

Keeper Moves

There are two classifications of moves: general and situational.

General Moves

General moves can be used at any time.

- Separate them.
- Capture someone.
- Put someone in harm's way.
- Announce trouble elsewhere.
- Foreshadow future trouble.
- Take away their stuff.
- Make them buy.
- Activate their gear's downside
 - hitting tags is especially useful for this!
- Tell them the possible consequences and ask.
- Offer an opportunity, with or without a cost.
- Turn their move back on them.
- Let the dice decide. Call for a roll+luck.
- Make a hazard (obstacle) move (from your framework).

Situational Moves

Situational moves should be contextualized and make sense given what is happening. They are used when the characters are **either in a threatening situation** (often involving a hazard), **or when** a character successfully

“Pokes Around” or **“Puzzles Things Out”**.

- Trade damage for damage.
- Inflict damage.
- Present items and clues.
- Reveal knowledge.

After every move, **always** ask the players:

“What do you do?”

Keeper Moves in Action

Note: When a Keeper Move is immediate, unpleasant, and irrevocable, it is referred to as a **‘hard move’** to help build a sense of dread among the players.

A Keeper Move should always:

- Flow from the fiction.
- Allow for character intervention
- Set up future moves.

This means you describe what happens, but pause just before the outcome is known.

At that point, you ask the players what they do:

The creature leaps out at you from the rafters. What do you do?

A Hard Move:

- Flows from the fiction.
- Cannot be interrupted.
- Is to be feared by the players.

This means you describe something from start to finish and it happens before you ask the players what they do:

The creature leaps down from the rafters and you take 2 harm as it bites into your neck. What do you do?

Hazards

There are five main types of hazards.

Elders: Community members in positions of power.

Townies: Groups bound together by common interests/goals.

Landscape: Natural, unnatural, or man-made.

Weird: Twisted people, entities, or things.

Doom: A danger coming or an event already taking place.

Defining hazards in this manner gives the Keeper an easy way to keep track of the essential moving parts of his framework that are at odds with the characters.

It is perfectly normal and natural for other parts of the environment to arise through discourse: NPCs, buildings, and landmarks that are not initially hazardous, but more or less serve as either window dressing or enable the Keeper to make either a general or situational move.

Over the course of play, however, as the story progresses these innocuous elements may (or should) become hazards in their own right.

A hazard is further defined by its subtype, which is nothing more than giving it an easy handle **which defines its impulse**. This impulse serves to reveal its motivation, driving force, and purpose in play. A hazard may act in a contrary manner on the surface, but it does so as a means to an end and will always, eventually reveal its true nature over the course of the story. **Hazards have their own specific moves** (see next page).

ELDERS

A member of a community in a position of some sort of power. He / She need not be in office (though they often are). An elder could just as easily be the barber, the mechanic, the sheriff, or the town gossip. An elder hazard is the elder plus any people/entities under his control.

- **Collector (impulse:** to own)
- **Dictator (impulse:** to control)
- **Prophet (impulse:** to denounce and overthrow)
- **Protector (impulse:** to maintain the status quo)

Elder Moves

- Outflank someone, corner someone, encircle someone.
- Attack someone suddenly, directly, and brutally.
- Attack someone cautiously, holding reserves.
- Seize someone or something, for leverage or information.
- Make a show of force.
- Make a show of discipline.
- Offer to negotiate. Demand concession or obedience.
- Claim territory: move into it, blockade it, or assault it.
- Buy out someone's allies.
- Make a careful study of someone and attack where they're weak.

Elders act primarily through their people, acting directly themselves only when cornered or caught out in the open.

TOWNIES

A townies threat is a group of people, often with an informal leader, linked together through some common bond or goal.

- **Cult (impulse:** to victimize and incorporate people)
- **Enforcers (impulse:** to victimize anyone who stands out)
- **Family (impulse:** to close ranks, protect their own)
- **Hunting pack (impulse:** to victimize anyone vulnerable)
- **Mob (impulse:** to riot, burn, kill scapegoats)
- **Sybarites (impulse:** to consume someone's resources)

An individual person within a group of townies might not share the group's impulse, and might even fight against it.

