

SOLARIAN

LUCKY 13



GAME ENGINE



BUILD YOUR OWN RPG

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**THIS IS
ALL FREE.**

REALLY.

**USE THIS
TO MAKE
YOUR OWN
GAME.**

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Introduction

The Lucky 13 engine is a system that can be adapted to any genre you choose for your own game. Lucky 13 was originally created for Top Secret: New World Order, and as such, you will see that game referenced throughout this document.

This is Version 2.0 of the game engine for Lucky 13. We rely on feedback from the community to continue to improve the Lucky 13 game engine and its Everlasting License for Free (ELF). Please let us know anything that is missing, or needs improvement, by sending an email with the subject “ELF” to hello@solariangames.com.

There’s a longer legal section at the end, but here’s the bottom line up front: You may use the Lucky 13 engine for your game for free, forever. There’s a “Lucky 13 game engine” logo that you can use, so long as you adhere to the simple and minimal requirements in the ELF. You can make changes to the wording used to fit the flavor and genre of your game. Any new copywritable material that you create remains your own property.



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for a copy of the Lucky 13 logo***

How to use this document

Think of this game engine as a toolkit for you to use when creating your own game. Some rules will be suited for your game “out of the box,” just as they are presented here. You may wish to alter some rules to fit your own setting or style of gameplay. Not every rule you will need is detailed here – the intent is not to create a complete universal game system in one document.

Depending on your game’s genre, setting, and flavor, you might need rules for aerial combat, chasing someone on a horse, swimming, zero-gravity maneuvers, psionics, encumbrance, morale, or any number of things that aren’t covered in this toolkit. Use the basic concepts outlined here to develop the specific rule details that you need.

The purpose of making Lucky 13 a game engine that anyone can use is to make it easier for players to pick up an RPG they’ve never played before and jump right in. If you choose to market your game as “Powered by Lucky 13,” you’ll want it to be as familiar as possible to players who are familiar with other Lucky 13 games. You’re free to adhere as closely or as loosely to this toolkit as you like, but remember that players will be happier if they have an easier time learning your rules.

The basics

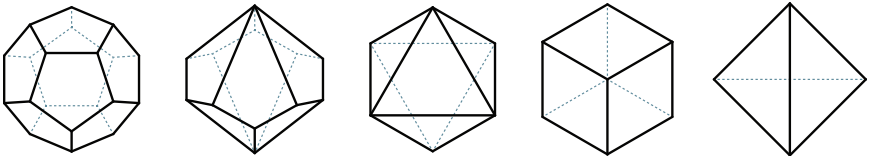
Lucky 13 is meant to be easy enough to learn in a couple of minutes, but support enough “crunch” to create a game where actions have predictable consequences, and choices matter.

At its heart, Lucky 13 relies on two kinds of rolls: skill checks and contests. A skill check happens anytime a character wants to use their training and abilities to do something that has a chance of failure. A contest happens anytime two or more characters are opposing each other, whether it's physical combat, a battle of wills, a chase, or anything else.

The engine is called “Lucky 13” because skill checks always require a 13 to succeed.

The difficulty is raised or lowered by the size of the dice the player gets to use when trying to roll a 13.

Lucky 13 uses five dice during gameplay: d4, d6, d8, d10, and d12.



Skill checks

Skill checks use three core dice, Ability, Skill, and a Difficulty Die, which are added to try and reach 13. Modifiers can cause the dice to “step up” or “step down” to a larger or smaller die. In some cases, other dice can be added when an object or character is used to help.

Contests

Contests are a simple matter of each side trying for a higher roll. Contests are typically Ability + Skill vs Ability + Skill, with any modifiers given to each side in the form of stepping the dice up or down, or additional dice as the situation warrants.

Stepping dice

Step up / step down is a fundamental concept in Lucky 13. Step up means to increase the die size, say from a d6 to a d8. Step down is the opposite. When the die is already the largest size, d12, then stepping up means to add a d4 to the die pool. When stepping down a d4, the die is removed from the pool altogether. Stepping up may continue indefinitely, but you cannot step down any farther than from a d4 to no die.

