

# SIX-SHOOTER

RUNNING THE GAME  
+ OTHER TIPS & TRICKS  
FOR THE GM

---

(PART FOUR)

---





# SIX-SHOOTER

## RULES & GUIDELINES FOR A WILD WEST INSPIRED CAMPAIGN IN 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION D&D

**Introduction:** Six-Shooter is primarily a system for adding a variety of Wild West -era firearms to a 5<sup>th</sup> edition D&D campaign. Alongside the guns, there are several additional rules to add even more gunslingin' flavor to the game.

The system is split into four parts according to the type of content within. Part One contains all the rules for using firearms and a way of generating weapons with random variables. Part Two offers more advanced rules for using cover and a few new game mechanics. Part Three focuses on the Wild Western Fantasy world and character creation, and Part Four is meant for DMs running a game using Six-Shooter.

Six-Shooter is designed with modularity in mind, so you can pick up a single rules mechanic to use or a whole bunch of them. For instance, Part Two contains rules for adding Luck as a seventh ability score, and in Part Three there is an alternative to D&D's traditional Alignment system.

*Designed for characters of any class, 1<sup>st</sup> level and up*

BY OOZNYNKOO



DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, FORGOTTEN REALMS, THE DRAGON AMPERSAND, PLAYER'S HANDBOOK, MONSTER MANUAL, DUNGEON MASTER'S GUIDE, D&D ADVENTURERS LEAGUE, ALL OTHER WIZARDS OF THE COAST PRODUCT NAMES, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE LOGOS ARE TRADEMARKS OF WIZARDS OF THE COAST IN THE USA AND OTHER COUNTRIES. ALL CHARACTERS AND THEIR DISTINCTIVE LIKENESSES ARE PROPERTY OF WIZARDS OF THE COAST. THIS MATERIAL IS PROTECTED UNDER THE COPYRIGHT LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. ANY REPRODUCTION OR UNAUTHORIZED USE OF THE MATERIAL OR ARTWORK CONTAINED HEREIN IS PROHIBITED WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF WIZARDS OF THE COAST.

©2016 WIZARDS OF THE COAST LLC, PO BOX 707, RENTON, WA 98057-0707, USA. MANUFACTURED BY HASBRO SA, RUE EMILE-BOÉCHAT 31, 2800 DELÉMONT, CH. REPRESENTED BY HASBRO EUROPE, 4 THE SQUARE, STOCKLEY PARK, UXBIDGE, MIDDLESEX, UB11 1ET, UK.

IMAGES USED IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE PUBLIC DOMAIN, USED UNDER LICENSE FROM [FREEIMAGES.COM](https://www.freeimages.com), OR ARE COPYRIGHT BY THE AUTHOR.

ALL OTHER ORIGINAL MATERIAL IN THIS WORK IS COPYRIGHT 2018 BY ARVO HALME (A.K.A. OOZNYNKOO) AND PUBLISHED UNDER THE COMMUNITY CONTENT AGREEMENT FOR DUNGEON MASTERS GUILD.  
CONTACT THE AUTHOR: [ooznynkoo@gmail.com](mailto:ooznynkoo@gmail.com)

# PART FOUR: GM GUIDELINES, TIPS & TRICKS

## CONTENTS

<b>FIRST I'D LIKE TO MENTION A FEW THINGS...</b>	<b>5</b>
» <b>NOW WE'RE GETTING TO THE GOOD STUFF</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>LOW MAGIC Vs. NO MAGIC?</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>JUST POP BY THE OLD MAGIC SHOP</b>	<b>6</b>
» <b>GEOGRAPHY AND WHAT'S BEYOND THE HORIZON</b>	<b>7</b>
» <b>THEMES AND EXPOSITION</b>	<b>8</b>
Overarching Plot and Timeline Management	8
What Should a Fantasy Wild West Feel Like?	9
<b>THE SWEAT LODGE &amp; THE WITCH'S BREW</b>	<b>9</b>
» <b>RUNNING STARSIGNS</b>	<b>10</b>
Random Starsign Assignment Table	10
» <b>MANAGING MONETARY ASSETS</b>	<b>11</b>
Bags Full of Paper Bills	11
Provide Various Services	11
Play Some Poker	11
Complication (Pushing Your Luck)	12
» <b>USING AND RESOLVING LUCK CHECKS</b>	<b>12</b>
» <b>HIGH CALIBER ROUNDS &amp; DAMAGE DICE</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>WHAT ABOUT RIFLES?</b>	<b>14</b>
» <b>MISSION CONSTRUCTION &amp; XP</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>MORE EXAMPLES OF (SIDE-)OBJECTIVES:</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>KICK THINGS OFF WITH A BANG!</b>	<b>16</b>
» <b>"END OF THE LINE, MR. BROWN"</b>	<b>17</b>
» <b>FINALLY A FEW WORDS ABOUT BALANCE</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>GUNS ARE OP!</b>	<b>19</b>
» <b>NOTORIOUS CRIMINALS</b>	<b>20</b>
» <b>SO... IS THAT IT?</b>	<b>20</b>
» <b>ONE PAGE CHEAT SHEET</b>	<b>21</b>



# FROM HERE ON: GM EYES ONLY!

---

*I like random. I also like variety and fairly complex rules, as long as they don't prevent the game still running smoothly. The purpose of Six-Shooter is to help you adapt an existing setting to better fit a Wild West inspired, somewhat less magical campaign, using the Dungeons & Dragons 5th edition ruleset as a base. This next part is meant to help GMs design and run the campaign.*

*Six-Shooter provides some guidelines on how to build and present the game world, regardless of where your campaign is based. The alternate/additional rules presented are meant to shift the emphasis away from dungeon delving and more in line with the types of narratives you probably want to explore. Also clearly identifying what things award XP (and approximately how much), sends a clear message to players that (even in D&D) you can do more than just kill monsters.*

*The combat system presented in parts One and Two is kind of complex (though for this update I've removed some stuff that was probably overly complicated/didn't really help anyone). There are several variables to keep track of, but I think as long as everyone remembers to note their ammunition usage in combat, there shouldn't be any real issues.*

*Overall it's probably a good idea for players to have a solid grasp of the core rules, before presenting them with a complex, additional ruleset. As Six-shooter isn't class-specific, I think it'll be fine as long as you understand how the different rolls (normal, advantage, disadvantage) work as well as how combat/ability checks are usually handled.*

***I'll ramble on for a bit longer on the next page...***





*Since some of the tasks normally assigned to the GM are (hopefully) reassigned to the rest of the group, it's pretty important for all players to have read most of the first three parts at least in passing, especially the rules governing inspiration and earning XP... and firearms. In any case, it's probably a good idea to keep the One Page Cheat Sheet handy (it comes with Part One but I'll also put it here: [PAGE 21](#)).*

*Battlefield positioning might be a little complex for purely theater-of-the-mind play, and I suggest at least roughly mapping out combat situations. This will also help you keep track of cover being damaged and noting when it breaks down if you use the additional rules for it.*

*I haven't seen a need to create new classes/races as those can be adapted with a few tweaks flavorwise. You might want to add some new backgrounds, but I think the biggest shift has to happen in the players' expectations of what they'll come across in the world and how the action/story will proceed. Luckily most people are somewhat familiar with Wild West tropes and stereotypes. Nonetheless, I think it's a good idea to have a little chat about which type of Wild West narratives people expect and are the most interested in exploring.*

*So why no alignments? I think alignments are more of a restriction than a personality guideline, and in the worst case scenario, they offer justification for bad behavior at the table. Without clearly defined alignments, characters are always wading in somewhat murky shades of gray. This is a good thing, in my opinion.*

## FIRST I'D LIKE TO MENTION A FEW THINGS...

*Which we might also call "Known Issues".*

Since we're going for a crouching behind cover and shooting back and forth -kind of vibe, I think the **Sharpshooter** feat as written could be a game-breaker. I'd consider tweaking it so you need to first take an action to carefully aim (not **Aim**) and only then, on your next action, you can receive the feat's benefits for a single shot. Or something like that. There's a similar issue with the **Close Quarters Shooter** fighting style found in one of the Unearthed Arcana supplements (Light, Dark, Underdark!) – personally, I'd just steer clear of that one.

I feel like bonus actions in 5th edition D&D are possibly the fiddliest bit of mechanics in the whole game.

Some characters will never use a bonus action for anything ever, while others never seem to have enough to suit their needs (I think monk players run into this quite a lot). In this system, I've made reloading and sometimes even firing a weapon quite heavily reliant on having a bonus action available, so whatever else they could be used for...

I feel like this can lead to hard but interesting choices in the midst of a heated battle, but maybe it just makes something already fiddly near impossible to manage. That being said, after running the system for almost fifty 4-hour sessions I don't really think it's an issue. There are some things I did tweak (or remove completely) during or after the campaign, but I think bonus action dependency might actually be fine.

