

SOCIAL COMBAT

Sometimes, a couple skill checks won't cut it. Convincing the ruthless orc war lord of leaving the village alone, making the noble allow you to enter his mansion and kill the king, and convincing the prison guard to let you out should all have some extra shine to them. That's where social combat comes in.

BASIC IDEA

Social combat is a way to structure a discussion with two opposing parties in a round system similar to that of combat. It consists of the two parties making verbal "attacks" against their opponents to lower their resolve, until one party's resolve breaks down, resulting in the other's victory.

SOCIAL STATS

In this pocketbook, "mental abilities" refers to the Intelligence, Wisdom and Heroism abilities of [5eS](#). However, some additional stats are required to run social combat: Resolve, Social DC and Desire/Fear. Each participant in the battle should have each of these.

Resolve represents a character's determination. It is built by adding their three mental abilities' modifiers (including negative ones) together.

Social DC is the barrier one needs to overcome to lower another's resolve. It's the character's highest mental score. This is only necessary for the opponent, not the characters.

Desire/Fear is more roleplay-oriented. In a discussion, a party would probably have the same desires and fear. The desire is what a character wants to get out of the combat, and fear is what they don't want.

COMBAT ROUND

A social combat session is divided in rounds, much like normal combat. However, there is no fixed initiative: each participant acts when they wish to, until everyone has acted and a new round commences. This goes on until no member of a party has any resolve left, resulting in the victory of the other party (meaning, their desires are fulfilled).

During a character's turn, they can do one of many actions, which are listed below.

ATTACK

A character can socially "attack" a member of the enemy party. The player can do so by narrating which skill their character uses.

The goal is to make a skill check with their narrated skill and get a result higher than the target's Social DC. If the result *is* higher, the target takes 1 Resolve damage. If the result is lower, the character takes 1 damage. If the result deviates by 5 or more, the character/target takes 2 Resolve damage or learns the target's desire or fear. If the roll is a critical hit or miss, the character/target takes 3 Resolve damage and the opponent learns their desire or fear.

A character cannot use the same skill in two attacks in a row on the same target.

A character makes their social attacks with advantage if they know their target's desire or fear. This can be achieved through educated guessing or by discovering it through previous attacks. They make them with disadvantage if their own fears are known.

HELP

As their turn, a player can describe what a character says to help another character. That character makes their next social attack with advantage. However, if the character they are helping fails their attack, they take 1 Resolve damage.

GANG UP

As their turn, a player can describe what a character says to help another character. That character deals one additional damage on their social attack. However, if the character they are helping fails their attack, they take 1 Resolve damage.

USE AN ABILITY/CAST A SPELL

Of course, characters may use some of their normal abilities/spells on their turn. This will fall into the roleplaying category, and play out logically.

Note that open spellcasting might well increase the enemy party's Social DC as they get suspicious, or even get them to walk away or break out combat.

MAKE COMPROMISE

If all the opposing party members are at half resolve or less, or a specific target is at half resolve or less, a character may make a compromise. This will result in their own desire being fulfilled, but at a compromising cost stated by the opponent.

Note that all these combat turn options are only for characters. NPCs (the opposing party) simply reacts to these actions, but don't act on their own. This keeps the stage on the characters, as they get Resolve damaged by their own actions, too.

Also, treat failed social attacks as opponent attacks, and not as failures. The noble slyly twists your words and comes back at you, it's not you who fall flat before his impassive form.

THANKS TO YOU!!

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It's a whole setting and worldbuilding community, one where you can find any support you need or any gaming material you might wish, such as this very guide.

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Special thanks to u/g2gro

Made with the Homebrewery

