

Sample edit for potential client's game "Deckahedron," discussing work needed on current draft.

Deckahedron World - Player's Guide

Tagline

Like board games? Remember Dungeons & Dragons? Want to try improv? Welcome to Deckahedron World!

Welcome to Role-Playing

Deckahedron World is a system for telling a story. The authors of the story are you and your friends, sitting around a table.

This story is improvisational, interactive, and collaborative.

The rewards for playing are laughter and excitement while you play, and warm conversations for years afterwards that start with "Remember that time we were playing Deckahedron World and..."

How to make a great story

Imagine the audience for this story is the inner children of all the players. What evokes the feelings we had when we were children playing pretend? Can you remember being 11 years old and watching a spectacular Steven Spielberg movie? Or maybe a cheap-but-awesome Sam Raimi movie?

You are going to collaborate with all the other players to make this story, so when you add your parts, think of what will give your friends around the table a thrill, put them in suspense, ratchet up their feelings of tension, or make their jaws drop with awe.

Sometimes inner children get a big kick out of blood and guts. Your inner child might giggle at the brothel scenes in HBO's Game of Thrones. If you don't know what topics your friends consider "off-limits", it is a good idea to ask and tell before you start playing.

The story that emerges from Deckahedron World is not a precisely crafted thing. That's ok. It doesn't have to be high art or even a cartoon on Adult Swim. It gets shaped by each player, and when your turn comes, you adapt, do your best improvisational "Yes, and", and see where it goes from there. It might sound like chaos, but with some faith in your friends, you will delight at how the plot solidifies, and how real the characters become.

Specifically, What to do

In a game of Deckahedron World, one person will take on the role of the Game Master, or "GM". The other people will be called simply "Players".

The GM

The GM's job is to know all the rules, and say **stuff**. Occasionally they will write notes and scribble some quick **numerical facts**.

The GM's domain is the world.

The Players

Player, your domain is your character.

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Most of your time will be spent saying stuff. You are part of a conversation. Ask questions, use your imagination, chime in when someone inspires you. Think about your character like a hero of a movie, and try playing as the **writer of the movie, or the director**, or immerse yourself like a method actor standing in the character's shoes and seeing with their eyes.

Deckahedron World invites you to:

- Describe your character and their actions
 - Act out their dialogue
 - Describe *how* they act
 - flourishes and stunts
 - their facial expressions, voice, and body language
 - **Tell** what they say / hear / see / smell / taste / feel
 - Describe their thoughts **&** memories
 - Chime in when they interact with or support the other characters
- Tell parts of the story
 - Tell your character's backstory
 - Contribute ideas and assert facts when the GM asks questions
 - Command your character's **hirelings and animal companions**
 - Refer to your **moves** to generate more ideas and see what boundaries you can push

As the conversation unfolds, the rules will chime in as well. When that happens you will be **called do things beyond just "saying stuff"**:

- Flip your Deckahedron
- Move tokens around
- Roll dice

This guide will teach you how to do those things.

The Deckahedron

Every player except the GM gets a Deckahedron. Inspect your Deckahedron. You should have 20 cards. There are 4 symbols, or "suits", on the fronts and backs of the cards:

Name	suit	odds	color	rank
Anchor		indicates the weakest odds	red	rank 1
Bulb		indicates below average odds	yellow	rank 2
Crescent		indicates above average odds	green	rank 3
Dart		indicates the best odds	blue	rank 4

Shuffle your Deckahedron and place it face-down in front of you.

Whenever your character attempts something risky, where the outcome is not certain, the GM calls for you to use your Deckahedron and "flip".

First, the GM names the move you're attempting and which of your character's attributes -- Strength, Dexterity, or Intelligence -- you use to resolve the flip.

GM Note: The attributes used to resolve a move are listed at the top of each card. Sometimes a card gives the option of several attributes, like "Str / Dex". You may need to ask the player for more detail about what they are attempting before calling for a flip.

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Look at the attribute on your character sheet -- what suit is it, Anchor, Bulb, Crescent, or Dart? Take the top card and flip it face up. Put it down so that the GM can read the result. (Saying "Bam!" or making some other sound effect is optional.)

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The top of the flipped card shows □ or □s. These tell you the result of the move. When you flip, be consistent with how you orient the card so the GM can easily read it. This helps simplify the GM's bookkeeping and keeps the game fast-paced.

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Finally, find the move card named by the GM and read its instructions. It tells you how the GM should interpret the □s and □s.

Afterward, any card used during a flip goes face-up in a *discard pile*. Later, you will start another pile of cards called an *Exhaustion pile*. Keep them separate.

Note: some move cards give you or the GM a choice between several options. If one of the options is impossible (fictionally or mechanically), it may not be chosen. Choose one of the other options instead.

For example,

You're playing a character named Kresk. You say:

Kresk sees the pit of spikes in front of him, but isn't scared. He just takes a running start and mightily leaps over the pit, landing safely on the other side.

The GM might say to you:

Ok, sounds good, but let's see if Kresk's legs are strong enough. Please flip Defy Danger with your Strength.

