## For the Game master: When to test on what?

Time and again, during the game, the question arises: is this something that every human (or ghoul or super mutant) can do just like that? Is this something, that other characters know how to do easily, but this character would have a problem with it?

One can assume that really commonplace actions and works don't need a test. A healthy character can leisurely walk, power walk, even run a short distance, without a problem and without testing on agility, endurance, acrobatics or athletics.
Likewise, you don't have to test on carousing for a single beer. It's rather improbable, that someone would get an alcohol poisoning and would have to lie vomiting in the corner because he drank a few sips of beer.

Accordingly, please use tests (outside of combat) rather sparingly. On the following pages you will find all stats and skills and some examples for useful tests and useful bonuses and difficulties.
This list does _not_ claim to be complete. Instead it's a help and an approach.

## The main stats:

On the main stats, one should really only test, if there really is no skill that would make for a more fitting test.

**STRENGTH:** Good reasons to test on strength are shows of strength of all kinds. Kicking a door in, lifting a heavy crate, bending a heavy iron bar. Bonuses could be used, if the character has taken a strength increasing chem (like Buffout), uses a lever, a winch or any other kind of tool.

**PERCEPTION:** On perception you should test, if there are details, of which you think a character that takes a very close look could spot them. In the bright sun of the wasteland, you could make such a test easier with baseball caps or sunglasses or make the test on trying to listen to the neighboring tables whispered conversation in the crowded restaurant more difficult.

**ENDURANCE:** Endurance tests are shows of strength that last for a longer time. In fact, instead of testing on endurance, many of those tests can be rolled on athletics. Which of the two is applicable is dependent on the master, but it's recommended to take the one with the higher success probability.

**CHARISMA:** Charisma tests could – for example – be used for a first impression, that is, before the character has the chance to say anything that would fall under the heading of one of the social skills. Or a test for the result of a talk, for which no skill really fits. Difficulties and bonuses could for example be based on preferences, prejudices or traits of the conversational partner. But also on clothes and the general appearance.

**INTELLIGENCE:** Intelligence can in many ways be called the skill to see problems, maybe even see a solution immediately. This starts with technical problems, but is also true for cultural or personal problems. Therefore one can test it in all situations dealing with more than the obvious.

<u>**AGILITY:**</u> Tests on agility should be needed rather rarely. If you do them, fitting bonuses and difficulties could be based on the clothing worn (a heavy metal armor makes it harder to crawl beneath a rusted car wreck, than a T-Shirt does).

<u>**LUCK:**</u> On luck many tests can be tested, basically, every time things are really up to luck and undecided.

<u>**COURAGE:**</u> To test on courage should happen rather often. Does a character even dare to jump a difficult jump from one rood to another? When the enemy fires covering fire onto the character's position in combat, will he still leave the cover? Bonuses and difficulties could be based on who the character is pursuing across the roofs or what they plan to do outside the cover (to rescue a wounded friend is more important for many people than their own safety). Furthermore a courage test can decide whether a character fights or flees. This counts mostly for non player characters, as the players decide what their character does.

## **The skills.:**

On the **combat skills** you'll probably never test outside of combat. If you visit a shooting match, you can apply the regular combat rules for the targets. The range based modifications and tunings are however by far not the only bonuses and difficulties you can apply.
Visibility, exhaustion because the character was just woken up by gunfire and many more details that you can decide from battle to battle. Also fear that a character might have due to a failed test on courage.
As for close combat one can regard unsafe ground or very bad shoes for combat (like, high heels) as a difficulty, just as scruples are one.

**First aid** and **Doctor** are skills, that don't differ much on the first glance. Roughly one can say, that all operations but the most simple ones fall to doctor. Treating a gutshot can only be done by a doctor, stitch up a strafing shot to the arm can be done by a medic. Removing a bullet can be done by medic, but you could add a luck test, to make sure the medic does not cause extra damage that could result in a larger scar or a wounded muscle.
Diagnosing sicknesses and treating them can only be done with doctor.
Fitting bonuses and difficulties can be based on the used equipment.

**Empathy** is the skill to see how a person feels, whether or not their truthful or lying. Bonuses and difficulties could be based on whether or not the person is a skilled liar, or if their face is partially or fully covered etc.

**Lockpicking** is best attached with bonuses and difficulties by the used equipment, but also by time pressure, if applicable.

Fitting bonuses and difficulties for **sneaking** can be looked at in detail in the combat rules for sneaking.