Townies Moves

- Burst out in uncoordinated, undirected violence.
- Make a coordinated attack with a coherent objective.
- Tell stories (truth, lies, allegories, homilies).
- Demand consideration or indulgence.
- Rigidly follow or defy authority.
- Cling to or defy reason.
- Make a show of solidarity and power.
- Ask for help or someone's participation.

LANDSCAPE

A landscape hazard can be natural, unnatural, or man-made.

- **Breeding pit (impulse:** to generate weirdness)
- **Fortress (impulse:** to deny access)
- **Furnace (impulse:** to consume things)
- **Maze (impulse:** to trap, to frustrate passage)
- **Mirage (impulse:** to entice and betray people)
- **Prison (impulse:** to contain, to deny egress)

Landscape Moves

- Reveal something to someone.
- Display something for all to see.
- Hide something.
- Bar the way.
- Open the way.
- Provide another way.
- Shift, move, rearrange.
- Offer a guide.
- Present a guardian.
- Disgorge something.
- Take something away: lost, used up, or destroyed.

WEIRD

A weird hazard is a twisted person, entity, or thing belonging firmly within the strange and alien. It may appear altogether normal and innocuous on the surface.

- **Cannibal (impulse:** craves satiety and plenty)
- **Disease vector (impulse:** craves contact, intimate and/or anonymous)
- **Megalomaniac (impulse:** craves mastery)
- **Outcast (impulse:** craves restitution, recompense)
- **Perversity (impulse:** craves overthrow, chaos, the ruination of all)
- **Sadomasochist (impulse:** craves pain, its own or others')

Weird Moves

- Display the true weirdness of its world.
- Display the contents of its heart.
- Attack someone from behind or otherwise by stealth.
- Attack someone face-on, but without threat or warning.
- Insult, affront, offend, or provoke someone.
- Offer something to someone, or do something for someone, with strings attached.
- Put it in someone's path, part of someone's day or life.
- Threaten someone, directly or else by implication.
- Steal something from someone.
- Seize and hold someone.
- Ruin something. Befoul, rot, desecrate, corrupt, or alter it.
- Tell stories (truths, lies, allegories, homilies).

DOOM

A doom isn't a person, but a horrible danger to come, because of something that people are doing, an event taking place, or something that has already come to be.

- **Barrier (impulse:** to impoverish people)
- **Condition (impulse:** to expose people to danger)
- **Delusion (impulse:** to dominate people's choices and actions)
- **Disease (impulse:** to saturate a population)
- **Mythos (impulse:** to destroy/dominate)
- **Sacrifice (impulse:** to leave people bereft)
- **Tradition (impulse:** to promote and justify violence)

A doom is any bad practical circumstance.

The town's water filtration breaks down?

The roads are iced over?

There's not enough food to get through the dry season?

Doom Moves

- Someone neglects duties, responsibilities, or obligations.
- Someone flies into a rage.
- Someone takes self-destructive, fruitless, or hopeless action.
- Someone approaches, seeking help.
- Someone approaches, seeking comfort.
- Someone withdraws and seeks isolation.
- Someone proclaims the doom to be a just punishment.
- Someone proclaims the doom to be, in fact, a blessing.
- Someone refuses or fails to adapt to new circumstances.
- Someone brings friends or loved ones along.
- Someone dies.

The "Someone" in these Moves should generally only be the NPCs.

Player Basic Moves

These moves are available for all characters.

ACT UNDER PRESSURE (roll+reason)

When you hurriedly flee, are doing something quickly and precisely, or are trying to resist something frightening, **roll+reason**.

On a 10+, you do it.

On a 7-9, you flinch, hesitate, cave, or stall.

The Keeper will offer you a worse outcome, a hard bargain, or an ugly choice (as per p. 171).

CONVINCE (roll+affinity)

When you have something someone wants, you can use your charm, wit, or wiles to get them to do something for you first, **roll+affinity**.

For NPCs:

On a 10+, they ask you to promise something first, and then do what you ask once you promise.

On a 7-9, they need some concrete assurance first, otherwise they refuse.

For PCs:

On a 10+, the target chooses one of the following:

- If they do it, they gain a point of Lore.
- If they refuse, they must Act Under Pressure.