If you run into issues with bonus actions etc., you could declare a simple variant rule for the different trigger types: **SA** weapons can only fire once per round (unless you **Fan the Hammer**), while **DA** guns let you fire multiple times if you have Extra Attack or a similar class feature.

If you think of any other glaring issues please let me know, so I can try to figure out possible solutions for them. Thank you for your interest and I appreciate any and all feedback I receive. As I said, the system has gone through a thorough playtesting, so I'm pretty confident there isn't anything terribly game breaking... but you never know.

# NOW WE'RE GETTING TO THE GOOD STUFF

*From here on out, we'll go over the stuff that's meant for a GM's eyes only. Secret stuff, behind the scenes stuff; stuff that will help make sense of the game/world.*

Six-shooter isn't mean to be a self-contained, full-fledged campaign setting – it's more like a mod to install on top of a campaign that already has some meat to it. When designing a Six-Shooter campaign, though, you can start small, with a single city and a few nearby towns, where missions can play out. That should actually get you pretty far.

But anyways, I've kept the world-building stuff to a minimum in previous chapters, so I'm cramming most of that in here. What you'll find are mainly rough guidelines, hints & tips, and as an example, a few bits about what I did in my Six-Shooter campaign.

I'm assuming you've already read through the first three parts, so if you feel like you're lacking context, that's where you might wanna look. I'll try to format my thoughts something like this:

- » What I think is a good guideline to follow and why.
- » Some examples that further impress the point.

» Specific examples of what I've done in a game of Six-Shooter

## LOW MAGIC VS. NO MAGIC?

I don't think the world should be completely magi-  
cless. Various monsters still have magical abilities,  
several classes have access to spellcasting, so the world  
should have a bit of a magical feel to it, even if people  
have moved on as a culture and science has taken over.  
Speaking of spellcasters, I think spells could be tweaked  
flavorwise, so they have a more grounded feel; less flashy  
fireworks and glowing runes or things like that. If your  
players' describe their own spells, go over what you think  
spells should look like in general, just to give them some  
ideas.

Maybe magic missile requires some used bullets as a material  
component, which fly from the caster's pocket telekinetically  
and make (really satisfying) sequential **\*thunk\***-sounds as  
they hit the target.

I might have given the impression earlier, that dragons  
don't belong in Six-Shooter, but that's not what I meant.  
There could be dragons, but it's more interesting not to  
say outright whether they exist or not; the world can have

dragons in it, but having them flying around all over the  
place probably isn't what you want to do (and would ruin  
the Wild West feel in my opinion).

Dragons, once they reach a certain age, have the  
ability to change shape, allowing them to fit in among  
other creatures or cultures if they so choose; you might  
be talking to a dragon, and never even know it. Feel free  
to introduce some mystery into influential NPCs.

Where is it the governor goes every weekend? It  
certainly seems to be working for him, he always returns  
well-rested and refreshed. There are rumors that he also  
speaks several languages, that's kinda weird, huh?

I gave the ability to **Change Shape** to adult dragons (normal-  
ly only available for older specimens), so I could introduce  
them to the game without the PCs being so completely over-  
matched should a fight break out. I also let them use their  
**Frightful Presence** in humanoid form – involuntarily even  
– their draconic nature seeping through a little.

## JUST POP BY THE OLD MAGIC SHOP

*So let's take a moment to go over magic items and all  
that good stuff.*

You won't find magic items in a store anywhere. If any-  
thing, they could be found in antique collections, rare  
auctions and overall you'll likely have to hire someone  
to find one for you. Some magic items could still exist  
hidden away in ancient dungeons and ruins and other  
forgotten places. I see a couple possible options for how  
to handle the acquisition of such rare items.

So the first option, **OPTION A**: You can (only) find  
magic items in the world. Maybe players find/receive a  
map indicating a long forgotten hoard etc.

The second option as I see it, **OPTION B**: You can  
use contacts higher up in the Agency (or really whatever  
you want to call the organization the PCs work for) to get  
access to magic items, either as a temporary loan for a  
single mission or for good.

Oh yeah, you could also go for **OPTION C**: Craft  
items yourself. The crafting rules presented in the DMG  
should work as written, you just need to figure out a  
decent price point for the crafted item, as crafting time is  
based on the price of the item.

A few items were found along the way as random loot during  
some longer missions. Close to the end of the campaign, once  
the players had saved up a good bit of money, they took to  
finding a few specific items in auctions etc. I used the pricing  
guidelines in the DMG and rolled Luck checks to help de-  
termine if other parties were bidding on the same items and  
how vehemently they wanted them. The PCs spent most of  
their money and a Downtime Action each but got what they  
wanted.



Since the PCs can design and order a custom sidearm, I thought it a nice touch if they could, at further expense, make these even more special by enchanting them. This came in the form of special oils and stuff costing 1000 gp that would permanently suffuse the weapon with the standard +1 magic bonus on attack and damage rolls. I also demanded the weapons be named, though; the magic wouldn't work before they did.

Giving away a limited amount of magically enchanted ammunition could be a good way to allow overcoming a monster's resistance to nonmagical attacks while making it a tough choice over if and when to use this strange and rare ammunition.

## GEOGRAPHY AND WHAT'S BEYOND

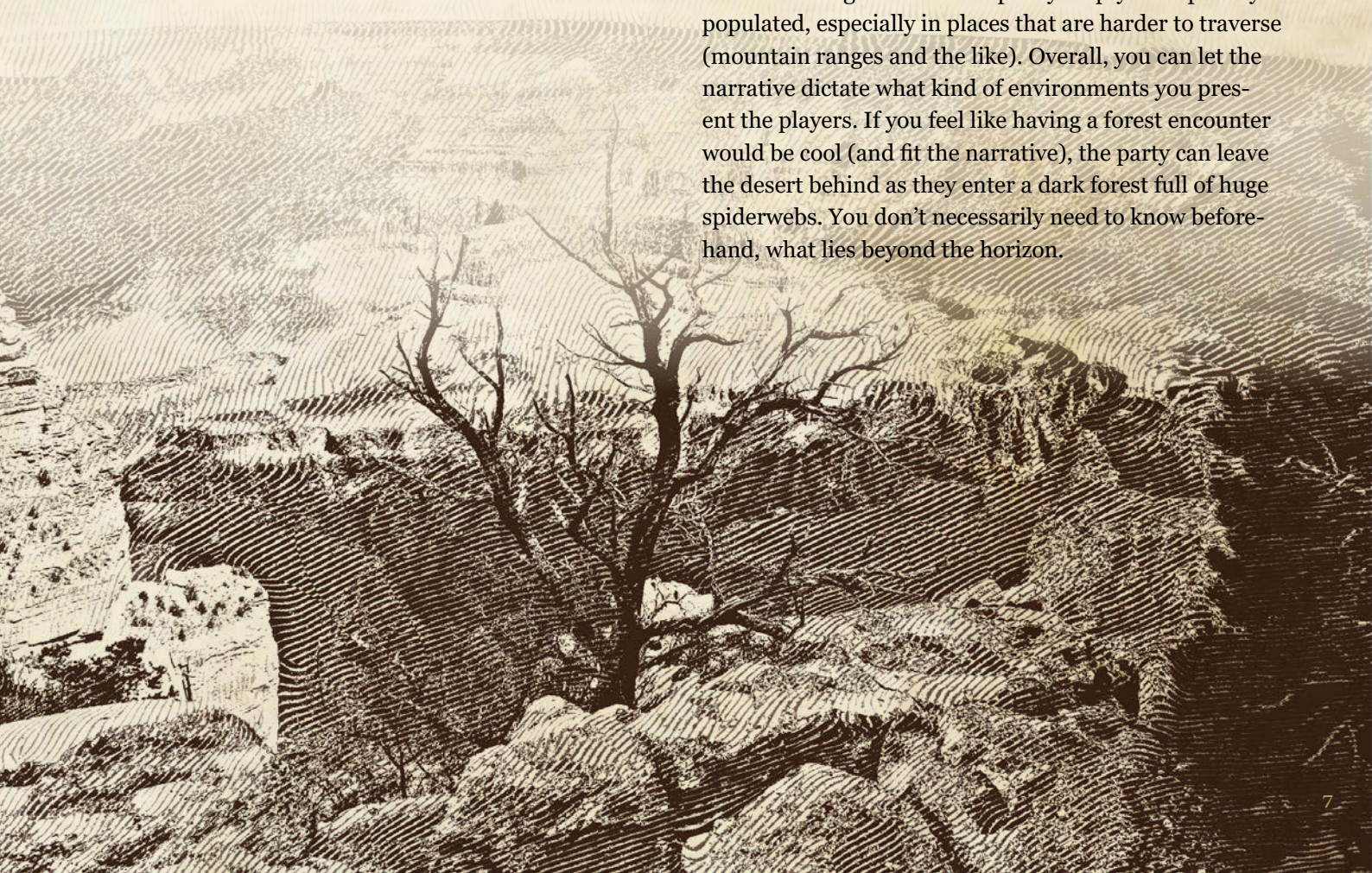
### THE HORIZON

If you're starting with an existing campaign world, I suggest setting the adventure somewhere pretty remote, a place that has evolved independently from others or maybe, as I cleverly hinted at earlier (in Part Three, I think), doing the alternate reality thing. The problem, if there even is one, has more to do with continuity, though, but I digress.