STEP DOWN	ORIGINAL DIE	STEP UP
remove die	d4	d6
d4	d6	d8
d6	d8	d10
d8	d10	d12
d10	d12	d12 + d4

When you're teaching new players to use the Lucky 13 system, those two concepts are usually enough to get everyone started, so they can jump in and start having fun right away. Other rules, like initiative, hit points, etc., are best addressed once they come up in the game. How many times have you sat with new players and had someone say "let's just start playing and we can figure out things when we need to know them?" That's a great approach.

The Rules

These are the core rules for Lucky 13. To use them in your own game design, you may incorporate them as-is, or make changes to suit your game's needs. The most likely change might be to change the names of various mechanics according to your genre and/or flavor.

The core rules of Lucky 13 can be thought of as a foundation for your own game. This open game license doesn't put any restrictions on how you can modify them, but for the sake of the players, you should keep the basic mechanics as intact as possible so someone familiar with Lucky 13 can easily pick your game up and play.

In every skill roll, there are three core dice, which we'll generically call Ability, Skill, and Difficulty. Each die is explained below.

Abilities

One of the core dice that characters roll is the ability die. When creating a character, five basic abilities are assigned. Our generic names are included for each, which you may use as-is or adjust to fit your game. The descriptions for each ability are from *Top Secret NWO* by Solarian Games, and are presented for reference. We encourage you to write your own to fit the tone of writing in your game.

Will

A measure of overall emotional well-being. Will refers to how well a character performs under pressure, the stability of their mental state, and ability to withstand stress, temptation, and fear.

Charm

This determines the character's personal skills, suave, and ability to fit in to any social situation. It covers skills such as intimidation, seduction, persuasion, ability to read other people's emotions, and talent for lying.

Pulse

Represents an character's stamina, health, and vitality. Athletics, labor, and other physically demanding activities rely on pulse.

Intellect

This ability measures an character's capacity for logic, reason, and learning. It also determines their level of perception, and ability to solve problems. An character with a high intellect score may or may not be well-educated, but they possess the natural talent to use the knowledge they obtain.

Reflex

A character's reflex measures their reaction time, agility, and speed. While it is often associated with overall physical fitness, an character who loses speed or agility to injury or disability still can maintain a high reflex score, as their reaction time may be unaffected.

You can change the names of any of the abilities to fit the flavor of your own game.

DETERMINING ABILITY SCORES

To determine a character's ability scores, one of two methods may be used: random or array.

RANDOM ABILITY METHOD

For each ability, in order, roll percentile dice (d100) and assign the die type based on the result:

PERCENTILE ROLL	ABILITY DIE RESULT
01 – 20	d4
21 – 40	d6
41 – 60	d8
61 – 80	d10
81 – 00	d12

ARRAY METHOD

Decide whether the character will be “balanced” or “specialized,” and using the following sets of die types. Assign one die type to each ability desired.

DIE	BALANCED	SPECIALIZED
d4	1	2
d6	2	3
d8	1	0
d10	1	1
d12	0	1

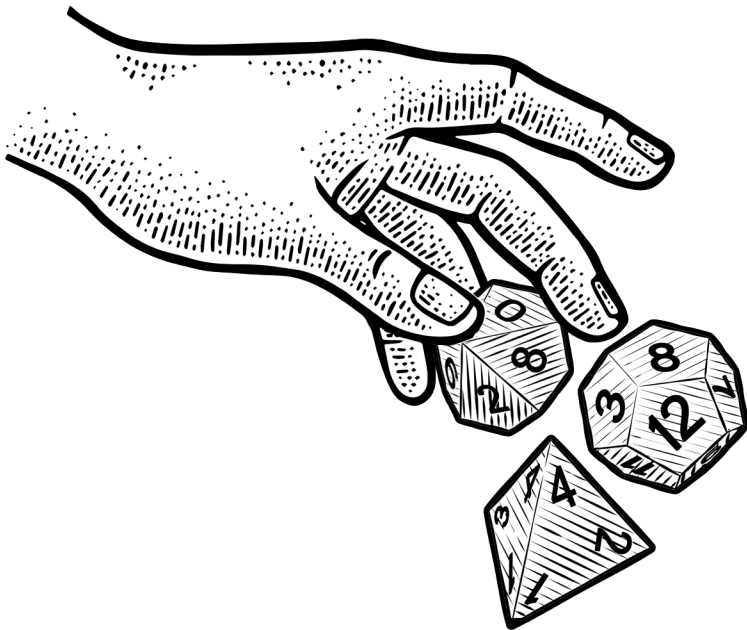
SKILLS

The second die a player rolls when trying to accomplish something is their skill die. While abilities are innate to the character, skills are things the character has learned through study and training. In Top Secret NWO, the skills are called tradecraft, and there are four of them, each specific skills that a spy would learn.