Look over at the character sheet and see that Kresk has rank 3 (Crescent) Strength. Flip over the top card of your Deckahedron and look for **that** Crescent suit.

Let's say you get ☐☐. The GM uses the instructions on the Defy Danger card ("You do it, but there's a new complication") to improvise what happens next:

You leap through the air, landing with a thud on the other side of the pit, kicking up a cloud of dust on this forgotten jungle trail. Rising to your feet, you notice that more than dust has been stirred. The sounds of movement and a threatening rattle alerts you to something approaching from inside the pit. What do you do?

Other ways to flip: Advantage / Disadvantage

Some flips are a little more complicated. Some moves in Deckahedron World instruct you to **"take +1 advantage"**, **"add an advantage card"** or **"flip with advantage"**. Sometimes you are given the opposite instruction, **"add a disadvantage card"** or **"flip with disadvantage"**.

Advantage

With an advantage, flip over your top card as usual, and then flip over the next card as well. Compare the results (the number of ☐s or ☐s next to the relevant suit) and **resolve the flip** with the card that has the **best** result.

If it's a tie, you may choose whichever card to be the card that *resolves the flip*.

All cards that got flipped go face-up in your *discard pile*.

Complete Flip Rule

You must flip over all the cards you were instructed to, even if the first card shows ☐☐☐.

Disadvantage

With a disadvantage, **do the same thing**, but use the **worst** result.

Multiple Advantages / Disadvantages

For a given flip, you may be instructed to add two advantage cards or two disadvantage cards. This means you flip **3 cards in total** and take the **best** or **worst**, respectively.

No flip may use more than 3 cards in total, so adding advantage cards beyond 2 is just ignored.

Sometimes there's a situation where you are instructed to both "flip with advantage" and "flip with disadvantage". To resolve any of these combinations, simply add up all the advantages, and then subtract all the disadvantages to arrive at your sum of advantage or disadvantage. The maximum is still two extra cards, so if the sum is -3, you only flip with two disadvantage cards.

Other flip complications: Green token cards

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Resolving flips is the main way that players acquire green tokens in Deckahedron World. Green tokens are sometimes called "risk rewards" and they are a player's most important mechanical currency in the game.

Some Deckahedron cards have a green token symbol in the middle. After a flip is resolved by a card showing a green token symbol, take a green token from the supply.

You may only do this when the card *resolves* a flip. (ie, when flipping multiple cards, only if the *green token card* was the one from which the □ or □ symbols were used to interpret the result of the *move*)

Green tokens are a currency you spend to activate "meta" parts of the game. See below for moves that let you "break" or "bend" rules, or partially take control of the narrative.

Other flip complications: Wound cards

Sometimes you flip over a wound card and must lose a Stamina point. See the [Combat chapter](#).

Wound cards are not used in the **One-Shot Campaign**, so you can skip these instructions when you start playing a longer campaign.

Other flip complications: Teamwork Flip

Before a flip is executed, if other players have characters in the same scene as the spotlighted character, and there is nothing in the fiction preventing it, those other players may choose to have their characters *aid* the spotlighted character. **They just chime in before the flip and say how their character helps out.**

Another time the Teamwork Flip is triggered is when the characters are all bound together in success or **failure. (ie, Defying Danger in a canoe travelling over whitewater)** In that case, the GM asks the players "who is taking the lead?". That player is the spotlighted player, and the other

players are supporting.

The spotlighted player flips as they normally **would, the** supporting players say how they are helping and flip one Anchor.

The players choose the best result to resolve the flip.

Only the card that resolved the flip can generate a green token, and only for the player who played it.

If there are any negative consequences (damage, danger, **etc**) from the result, all the participating characters must suffer them.

Supporting players may not **Do a Flashback** on Teamwork Flips.

Reshuffling

At any time before a flip, or after a flip is resolved, you may take your *discard pile* and shuffle it back into your Deckahedron.

Whenever your Deckahedron is down to 5 or fewer cards, you **must** take your *discard pile* and shuffle it back into your Deckahedron.

Interpreting the result of a flip

When a player's character performs a move, the player executes a flip, and the GM interprets the narrative result, based on the text of the move card.

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Usually $\square\square$ means an unfettered success, and $\square\square$ means success, but with complication.

When the result is a single \square , it sometimes means the same as a $\square\square$, but often it is slightly worse.

Any time a flip results in a single \square the GM should add a point to the **Bad Bank**-- even when the move card says it has the same narrative effect as a $\square\square$.

When the result is \square , it is the GM's turn to make a move. The GM narrates the consequences of the move the player just attempted and has license to take the narrative where they like.

See the **GM Guide** for explanations of the *Bad Bank* and for a list of moves the GM is allowed to make.

Exceptions on \square and \square flips

Sometimes a card does not say how a \square should be interpreted. In that case, the GM gets to make a move, just like \square .

Rarely, a card will have instructions for how to interpret a □ result. These instructions should be executed, but might only be *part* of the GM's move -- the GM gets to decide if they have more to add.

When the move card has the tag *IMMEDIATE*, the GM does not get to make a move on a □. Instead, the GM should just add 2 points to the *Bad Bank*.