

SCREAM FEST: The Role-Playing Game of Horror and High Action!

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Introduction

Welcome to Scream Fest! Scream Fest is a rules light role-playing game that blends simple rules, high action and horror of all styles. The game is intended to be loose and fun, able to be used for any genre of horror imaginable and easy to set-up and play. Within you will find the complete rules of play, of course, as well as dozens of monsters and other denizens of the darker realms. You will also find a selection of “Scream Worlds”, complete mini-settings that allow for the super-quick set up of one-shot and convention games; just choose a Scream World and go!

What you will not find in Scream Fest is the minutia of rules for every conceivable action that a player may choose to attempt. You will not find pages of situational modifiers for combat and skill use. The Scream Fest game system is light and loose to allow for maximum fun and minimum fuss.

What is Horror?

Wikipedia defines horror as:

“... the feeling of dread and anticipation that usually occurs before something frightening is seen, heard, or otherwise experienced. It is also the feeling one gets after coming to an awful realization or experiencing a hideous revelation...”

This is the definition that I will use throughout these rules when speaking of the horrific and monstrous events that will undoubtedly befall the characters as they explore the realms of horror. Granted, this game is not meant to be ultra-realistic or detailed or even serious, but ya gotta start somewhere, eh?

Creating a Character to Fight Evil Beasties

The first thing every player must do, before they even think of getting the bejezus scared outta them, is to create a character. If you do not know what a character is, this is not the game for you.

In order to create a character, each player must perform a short series of steps. These steps

are repeated in short form on the character dossier that can be found in the Appendix for quick reference. After you have created one or two characters, you should not even need to refer to the rulebook to make future ones, it's that simple!

Step One: Character Concept or Who the Hell am I?

This one is easy as pie. Simply write out a one or two sentence description of who your character is, what he does for a living, or what he likes or dislikes. For example, a good character concept could be: "A private investigator that is a ladies man and likes to read science-fiction novels."

See, easy! Your concept can be anything that fits within the Scream World that your Horror Master has set up for the game session, so be sure to run it past the HM before you continue with the rest of character generation.

Step Two: Assign Attributes

Attributes are the basic numerical values assigned to your character, the building blocks of what your character can do. There are only three Attributes in the Scream Fest system: Mind, Might and Motion. How attributes are used in the context of actual play is described in the **How to Find and Kill Monsters** section of the rules.

Mind defines a character's intelligence, perception and willpower. It describes what a character does and does not know and how well he can apply that knowledge.

Might is simply the character's raw physical ability. It defines the strength, physical power and utter resiliency of a character.

Motion defines a character's speed and manual dexterity, as well as their ability to perform fantastic feats of agility.

To determine a character's attributes, simply divided 10 points between the three. The maximum score is 5 and the minimum is of course 1. The average human score is 2, in case you are wondering, so that will put the typical character way above normal! Gotta be skilled to tackle things-man-was-not-meant-to-know! If the HM is especially cruel, he may want you to roll a 1d4 for each, right down the line, and be done with it... *shudder*

Step Three: Assign Skills

First off, what are skills? Simple enough to answer, a skill is simply a trained ability that your character possesses that helps them to survive the unrelenting horror and depravity that your Horror Master is gonna throw at you. Not everyone will have every skill, but everyone may attempt any of them as an untrained task. Once again, see the **How to Find and Kill Monsters**

section of the rules for details on how to use your skills.

You have 20 skill points to purchase the skills that your character begins the game with. Skills cost 1 skill point per rank of the skill up to the controlling Attribute for that Skill. It costs 3 skill points for each rank above the applicable controlling Attribute. If you don't know what a controlling Attribute is, simply look at the Attribute in which the skill in question is listed under. That is the only hint I am givin' ya!

Skills Descriptions

MIND

Awareness: This skill is a character's ability to perceive their surroundings, notice details, spot hidden clues, and listen for creepy noises coming from the basement of the rickety old haunted house boat. It is a determining factor for a character's Reaction score as well.

Craft: This skill defines the characters ability to build or create useable items from raw materials as well as to determine the quality and/or value of created items. As they say, if you build it, THEY will come... Bwahahahaha!

Knowledge: Knowledge is a catch-all skill that encompasses everything that a character learned in school, on the streets or in the hoosegow between lifting weights and running away from Bubba.

Technology: This skill describes a character's ability to operate technological items such as computers, sensor systems, advanced scientific apparatuses, etc... If your character concept includes the word "geek", then you should think about putting a rank or three into this skill.