The region where the campaign is set could (maybe even ought to) be self-contained and kind of apart from everything else. You can start small and go big, or you might prefer to always stay within a day's travel from a certain central location. Feel free to define the area as well as you like, but you don't have to know everything that goes on everywhere – far from it! I would suggest that one city as a base of operations is better than traveling between several major settlements. City life is a good contrast with the frontier.

You can have as much or as little politics come into play and I feel the same goes for intricate systems like the economy... but I think a good, solid basis for things is to think about cause and effect. Why has the tribe of barbaric orcs moved into the area? What caused their food supply to run dry? Where did the weird predator come from that ate all their buffalo? You know, something along those lines.

Most of the region should be pretty empty and sparsely populated, especially in places that are harder to traverse (mountain ranges and the like). Overall, you can let the narrative dictate what kind of environments you present the players. If you feel like having a forest encounter would be cool (and fit the narrative), the party can leave the desert behind as they enter a dark forest full of huge spiderwebs. You don't necessarily need to know beforehand, what lies beyond the horizon.





The first few missions were set in very different geographical areas, even though they were all just a couple of day's train ride away from the city. No-one seemed to have any issues suspending their disbelief, and later on, once I revealed a section of the map of the continent (mainly to impress upon the players the positions of different nations), the locations of previous missions mostly made sense as well, close enough at least.

While trains allow people to explore farther reaches, you don't have to figure out everything along the way: with trains, the journey isn't more (or even as) important than the destination, although encounters during a train ride are always awesome.

If you use a map, fill it in as you go, instead of having things worked out beforehand. Don't let the map tell you something isn't there when you want it to be. And when in doubt, you can explain it through microclimates.

For my campaign, one big difference compared to the base setting was that dragons had gone into seclusion. This had happened a couple centuries back. Their hatchlings are raised by older dragons in a collective in a secluded mountain range, yet some are present among humanoid settlements, disguised and acting in various leadership roles / wielding a lot of influence. A young dragon, still learning how to fit in among humanoids, might act strangely and draw attention to itself.

In addition to the regular, civilized culture of modern towns and cities, there are more primitive cultures that not only exist but may thrive in the harsh wilderness. These cultures can provide you with monsters to encounter or they can become significant parts of mission objectives, like when a railroad is being built through tribal lands, and the mission is to scout out the area ahead and deal with any obstacles.

You could also present influences from more exotic cultures, like stuff from distant lands or remnants of prior civilizations. On the other hand, the region could have an air of mystery to outsiders. Maybe gunpowder was discovered here and isn't available elsewhere, the same could go for electricity. The area could be surrounded by such harsh waters and bad weather that it is nearly impossible to get to (by sea or by air).

The mysterious swordsman wearing a curved, single-edged sword on his hip could be descended from an unknown merchant who shipwrecked on the continent. The boy was the only one to survive the shipwreck, so nobody knows where the ship came from, and nobody has been able to read any of the documents found aboard the wreck.

Something like this is especially useful if you want the campaign to be contained in a world that is already familiar to players but you don't want to state explicitly, that they're still in that same world. This was the case for me. I presented the players with small things that probably gave it away, but only near the end, did anyone mention the other continents, which would have been more familiar to the players.

## THEMES AND EXPOSITION

*While certain concepts may be common to all stories, Wild West stories have certain themes not usually found in fantasy adventures. To emphasize the difference, it could be beneficial to take some notes from other media in the genre; while westerns with fantasy elements are rare they aren't unheard of.*

Rather than trying to fit a fantasy narrative into a wild west setting, I think it is much easier to think in terms of wild west narratives and add some fantasy elements to those. Furthermore, I think you should start with minimal fantasy elements and increase their number as the story develops, which will be somewhat in line with what characters are capable of, especially when spellcasters are present in the party.

**Cults!** Cults are a good way to introduce the idea of metaphysical influences, while not coming out and outright saying "there's magic and gods and stuff in the world". Cultists can just be really messed up, who knows why they have such weird beliefs and violent tendencies. So the guys who robbed the bank and got away, may not be doing it just out of greed. Maybe they need the money to get the winning bid at an auction of an ancient ceremonial knife, which they need to make sacrifices to whoever or whatever mysterious entity they believe they serve.

### OVERARCHING PLOT AND TIMELINE MANAGEMENT

While you may have an idea of the story you want to present your players and find out how it unfolds together, remember that a characters' own objectives are a staple of the genre and shouldn't be overlooked. Personal vendettas are (as they should be) a thing in this setting.

I think a middle ground between following an overarching plot and building a dynamic, emergent narrative, is what you should aim for. To do this, you could plan a series of events that will happen in the world, not necessarily to the characters, but regardless of their presence. Along the way, as the story develops, you can add stuff to this timeline based on the characters' actions; consequences of their action or inaction.

I started some sessions (or episodes, as I called them) with a scene presenting events elsewhere in the world, but related to the current mission or something that was happening after the party had left wherever their prior mission had taken place. A mysterious hooded figure interrogated (via a spell) the corpse of a monster the party defeated, to find out who they were. Some prior information implied who this person might be, but it wasn't stated explicitly.

Have stuff happen in the world around the characters and give them a chance to react. I'm talking about things



not directly (at least not obviously) tied to their mission, though that never hurts either. It is important for their actions to have consequences, and no-one else needs to know if/when you change stuff coming up on your timeline to better fit the circumstances and tie into the narrative as it unfolds.

### WHAT SHOULD A FANTASY WILD WEST FEEL LIKE?

Setting the tone for your story can be pretty hard, especially when going for a dark, more somber feel, which I think is well suited for a Wild West world with fantasy elements and influences.

Presenting a theme for exposition scenes can be a good way to subtly tell your players what kind of story you want to tell (with their help). It's left up to them how they want to respond. I think humor has a place in all kinds of stories, if for no other reason than to contrast with all the tragedy/horror/violence/suspense, so it's fine to take that approach as well. Also, try to choose themes you will also explore in the narrative through NPCs or upcoming events, (kind of like foreshadowing but more vague and thus more forgiving).

The main timeline in my campaign consisted of a major upcoming event, where multiple nations' leaders would come together over a few days for a decennial gathering. The date for this event was set, though I left a lot of room before it to explore the world over several (not necessarily related) missions. At some point, the idea of someone possibly trying to mess with the decennial gathering was introduced, and in the end, all of the focus was on trying to prevent whatever might occur.

A big theme in my campaign revolved around "consequence". Whatever was brewing behind the scenes has been set in motion long ago. The player's actions would also directly or indirectly affect the Big Upcoming Conference and how that whole thing would go down. I thought of going with "Regret" as the first theme for framing exposition scenes, but in the end, there wasn't a need to limit these scenes as the players didn't offer up too many of them.

### THE SWEAT LODGE & THE WITCH'S BREW

At some point, one or more of your players will probably choose to "**Go Smoke a Pipe**" as their downtime activity. They will expect to receive some kind of ritual blessing or even to return with a strange potion that could help them in the future. While potions are already a thing in the game and there is an extensive selection to draw from (either hand-picked or at random), blessings can be more or less tied to game mechanics, but they could just be a way for characters to feel better about themselves.

Blessings, due to their more ephemeral nature, could be more narrative-focused elements than potions (which have clear written rules, mostly).

When a player first picks the **Downtime Action**, ask them who it is they're going to see. Is it the preacher at a local church, the shaman of a nearby tribe or a strange hermit living secluded in some nearby woods? Regardless of what the player expects to come of all this, it presents an exceptional opportunity to have an in-game discussion about their characters' beliefs... their hopes and dreams, and worldly worries.

I had to come up with a few blessings sort of on-the-fly, as a result of characters having weird discussions in a sweat lodge with a wise tribal elder. The first one, to provide an example, I called "Blessing of Spirits". It made the character who received the blessing perceive when they were being lied to or misled, as nature spirits showed them something was amiss. The ground under the character's feet would tremble, though no-one else could feel it, or a slight breeze would blow around them, even while indoors. This happened a total of four times (four because of the number of primal elements) before the blessing ended – the characters felt the spirits' presence fade from them. I never explicitly told the players what the blessing did (or what I called it in my notes).

Common and uncommon potions are both fine as rewards for this **Downtime Action**, seeing as most of them are either generally useful or potentially provide ways around certain obstacles, but none of them are powerful enough to break the game, should they be rolled at random.