Character creation in Top Secret NWO involves basing each skill on an ability score. In your game, you may take this same tack, or you may choose to have players roll, use an array, or a point buy.

Skills are meant to be broad categories, under which characters will have many specializations. When deciding what skills your game will need, try and imagine how many different specializations might fit within that broad skillset.

Your game may have whatever number of skills is appropriate for your genre. A few examples are given below to get you started.



Fantasy skill examples



Spellcasting

Scholarship

Healing

Sneaking

Fighting

Post-apocalyptic skill examples



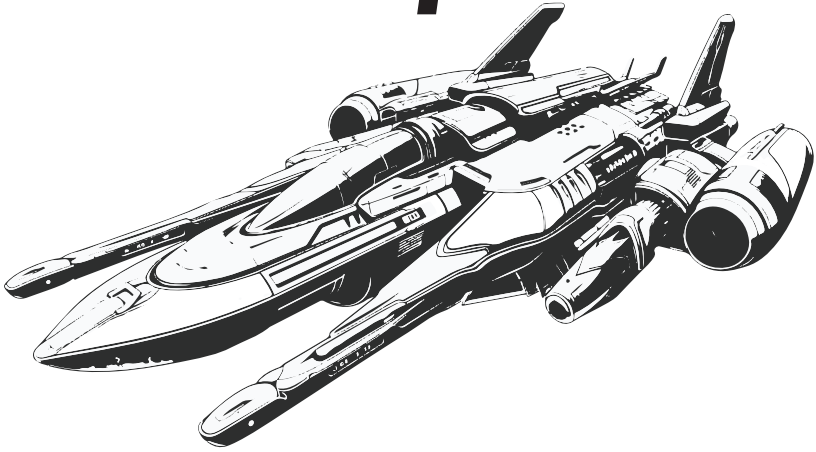
History

Communication

Technology

Weaponry

Science fiction skill examples



Technology

Astrogration

Mysticism

Mechanics

Diplomacy

Combat

DIFFICULTY

The third die in a skill roll is the difficulty die. This die is unique in that it is not a character ability, rather it is a variable chosen by the GM at the time the player is about to roll. The difficulty die can be anything from a d4 to a d12. The smaller the die, the more difficult the task is.

Example

Player: "Hrothgar the Mighty is going to force the door open with his body."

GM: "The door is moderately strong. That's a d10 difficulty die. Roll a d10 plus your Pulse and your Fighting dice to see if you succeed."

Player: "I rolled a 5, 3, and a 9. That's 17 total, way more than 13 - the door is toast!"

GM: "Absolutely. Hrothgar forces the door open with ease."

Difficulty levels correspond to die sizes as follows:

DIFFICULTY LEVEL	DIE TYPE
Easy	d12
Moderate	d10
Difficult	d8
Challenging	d6
Extraordinary	d4
Heroic	none

SPECIALIZATIONS

Once a character has their core abilities and skills, they are further distinguished by the specializations they develop, and the background they had before becoming an adventurer. Specializations fall within one of the Skills described above.

In gameplay terms, a specialization is used as a modifier when a character is rolling their skill die. Specializations are expressed in terms of levels, and each level in a specialization lets the player step up one die type when rolling that skill.

Specializations have a minimum level of 1 and a maximum level of 5.

When a character acquires a new Specialization, it begins at level 1.

For example, a fantasy character may have a d8 Skill in Spellcasting. Spells would be considered specializations. Suppose a character had two levels in the spell Teleport. To see if the spell succeeds, they would roll an Ability, Skill, and Difficulty die, attempting to get a 13 or better.

Let's say in this example that the character has a d10 Intellect, a d8 Spellcasting skill, and the GM declares that the teleportation is Challenging, which is a d6 difficulty die.

