

**BOOTLEG
VERSION**

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MemoryCore

USER MANUAL



MemoryCore

LOW-POLY RPG

A GAME BY
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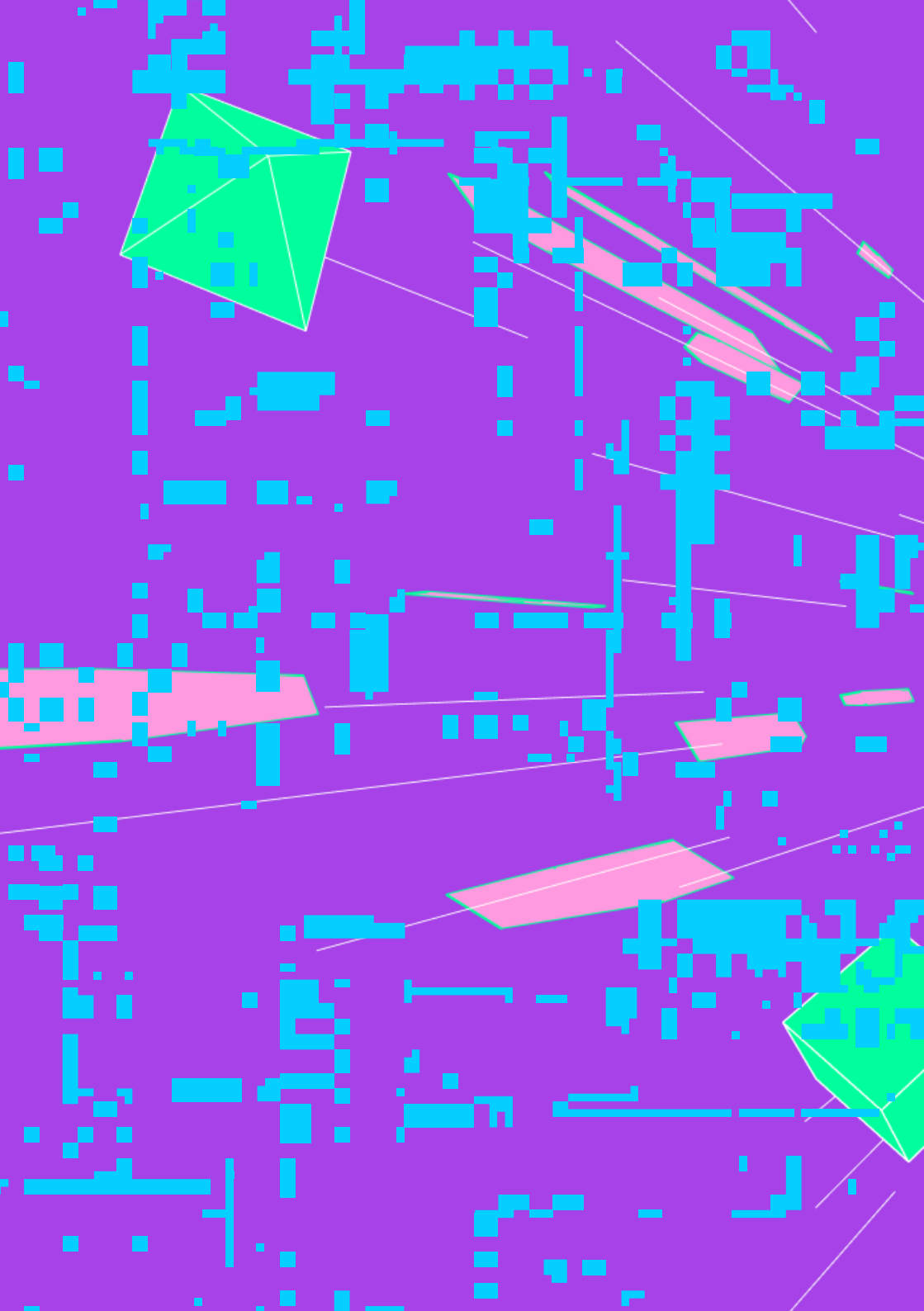