The success when **pickpocketing** (this covers both picking pockets and stealing from stores etc.) depends of course on how perceptive the person being stolen from is and how much the thief stands out. Stealing in a store in line of sight of the store clerk is rather difficult. Likewise picking pockets is harder, if the stealing person and the mark are the only people in the streets than when it happens in the crowd on one of the main streets of the Hub.

**Disguising** is the skill to disappear in a crowd, or where strangers aren't allowed, for example illegal entry into a NCR Ranger barracks with a stolen uniform. Unmilitary looking characters would have difficulties in this example, characters with a military background would have it easier. A human or super mutant is more likely to be noticed in Gecko and so on...

Giving bonuses and difficulties on **Repairing (mechanics)** is very easy: tools. Those with the fitting tools have it easier, those who lack them, have it harder. The diagnosis of a problem needs to be tested, but could lead to an easier repair, if it succeeds exceedingly well.

The big problem with **repairing (electronics)** is that electronics are often not meant to be repaired. Instead, defect parts should be exchanged, so difficulties would be fitting for a broken circuit board. It would greatly ease the repair, if there are just a few cables that need replacement. Furthermore the big question is whether or not the character has experience with such a device or on how complicated it is. Again, the diagnosis of the problem needs a roll – but can give a bonus to repair, if it succeeds well enough.

**Computer skills** refers only to software. Bonuses could be given for used tools (like viruses) as well as only lightly protected systems. Really well protected databases are of course a lot better protected and therefore harder to crack.

Giving bonuses or difficulties to **Gun smithing** is easiest done by looking at four things: Are there blue prints available? Are all the needed materials and parts there? (On some of those one can sneak by, by using similar things or by fitting things that normally don't fit and so on … ). How well is the workshop equipped? How hard is it to build the weapon? (A pipe gun is easier built than a fully automatic, belt fed and recoil operated machine gun).

**Natural sciences** and **history** are easiest do ease or make more difficult by asking oneself, how famous is this? Schroedinger's cat is mostly unknown to most of the Wasteland dwellers, just like ptolomaic Egypt or the Ming Dinasty. But the more basic natural laws like basic chemistry, or gravity, are well known, just like people heard of the ancient Rome or the US war of independence.

As for **geography and politics** it's even easier: an inhabitant of Vault-City has heard stories about the New California Republic, but doesn't really know it's geography, has never been to a Republican city and might only know the most basic principles of the Republic (no discrimination, freedom for all). On the other hand republican citizens often know little about Vault-City, if they have not taken the time to find out anything by themselves. What the usual citizen of the Republic knows about Vault-City are two things: much discrimination and Vault-City prevails!

To give bonuses or difficulties on **tactics** is easiest done by looking at how much of an overview the tested character has over the battle. Likewise one can look at how much experience the character has gathered in this kind of fight.

**Driving (carts)** and **Driving (Engines)** is best eased or made more difficult by looking at the technical aspects. With carts, one can always decide that the pulling animal suddenly becomes stubborn (or stupid).

Tests on **riding** should be made whenever one moves faster than a brisk walk, while sitting on a horse. Bonuses can be given when aids like spurs or a riding crop are used. Difficulties can be added for special maneuvers (like hot pursuits, jumps that are especially high or far … ).

**Training** difficulties are dependent on what animal is trained and whether or not the animal is used to learning new tricks or if the animals wants to learn (the stats of the animal and the rules for animals are good aids in that regard).

**Survival** eases and gets more difficult depending on which of the many aspects of this skill is used. To build a fire with a lighter or with matches is a lot easier than without any aids, with a shovel it's easier to find fresh water...

**Tracking** depends mostly on the ground (to see the tracks a squirrel made on a cemented, clean street is incredibly hard), but also based on the visibility.

**Hunting traps** depend mostly on the equipment and the kind of trap. A foot hole is quickly built with a shovel, especially on fitting ground. For a more complicated sling that would bind a character that steps onto it, one needs a rope. Another factor is also the kind of prey one expects.

**Knots** depend the fitting rope for the fitting knot – or the fitting thread – apart from the fact, that tying one's shoes is a lot easier than many sailor's knots.

**Climbing** depends mostly on the properties of the wall, the height and all aids.

**Beguile/seduce** is best made more difficult by sexuality. **Persuade/convince** needs arguments, for **trade/haggle** one best sticks to the haggling rules, but can also be simplified by bluffing, as is best done with mirrored sunglasses. Especially clothing and general appearance can have a great influence here. Characters in blood smeared, dirty, disgusting rags are rarely successful when trying to seduce the well styled ladies of the high society.
Persuade/convince for example works best for characters that appear to know what they are talking about (if you wish to convince a citizen of Vault-City to leave the city limits and see the world with his own eyes, you might have more success in travel clothes). Trade haggle can be enhanced through bluffing aids or be influenced by clothing worn – a trader will be much more obliging towards a customer that looks like he has a lot of money and maybe present him with a special offer to get this rich customer into his clientele.

