, by someone else.

Still, the storyteller can use this mode, if needed. For instance, it can be useful in cases where players lack of integration in the group, or when their character is following a boring section of the whole plot.

Character Swapping

A very interesting mode that the storyteller can use is to swap characters between players.

Turn Skip

The last narration mode allowed to the storyteller is to force the skip of the move for a playing character, no matter if he/she is witless

In other words, it is not to be considered a 'default' that all the players will move during a game turn. The storyteller can use this mode, for instance, to enforce dramatic and thrilling events.

Non player characters

These are distinguished in animated and non animated.

Animated NPCs are all characters that can have a voluntary interaction with players.

Non animated NPCs are all characters that cannot have a voluntary interaction with players. In this category fall all "objects" in a broad sense.

NPCs can have life points, classes, races and levels.

The storyteller will assign the proper values for them in the setting.



Actions and results

In principle, the storyteller should allow the maximum freedom to the players. ALL the actions, in theory, should be possible and have a chance of success of 100%. We're not talking here about the positive result of the action but just the fact that the action can be executed. For the result of success refer to "Roll for success".

If an action is not possible, in that moment and for specific reasons, it will be possible later if the reasons for failure have been removed.

The actions can be divided in possible, impossible and forced.

Possible actions

In principle, ALL actions are possible.

The execution of the action, with success will be allowed, unless the storyteller asks for a "Roll for Success", as described in the player section.

Impossible actions

There are three kinds of impossible actions. The result will always be a failure.

Absolutely Impossible, because of the "world model": in other words, those actions that are not allowed by the physics of the world.

Levity - Version 2.0.8

Impossible in that moment, because they need previous mandatory actions.

Impossible because of character characteristics. In short, the action is not possible, unless it is explicitly allowed by the storyteller, perform actions for which the storyteller considers that the character can't do them basing on physical or mental skills of the character.

Forced actions

In some cases, the storyteller can ignore the decisions of the player and force them to perform an action. This kind of action is to be used carefully.



Credits

I would like to thank first Paula Dudzik for the wonderful artworks embellishing this manual

Page 4 – Such a long way together – [Link to original page](#)

Page 5 – The power (II) – [Link to original page](#)

Page 6 – Odalisque – [Link to original page](#)

Page 7 – Last Rose of the Summer – [Link to original page](#)

Page 8 – Centaur – [Link to original page](#)

Page 9 – Darkness and Stardust – [Link to original page](#)

Page 10 – Whitniss – [Link to original page](#)

Page 11 – Keraam – [Link to original page](#)

Page. 12 – Choices – [Link to original page](#)

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