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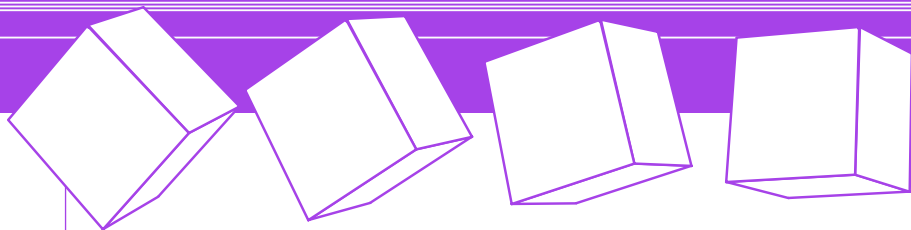
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SECTION 1

POWER ON

THIS IS NOT A CONSOLE



MEMORYCORE is a curated anthology of **32-BIT-ERA INSPIRED TTRPGS**.

With the rules contained in this book, you can play a variety of games—each one inspired by a masterpiece of the 32bit era—or even create your own.

Every game in MemoryCore's first anthology comes in a **CLAMSHELL BOX** inspired by the iconic '90s jewel cases.

Inside each box you'll find a Game Rulebook, pregenerated Character Boards, an Exploration Map, and everything you need to play.

WHAT IS A TTRPG?

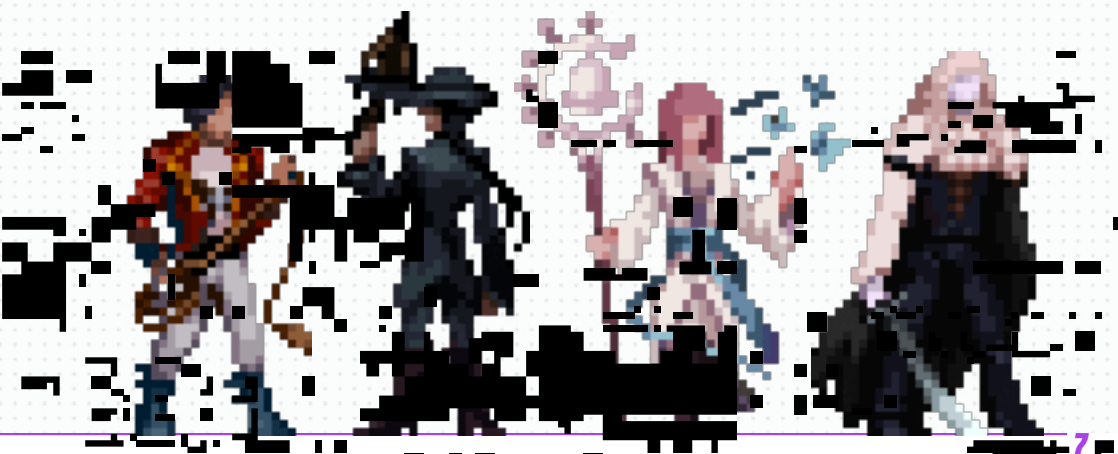
A tabletop roleplaying game is a game where there is no screen, no code, and no fixed path.

Instead of following a programmed experience, you and the other players create the story together in real time. Instead of pressing buttons, you describe what your character does. Instead of fixed outcomes, the story emerges through conversation, dice rolls, and the imagination of everyone at the table.

There are no limits except the rules and what you can imagine—and no two sessions ever play out the same.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO PLAY?

- This book
- Any game from the MemoryCore anthology
- A set of polyhedral dice: 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, and 1d12
- A couple of hours for each session
- A group of 2-5 players (GM included)



WHAT'S IN THIS BOX

If each game in the anthology works like a single 32-bit-era videogame, then the MemoryCore base box is the console that runs them. Inside, you'll find all the hardware, UI, and software you need to play any of the games.

USER MANUAL

This book is the system's core software. It contains the shared rules that power every game—such as the core resolution mechanic, advantages and disadvantages, etc.—along with the definition of key systems, gameplay structures, and tools to create your own experiences within MemoryCore.

MARKERS

Used to write directly on the Character Boards of each game, allowing you to track progression, changes, and key information as play unfolds—just like updating a save file in real time.

TOKENS

Used to track clocks, objectives, map position, and status ailments. While every game uses these components, each one does so in its own way, adapting them to its genre, pacing, and specific mechanics.