# RUNNING STARSIGNS

*A lot of creatures in the Monster Manual are unaligned and people in the world are mostly either neutral or unaligned as well. Starsigns aren't a moral or ethical choice, they describe tendencies that people born on certain days may exhibit.*

Be liberal with your application of starsigns to NPCs in the world, but remember, that most people won't fit their stereotypes perfectly, if at all. You don't have to pick or roll a starsign for everyone, though, but I suggest having one for all key NPCs the players may come into contact with repeatedly.

Some starsigns are less common in the world overall, which doesn't mean that players are limited in their choice, it's just that some signs don't come along as often as others. If you want to roll for starsigns randomly, use the table below which reflects their comparative rarities. The rarest signs are Spirit, Bound, and Wild, while the four elemental signs are present the most frequently.

## RANDOM STARSIGN ASSIGNMENT TABLE

STARSIGN	D100 RESULT
Water	1-15
Shadow	16-25
Bound	26-32
Earth	33-47
Spirit	48-52
Wild	53-60
Fire	61-75
Sun	76-85
Air	86-100

Sometimes you can easily pick a starsign to either contrast nicely or reinforce an NPC's personality. I think a random roll is a good option for when you don't necessarily know how you want someone to act or react, not when you already have an idea of what you want. So if/when the choice is clear and easy, pick the one you like, rather than rolling for it.

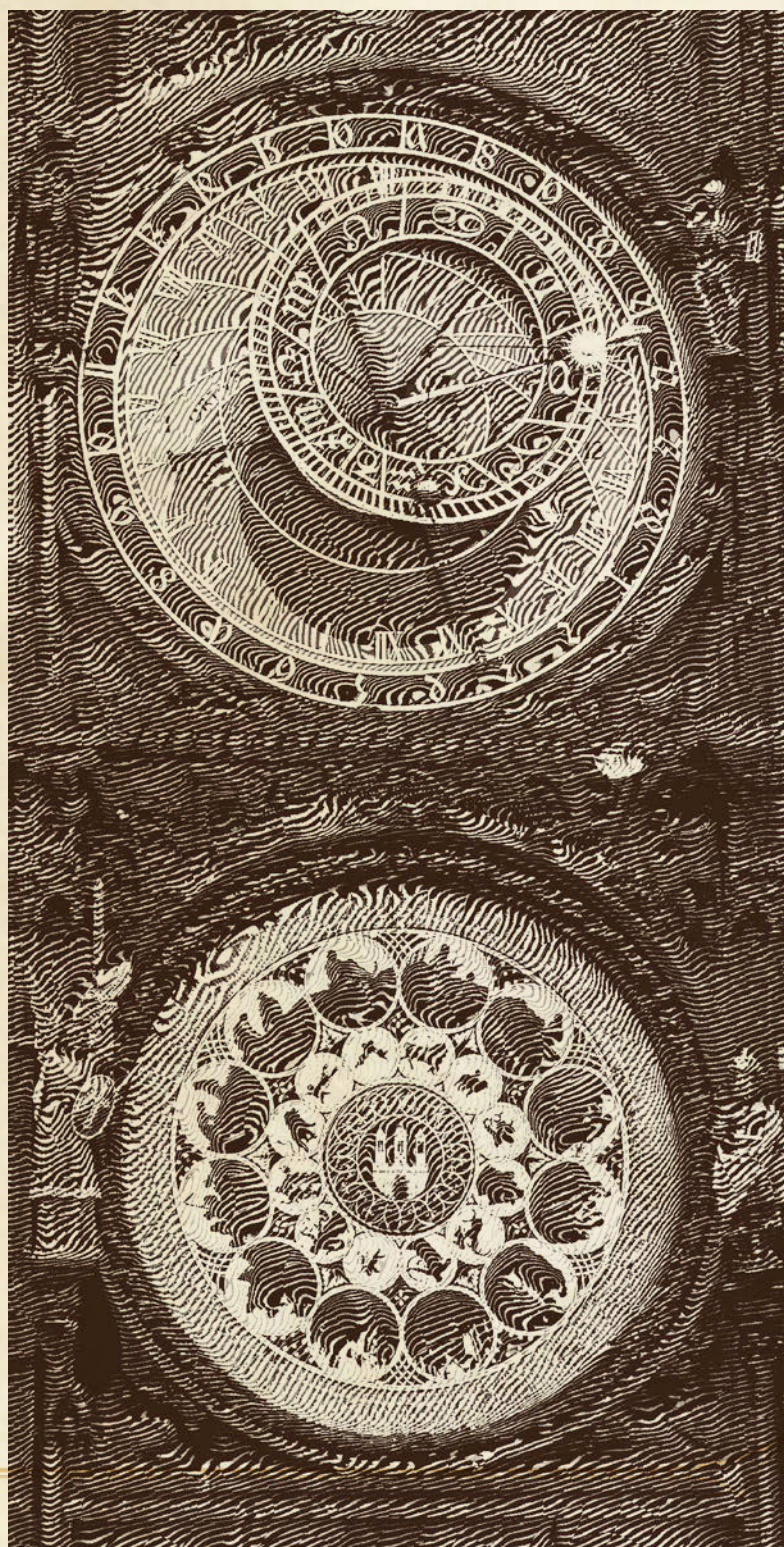
The PC's contact at the Agency, Ms. Johnson, has to manage a number of agents out in the field and has seen countless come and go over several years. What if her sign is Spirit or Bound? She knows she shouldn't let herself get too attached to her agents, but she can't really help it.

If a player is having trouble picking or chooses not to have a starsign, that means no sign has been detected which links to the date of their birth. If they ever pick one at a later date, that sign was indeed present, but it was so faint that no-one really took any notice and so it was

omitted from calendars/almanacs.

Keep track of your PC's starsigns and make a note anytime they come across NPCs with antagonistic signs. You can be as subtle as you like, but inform the player their character has a strange feeling about the antagonistic individual.

Maybe they feel like the guy is looking at them funny, or sense a whiff of something coming from their general direction – try to describe it as something the character senses or intuits, but doesn't necessarily know what it means.





# MANAGING MONETARY ASSETS

*So how much money are players expected to receive for just doing their job and how far will that money get them? What else can they do to earn a few bucks? Here are some thoughts on that.*

I think the base amount of money each PC receives should be enough to live on, but not leave much in the way of savings. I think 15 gp per week is a good amount, at least to start. What can 15 gp get you? Let's say it would cost 10 gp per week for room & board at a tavern/inn/guesthouse, so you'll have 5 gp left over. Doesn't sound like much, does it? It isn't meant to.

While Agency recruits can survive on just their retainer, they are encouraged to do missions, as these are likely to provide some money along the way. How much money should you reward and for what? What would be considered a lot of money?

» A regular (combat) encounter might yield 3D4\*5 gp to be split among all participants, more if it's classified as deadly. I'm assuming a single session includes between two and four encounters in total and mission-specific encounters don't award money separately – if anything you'll need to collect any valuables you find as evidence.

» The winning pot in a major poker game might come out to a small fortune of 250 gp. A normal game in any old saloon probably won't have a pot bigger than 25 gp.

» An exceptionally fine gem could be auctioned off for 500 gp.

» It would cost about 1000 gp to enchant a weapon with magic. Enough mysterious Arcane Oil to apply to six (or seven) bullets would cost around 75 gp (to make).

» 25 gold per week would allow you to rent & live in a nice apartment and not be bothered by the sounds coming from the tavern's common room.

## Bags Full of Paper Bills

Coins are the most frequent form of currency, followed by bills printed on durable cotton paper, gems and of course gold nuggets. Copper pieces (**cp**) are the most common out of all these and can be cut in half or even into quarters, but the players/GM don't need to worry about any smaller denominations, just assume you have some when you need them. Gold nuggets are weighed and given a value in gold pieces or fractions thereof.

» Used weapons looted off enemies are generally a hard sell. Most generic bandits don't take good care of their firearms, and any decent gunsmith will take one look at them and know exactly what you're peddling. The most anyone will get for such is 5 gp per piece (maybe

10-15 gp for shotguns). Nicer guns, especially **UA** or **Lancers** are easier to sell off but you are still unlikely to get more than 25% of their full price.

» Completely new and unused weapons can be sold off for about 30% to 50% of their full price.

Only Underwood Arms and Lancer Bros. weapons are of a sufficient quality to be magically enchanted. They are generally the best quality weapons on the market. Enchanting is also really expensive, so you wouldn't want to have it done on a 25 gp Walker Recruit. Part of the cost might be figuring out and finding someone who can even do it, as it's not a service that is normally provided. You might have to ship your weapon out, wait for it to get there, for it to get enchanted, and then be shipped back to you, taking quite a while.

As mentioned, some **Downtime Actions** can earn a bit extra. Here are some nice rollable tables for those!

When a player wants to **Provide Various Services** they will receive an amount of money based on how well they manage to find employment.