Willpower: This very important skill is a character's ability to withstand the un-hinged insanity of their investigations and battles with the supernatural denizens of darkness. Anytime a character comes up against something that could spook them out, sap their will or make them beg for mercy and go running to their mummy, this skill is used. It is also used to determine a character's Sanity score.

MIGHT

Endurance: When a character is running from a demon from the darkest pits of hell or must withstand torture from that same demon, or even has to go a few days without food or water, this skill comes into play. This skill also helps to determine a character's Threshold score.

Fighting: This skill defines a characters basic ability to beat someone up while in close range with them. The Fighting skill covers swords, clubs, staves, and even kicks and punches. Of

course, you better be damn good if you actually want to get as close to the evil nasties you will be facing with this skill. Or suicidal.

Power: The Power skill encompasses the use of a character's muscle in order to affect the world around them. Thus, if you need to bend bars or lift gates, or smash down a door whilst being chased by a horror from another outside space, then this skill is the one you would want to use!

Survival: This skill defines a character's ability to find food and water in the deep, dark forest as well as finding shelter and making fires from twigs and stuff. Survival also is a character's ability to follow tracks or trails and otherwise not get lost on your way to the cabin in the woods...

Toughness: There comes a time in every character's, er... life... that they will be beaten, clubbed, stabbed with a machete by an homicidal maniac or bitten by a zombie, that is where a character's Toughness skill comes in. Toughness is used to determine the character's wound Threshold score as well.

MOTION

Athletics: The Athletics skill covers most kinds of physical activities not specifically covered by any other skill. More specifically, the Athletics skill allows you to jump around (jump around, jump up, jump up, and get...ah...hehe), climb trees and other climbable objects, swim, do a back flip, etc...

Driving: The Driving skill allows one to control a moving vehicle without being confused for the ghost of a person who was killed in a motor accident and out for revenge. The basic Driving skill covers most common vehicles, such as cars and semi-trucks, and may be used in conjunction with other skills (such as Technology) for use with helicopters and airplanes.

Quickness: This skill is a measure of a character's trained ability to get out of the way of incoming objects that are intended to hurt them as well as their ability to move quickly when the need arises, such as jumping out of the way of a moving vehicle that happens to be possessed by the ghost of a person who died in it. Quickness is also used to determine a character's Move score as well as their Reaction score.

Shooting: If you wish to be able to hit anything smaller than the broadside of a barn with a ranged weapon of any type, then this skill is for you. The Shooting skill covers every type of long distance weapon from a throwing star to sub-machine gun to a rocket-propelled grenade. Yeah, boyee!

Subterfuge: If you want to be able to skulk around in dank, dark places and steal things from rich people, then you will want to buy a few ranks of this skill. The Subterfuge skill includes the

ability to pick locks, sneak around; perform feats of sleight of hand and other, generally illegal (but fun!) actions.

Step Four: Determine Characteristics

A character is more than a sum of his basic Attributes and Skills, he or she is also defined by their Characteristics. Characteristics are figured stats that are determined by the skills and attributes that you have already chosen for you character. The Characteristics are:

Reaction: A characters Reaction score is a measure of their ability to react quickly and gain the initiative in combat. To figure a character's Reaction score add together their Awareness + Quickness skill levels, plus one.

Threshold: The Threshold of a character determines how much damage that they can sustain before gaining a wound. It is figured by adding Toughness + Endurance +1.

Move: Move is simply how many paces a character can move in one round of combat. It is figured as Quickness +2 paces.

Sanity: A character's Sanity score is a measure of how much utter horror they can stand before going ape-shit bonkers. Sanity is lost as Willpower rolls are failed and once a character reaches 0 Sanity, they are irredeemably deranged! Sanity starts at Willpower times 5.

Step Five: Choose Gear

Equipment for a character in the Scream Fest RPG will vary so widely, that I will not attempt to list everything possible. Each victim...er...*character* will get a variable amount of starting cash depending on the whims of the Horror Master and the Scream World he has chosen. I recommend anywhere from \$200 - \$1000 depending on how well equipped a group is to be at the start of the game session. See the Appendix for a list of gear to purchase. Also remember that the internet is nothing but a big *Sears & Roebuck* catalog as well!

Step Six, Six, Six: Play the Game!!!!

How to Find and Kill Monsters, Perform Actions and Generally do Stuff

This admittedly small chapter of the Scream Fest RPG is dedicated to the basic game mechanics used to power the game. Also to be found within this chapter is how to conduct combat, keep your sanity and award Horror Points, the games version of experience points. Any other incidental rules will also be contained in this chapter.