LEARN THE RULES YOUR WAY

You can use this User Manual in two ways.

If you want to learn the rules first and run the smoothest possible sessions, read the **RULES** section of this manual. It's 12 pages long, and it gives you everything you need to make any MemoryCore game run like clockwork.

If you'd rather learn by playing, you can skip this Manual for now. Just open a game and play the tutorial contained in its Game Rulebook—an in-game, step-by-step guide that teaches you the system from scratch. Whenever a new rule comes up, the tutorial points you to the exact page of this Manual that explains it.

To seasoned TTRPG players, stopping mid-session to learn the rules may sound counterintuitive, but it's like testing controls in a video game—crouching and jumping in the middle of a village just to figure out which button does what: a little awkward, but still a great way to learn as you play.

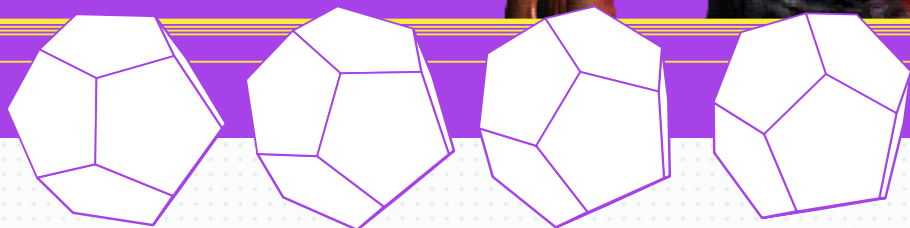
YOUR OWN DEVELOPER KIT

Maybe you're the kind of person who'd rather tinker with a level builder than jump into a ready-to-play campaign. After all, a tabletop roleplaying game isn't just about pre-made content, right? Creating it's part of the fun!

The **DEVELOPER KIT** section of the User Manual includes everything you need to create your own stories, and even design entirely new games. On top of that, all MemoryCards are cross-compatible, so every new game expands your options.



YOU CAN BE A PLAYER OR THE GM



PLAYER

As a **PLAYER**, you control one of the game's main characters. You decide what they do, portray their actions, give them a voice, and—if you want—describe what they think and feel. Each player uses their **CHARACTER BOARDS**, the **EXPLORATION MAP**, and **MEMORY CARDS**. They can also consult the **USER MANUAL** if they want to.

GM

As the **GM** (Game Master), you provide the context players need to portray their characters: describing areas and locations, narrating cutscenes, playing all NPCs, responding to the players' actions, and keeping the game moving.

The GM uses this **USER MANUAL** and the **GAME RULEBOOK**, manages the **GAME DISC**, and distributes **MEMORYCARDS** to the Players.

TUNE IN TO THE LOW-POLY SPIRIT

MemoryCore is not about realism. It's about capturing the feel of classic videogames—their unwritten rules and their strange but unmistakable internal logic.

What follows is a guide to playing in that spirit: embracing genre tropes, trusting your memories, and creating new ones together as you forge a story that feels both familiar and new.

EMBRACE GAME LOGIC

A key can take up the same inventory space as a gun. Food can restore health. Entering a new Area can reset an alarm. Defeated enemies may vanish and leave loot behind. Tell a memorable story, and **DO NOT FORCE REALISM** where the vibe matters more.

1

TRUST THE GENRE

If the game feels like it should have secret passages, look for them. If a cardboard box seems important, trust your instincts. **EMBRACE THE GENRE** and lean into it together—that is part of the fun.

2

BE A TOP PLAYER

BE GENEROUS with each other, even when your roles clash. Leave petty drama outside the game, and do not make newcomers feel like they missed the tutorial.

3



SECTION 2

RULES

CHARACTER ANATOMY AT A GLANCE

Your character is represented on a double-sided, rewritable board that includes everything you need to play them. All Character Boards share a common structure, while each game adds its own unique elements. Here are two examples—one from **SOLID STATE MACHINE** and one from **BLOODSONG: HUNTERS OF THE NIGHT**.

IRON SAGE
You want to find out why Old Root left the Vesper Squad and became a terrorist.