## PROVIDE VARIOUS SERVICES

ROLL D100	RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS
1-40	seems there's not much to do: 1d4*5 gp
41-60	you get a steady income: 2d4*5 gp
61-80	you are overpaid: 2d6*5 gp
81-95	you become the go-to guy for a local merchant: 3d4*5 gp
96-100	your client dies: you inherit 4d8*5 gp but won't find additional work in this town again for 2d6 weeks

When someone decides to **Play Some Poker**, things can get interesting. First, they roll a Luck check, which determines the modifier for the 1D100 roll:

- on a failure, they get -50
- on a success +0, a critical success +50
- if they **Push Their Luck**, the modifier is +0 but also roll on the table after the next one for a complication.

## PLAY SOME POKER

ROLL D100	AND THE WINNER IS...
-49 - 10	you lose everything except 1 gp
11-40	you lose 5d4 gold
41-70	you win 10d4 gold
71-90	you win 3d6*5 gold
91 - 100+	you win 5d6*5 gold



## COMPLICATION (PUSHING YOUR LUCK)

ROLL D100	COMPLICATION (PUSHING YOUR LUCK)
1-30	You get drunk, have a party, in the morning all your money is gone. But you sure had a good time!
31-60	You are accused of cheating and can't gamble in this casino anymore, they take half your winnings.
61-90	You make contact with a loan shark, who offers you the world! This... might have some repercussions.
91-100	First of all, reroll your Luck score. Second, a tax auditor becomes interested in you and yours – apparently, they will “ <b>be in touch</b> ”.

Speaking of **Pushing Your Luck** and Luck scores in general...

## USING AND RESOLVING LUCK CHECKS

*Luck checks are useful in situations where the outcome could swing either way, but it doesn't depend on a character's skill or spellcasting ability or anything like that. Ask for a luck check to help determine what happens, instead of just deciding on a whim.*

So first let's go over the possible results of a luck check in a bit more detail. When you make a luck check, you roll 1d20 and compare the result to your luck score. You'll usually want to roll high but not to go over your luck score.

Rolling between 1 and 3 is always **Unlucky**. This is a failed check. In narrative terms, it's a strict “No!”. Whatever you wanted to find or have happen, you don't or it doesn't.

Rolling 4 or more but less than your Luck score is simply a **Success**. You basically get what you wanted, at least in part.

Hitting the **Sweet Spot** (your Luck score exactly) means the situation is usually very beneficial to the player/character.

Anything above your Luck score means **Pushing Your Luck**, which usually results in some complications whether you get what you wanted or don't (but it could also just be a simple “No”). The simple answer is to say “**Better Luck Next Time**.” and leave it at that... but there's a more complex variant for it below, which is good if you want to come up with random dynamic content and consequences on the fly.





*So the general (though optional) rule for modifying Luck scores goes as follows:*

- » **Pushing Your Luck** increases a Luck score by one but never above 17 (the only way to have 18 Luck is to roll three sixes).
- » **Unlucky** decreases a Luck score by one, but never below 4.
- » Whenever you roll a natural 20 on a Luck roll you get to (have to, really) **Turn The Tables** and reroll your Luck score; then reroll the check.

*Here's another example of a Luck check in play.*

---

**Example 3:** Elgar (Bob's new character) is very unlucky, having rolled the minimum of 3 for his Luck score. The GM calls for a Luck check and the result is a 3. The roll indicates both a critical success and a failure, so it's a bit weird, and the GM decides to treat it more like a simple success, so the added bonus effect of a critical success cancels out the failure.

---

Instead of having them out in the open you can keep the PCs Luck scores a secret from the players. Players get to make checks, and can guess whether they succeed or not, but won't really know if they simply succeeded or are pushing their luck or whatever. If they're perceptive they might figure out their score with time, but it's not an easy mechanic to exploit, so it makes little difference.

You never really know how lucky you or when your luck will run out, so hiding the numbers adds a little bit more excitement when rolling Luck checks.

Instead of stating "**Better Luck Next Time**" you can consult the list below. You can roll or just pick one of the options on the list (or if you come up with something else, you could just go with that). I've tried to fill the table with stuff that could fit most situations, or can at least be interpreted in some way to make narrative sense.

So roll 2D6 (or prompt the player for a roll) and try to interpret the result in a way that fits the situation. Generally, these complications won't come about right away. You'll have to make a note of the result and keep it in mind until you find a good place to assert it in the narrative.

- 2 - **IT'S A TRAP!** - they knew you're coming, sry  
While everything seems alright now, it won't for long. They're expecting you, they've had time to prepare and you're screwed.
- 3 - **MURPHY'S LAW** - whatever can go wrong...  
No plan can take everything into account. Sometimes

even the most unlikely things to go wrong, still fail catastrophically.

- 4 - **OOS - out of stock** - n/a for a good while  
Though it should normally be readily available, it just ain't happenin', not today, probably not tomorrow or maybe even in the next couple of months.
- 5 - **HIDDEN MOVEMENT** - drawing unwanted attention  
While it seems you got away scot-free, someone took notice, possibly someone you hadn't taken into account. They've now taken an interest: you are now on their watchlist.
- 6 - **NEMESIS** - a competitor appears  
Someone else is on the case and they got there right before you. You might even catch a glimpse of them before they vanish around the corner.
- 7 - **OLL KORREKT** - the calm before the storm  
For now, all is well and everything is going according to plan; that won't last. It's likely that the proverbial shit is about to hit the fan.
- 8 - **OUT OF TIME** - didn't quite make it  
The door shuts in your face. The guy ahead of you just bought the last one. Almost but not quite. With some quick thinking and ingenuity, you could still turn this into a close call.
- 9 - **NOT SO FAST!** - don't count your chickens...  
Coming out of the shop carrying your shiny new magic sword, a pickpocket grabs your purse and scurries into the crowd. Or maybe the shine on the sword starts to wilt away as the illusion fades to reveal a rusty old piece of garbage.
- 10 - **WHOOPS!** - slipping on a banana peel  
You drop the ball. You stumble on a cobblestone and fall over on the priceless artifact you successfully carried out of the vault unnoticed. Whoops!
- 11 - **ARE WE THERE YET?** - glass half full  
The bottle of whiskey you find is already open and half of it is gone. The ancient puzzle is missing some pieces. Your success is only partway, but otherwise, you get out intact.
- 12 - **JACKPOT!** - a stroke of luck  
Not only do you find what you were looking for, you can get it at a discount. Maybe all the guards just left to congratulate their colleague on their birthday, leaving the way open for you both coming and going!



This is a weighted list (on a 2D6 you are significantly more likely to get a total of 7 than anything else) and so the likely outcome is an **Oll Korrekt**, meaning basically “Yes, but...”, though it could be a while before the “but”-part comes up.

## HIGH CALIBER ROUNDS & DAMAGE DICE

The way damage is “balanced” for firearms is that pistols usually roll a single big die, whereas shotguns roll multiple smaller dice. The maximum damage stays the same almost all the way, but both can peak a little higher when you switch to a high caliber weapon.

So the rule of thumb is to increase damage by one step for handguns and single-shot shotguns, or increase the number of dice and thus also minimum damage for double-barrelled shotguns. The table in Part One reflects this idea, but I thought it would be good to explain my reasoning briefly.

### WHAT ABOUT RIFLES?

*I have a few initial thoughts on how rifles might work and what would make them different compared to pistols and shotguns.*

- » Base damage is one step up from pistols, starting at 1D12 on the cheaper end (possibly lever action models that use the same bullets as handguns do), going up to 2D8 for bolt-action rifles and the like.
- » Higher range, starting out at 80/400 feet and increasing from there to something around 120/600 feet.
- » A minimum range, inside which shots are made at disadvantage. For instance, shooting at anything within 15 feet could be fiddly in combat with such a heavy, long-barrelled weapon. Increased range (maybe some models have scopes attached) would also increase this minimum distance slightly.
- » The inaccurate flaw increases minimum distance instead of decreasing normal range. The benefit of the Accurate trait is doubled for a 20' increase and it also affects maximum range.
- » Maybe the ultimate model – crafted by *Lancer* of course – would have the following stats: It is Accurate and High Caliber; range 140/620, minimum range is 20 feet; damage is 2D10; reload is fast (shots are loaded straight into the barrel one at a time and the bolt is then slid back with a satisfying \*cu-chunk\*); It would cost, I don't know, maybe 1000 gp. Let's call it *Lancer Bros. The Impeccable*.