On a 7-9, the target chooses one of the following:

- They can choose to do it for no gain.
- If they refuse, they must Act Under Pressure.

On a 6 or less, they lose a point of Trust with you.

What they do then is up to them.

HELP/HINDER (roll+trust)

When you help or hinder someone making a move, **roll+trust**.

On a 10+, they take a+2 (help) or -2 (hinder) to their move.

On a 7-9, they take a+1 (help) or -1 (hinder) to their move, and you expose yourself to danger, retribution, or other consequences.

On a 6 or less, they lose a point of Trust with you or the Keeper holds one to use as a hard move (your choice).

Note: How many people can help in a given situation is determined by the Keeper, and you must narratively state how you're helping. Keep in mind, even if the person you help succeeds (gets a total of 10+), you could still suffer a consequence if you only get a partial success (7-9). Your Trust in others is used when you Help/Hinder them, so if you have Trust+2 in Meg, and she has Trust+1 in you, you'd roll+2 to Help/Hinder her while she would roll+1 to do the same for you.

POKE AROUND (roll+luck)

When you poke around a place physically looking for things, **roll+luck**.

Additional attempts to search the same area are made at a cumulative -1 unless the Keeper informs you something substantial has changed.

On a 10+, select 1 of the following:

- Find 1 good item (Keeper's choice)
- 1 minor item (your choice)
- 1 clue (+1 ongoing when acted upon)
- pick one from 7-9 table.

On a 7-9, you may:

- Find hidden area/threshold (in/out) (Keeper's Choice)
- Find minor item (Keeper's choice)
- Determine a physical hazard present (if none, you find that out)

On a 6 or less, there is either nothing else in the area or the Keeper may hold 1 to use as a hard move at any time and you may attempt to search further.

PUZZLE THINGS OUT (roll+reason)

When you face an intellectual dilemma, learn a new piece of information, or discover a clue, you may **roll+reason** to attempt to puzzle things out. **On a 7+**, you get to ask one or more questions.

Whenever you act on one of the Keeper's answers, take +1 ongoing.

On a 10+, ask 3 from below OR gain 1 Lore.

On a 7-9, ask 1:

- What is this?
- What does this mean?
- How can I get in/out/pass?
- Who's in control here?
- Which enemy before me is the most dangerous?
- What is its weakness?
- What should I keep an eye out for?
- How does _____ fit into _____?

Of the most common questions that will arise, this is just a small sample. The Keeper should allow for some situational flexibility. Whenever the characters get new information, or seem to be stuck, you can call for one of these rolls. A character cannot attempt to Puzzle Things Out more than once until further information is gained.

READ A PERSON (roll+passion)

When you want to figure out what someone is thinking or feeling, **roll+passion**.

On a 10+, hold 3.

On a 7-9, hold 1.

While you're interacting with them, spend your hold to ask questions about the character, 1 hold per question:

- Are they telling the truth?
- What are they really feeling?
- What do they intend to do?
- What do they wish I would do?
- How could I get them to _____?

RESORT TO VIOLENCE (roll+might)

When you cast aside all pretense of civility and wish to harm your enemy regardless of personal safety, then you **roll+might** as you resort to violence. You may wrest control of an item or situation from another in this manner, whether it be with fists or feet, or a more proper weapon, but you do so with malice in your heart. There will likely be pain, if not bloodshed, on both sides, as you attack. You will likely take damage in this exchange, regardless of the outcome. With at least a 7-9, you can opt to decrease the damage suffered by 1 point. 0 damage can still prompt a damage move in this circumstance.

On a 10+, choose 3 from 7-9 below.

On a 7-9, choose 2:

- You take definite hold of the target item.
- You suffer little harm (take -1 harm).
- You inflict terrible harm (cause +1 harm).
- You impress, dismay, or frighten your enemy.

An impressed, dismayed, or frightened NPC enemy absolutely must change their behavior, but it's up to the Keeper how they do so.

For PCs, pressing an attack when they're impressed, dismayed, or frightened requires them to *Act Under Pressure*.

Oh, the Horror!

When a character sees something terrifying or potentially startling (and thus, could reasonably cause shock), he must immediately roll a **sanity check**. (Act under Pressure)

On a 10+, they take 1 less shock and may act normally.