With a 2nd level Teleport spell, the d8 Spellcasting die would step up two levels, from a d8 to a d12.

To cast the Teleport spell successfully, the player would roll a d10 + d12 + d6, hoping to get a 13 or better.

In Top Secret NWO, specializations are broken down into two levels (Specialized Skills & Proficiencies, a subset of Specialized Skills). This was done to give new characters a chance to acquire a group of specializations at the start, which are then increased one at a time as the game progresses. You may wish to do something similar, or to keep things simple by having just one level of specializations. Remember, this game engine is just a toolkit for you to create your game as you see fit.

Some examples of specializations you might choose to create:

FANTASY

PARENT SKILL	SPECIALIZATION
Spellcasting	Teleport
Sneaking	Pick locks
Sneaking	Disguise
Healing	Heal simple injury
Fighting	Broadsword
Fighting	Tightrope walking

SCI-FI

PARENT SKILL	SPECIALIZATION
Technology	Understand alien equipment
Astrogation	Pilot light starcraft
Astrogation	Dead reckoning
Mysticism	Mind energy shield
Mechanics	Craft simple radio
Combat	Nerve pinch

POST-APOCALYPTIC

PARENT SKILL	SPECIALIZATION
History	Use artifacts
History	Read dead languages
Communication	Sign language
Technology	Siphon fuel
Technology	Welding
Weaponry	Club fighting
Weaponry	Chains

BACKGROUNDS

Your game may wish to provide characters with a background prior to becoming an adventurer. If you do so, the Lucky 13 engine has a mechanic to provide the character with certain abilities or advantages based on the background they choose.

While Specializations give the player a step-up modifier for their die rolls, Backgrounds give them an advantage during a die roll. If a player uses their background to help them succeed with a die roll, they may roll their Ability die twice, and choose the higher of the two rolls.

In Top Secret NWO, we provide 20 backgrounds that players may roll for or choose from during character creation. Players are allowed to invent new backgrounds with the approval of their GM.

There are no hard & fast rules about the specific abilities conveyed by a character's background. It's an opportunity for creative role-playing on the player's part, and creative adjudication on the GM's part.

EQUIPMENT / ASSETS

“Assets” can be thought of as a general term for any thing or person that a character uses to increase their chances of succeeding at a task. In some cases, it will be impossible to succeed without the asset, such as needing a parachute to skydive or needing a lantern to see in a dark cave. In other cases, the asset will simply improve the chances of success.

Assets can also come in the form of people that the character calls on for help. For example, a character attempting to bluff their way past town guards could use an NPC from the town who has coached

them on what to say. This is a great incentive for players to cultivate friendly connections as the campaign progresses, to call on them when the time is right.

When using an asset, the skill die steps up based on the level of the asset.

Example: Snake Preacher (who has a Technology skill of d6) is exploring the ruins of a tunnel system from *The Before Times*, carefully making his way to avoid pitfalls and traps. To help him out, he has a torn and faded old paper map that he captured from a nomad. The map is just adequate, or level 2.

Whenever Snake Preacher rolls to see if he detects a pitfall or a trap, his Technology die is stepped up two times, from a d6 to a d10.

Assets are rated based on their quality, from level 1 (inferior) to level 5 (perfect). You may modify the levels as appropriate for your own game if you wish.

ASSET QUALITY	LEVEL (STEP UP)
Perfect	5
Excellent	4
Standard	3
Adequate	2
Inferior	1

EXPLODING & IMPLODING DICE

Lucky 13 uses both exploding and imploding dice. In *Top Secret NWO*, they are called “burst” and “blowback.” You may wish to choose appropriate terms for your own flavor, or stick with the more common

terms “exploding” and “imploding.”

A die explodes when the highest number on that die is rolled. The player may keep that roll and roll the die again, adding the result to their die pool total.

A die implodes when the lowest number (1) on the die is rolled. This is not an automatic failure, because there are other dice that were rolled with it, and the total may still reach 13 even if one die comes up as a 1. The result of an imploding die is a dilemma.