# MISSION CONSTRUCTION & XP

*Let's go over some guidelines on how to construct a mission and figure out how much XP it is worth.*

First, decide the main target/objective of the mission. The mission could be to apprehend a wanted criminal or find someone in hiding. Perhaps it's less defined, like investigating some strange phenomenon or escorting a VIP through dangerous terrain. Assign a difficulty to the overall goal of the mission, either easy, medium, hard or deadly. You can go about figuring out the challenge of the mission in a few ways:

- How many sessions do you see the mission spanning?
- How many combat encounters or other obstacles do you expect the mission to contain?
- Does the party possess something that might make completing the mission significantly easier?
- Are there going to be encounters with creatures of a significantly higher challenge rating than the party can handle easily?

For example, the mission could be to track down and apprehend Mr. Brown. Assuming he isn't easy to track down and it requires a bit of legwork to find the necessary clues to his whereabouts, it sounds like it might take one session to find Mr. Brown and at least another before he is finally apprehended, so let's assign the mission a Medium difficulty. If it was intended more as a one-shot, I think it should be an Easy challenge.

Mr. Brown is a notorious criminal, "**Wanted dead or alive**". There have recently been sightings of him and his posse near a town, so the party starts looking there.

In addition to the main objective, you could set up several optional ones. These should be such, that the mission can be finished without doing them, but they can still make completing the mission easier or yield better/additional rewards.

You can come up with more mission objectives along the way, possibly as a result of the players' actions, but you don't have to tell them if and when they complete such objectives, though it might be polite to tell them once all the objectives have been completed, if they tend to be completionists.

On the other hand, you could reveal mission objectives as they would appear in a video game, making note of when new ones appear in the "Quest Journal".

Dealing with Mr. Brown's cronies, before facing the man himself, is an optional objective. Let's say Brown travels with five other outlaws, so taking care of some of them beforehand will help when apprehending him. This sounds like a medium challenge objective since it probably requires some finesse and/or planning to pull off.

Once the mission is completed, the party returns to the city and you can award XP for any and all completed objectives. Mission XP should come at the end of the mission and applies to all mission participants independently and regardless of whether they took part over just one or all sessions during which the mission was played out.

First, you'll have to figure out the average level of all PCs in the game (at the end of the mission). Assign XP according to the difficulty rating of each completed objective for the PCs average level. Assuming (most of) the PCs are at first level, completing both the objectives described above would yield everyone 100 XP (a medium challenge for a first level character is 50 XP). In addition, other encounters you might run during the course of the mission could yield additional XP.

*Here are two more quick examples of side objectives for the example mission.*

**Side-objective 1:** Mr. Brown has hidden something along the way. Finding it is an Easy challenge.

**Side-objective 2:** There are some documents left behind by the previous owners of wherever it is Mr. Brown is holed up in, which could be of use to someone. Realizing the importance of the documents and grabbing them completes another Easy challenge, and may lead to further missions or objectives.

## MORE EXAMPLES OF (SIDE-)OBJECTIVES:

The following examples could be either main or side-objectives for a mission. Completing each should award XP based on their initial difficulty, not their perceived difficulty. If the PCs make life harder for themselves, that shouldn't increase the amount of XP they receive, in my opinion.

- Making some kind of discovery, finding something lost or forgotten, like ruins or catacombs or whatever (easy to hard)
- Finding a hidden thing (easy to medium)
- The thick plottens! Finding out something that makes the whole thing a lot more complex and possibly ties previous missions together etc. (medium or hard)
- Prevent the target from getting a message out / sending for reinforcements (medium or hard)

## CHOOSING MISSIONS

*Is it better to give the characters a choice of several missions to choose from, or just have the Agency dictate*



*where they're needed next?*

I think the players should have some say in what kind of missions they go on. It's hard to know beforehand what things seem interesting to everyone, so if they have a choice in missions, they can pick the one that piques their interest. However, I'm all for not giving the characters a choice in the matter, so how to combine the two? Discuss the next mission with the players, but when it comes time to present the characters with their mission, they don't have a say. This also encourages discussion and feedback at the beginning or end of/between sessions.

I was spared from doing a lot of extra preparation when we discussed the next mission between sessions. I started by presenting two or three options, just very rough mission parameters like "escort someone across the border and bring them back with you" or "go to this town and help the locals investigate a strange murder". Once the players had come to a consensus I knew which mission I'd need to prepare for. And when that mission was concluded, I would offer the other options again.

After a few missions, there might be several loose threads in the narrative, so it might be nice to provide an option to do some general investigating and get to just explore the city for a while, instead of heading out again to whatever miserable frontier town has just been invaded by some crazy cultists.

## KICK THINGS OFF WITH A BANG!

*I could mean that literally, but maybe not this time. I think it's important to get right to the action when you start the game. Don't start in the saloon with the PCs meeting each other for the first time. You can still explore it later in a flashback or something, but don't start the game with it. It's good for everyone to introduce their characters, but they don't have to enter the saloon one at a time in order to do that.*

The initial meeting-in-a-tavern scenario can lead to situations where characters don't immediately get along and being forced into a party can seem unintuitive (or worse). So skip past all that nonsense and, instead, ask the question "Why is it that you do get along in the end?". I don't mean that a little drama and tension within the party isn't fun, just that we should be able to start off with the assumption that everyone's part of the (same) team.

Start in the midst of the action, if you can. Think of how an episode of a gunslinging, western TV show would start, and go from there. I'm going to present you with what I did for the first session of the campaign after everyone had introduced their characters and we'd gone over any questions people had about their characters etc.

*Ok, are you sitting comfortably? Let's go.*

---

The first scene unravels with a close-up shot of a horse in full gallop, kicking up the desert dust with its iron-shod hooves. The rider is clad in a black leather duster, has a salt & pepper goatee and is holding onto his hat with one hand, covering his face from our view. In the background we see several other riders giving chase.

---

The man in black is approaching a mine entrance, where a door lies open. He reaches it and quickly dismounts, runs inside, and pulls the door shut. We can hear a loud \*clank\* as he bars it closed from the inside.

---

We pull back to see the other riders approach the mine entrance, just moments behind their target. These are the PCs (and the man they were chasing is a nefarious criminal Mr. Brown, whom they tracked to the last town, where the chase initiated).

---

As the players got situated with the narrative they each then took a turn to describe their characters. These Agents have been working together for a while, and though the players have yet to get well acquainted with each others' characters, the characters trust each other (up to a point) and have done this sort of stuff before.

---

The first thing they need to do is to force the door open. They could have found some dynamite laying around with a successful luck check, but took the brute force approach instead, and got through that way. We get a view of the door from the inside, with just a few strands of light coming through breaks in the wood before it crashes open in a shroud of dust and splinters accompanied by a loud grunt. As the dust starts to settle, the PC's make their way inside quickly but carefully, and the mission continues...

---

*... on the next page...*



## “END OF THE LINE, MR. BROWN”

*What follows is a brief outline of the rest of the introductory mission, which should only take two or three hours to get through and will give everyone an idea of the kind of action that's to be expected. After all, we're watching the pilot episode, right?*

From here on, there are several things that might happen. Mr. Brown had a little time to prepare for the PCs arrival and may have set traps, or maybe the way to him is just a little precarious, as this is an abandoned mine were delving into. I won't subject you to any more tables, but here's a list of stuff that may come up chasing Mr. Brown through the narrow, underground passages.

Roll 1D6 for obstacles/stuff the PCs encounter. Roll three times, rerolling any duplicate results. You could also ask your players to roll for you, so they can only blame themselves when they slip and fall to their death. That's how it works, right? In any case, resolve these in order with the lowest number first.

1 – There's dynamite with a long fuse stuck in a crack in the wall. If it's noticed in time (perception DC 20), you can cut the fuse and prevent the explosion; hit DC 15 and you still have time to chuck it further away; DC 10 and you have a chance to back out from the area (3d6 damage, DC 12 Dexterity save for half damage). If one of the PCs is scouting, they should make the check, otherwise, it falls to whoever is in front. If you roll under 10, everyone has disadvantage on their saving throws.

2 – Mr. Brown's allies have made it, despite being held back due to your efforts (they might be covered in tar & feathers but that just makes them angrier). They try to sneak up on the party from behind. Brown's cronies are Bandits and there are 3 or 4 of them. Award XP for the cronies separately.

3 – There's a steep, near vertical rocky slope where a rope ladder probably used to hang, but has been pulled up (and if the luck check fails, was removed completely and not just left at the top bunched up in a pile). The rock is still climbable but pretty slippery as there are small streams of water running down the walls (DC 12 athletics climb or DC 14 acrobatics to parkour up). If the rope ladder is still there, you can use mage hand to bring it down (or a grappling hook) and the first one to climb up can make things easier for the rest.

4 – Mr. Brown has managed to set up a simple trap – trip a wire and a cheap front-loading revolver fires, +2 to hit, 1d10 damage, DC 12 to find the trap if actively

searching, DC 17 if relying on passive perception.

5 – When approaching the last chamber, you see a glimpse of Mr. Brown in a small mirror on one of the walls, he doesn't know you're there yet, but you know his exact location and might be able to use this to your advantage.