On a 7-9, they take 1 less shock but are -1 forward.

On a miss, they take full shock and are either **longoing** (for the scene) or the Keeper holds one (Keeper's choice).

Suffering Damage

Damage is suffered in two forms: harm or shock. Whenever it is taken, the character rolls on the following table. If damage suffered is 0 (or is reduced to 0), the Keeper may still call for a roll (based on the situation and circumstances). For example, a big bruiser might tap your skull, doing no serious damage, but knock you out cold.

Damage Moves

When you suffer damage, roll+damage suffered (after subtracting any protections you may have). No other modifiers come into play.

On a 10+, the Keeper can choose 1:

- You're out of action: unconscious, trapped, incoherent, or panicked.
- It's worse than it seemed. Take an additional 1 damage.
- Choose 2 from the 7-9 list below.

On a 7-9, the Keeper can choose 1:

- You lose your footing.
- You lose your grip on whatever you're holding.
- You lose track of someone or something you're attending to.
- You miss noticing something important.

On a 6 or less:

The Keeper can still choose something from the 7-9 list above. If they do, though, it takes the place of any damage you suffer, so you take -1 damage.

Mental Health

Certain Characters, notably the Alienist, may treat people who are suffering shock. The patient must be in a place he feels safe. At the very least, he must be removed from the locale/source/presence of his discomfort(s).

To treat a character with three or more shock, roll+stock spent.

On a 7+, the subject stabilizes (restore Sanity to second segment), but the

Keeper chooses 1 (on a 10+) or 2 (on a 7-9):

- They need to be physically restrained before you can move them.
- Even sedated, they fight you; you're Acting Under Pressure.
- They'll be in and out of consciousness for 24 hours.
- Stabilizing them eats up your stock; spend 1 stock more.
- They'll be bedridden, out of action, for at least a week.
- They'll need constant monitoring and care for 36 hours.

On 6 or less, they take 1 shock instead.

To use medical supplies to speed the recovery of someone with one or two segments of shock, don't roll. They choose: spend 1 day (segment 1) or 1 week (segment 2) sedated, immobile but happy, or do their time like everyone else.

To use medical care to revive someone who's

DERANGED (at the sixth segment, not beyond): **roll+stock** spent.

On a 10+, they recover to TRAUMATIZED (segment 4).

On a 7-9, they recover to HYSTERIC (segment 5). **On a 6 or less**, you've done everything you can, but they're still insane.

Physical Wellness

Certain characters, notably the Doctor, may treat people who are suffering harm. Those trained to use medical supplies may spend 0-3 stock. To treat a character with three or more harm, **roll+stock** spent.

On a 7+, the subject stabilizes (eliminating all harm beyond the second segment), but **the Keeper chooses 1 (on a 10+), or 2 (on a 7-9):**

- They need to be physically stabilized before you can move them.
- Even sedated, they fight you; you're Acting Under Pressure.
- They'll be in and out of consciousness for 24 hours.
- Stabilizing them eats up your stock; spend 1 stock more.
- They'll be bedridden, out of action, for at least a week.
- They'll need constant monitoring and care for 36 hours.

On a 6 or less, they take 1 harm instead.

To use medical attention to speed the recovery of someone with one or two segments of harm, don't roll, just spend one stock. They choose: spend 4 days (segment 1) or 1 week (segment 2) sedated, immobile but happy, or do their time like everyone else.

To use medical supplies to revive someone who's DYING (at the sixth segment, not beyond): **roll+stock** spent.

On a 10+, they recover to BROKEN (segment 4).

On a 7-9, they recover to GRIEVOUS (segment 5).

On a 6 or less, you've done everything you can, but they're still dead.

Recuperation

Simple Recovery

Bed rest: Recover 1 damage per week (if lightly injured or in shock). Choose which one if suffering from both harm and shock.

Simple Aids

A properly applied bandage: Eliminates 1 harm.

A good stiff drink (or equivalent): Eliminates 1 shock.

Note: A character may only benefit from one simple aid for each category once per day.

Simple recovery and aids only work when the character has two or less segments of damage in a particular category.