LEVEL 6

HEALTH FOCUS

STATS / Roll the TOP DIE on your START BAR vs DC:

ASSAULT	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
MOBILITY	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
AIM	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
SENSES	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
BRAIN	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12
NERVE	d4	d6	d8	d10	d12

SPEC / GAIN BONUS ON A TEST (1):

- Suppressive fire
- Cover to cover
- Quick shot
- Fieldcraft, Ambushes
- Tactical Planning, Detect lies
- Field commander

FERTS:

- Tactical Espionage (1)
- Instantly learn one of an Enemy's FERT.
- Lead by Example (1)
- Gain MULTI on a TEST. Give your best result to an ally, keep the second best.

De-Escalation (1)
Lower ALERT by 1 by creating a distraction or misleading the enemy.

MEDICINE
Restore 1 START BAR

NATION
Restore 1

IRON SAGE

BACKGROUND

Your real name is **Samuel Kent**, and the military is the only life you've ever chosen. You joined the **Vesper Squad** after **Old Root's** betrayal. You idolized him — not blindly, but the way you respect someone who shaped you into what you are. That's why you can't accept the official version. People don't throw away everything they believe in for self-interest alone. There's something no one is telling you. Your teammates know they can count on you. You're the one who holds the line when everything falls apart — not because you're fearless, but because someone has to.

STARTING GEAR

- Cigarettes
- Frag Grenade
- Handgun



PERSONAL INFO

1

Some key details about your character: a **PORTRAIT**, their **NAME**, and a **PERSONAL MOTIVE** that ties their story to the game.

LEVEL, HEALTH & ENERGY

2

Two track bars showing your character's **HEALTH** and the **ENERGY** they can spend to activate special abilities and gain various advantages. Both tracks increase as your **LEVEL** rises from 1 to 6.

STATS

3

6 **STATS**, each represented by a **STAT BAR**: a track of dice sizes (d4, d6, d8, d10, d12). Some dice are active, while others are inactive.

CUSTOM FEATURES

4

Game-specific sections of the board. These elements are explained in each game and often rely on shared core mechanics.

BACKGROUND & STARTING EQUIPMENT

5

On the back of the board, your character's **BACKGROUND** gives you the basics to get into their shoes, while **STARTING EQUIPMENT** show your starting MemoryCards and **CHARACTER GROWTH** explains your character's progression.

CORE RESOLUTION MECHANIC

Difficult or dangerous **ACTIONS** require a **TEST**.

ROLL YOUR TOP DIE AGAINST THE DIFFICULTY CLASS. On a success, you achieve your goal as intended. On a failure, the situation evolves in an unexpected way, introducing new complications.

CALLING THE TEST

The Player declares an **ACTION**. If it is difficult or dangerous, the GM calls for a **TEST** and sets the relevant **STAT** and **DIFFICULTY CLASS** (DC = Easy: 3 / Normal: 4 / Hard: 5 / Extreme: 6)