Basic Game Mechanics

The basic die roll in the Scream Fest RPG is to roll a number of six-sided dice (d6's in game parlance) equal to the appropriate attribute + skill (if your character has ranks in an applicable skill.) After you roll the dice, note how many "6's" were rolled, if any. Each "6" rolled is called a Success (abbreviated SX) and you will always need a MINIMUM of one SX in order to succeed at any task. More complex tasks could very well require multiple SX in order to succeed. The Horror Master will assign a difficulty to the task in question using the following chart as a rough guide:

TASK DIFFICULTY	SX NEEDED
Simple Task	1 SX
Average Task	2 SX
Tricky Task	3 SX
Challenging Task	4 SX
Arduous Task	5 SX
Etc...	Etc...

That's it! Pretty much everything you do in Scream Fest follows that basic die roll, or a slight variation thereof!

Combat

Combat in the Scream Fest RPG is a quick affair, with only a few dice rolls needed to figure it all out. It is also considered a *versus* system, meaning that every task roll will be pitted against another roll performed by your enemy and the result will then be determined.

Simply follow the steps outlines below for the low-down on beating up monsters (or getting beat up and eaten yourselves!)

Step One: Determine Order of Actions

First things first, we must know who is going to react the quickest to a dangerous situation and that is where the Reaction Characteristic comes in. Each player rolls a number of dice equal to their Reaction characteristic. The player with the most SX rolled gets to act first in the combat round, then the next, etc... Ties go to the highest Awareness rank, then Quickness rank and finally Motion Attribute.

Each SX rolled gives the player the ability to perform one Action. A list of actions can be found below. This list is *not* all inclusive, but simply a listing of the most common actions a player may perform.

A player may choose to hold a few of their available actions if they wish in order to save them so that they can perform a defensive action of some sort later in the combat round. This defensive

action can be used any time an attack is directed towards them.

Held actions may also be used to perform an Interrupt. An Interrupt is exactly that, the disruption of another's action so that you may try to interfere with the action they are about to attempt. If you choose to try an Interrupt, you must roll Quickness versus their Quickness and get at least one SX over their total. You must, of course, have an action available in order to perform an Interrupt.

ACTIONS

Attack: The Attack action is your basic use of the Fighting or Shooting skill and is generally compared to Quickness to determine whether a hit occurs.

Defend: The Defend action encompasses the use of the Quickness, Toughness or Willpower skill in order to resist being hit and/or damaged.

Move: Move is simply moving a number of paces equal to your Move Characteristic. A pace is equal to five feet (one square or hex on a map, or about an inch on a tabletop), in case you are interested.

Use Skill: Using any skill during combat that the HM decides can be accomplished during a few seconds of game time.

Step Two: Attack! Kill the Monster, Kill the Monster!!!

When one individual attempts to induce bodily harm on another, a couple of dice rolls must be made to see if he succeeds or not.

First, the attacker rolls the appropriate attack skill and counts SX.

Next, if the defender chooses to try to dodge the blow, he makes a Quickness roll and counts SX. Remember, this takes up one of the actions you have available for the round. If a defender chooses to not use up an action for a Quickness roll, the attacker will hit with 1 SX.

Finally, you compare the attackers SX against the defenders SX. If the attacker scores *more* SX than the defender, a hit occurs! Also note the number of SX the attacker got *over* the defender as this become a damage bonus in the next step.

Step Three: Determine Damage

This step is easy as pie as well. If an attack was successful, simply roll a d6 and add the Damage score of the weapon used *and* the bonus damage gained due to a high margin of

success, if applicable. This is the damage done to the character due to the bashing of brains or the firing of the shotgun!

If the character is wearing armor of any sort they are protected from this damage to a certain degree. Simply subtract the Armor Rating of any armor worn from the damage done. The remainder is the considered actual ripping flesh and pierced kidneys and will apply to the character.

A player adds up damage as it occurs and marks it in the empty Current Damage box on his character dossier. When the accumulated damage surpasses the characters Threshold score then they have received a wound and marks the next available wound box on their sheet. The player then erases any damage in the Threshold box, clearing the way for the gaining of another wound!

Each wound is considered serious damage against the character's health and humanity and thus each wound can possibly impair the character's ability to perform future actions in the form of die penalties. Every time a wound is marked, the player must roll a Toughness task. If the task is a success with at least one SX, then no penalty is accrued. If the Toughness roll fails, then a -1 (cumulative) is written in the Penalty Box of the character sheet and will apply to *all* future rolls until a character is healed, including future Toughness rolls.

When a character receives a number of wounds equal to their Threshold, then the character is irrevocably dead, unless resurrection is part and parcel of the Scream World in which they are a part of. Or if the Horror Master has something even more fiendish than death to throw at the characters, BWAHAHAHA!