6 – There is a box of dynamite in the room with Mr. Brown, pretty well hidden right next to him. Setting them off would likely do the trick, but it's a bigger blast (4 sticks bundled). Can you shoot dynamite to set it off? Sure, as long as it's not fresh. The sticks in this abandoned mine are pretty old, (or you might use a Luck check to determine the dynamite's condition).

The ones we don't get can be tweaked and reused to populate another table (or list, as we're starting to hate tables), in another mine delving adventure later on.

There are full stats for both Mr. Brown and his cronies a bit later on.

*So let's see how this might play out.*

The players roll 1, 2 and 3 for their obstacles. Rolling high could have benefited them while rolling low, as they did, results in the most dangerous obstacles.

Proceeding carefully in single file along a narrow passage, one of the PCs suddenly stops to listen. As everyone quiets down, we start to make out a hiss in the background, before we see the dynamite stuck into a nearby wall. So one of the PC's noticed the burning fuse in time (DC 15 perception), and rushes everyone back, away from the explosion's radius. A moment later we hear another loud bang and for a moment everything goes dark. But then a lantern is relit, and we see the party dusting themselves off and checking for damage. They nod to each other and continue on their way.

It doesn't take long for Brown's cronies to catch up now (following the sound of the loud bang they just heard). The first shots they make are at an advantage but are made at a significant distance (negating the advantage), shot across a long, straight stretch of tunnel. After the first shots the PCs all head for cover, dashing to the end of the tunnel and around the corner. The advantage shifts to the PCs, as they can shoot at the Bandits from behind cover, while the Bandits can only advance in the open along the straight tunnel.

One of the PCs stays behind to slow down the Bandits, while the others proceed. He peeks out every now and then to fire, but keeps his back to the wall. After a few shots, he reloads his weapon, fires one more time and legs it after his buddies.



---

Now that the approaching threat is known, there is an increased sense of urgency. Taking it slowly is no longer an option, and everyone is keeping an eye out for more advantageous terrain. Instead, the PCs come to a halt, as their passage ends on a ledge overlooking a deep crevice. They notice the passage continues above and start trying to figure out how to get up the slippery, 20-foot high wall. We also get a shot of one PC looking to the side of the cliff, down where drops of water fall into the impenetrable darkness.

---

Before anyone actually makes the attempt to climb up, the guy who stayed behind catches up and informs the others that Brown's cronies aren't far behind. The ledge is a bit wider where the tunnel ends, so there's some cover on each side. Two of the PCs take position on either side of the tunnel and get ready to shoot at the cronies when they approach.

---

Shots are fired into the tunnel, while one of the PCs starts climbing up. We see his hand come up over the top to grab one of the rungs of the rope ladder before pulling it down beside him.

---

Our guys are now shooting at the cronies, putting one of them down as a lucky shot connects. With a nod, they signal each other: the first one sprints over to the rope ladder, then the other follows. While the last two are climbing up, the rest are up on top, aiming down at the tunnel entrance. One of the cronies peeks out and immediately takes two shots to the chest. He goes down, rolling over and falling silently into the crevice. The rope ladder is pulled up again, and the party continues farther into the mine.

---

We see the last of the cronies hesitate inside the tunnel. When he finally gathers enough courage to take a peek, the PCs have already moved on. So he's standing there pointing a gun at empty space, looking like an idiot. He holsters his gun, spits out a glob of tobacco, curses profusely for a while and then decides to peace out.

---

Meanwhile the PCs have been proceeding through the next few passages and finally come upon a closed door, with light coming from behind it. A conversation with Mr. Brown follows, shouted through the closed door, but it doesn't lead to any meaningful conclusion – both sides are still ready, if not eager, to fight it out. Though we don't see it (yet), it's likely Mr. Brown is waiting with his gun pointed at the door, and it wasn't a walker either, looked like a Storm judging by a brief glimpse earlier.

---

One of the PCs has the idea to grab something to use as cover. It doesn't have to hold out for long, just long enough to let someone get through the door so the others can get their shots off at Mr. Brown.

---

---

We now see what Mr. Brown is seeing. He's retreated to a small alcove and taken cover behind a solid-looking desk, but he is feeling pretty boxed in, as there's no other way out. He looks down to check his trusty weapon one last time – it's an older version of the Typhoon, called a Turmoil. He flips the barrel down and sees all six cylinders loaded with high caliber rounds. He rotates the barrel back in place and takes aim, waiting for someone to come through the door.

---

Suddenly the door crashes open and someone rushes through. Mr. Brown fires before even realizing they are carrying what looks like a mine cart in front of them, and his shots ricochet off its tough metal frame. More people follow the first, and the chaos of a gunfight takes hold.

---

From the PCs' perspective, the fight doesn't take long and it ends with Brown lying on the cold stone floor with several bullet holes in him and a pool of blood spreading under his lifeless body. When Brown saw the situation unfold, he decided to fan the hammer and unload his full cylinder in one go, so he did clip a couple of the PCs but they all manage to walk away on their own two legs.

---

So that's one way it might play out. After this the next scene would see us back in town with someone from the party "turning in the quest", sitting in a chair in a dimly lit room across the desk from their Agency contact, who is about to provide instructions for the next mission (or more likely to tell them to enjoy a few days of downtime).

Then we have to figure out what everyone wants to do in their downtime – they have at least one night to spend in town. During the next day, they can plan out their next mission for a bit, before setting off. Maybe they also want to stock up on ammo and stuff. Anyway, I think that's enough of that.



# FINALLY A FEW WORDS ABOUT BALANCE

*You might still be wondering about some of the design choices I've made. Why does the cheapest pistol only cost 25 gp? Is it okay to use guns when they do significantly more damage than traditional weapons? Why no dragons? I will now endeavor to alleviate some of your concerns.*

## ALL ABOUT THE BENJAMINS?

In a typical game of D&D players will gather such piles of treasure that should they wish, they could probably buy their own village/town/city/island paradise. That really goes against my idea of hunting down criminals (or monsters) for your next payday. If PCs have hundreds or thousands of gold but are still considered middle class, how much money does the upper class have at their disposal? My point is, it can get out of hand pretty quickly.

Basically, the prices in this document are balanced with the guidelines I've provided regarding how much money PCs should receive and from what. If the PCs get a steady income of a few gold each from normal encounters, in addition to a weekly salary, the money still adds up over time, but buying ammunition, for instance, will take a good chunk out of their earnings.

The money from encounters can be abstracted as loose change your enemies might be carrying, alchemical substances you might get from monsters and other miscellaneous bits like that, which can all be sold off easily at the nearest town or once the party makes it back home.

Rolling random loot off the treasure tables in the DMG will result in significantly more valuable rewards, which is OK every once in a while, but you shouldn't use it for every encounter – save the treasure tables for big, meaningful encounters that you build up to for a while. Once per mission is probably OK, assuming a mission takes between two to four sessions to complete.

One of the reasons PCs have an easier time selling off looted *Underwood Arms* or *Lancer Bros.* weapons, is that they are generally of better construction quality. This also means they are the only weapons you can enchant with magic (if such a thing is possible in your campaign, which it doesn't have to be).

Every now and then, you could roll up a new random gun, which the PCs find somewhere. Maybe it fell off a caravan – whatever (the point is that it's new, in

pristine condition... comes in a box)! This is one way to introduce the variance in guns that the rules support.

## GUNS ARE OP!

Ok, moving on... Looking at the damage numbers you might get the feeling that combat will be really lethal. I designed it so that firearms do as much or slightly more damage than top-tier martial weapons (greatswords etc), which does make combat overall quite lethal and swingy – it's less about surviving multiple hits, more about trying to not get hit in the first place. The +5 bonus to AC you get from three-quarters cover is **very significant**.

Instead of thinking about combat as more lethal, think about it in terms of it forcing players to act with a bit more thought behind their positioning and even emphasizing teamwork. You might notice I significantly reduced the normal range for handguns compared to what is listed in the DMG. That in addition to the **Aim** action should encourage careful, tactical play.

Having NPCs use these advanced actions in combat is a good way to demonstrate how they work to the players, and when they could be used. Players tend to forget all the things they can do when they're not printed on the character sheet.

Compare a heavy crossbow to a basic revolver, and the latter no longer seems very powerful, you might even prefer a light crossbow over a 25 gp gun (since it has a close range of 80 feet!). If only it were as cool...

Also, the additional XP rewarding things are designed in part to get characters across the first couple levels, which can be very lethal regardless of what damage dice are rolled – that's just the nature of 5th edition D&D.

Outfitting every generic bandit with a hard-hitting sawed-off shotgun would be considered pretty mean. You can balance NPC equipment if you just consider what stuff costs and how much money they would have had to spend. If I had to give you a rough rule of thumb, I'd say assign group leaders or major NPCs 100-150 gp multiplied by their challenge rating or 20 gp per hit die or something.