Dilemmas

A dilemma is an opportunity for some creative role-playing by the GM and players alike. It doesn't necessarily result in a failure, but it may set up a new situation that needs to be overcome. The dilemma can be serious or funny, as the situation or your adventure calls for. The GM may declare what the dilemma is, or they may choose to let the rest of the players at the table have some fun and decide what happens to their fellow adventurer.

Example of a dilemma

The intrepid space marine Janet reaches for a hallucinogenic grenade to throw at the invaders boarding her ship. Her roll is successful, but her Ability die comes up as a 1, so it implodes. The grenade hits the invaders, but a dilemma is called for. The GM asks the other players for ideas, and they decide that she accidentally triggered the rest of the grenades on her belt at the same time, so now Janet and her companions are hit by hallucinations as well.

There are two modes of play that affect which dice can explode: Cinematic and Gritty.

Cinematic gameplay

In Cinematic mode, any die can explode or implode. Exploding dice can continue to explode indefinitely.

Gritty gameplay

In Gritty mode, only an Ability die can explode, and it can only explode one time.

CHARACTERS ASSISTING CHARACTERS

When a PC or NPC assists with a task that they would reasonably be able to help with, such as lifting a heavy object or fast-talking an NPC, they can provide a step or more up to the appropriate die type. For ability tasks (lifting a heavy object would be a pulse ability, for example), the ability die would step up. For skill tasks (deciphering a code, for example), the skill die would step up.

When assisting with a roll, use the following table to determine how many steps a die can increase.

ASSISTING	LEVEL (STEP UP)
d12	5
d10	4
d8	3
d6	2
d4	1

HIT POINTS

Hit points are based on the character's Pulse (or whatever you choose to name the physical ability in your game). In Lucky 13, as your hit

points are depleted, your Pulse temporarily goes down as well.

Each Pulse die has 10 hit points associated with it. Once all of the hit points for that die have been depleted, the character's Pulse goes down by one die type, continuing until the character reaches zero hit points.

(Note: When designing your game, you may choose to increase or decrease the number of hit points associated with each Pulse die, depending on how you want weapon damage to compare to hit points, or the scale that you prefer.)

Restoring hit points also restores the character's Pulse.

This is best illustrated with a hit point chart on the character sheet. Here is an example in table form:

PULSE DIE	HIT POINTS	TOTAL HIT POINTS
d12	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	50
d10	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	40
d8	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	30
d6	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	20
d4	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	10

A character with a d4 would have 10 hit points when at full strength, a character with a d12 has 50 hit points, and so on for all die types in between.

INITIATIVE

Initiative is based on the Reflex ability. At the beginning of an encounter, each character rolls their Reflex die, and the GM rolls Reflex for their opponents. Initiative proceeds with the highest roll going first, and so on until reaching the lowest roll, which goes last.

The GM may choose to roll one die for all opponents as a group (if they have identical Reflex dice) or to roll individually for each opponent. The decision is up to the GM, based on whatever will make the encounter play most smoothly.

The GM notes the initiative order based on the die rolls.

In the case of a tie, the GM may decide who is higher in the initiative order. This can be done by awarding a higher spot to the character with the higher Reflex, or by having a roll-off to decide. The GM also has the discretion to make a ruling based on other factors, as the situation calls for.

Initiative is rolled once per encounter, and the initiative order remains the same for the entire encounter.

OPPOSED ROLLS

When two characters are competing to achieve a result, an opposed roll is used to determine the winner. This can be used for rounds of combat, a battle of wills, a test of strength, or anything else where one character is attempting to thwart another.

An opposed roll consists of each character's Ability die + Skill die versus the other's, along with any modifiers in the form of stepping the dice or adding additional dice. Some examples are shown below. When designing your own game, you will want to spend time deciding the kinds of modifiers you want to provide, especially when it comes to combat, weapons, and armor.

Example:

“Knuckles” O’Malley is trying to force open an interior door, but his rival Tony “Big Tuna” De Luca is holding it back from the other side. The door is inferior, i.e. level 1.

Knuckles rolls his Pulse (d8) + Fighting (d10). Big Tuna has a Pulse of d8, but the level 1 door makes the die step up to a d10. He rolls a d10

+ his Fighting (d10).

Knuckles gets a total of 9 with his two dice, and Big Tuna gets a total of 12.

