

## TACTICAL

*Karng, son of Mortag, screamed an ancient Klingon war cry and swung his bat'leth full strength, slicing through the Jem'Hadar warrior's armor and knocking the Dominion soldier over the precipice into the yawning chasm below. He barely recovered in time to parry a blow from another Jem'Hadar soldier rushing him. He sidestepped and rammed his shoulder into the warrior from the Gamma Quadrant, sending it down into the gulfs to join its comrade.*

*He quickly leaped away from the edge, dodging Jem'Hadar phaser fire. The horde of Dominion soldiers kept coming, overrunning the base. Only Karng was left to stop their assault. Only he stood between them and the riches of the Alpha Quadrant.*

*As he gathered his strength and prepared to leap at them, ready to die a hero's death—a death which would be sung by all Klingon children for centuries to come—the oncoming Jem'Hadar soldiers froze in midmarch as if they were motionless mannequins. A voice boomed out over the smoky hills:*

*"You're time's up, Klingon."*

*Karng screamed in rage and shattered his bat'leth against a sharp rock.*

*The voice again boomed across the sky: "I'd be happy to give you another hour of holosuite time, but the price is 150 credits."*

*"150! You said only 100 earlier!"*

*"That was for one hour! I've got customers waiting here! If you want me to bump them for another hour, it's going to cost you!"*

*Karng picked up the pieces of his broken bat'leth and headed for the door, uttering a Klingon curse. Legendary honor would have to wait for another day...*



## ACTION!

Now that you've created your character, it's time to learn how that character interacts with the rest of the *Star Trek* universe—how he figures things out, fights other characters, and solves problems. That's what you'll find in this chapter: the rules of the game. It is divided into three sections: Time (the timeframes within which action occurs in the game), Tests (how to use your skills to accomplish things), and Combat (rules for fighting).

## TIME

Actions during an episode or series—from swinging a *bat'leth* to negotiating with the Ferengi Commerce Authority—occur within a certain framework. In the



*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Roleplaying Game*, this framework is represented by the measurement of time. The *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG* uses five abstract divisions to illustrate the passage of game time.

- **Round:** A *round* is the smallest time increment used in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG*. Rounds usually last five seconds and represent the time it takes to complete a single action (such as making an attack, dodging an attack, or performing certain skills) or group of actions (making several attacks, or attacking and dodging).
- **Scene:** Similar to scenes in television or film, a *scene* blends elements of roleplaying and action. Scenes represent the smallest episodic increments used in the game, and are usually confined to a single setting or location. Action scenes often last only a few rounds, while narrative scenes (such as a description of events during a journey between starbases) can last for several hours or even days of game time.
- **Episode:** As in a television show, a collection of scenes forms an *episode*. In the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG*, each episode describes a major sequence of events important to the eventual resolution of a story. Episodes normally include some sort of temporary closure, and often resolve one or more subplots or minor plotlines. A complete episode can usually be played out in a single game session.
- **Series:** A group of interconnected episodes forms a *series*. Series often include recurring characters and events, as well as an ongoing, larger story arc that links component episodes together.
- **Downtime:** Think of *downtime* as “time between”—time between scenes, between episodes, or between series. Whenever your characters aren’t actively doing something, it’s considered downtime. Much of a character’s ongoing development occurs during this “time between episodes.”

## TESTS

If the flesh of a *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG* game is the story, its lifeblood is action. Almost everything your character does—swinging a *bat’leth*, fixing the warp core, or

charming that Bajoran dabo girl—can be described in terms of an *Action*. Whenever precise timing becomes a consideration during an episode, the Narrator will normally ask players to declare specific actions for their characters. For more information on actions and how they are used, see “Actions,” page 111.

When facing a situation where the outcome of an action is uncertain, you roll a Test to determine whether your character succeeds. Tests can be based on attributes alone, but more frequently they involve a skill (a *Skill Test*). Whenever possible, the Narrator should use Skill Tests to resolve actions.

To make a Test, you roll a number of dice equal to a particular attribute and add the highest die to your character’s skill level. Compare that total—the *Test Result*—to a *Difficulty Number* set by the Narrator. If the Test Result equals or exceeds the Difficulty, the Test succeeds. If the Test Result is lower than the Difficulty, the attempt fails. See “Test Results,” below, for more details.

## DIFFICULTY

Certain tasks are inherently more difficult than others, and in the *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine RPG* a task’s Difficulty reflects this. The accompanying table illustrates the various Difficulty Numbers used in the game.

The Difficulty categories, such as Routine or Challenging, offer general descriptions that the Narrator can use when explaining the difficulty of an action to the players. The Difficulty Numbers in each category represent a range, so the Narrator has some options when determining the Difficulty Number of a task that falls into each category. For example, a Challenging task could have a Difficulty Number of 9, 10, or 11. Boldface numbers indicate the typical Difficulty Number for each category.