1

ROLLING THE DICES

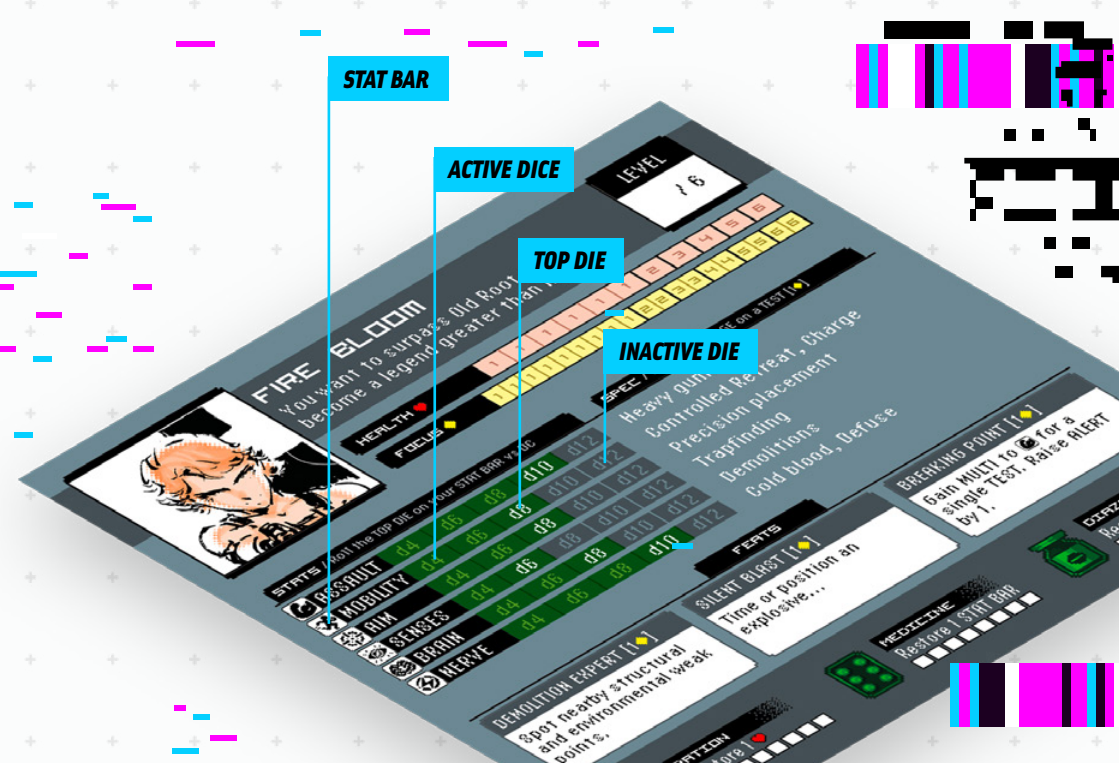
The Player rolls the **TOP DIE** of the relevant **STAT** and checks the result against the **DC**. Equal or higher is a **SUCCESS**. Lower is a **FAILURE**. Before rolling, the Player may also activate **MODIFIERS** such as **ADVANTAGE**, **MULTI** or a **BUFF**.

2

NARRATE THE RESULT

On a **SUCCESS**, the Player describes how their character achieves their goal. On a **FAILURE**, the GM describes how the situation gets more complicated and may apply negative effects, depending on the game.

3



How to Set the **DIFFICULTY CLASS**

→	4 IS DEFAULT	Drop to 3 for simple actions, or raise to 5 or 6 for difficult ones.
→	CONTEXT	Consider what is happening in the SCENE and the AREA 's description.
→	ACTION	Ask yourself how difficult that action is in itself.

MODIFIERS

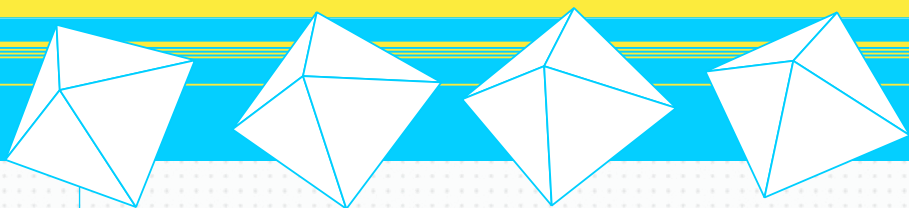
ADVANTAGE, DISADVANTAGE, AND MULTI

- **ADVANTAGE:** Roll your Top Die twice and keep the better result.
- **DISADVANTAGE:** Roll your Top Die twice and keep the worse result.
- **MULTI:** Roll all the Active dice in your Stat Bar and keep the best result.

BUFFS AND DEBUFFS

- When you gain a **BUFF**, activate the first **INACTIVE DIE** in the matching **STAT BAR**, to the right of your highest **ACTIVE DIE**. Buffs are always temporary, usually lasting 1 turn, or more rarely, 1 scene.
- When you suffer a **DEBUFF**, deactivate the highest **ACTIVE DIE** of that **STAT BAR**; you can't use it for the next Test with that Stat. Debuffs can be removed in various ways, such as Tests, Feats, MemoryCards, or by a Buff.

HIGH-STAKES STORYTELLING TOOL



Sometimes, such as during interactive **CUTSCENES** or **VS ENCOUNTERS**, the game may ask you to start **BUTTON MASHING**—a focused, tactical storytelling mechanic capable to resolve a full scene through a single simultaneous roll.