Big Tuna holds the door, Knuckles is not able to force it open this round.

Combat

When two characters are engaged in combat, the basic opposed roll looks like this:

Reflex + Combat + Weapon Accuracy VS Reflex + Combat + Defensive Die

Your system may have different names for Reflex and Combat, but you will need a skill that can be used whenever combat occurs, whatever you name that skill.

The higher roll wins that round of combat, meaning the attack either succeeds or fails. A draw is considered a failed attack.

Damage is based on the difference between die rolls. To determine damage, roll the weapon's damage die and add the difference between attack die rolls.

Example:

Brunella attacks Casimir with a broadsword. Casimir is wearing chainmail armor.

BRUNELLA	
Reflex	d8
Combat	d6
Broadsword accuracy	d8
Broadsword damage	d10

CASIMIR	
Reflex	d6
Combat	d10
Pulse	d8 (30 hit points)
Chainmail armor	d6

Brunella rolls Reflex (d8) + Combat (d6) + Broadsword (d8).

She gets 4, 5, and 7 for a total of 16

Casimir rolls Reflex (d6) + Combat (d10) + Chainmail (d6)

He gets 2, 6, and 4 for a total of 12

The attack succeeds because Brunella rolled higher. The difference between 16 and 12 is 4.

Brunella rolls the broadsword's Damage die, a d10, and gets a 6. Adding the 4 points from her attack success, the total damage is 10 points.

Casimir had 30 hit points because of his d8 Pulse. He now has 20 hit points, and his Pulse has dropped temporarily to a d6. (See hit point chart above)

Defensive Dice

In combat, the character being attacked gets a Defensive Die to roll against the attacker's weapon die. This may be a character's armor, a monster's natural toughness, an energy shield, or whatever is appropriate in your game. It's also possible that a defender with nothing but their natural abilities to protect them in an attack may get no Defensive Die at all.

Modifiers

There are situations in which a character should have their chances

to prevail in combat modified either upwards or downwards. This is done by stepping up one of their dice, or giving them an advantage or disadvantage during a die roll.

The Lucky 13 system does not have players do the math of adding or subtracting totals from their die roll. Changing their roll is the primary method of creating modifiers.

Some modifiers that will typically affect combat are those provided from a Specialization or a Background. You may choose to include additional rules in your game to provide modifiers based on combat conditions, terrain, prone opponents, or other situations.

WEAPONS

Weapons have two abilities, Accuracy and Damage. In its basic form, Lucky 13 does not distinguish between melee and ranged weapons, although you may wish to do so for your own game. Top Secret NWO has detailed rules for ranged weapons, mostly firearms, as a modern espionage game, and you may look to those rules for inspiration if you want to create distinct rules for ranged weapons.

Accuracy

A weapon's Accuracy Die can be anything from a d4 through a d12. The higher the die type, the easier it is to hit with that weapon. This is true for both ranged and melee weapons.

Damage

A weapon's Damage Die is the base die that a player will roll when their character scores a successful hit with that weapon. The total damage inflicted is a function of their Damage Die roll plus the amount by which their attack roll succeeded.

ARMOR

For player characters and NPCs, armor will be the most common source of a Defensive Die in combat. Armor is rated from d4 (least effective) to d12 (most effective).

HEALING

Healing rules are specific to the type of gameplay you want to create. As the game designer, we encourage you to create whatever healing rules you choose.

For reference, in Top Secret NWO, characters can recover a maximum of 4 hp from resting alone, at a rate of 1 hp every 15 minutes. Additional healing requires either first aid or more involved medical treatment. You may refer to the Top Secret: New World Order rules for more details.

Choose the healing methods that fit your setting's genre and flavor.

DEATH & DYING

Once a character reaches zero hit points, they are dying. A dying character is unconscious, and loses one hit point per minute if they are not given some kind of healing treatment to stabilize them. In Top Secret NWO, this means first aid. You may define the method of stabilizing a dying character in a way that fits your setting. They may then be healed using whatever methods your game allows, up to their maximum hit points.

For a more cinematic game, you may choose to allow a character to continue fighting with no penalties once they are healed. For a grittier game, you may choose to have the character require some period of rest and recuperation before they are able to perform at full strength again.