You'll put a lot of cheap *Walker Recruits* (25 gp) in the hands of simple bandits. This also means if they **Fan the Hammer** or otherwise discharge 6 shots, they'll likely have to fall back on a secondary melee weapon. Not everyone will even have firearms. Bows and arrows are still pretty common among barbarian tribes and the like.



# NOTORIOUS CRIMINALS

*I'll include updated stat-blocks for the Bandit and Thug, which were both mentioned earlier as Mr. Brown and his cronies.*

## MR. BROWN (THUG)

MEDIUM HUMANOID, FIRE SIGN

**Armor Class** 11 (leather duster)

**Hit Points** 32 (5d8+10)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

**Skills** intimidation +2

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)

**Pack Tactics.** Mr. Brown has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of his allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** Mr. Brown makes two melee attacks.

**Storm Turmoil.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +2 to hit, range 30/150 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (2d8) piercing damage. Weapon properties: Single Action. Top-break. Standard reload. Jam-prone (gets jammed on a roll of natural 1).

**Fan the Hammer.** Expend all 6 shots into an area 5 by 10 feet (wide or narrow, your choice). Any creatures in the area need to make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 8 (2d8) piercing damage on a failed save or taking no damage but moving 5 feet away from the area if the save is successful. This movement may provoke attacks of opportunity.

## BROWN'S CRONIES (BANDIT)

MEDIUM HUMANOID, SIGN VARIES (COMMONLY FIRE)

**Armor Class** 12 (leather duster)

**Hit Points** 11 (2d8+2)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

**Senses** passive Perception 10

**Languages** Common

**Challenge** 1/8 (25 XP)

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** Melee Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

**Walker Recruit.** Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, range 40/150 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage. Weapon properties: Single Action. Front-loading. Slow reload.

**Fan the Hammer.** Expend all 6 shots into an area 5 by 10 feet (wide or narrow, your choice). Any creatures in the area need to make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage on a failed save or taking no damage but moving 5 feet away from the area if the save is successful. This movement may provoke attacks of opportunity.

**Mace.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage.

## SO... IS THAT IT?

*So far, yes. I'm working on some new stuff and I encourage you to send me any requests you might have for things to add to the system. Would you like to contribute to the Six-shooter system? I'm definitely open to working with more people on this, so send me a line!*

*If you got this far, thank you for your time and your interest! I hope you find some use for what I've created and that it helps you with your own game. Cheers!*



# ONE PAGE CHEAT SHEET

## TRIGGER TYPES

**SA** (Single Action): You need to use a bonus action to cock the hammer before you can fire. The benefit of an **SA** gun is that you can take a special action called **Fan the Hammer**.

**DA** (Double Action): Just pull the trigger and it shoots. The weapon can be fired multiple times in a round.

## WEAPON PROPERTIES...

**Slow Loading:** You can take an action to reload a single round into the weapon's cylinder or magazine.

**Standard:** You can use an action to reload the weapon, but while doing so you can only move at half speed.

**Fast Reload:** Using a spare cylinder or a moon-clip, reloading only takes a bonus action.

## ... FLAWS ...

**Jam-prone:** Any time you roll a natural 1 with a Jam-prone weapon, it will jam. You'll need to take an action and make a successful check to unjam it before it can be fired again.

**Overheating:** An overheated weapon gets disadvantage on attack rolls and it becomes **Jam-prone** temporarily. For revolvers, this happens after the first cylinder has been emptied completely, shotguns can be reloaded once. Weapons **without this flaw** can handle being discharged twice as many times before they heat up too much, and they don't become **Jam-prone** while hot.

**Inaccurate:** The normal range is reduced by 10 feet.

**Loud:** If fired in a small enclosed space, everyone inside must make a DC 12 Constitution save or be deafened temporarily.

## ... AND TRAITS

**Accurate:** Increase the close range of the weapon by 10 feet. This trait is incompatible with the **Inaccurate** flaw.

**Automatic:** Automatically ejects shells either as they are fired or when the cylinder is released for reloading etc.

**High Caliber:** Upgrade damage dice by one step. High caliber rounds cost twice as much as normal.

**Silenced:** The DC is 15 to perceive and recognize the gun being fired for what it is. Incompatible with the **Loud**-flaw.

**Seven Shooter:** Fit seven instead of 6 rounds into the gun's cylinder or magazine!

**Solid Construction:** The opposite of the **Overheating** flaw (and also incompatible with it): never worry about the gun overheating.

**Recoil:** Shots fired after the first have disadvantage. Adding this trait also adds the **Loud** flaw and it supersedes the **High Caliber** trait. Damage is increased.

## FIRING A SHOTGUN

**Normal roll:** Normal damage on a hit, minimum damage (no bonus) on a miss.

**Roll with Advantage:** Normal damage on a hit, minimum damage (+Dexterity bonus) on a miss.

**Roll with Disadvantage:** Half damage on a hit.

## WEAPON TYPE ABBREVIATIONS

### HANDGUNS

- **FL** (Front loading)
- **CR-Cap** (Cylinder Release, Cap & Ball)
- **TB** (Top-Break)
- **SOC** (Swing-out cylinder)
- **CR-B** (Cylinder Release, Bullets)
- **MF** (Magazine-Fed)

### SHOTGUNS

- **SS** (Single Shot)
- **DB-SS** (Double-barrelled, Single Trigger)
- **DB-DT** (Double-barrelled, Dual Trigger)
- **LA** (Lever Action)
- **PAP** (Pump Action Prototype)
- **Soff** (Sawed-off Double Barrel)

## SPECIAL ACTIONS

**Fan the Hammer:** All creatures in a 5' by 10' area make a Dexterity save (minimum DC is 12) or take damage. You need to have an **SA** weapon and start with a fully loaded cylinder. Double damage if there is only one creature in the area and it is Large or larger.

**Aim:** Carefully line up your shot instead of moving. Doubled close range until the start of your next turn. If you **Aim** and **Fan the Hammer**, no range increase but the DC is 3 higher.

**Unjam a Gun:** Roll an Intelligence check against DC 12. A success unjams the gun. Alternatively, you can try to force the gun to work: roll a Strength check against DC 14.

**Jamming Spell:** Use a special ability or spell to jam the target's weapon instead of applying one of the following conditions: **incapacitated**, **paralyzed**, **restrained** or **stunned**.

## DYNAMITE!

A single stick does **3D6** bludgeoning damage in a 10 ft. radius sphere. A successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw halves the damage. Additional sticks add **+1D6** damage, +5 ft. radius.

- Normally dynamite explodes on the round after you ignite it, just before your next turn.
- You can spend your move to shorten the fuse and wait a moment before throwing. The explosion then occurs at the end of your current turn.
- Lighting dynamite is a bonus action. Roll a ranged attack (range(30/60), thrown). If your attack would hit AC 10 or higher the dynamite lands where you wanted. A miss means the explosive lands halfway or 10 feet further than you intended (GM's choice).
- On a natural 1, you fumble and the lit explosive lands at your feet.
- Several sticks of dynamite can be tied together before throwing them, but each additional stick applies a -1 penalty on the attack roll and decreases the maximum range by 10 feet.
- Alternatively, sticks of dynamite can be hidden or placed stealthily.

## DOWNTIME ACTIONS

- |                                 |                       |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Acquire training              | • Go dig a foxhole    |
| • Provide various services      | • Play some poker     |
| • Seriously relax               | • Order a new piece   |
| • Fiddle around with new things | • Fix my gun          |
| • Hit the stacks                | • Ride like the wind  |
| • Go smoke a pipe               | • Revisit an old case |



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---

*Hi, my name is Arvo Halme, though I go by OoznynKoo online. I've been playing D&D since the late 90's. I started with 2nd edition, inspired by BioWare's Baldur's Gate and I believe the first time I ran a game I actually used the manual for the video game as my rulebook (that thing was... comprehensive). When 3rd edition came along I was quick to jump aboard and then 3.5, which I stuck with until 5th edition came out.*

*I'm a graphic designer by trade, focusing on web design. Lately, I've been procrastinating quite a bit by doing campaign prep and other miscellaneous role-playing stuff, so I decided to give myself a bit of space to explore what I could come up with to actually publish. Six-Shooter was the first role-play related thing I'd ever published, though I've written loads of stuff for previous campaigns I've run, and published another pretty big thing since then (search for "Lords of the Nexus" on the DMsGuild).*

*It was an interesting time writing Six-shooter initially; writing this update after using the system for a campaign spanning almost fifty episodes was just as interesting; seeing the things that needed changing, that could easily be removed, and all the stuff I forgot to use in my own game (that would've definitely helped).*

*If you like (or dislike) my stuff, please drop me a line (email me at [ooznynkoo@gmail.com](mailto:ooznynkoo@gmail.com)). I'll definitely do more stuff in the future. What's next on the list of things I want to design, I don't quite know. I guess we'll find out soon(ish... hopefully)!*