**Social adaptation** is another skill, similar to disguising, that allows to blend in in a crowd. Unlike disguising this is blending in in word and deed, instead of just looking as if one belongs in the crowd. Just like with *geography and politics* this can best be explained by life experience. A city dweller knows better how to behave in a city, even a strange one, than a tribal does (and the other way around).

Making **teaching/instruction** more difficult is easiest done with unwilling students – and a bonus can be given for students that love to learn.

**Gambling** bonuses and difficulties are difficult in most circumstances and depends a lot on the game played. If possible in a certain game, one can add bonuses or difficulties.

**Board games** are often games that need concentration – a good starting point to add difficulties.

**Card games** in which bluffing plays a role can easily get a bonus for using mirrored sunglasses.

Producing **Music** is a lot easier with an instrument – or with sheet music.

**Animation**, that is, attracting the attention of others with little tricks, is made easier with flashy outfits and burning torches – and more difficult without.

**Acrobatics** is – similar to Agility tests – easily influenced by the clothing worn.

For **Athletics**, where it's all about long exertions, temperature can be used to make the test harder or easier, possible pauses, etc...

For **carousing** one should look at the experience. A regular drunk can drink a lot more without negative effects than an inexperienced, untrained drinker. Same applies also to other drugs.

**Body control** depends a lot on the situation, so the bonuses and difficulties should be improvised.

**Sensual acuity** is the skill to notice hidden details. Basically one uses perception to see the three raiders attacking one from the front. Sensual acuity however is used to see that one of them shivers and is obviously suffering a withdrawal of some kind of drug. Or to notice the hidden, fourth one that is trying to sneak up from behind. Non obvious details are sensed with sensual acuity. Therefore bonuses and difficulties depend a lot on the situation.

**Cooking** is best made easier or harder by looking at the ingredients, equipment and the type of the dish that is planned.

# Rarity of weapons

Each weapon has a value for rarity. For all who look at this value and then ask things like: *Ahhh… the .223 pistol is very rare. What the hell does that mean?!*
This section is for you.

In principle these values have rather clear words, instead of having been given numbers. Here are all at once, so you can see them all:

> very rare
> rare
> common
> quite common
> very common

One can either see this as a neutral, not closer defined, rough guideline and just say: everything that is common or even more common the players are able to get without a problem and the rare stuff they only get at certain points the master decides. In fact, in this PNP there are the basic rules that
a) the master is always right and b) change the world as you need it (is not fully applicable for players).

The rarity basically just means, how common a certain item is at a certain place. **This of course varies from place to place!**
In mountainous terrain, finding climbing gear is easy and if you'd prefer to play in the ruins of Washington D.C. as seen in Fallout 3, the probability to find post war products from the NCR is rather slim.
As for the last point one could of course come up with a new story for who produced this piece of equipment and how it came to the east coast.
In grocery stores one can't buy weapons, not even very common ones and one can't buy a brahmin steak in gun store. The examples are endless.

If you prefer rolling dice however, here is an example rule which you do need need to use, but could:

[difficulty for the rarity] + [difficulty for the place] = Probability of finding the item

As difficulties for rarity we have the following suggestions:

| | |
|---|---|
| very rare | 90 |
| rare | 70 |
| common | 50 |
| quite common | 30 |
| very common | 10 |

The difficulty for the place can also be a bonus. Finding an energy weapon in the small, quaint trapper town of Klamath is a lot more improbable than in the largest trading center there is: the Hub. For the Hub one could make the difficulty for the place maybe 20 or points easier. With that you now have a value you can test with a D100.

# Standards of living:

The following sections give a rough, quick overview on how much money individual people in the wasteland earn approximately in a month. That differs of course from area to area, but, roughly, it fits everywhere.


Squalor (beggar/vagabond): 50-60 $ a month

Paltry (lower class): 250 – 300 $ a month

Acceptable (middle class): 750 – 900 $ a month

Plenty (rich trader/store owner): 6000 – 7500 $ a month

Super rich (barely no one): 8000+ $ a month


These are monthly incomes in the wasteland. One can roughly assume that at least 40$ a month are needed for food and just to survive (mostly food). 200$ for food and a roof over the head if one wants to live more or less okay.

What remains can be invested into fun – or saved for large acquisitions. When you define own prices, think about who needs this and how long they would have to save for it.