HOW IT WORKS

All players roll all five dice at once, at the same time: 1d4, 1d6, 1d8, 1d10, 1d12. Then everyone looks for their **BEST SINGLE COMBINATION**: either matching numbers or a straight. You can keep only one combination. In general, the longer it is, the better the outcome.

After rolling, you may spend 1 Energy to reroll any number of dice you choose. You can reroll as many times as you want, but each reroll costs 1 Energy.

OUTCOMES

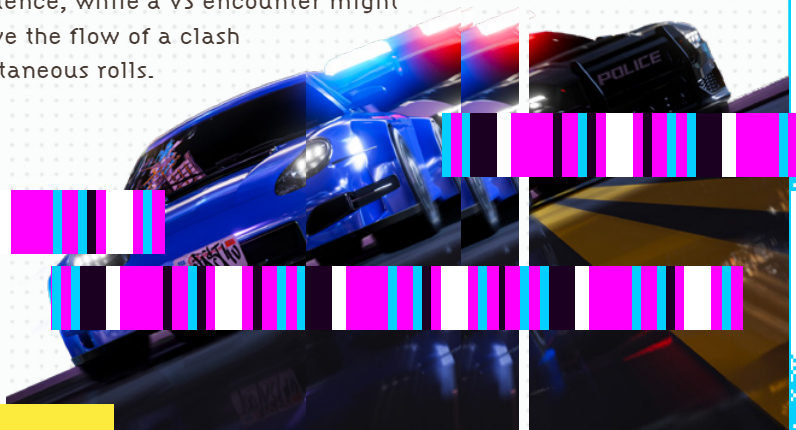
A valid combination must include **AT LEAST 2 DICE** and can include **UP TO 5 DICE**. Unless the game says otherwise, there is no difference between matching numbers and a straight of the same length.

Each game explains what different results mean. A pair, a three-die combination, or a longer result may lead to different effects depending on the situation. Some games may also feature special rules that interact with Button Mashing, like special moves triggered by specific combinations.

ALL PLAYERS ROLL AT THE SAME TIME

Button Mashing is always resolved **SIMULTANEOUSLY**: all players roll at the same time, then the game uses the results to determine how the scene unfolds.

This makes it ideal for moments where the focus is on the outcome of a whole exchange rather than on step-by-step actions. A Cutscene might use Button Mashing to show how each character performs during a dramatic sequence, while a VS encounter might use it to resolve the flow of a clash through simultaneous rolls.



QUICK EXAMPLE

You roll 3-3-4-8-10. Your best result is **3-3**, a **2-DIE COMBINATION**.

You spend 1 Energy to reroll the 8 and the 10. Now you have 1-2-2-3-4.

Your best result is 1-2-3-4, a **4-DIE COMBINATION**.

If you want, you can spend 1 more Energy and reroll again, trying to improve that result even further.



When **COMBAT** starts every second counts, so play proceeds in **ROUNDS**. Apply all core rules, with a few additions to handle **DAMAGE**.

COMBAT ROUND STRUCTURE

Each **ROUND** is divided into 3 phases:

1. **PLAYER TURN.** They decide in which order they act. On their **TURN**, each character can perform 1 **ACTION**. If that action requires a **TEST**, resolve it using the standard rules.
2. **ENEMY TURN.** If an enemy attacks one or more characters, those characters must face a **TEST** to defend themselves.
3. **ROUND CLEANUP.** Update tracks, resolve ongoing effects, and apply anything that happens at the end of the **ROUND**. Then, a new round begins.

PLAYER TURN

During **COMBAT**, the fiction does not stop. **PLAYERS** should use their imagination and freely describe what their **CHARACTERS** do. The **GM** can use this list to determine the effects of their actions.