Step Four: Rinse and Repeat...

...until all of the blood has washed out of the gaping wound in your head!

Healing

If a character actually survives a dance with the dead in their dreams, then they will most certainly want to heal their wounds afterwards.

First off, any points of damage that a character has received that has not created a wound is lost the morning after the damage occurs. This is the healing of the effects of all of the scrapes and bruises that they had received, although they technically still have the scrapes and bruises.

If the character has any wounds, then the real healing begins! First count how many wounds the character in question currently has. It takes that many days to heal one box. Next, count how many are left. It now takes that number of days to heal the next wound. Keep doing this until all wounds are healed! If the character is under the merciful ministrations of trained

professionals, then halve the time it takes (round down.)

Sanity

The Sanity Characteristic is a measure of the mental fortitude that a character has whilst facing the horrors of the dark and spooky places. Every beastie in the game, as well as certain events (detailed below) have a Sanity Damage Rating. When a character is forced to interact with these creatures and events, a Willpower roll is called for and is compared to the SDR of the event in question. Each SX rolled negates one point of SDR. Any remaining points are subtracted from the characters current Sanity characteristic.

Once a character loses a number of Sanity points equal to their Willpower skill, they gain a Phobia. The phobia that they gain must be assigned by the Horror Master based upon what hellish vision caused the characters Sanity to fall. Each phobia gained by the character gives a penalty of -1 die to all rolls when the object of the phobia is around and a character must make a Willpower roll with at least 1 SX in order to even stick around and confront the object of their fear.

One can heal their sanity, and thus erase their phobias, by visiting a shrink. It takes 1 month of regular therapy (3 hours per week, in one hour sessions) to get back one point of Sanity. If for any reason a character misses even one session, they must start all over! Once a character gets back Willpower in Sanity, they can get rid of one phobia of choice!

Events that Drain Sanity

work in progress

Horror Points

Horror Points are gained by uncovering foul truths, investigating the occult practices of the aboriginal albino Satanists that are plaguing Clear Water Lake, and tackling the thing-that-should-not-be and knocking him into the river Styx! Basically you gain HP by playing the doggone game!

You will receive between 2-5 HP every session of play, if you survive that is, at the purview of the HM!

You may spend accumulated HP in two ways. First, you can increase a skill rank for a cost of 2 times the new rank in the skill. Thus, to raise a skill from rank 2 to rank 3 costs 6 HP. You can also increase an Attribute by spending 10 times the new score in HP.

Secondly, you may spend HP in order to roll an extra die on any task, at any time, however many you want to spend, even after you have already rolled and failed! How is that for nice?

The Horror Master

The Horror Master is Scream Fest's version of a Game-Master (in case you were wondering for some reason.) The Horror Master is the god of Horror in the Scream Fest RPG. He or she will choose (or create from scratch) the Scream World that the players will interact with and plan out a game session.

Scream Fest is designed primarily as a one-shot style RPG system, although campaign play is certainly possible. It is made for the Horror master to be able to pop out a night's session in a half an hour or less just by choosing a Scream World and using a little of the good 'ole gray matter.

Scream Worlds

Scream Worlds are a simple idea: steal...er... borrow a basic idea from any horror movie, novel, comic book, fevered dream, etc... and make a one or two page setting based upon it! Each Scream World will have the following features: Title, Premise, Hooks, Twists, and Big Bads.

The **Title** of the Scream World will be evocative of the setting itself and should be able to describe the gist of said setting in a few words.

A Scream Worlds **Premise** is a basic description of the world, giving the Horror Master the status quo of the setting and a bit of fluff so that he can get his groove on.

The **Hooks** section is just that... dripping, bloody, gore encrusted plot devices that will allow the HM to pop open a beer and start running the session!

Twists are a collection of odd thoughts that can be used to change the direction of the basic Scream World or to simply make the world *different* than the tried and true setting.

Finally, the **Big Bads** are the villains of the piece, the horrible creature from the blackness of space or the serial killer with a penchant for hacking co-eds to pieces with a meat cleaver.

The following section describes a devil's dozen of Scream Worlds for your maniacal enjoyment.

Dusk of the Living Dead:	The Dead walk amongst the living, hungering for BRAINS!
It Came From Beyond:	Sadistic Cultists try to raise the Ultimate Evil!
No Screams in Space:	Murderous Aliens trapped with an unsuspecting crew!
Camp LuLu Massacre:	Psycho Slasher out to kill horny teenagers!
The Bog Witch:	Evil Witchy Woman out to seek Revenge!