Death occurs when a character's negative hit point total equals their Pulse die type.

Dying

PULSE	DEATH OCCURS AT
d4	-4 hp
d6	-6 hp
d8	-8 hp
d10	-10 hp
d12	-12 hp

SKILL ADVANCEMENT / ADVENTURE POINTS

Lucky 13 does not use discreet levels for characters, opting instead for a smoother, more natural advancement by allowing characters to improve their skills at the end of each adventure, based on their performance during the game.

In Top Secret NWO, this is done with the use of Mission Points that are awarded for things such as completing a mission, performing a heroic act, saving another character's life, discovering vital intel, etc.

The generic Lucky 13 term for this is Adventure Points.

Characters are typically expected to be able to earn between 10 and

20 Adventure Points per adventure.

Adding a new Specialization or increasing a Specialization Level costs 4 Adventure Points.

Characters may increase their Ability scores through Adventure Points as well. It can be assumed that the character goes through training and study to improve their Abilities, and should be role-played that way. As a game mechanic, though, it requires spending Adventure Points as well.

Increasing an Ability costs the current Ability Die type x4 Adventure Points.

Ability Score Increase

CURRENT ABILITY SCORE	INCREASED ABILITY SCORE	ADVENTURE POINT COST
d4	d6	16
d6	d8	24
d8	d10	32
d10	d12	40
d12	N/A	N/A

Adventure Points may be saved and accumulated, they do not have to all be spent at the end of an adventure.

ADDITIONAL RULES

These are some additional rules which are used in Top Secret NWO. You may ignore them or use them in your own game rules, as you wish. You may, of course, also add other rules as needed.

Reputation

Reputation is a mechanic in Top Secret NWO that encourages players to consider the consequences of their actions. Because Lucky 13 doesn't use an alignment system, this is one way to prevent games from going off the rails into "murder hobo" territory.

Every character begins with a Reputation of zero, which can increase as high as level 5, or even decrease into negative territory, down to -5.

In some interactions between PCs and NPCs, a skill check is required to see if the NPC will be friendly or hostile to the PC's overtures. This is a Reaction skill check, which consists of Charm + HUMINT (a Top Secret NWO skill) + a decision die. The PC's reputation will cause the Charm die to step up or down according to their reputation level.

Reputation is adjusted at the end of each mission in Top Secret NWO, using a table of points that are awarded or deducted for certain behaviors. You may refer to the Top Secret NWO core rulebook (pages 11 and 101) to see details.

If you choose to use Reputation in your own game, you will want to write your own set of behaviors that affect reputation so they fit your genre and setting.

Impairments

Impairments work like Backgrounds, but in reverse. Rather than providing an advantage when rolling dice, a character with an Impairment will be at a disadvantage when a situation arises where their impairment would come into play. This means they will roll their Ability die twice, and select the lower of the two rolls.

Impairments are either rolled for or selected during character creation. The player must first decide whether they want their character to have any impairments or not. If they do choose to have an impairment, they may select one additional Specialization during creation.

ADDING YOUR OWN RULES (CORE PRINCIPLES)

You will find that there are many rules you will need to create yourself in order to have a complete role-playing game. Use this game engine as a toolbox when writing your own additional rules.

The core principles of Lucky 13 are:

- **Simplicity:** Players are never asked to add a number to their die roll, or calculate target values for success. A 13 always succeeds in an unopposed roll and higher roll always wins in an opposed roll. Modifications come from changing the dice that are rolled rather than doing math.
- **Adventure, not plunder:** Lucky 13 does not use a system of leveling up, where players are in an arms race with monsters, and the goal is to keep gaining levels to fight more powerful baddies. Character advancement is organic, so the goal is to have more and more interesting adventures, building a rich biography for your character.
- **Player agency:** Decisions have consequences, and the choices a player makes for their character matter. There should be enough “realism” that the decisions made in character creation have an effect on the game, beyond storytelling flavor. Lucky 13 is not a simulation engine, but it provides enough granularity that equipment, weapons, and abilities can have distinct mechanics that make the adventures feel consequential and “real.” The players should never feel railroaded. At the end of a game, everyone should feel that their actions mattered.

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LUCKY 13™