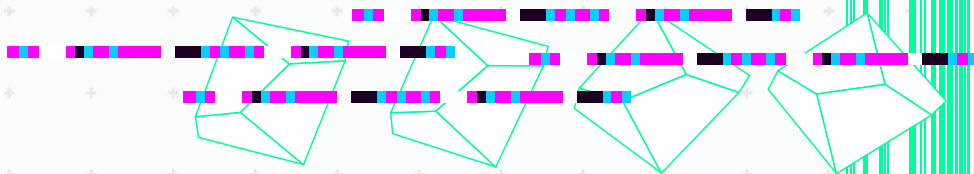
- Attack with a weapon using the **STAT** indicated by that weapon's MemoryCard for the **RANGE** you described. If you succeed, deal damage equal to your **TEST** result + the weapon's **DAMAGE** (marked as DMG on the Card).
- Equip, switch, or use an item.
- Gain **ADVANTAGE** against the next enemy attack targeting you, or grant it to an ally.
- Grant **ADVANTAGE** to an ally's next **TEST**.
- Face a **TEST** to discover something about an enemy, like one of its **STATS**.
- Use one of your **FEATS** that requires an action.
- Make a **TEST** to advance a track, or prevent it from advancing.
- Describe any other action and work with the GM on how to resolve it.

ENEMY TURN

When an enemy attacks, the **GM** describes what happens and calls any player for a reaction **TEST** on a specific **STAT**. The **DC** is listed on the enemy's sheet.

A reaction **TEST** works like any other **TEST**, except its purpose is always to avoid harm or other negative effects.

- **SUCCESS**: you avoid the attack and suffer no damage.
- **FAILURE**: you suffer the amount of damage listed on the enemy's sheet: subtract that value from the **HEALTH BAR** of the affected player character.



KNOW YOUR ENEMY



Characters in MemoryCore games often face **ENEMIES**—from disposable **MOBS** and dangerous **ELITES** to formidable **BOSSSES** that bend the rules of the game.

WHERE THE DATA LIVES

Each **GAME RULEBOOK** references its enemies with a short tag, like:



[BAT: Mook 1 / Flying, Vampiric]







A bloated, blood-hungry bat.

The full **ENEMY TABLES** that translate that tag into something playable live in this Manual. The split is intentional: you can keep the Manual open at the right table and jump freely through the Rulebook without losing your place.

AN ENEMY STAT BLOCK

Every enemy in this Manual is summarized by six values:

- **HP:** The enemy's health. At 0, it goes down.
- **ARMOR:** Subtracted from any **DAMAGE** the enemy takes.
- **DAMAGE:** The **HEALTH** a **CHARACTER** loses on a failed reaction **TEST** against this enemy.
- **STATS:** The **DC** for any **ACTION** or **REACTION TEST** against the enemy — one **DC** per **STAT**.
- **SPECIAL:** Tags pointing to unique **TRAITS**, defined right after the table.
- **LOOT LEVEL:** The enemy's loot tier. Each game has its own **LOOT TABLES**.

TYPE	HP	ARMOR	DAMAGE							LOOT
MOOK 1	6	0	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	Scarce
MOOK 2	10	1	1	5	4	4	4	3	4	Scarce
MOOK 3	10	1	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	Standard
MOOK 4	10	2	1	3	3	4	4	5	5	Standard
ELITE 1	15	0	2	3	4	5	5	5	5	Standard
ELITE 2	20	2	2	5	5	5	5	5	6	Supplied

SAMPLE SPECIALS

Each **GAME BOOKLET** references its enemies with a short tag, like:

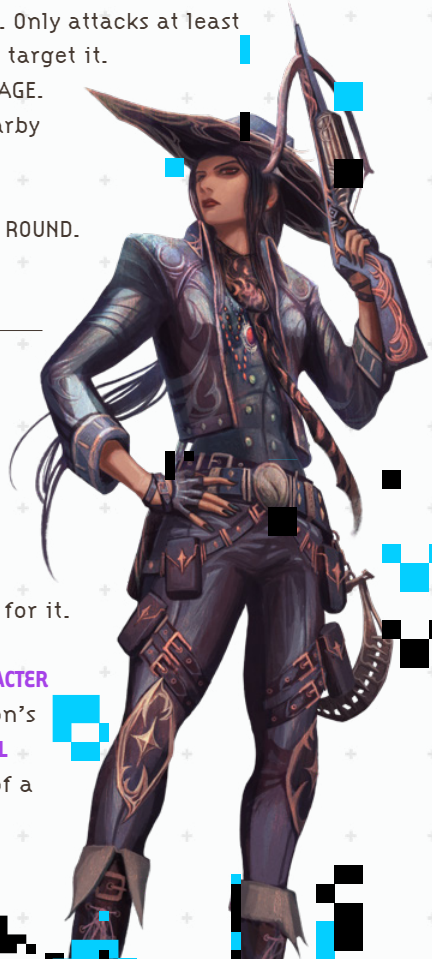
- **FLYING:** Always out of reach of melee weapons. Only attacks at least at FAR distance, or other flying creatures can target it.
- **VAMPIRIC:** Recovers 1 HP whenever it deals DAMAGE.
- **GRENADIER:** Can throw 1 grenade (-2 to all nearby targets).
- **DEADEYE:** Can shoot from VERY FAR range.
- **REGENERATING:** Recovers 1 HP at the end of each ROUND.