Certain situations modify the Difficulty of a character’s actions. Such modifiers are expressed in one of two ways. Normally, a Difficulty modifier appears as a simple positive or negative adjustment, which means the actual Difficulty *number* is affected (a +1 modifier turns a Difficulty 3 action into a Difficulty 4 attempt; a –2 modifier changes a Difficulty 7 action to a Difficulty 5 action). Sometimes, modifiers affect an entire Difficulty *category*. Raising the Difficulty by one category would cause a Routine action to become a Moderate action (the Narrator still sets the precise Difficulty Number).

### DIFFICULTY

<i>Difficulty Number</i>	<i>Description</i>
0	Automatic action—no roll required
3, <b>4</b> , 5	Routine
6, <b>7</b> , 8	Moderate
9, <b>10</b> , 11	Challenging
12, <b>13</b> , 14	Difficult
15+	Nearly Impossible





## WHAT DOES DIFFICULTY MEAN?

The Narrator chooses a Difficulty Number whenever a character attempts an action unopposed by another character (such as trying to decipher a code). For tests that are opposed by another character (see "Opposed Tests," below), pick a number from within the ranges given, using the category descriptions as guidelines. For example, a Routine Test will have either a 3, 4, or 5 Difficulty, while a Moderate action will have a 6, 7, or 8 Difficulty. After you get a feel for the game, assigning Difficulty becomes second nature. Generally, the minimum Difficulty Number is always 2, regardless of the modifiers applied.

Remember that a single point of Difficulty can make a big difference in a tense situation. Because the actual Difficulty Numbers remain slightly flexible within each category, the Narrator should also keep track of the skill and attribute levels of his players, and assign Difficulty accordingly. Similarly, remember that, unless he gets a 6 on his Drama Die (see below), the best result a character can get when rolling the dice is a 6, so the highest roll he can possibly make in most circumstances is equal to 6 plus his skill level. Keep this in mind when determining Difficulty Numbers; a character with a skill level of 3 cannot succeed with a Difficulty 10 task unless he gets a 6 on his Drama Die or gains some other bonus to his Test Result. Even if the Drama Die rolls a 6, the best result a character can obtain on a single roll equals 12 plus his skill level.

Use the following guidelines when assigning Difficulty:

**Routine:** Easy tasks. Even inexperienced characters will perform these successfully most of the time. Examples include making a standard sensor scan or creating a simple computer program.

**Moderate:** Tasks that require some skill to complete successfully. An average character has a decent chance of failure. Examples include creating a complicated computer program, making a sensor scan for something that is difficult to find, or making routine repairs/adjustments to the warp engines.

**Challenging:** Complicated tasks that often require considerable skill. Average characters will only occasionally succeed at these tasks. Examples include reconfiguring the warp engines under standard conditions or making a sensor scan for something at extreme range or present in minute quantities.

**Difficult:** Complex tasks that would challenge an expert or professional. Average characters will almost never succeed, and skilled professionals stand a good chance of failure. Examples include reconfiguring the warp engines on a tight deadline or repairing a damaged phaser during combat.

**Nearly Impossible:** Need we say more? Even legendary characters need a bit of luck to succeed at a Nearly Impossible task. Examples include reconfiguring the warp engines on a tight deadline in combat or repairing a damaged phaser which is going to explode in the next few seconds.

## WHAT SHOULD I TELL THE PLAYER?

As Narrator, you don't have to reveal the Difficulty of a Test to the player. In fact, keeping Difficulty secret can heighten the tension during key scenes in an adventure. Describing tasks as "Routine," "Moderate," "Challenging," and so on can give a player a rough idea of the task's Difficulty without telling him a specific number.

For less critical scenes, of course, it is perfectly acceptable to tell the player the specific Difficulty Number.



## DEGREE OF SUCCESS

The degree to which a character succeeds at an action depends on how far over the Difficulty Number the player rolled. The higher the Test Result, the better the performance. Exceeding the Difficulty by 1 indicates success, but exceeding it by 7 or 8 represents a spectacular result. A Test Result which is 6 or more above the Difficulty Number indicates a *Dramatic Success*, with especially beneficial results (see "Dramatic Success"). During Opposed Tests, a successful Test Result that is 6 or more points higher than the opposing Test Result indicates a Dramatic Success.

Although "degrees of success" are not specifically defined, it can often enhance the game if the Narrator keeps such things in mind when describing effects to the players. Most players like to hear how well their characters have performed, so ham it up! After all, a good *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* RPG episode should capture the cinematic "feel" and tension of the television show.

*Gar Vedorn uses his Stealth skill to sneak past several Orion guards. The Narrator declares this a Moderate task (Difficulty 6). Vedorn has Stealth 4 and Coordination 4. He rolls his four attribute dice; His highest result is a 6. Added to his Skill of 4, that gives him a result of 10 (4 more than he needed to succeed). The Narrator rules that, because he has succeeded by such a large margin, he has made absolutely no noise and the guards haven't the faintest clue he is around.*

*A short while later, Vedorn tries to break into a protected Orion computer terminal using his Computer (Research) 3 (4) Skill. The Narrator declares this to be a Difficult task (Difficulty 8) because of the computer security in place. Vedorn's Intellect is 3. Unfortunately, his highest die roll is only a 2, giving him a total of 5. Since this is far below the number needed to succeed, the Narrator rules that he not only fails, but trips an alarm!*