Blood & Candy: All of the Spooks come out on Halloween!
 House on Haunted Bluff: Who knows what Lurks in its Evil Halls!
 Street of Nightmares: An Unsuspecting town versus a Nighttime Ghoul!
 Fangs for the Memories: Vampires cavort in an old abandoned Theatre!
 The Globule from Mars: Giant blob of Viscous matter Envelopes mankind!

Appendix:

This section is basically a bunch of miscellaneous bits 'o bloody honey that is necessary for play, so strap on your feed bucket and enjoy! Included in this section is a table of creepy words and phrases for the Horror Master to use during a game, a selection of basic equipment list for your purchasing fun, a few spookies that do not tie directly into one of the previously described Scream Worlds, and a character dossier!

Spooky & Creepy Words!

This table is just a bunch of appropriate words that a Horror Master may use during a session to heighten the spooky-ookieness of their game!

Spooky	Creepy	Icky	Eerie	Uncanny
Weird	Strange	Mysterious	Peculiar	Unnatural
Supernatural	Spine-Chilling	Sinister	Scary	Bloody
Ichors	Putrescence	Oozing	Pus-Filled	Frightening
Alarming	Fearful	Fearsome	Startling	Shocking
Disquieting	Odd	Outlandish	Perplexing	Astonishing
Grotesque	Gross	Bizarre	Misshapen	Distorted
Twisted	Deformed	Malignant	Warped	Shrunken
Disheveled	Hateful	Nasty	Wicked	Cruel
Malevolent	Malformed	Bent	Evil	Eccentric
Monstrous	Ghostly	Paranormal	Mystical	Numinous
Voluminous	Capricious	Unpredictable	Erratic	Irregular
Spine-Tingling	Vomitous	Ominous	Ill-Omened	Portentous

Gloomy	Foreboding	Forbidden	Depressing	Dismal
Mucky	Murky	Foggy	Shadowy	Sick
Pale	Queasy	Dizzy	Unsettled	Dubois
Deceitful	Cunning	Devious	Torturous	Torrential
Waning	Unpromising	Pallid	Ashen	Sallow
Pasty	Feeble	Sunken	Gaunt	Cadaverous
Drawn	Pinched	Skeletal	Corpse-Like	Cancerous

General Equipment:

Here is a list of various pieces of basic gear for a character to purchase. It is no where near all-encompassing, so feel free to make shit up as you need it!

Item:	Cost:	Item:	Cost:
Backpack	\$30	Canteen	\$10
Iron or Wood Piton/Stake	\$5	Compass	\$40
Flashlight, Heavy Duty	\$25	Rope, 50'	\$20
Lighter	\$2	Lantern	\$25
Matches, Waterproof, Box of 100	\$4	Sleeping Bag	\$30
Suitcase, Large	\$60	Briefcase	\$40
Tent, 1 Man	\$45	Tent, 4 Man	\$160
Cell Phone	\$100	Weapon Holster/Sheath	\$20
Portable Radio	\$35	First Aid Kit	\$50
Binoculars	\$200	Camcorder	\$800
Tool Box & Tools	\$150	Camera, Digital	\$200
Crowbar	\$20	Shovel	\$15

Weapons:

Here is a selection of weapons that are available in the game. These are a generic variety of weapons and are, by no means whatsoever, realistic. Oh, by-the-by... there are no stats for range or ammo or any of that nonsense in *Scream Fest*. I suggest that you just use common sense on range and forget about ammo unless it is dramatically appropriate. If you want a mechanical method of knowing when a gun is out of bullets, let a gun run out when the players rolls all 1's, or more 1's than SX. That'll teach them munchkins, won't it?

Weapon:	Damage Rating:	Skill Used:	Notes:	Cost:
Club, Baton, Staff	+1	Fighting	also chair legs, etc...	\$10
Knife, Dagger, Stiletto	+2	Fighting	any small blade weapon	\$50
Sword, Morningstar	+3	Fighting	any medium weapon	\$125
Claymore, Battle Axe	+4	Fighting	any large weapon	\$200
Revolver	+2	Shooting		\$150
Automatic Pistol	+3	Shooting		\$250
Shotgun	+3	Shooting		\$200
Rifle	+4	Shooting		\$300
Sub-Machinegun	+5	Shooting		\$450

Armor:

Here are a few pieces of armor and their respective Armor Ratings for you worry worts!

Armor:	AR:	Cost:	Armor:	AR:	Cost:
Winter Coat/Jean Jacket	1	\$50	Leather Trench-coat	2	\$200
Flak Jacket	3	\$350	Riot Gear/Combat Dress	4	\$800