ACTING AGAINST AN ENEMY

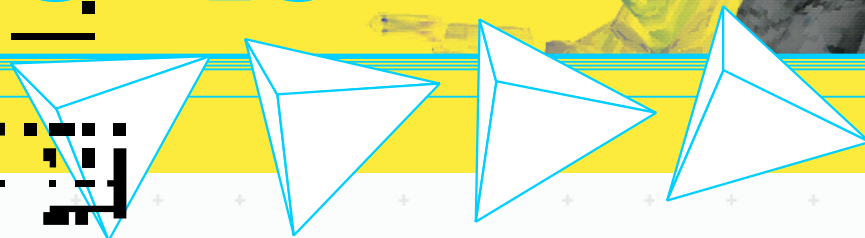
To attack an enemy, or dodge its attacks, run a **TEST** as usual, using the **STAT** value from the enemy's row as the **DC**.

The same value applies both ways: a **SOLDIER**'s 4 in **ASSAULT** means **CHARACTERS** need a 4 or higher both to hit it in melee and to dodge its strikes. The **GM** may adjust the DC when the fiction calls for it.

On a successful attack with a weapon, the **CHARACTER** deals **DAMAGE** equal to the **TEST RESULT** + the weapon's **DAMAGE** bonus. Many weapons also trigger **SPECIAL EFFECTS**, tied to specific dice results or the cost of a spendable resource.



WORLD, AREAS AND ZONES



The game world is organized into **AREAS** and **ZONES**: sections the GM can use to immerse players in the context around them.

AREAS

AREAS are thematic sandboxes: sections of the game world built to offer tension, objectives, and choices. Areas do not control the flow of the session by themselves—they provide context.

ZONES

ZONES are subdivisions of Areas: self-contained spaces the characters can enter, leave, revisit, and explore. A Zone gives the GM what they need to run play: a short description, a few narrative tags, useful resources, dangers, connections, and goals. A Zone is the immediate frame of play: the place where choices are made and consequences unfold.

SPLITTING THE PARTY

During a campaign, characters may end up in different Areas or Zones. That is fine—the story goes where it goes.

The game supports a scattered party, but it is usually easier for the GM if the group stays together, or at least within the same Area. The more divided the characters are, the more separate scenes you can expect.

TIME AND PACING

Time is not tracked minute by minute. Instead, the GM uses **SCENES**, **ROUNDS**, **TRACKS**, and **CUTSCENES** to pace the session, manage its flow, and keep the main objectives clear so the game maintains momentum.

SCENES

SCENES are segments of play focused on a specific objective, obstacle, or dramatic beat. When narrating a Scene, the Zone becomes its frame: the Zone tells you where the action happens, while the Scene tells you what that moment is about.

ROUNDS

ROUNDS are used when time is at the essence. Each player, in any order, takes one **ACTION** and can move up to a **CLOSE** distance. Then enemies respond through **REACTIONS** triggered by the GM. At the end of the Round, resolve ongoing effects, advance Tracks, and handle any changes in the situation.

TRACKS

TRACKS measure anything too complex to resolve with a single Test. They can show progress toward an objective or how close an unwanted event is to happening. Tracks make progress, danger, and urgency visible at the table.

CUTSCENES

CUTSCENES are short scripted sequences used to deliver story beats, raise the stakes, foreshadow events, or mark important transitions. They are triggered by clear conditions, such as entering an Area or completing an objective. During a Cutscene, player agency is limited to the interactions the game explicitly allows.



DATA CORRUPT



MemoryCore

LOW-POLY RPG

 **BACKERKIT**

JUNE 9 2026

