A.D.A.

Artefact Detention Agency

Contents

Introduction

A.D.A. you are an agent of a secrective agency, bound to protect the world from mysterious artefacts. You will investigate strange events in order to find these artefacts before they fall into the wrong hands. But being part of an agency doesn't always come with perks. The agency is riddled with unneccesary bureaucracy that makes life ever so harder.

Whereas in traditional roleplaying game you would need someone to guide you through the adventure you can play A.D.A. completely alone or together with someone else. The game is focused on the story you develop during play and as such is fuelled mostly by your imagination.

Material Needed

To play A.D.A. you do not need much:

- A bunch of **six-sided dice** (also written as **d6**). About 10 should be enough.

- **Paper and Pencil** to write down important things. Ideally you have some index cards to write on, but normal paper will do fine as well.

- Some sort of **token** that can be used as Luck points. Some loose change fits perfectly.

- Optionally printed out copies of various sheets that you can find at the end of the book.

Disclaimer

This rulebook is a work in progress. In its current state it is mostly just a collection of various rules and mechanics that I noted down. They are in

no way cohesive, balanced, well-written or playtested. It is a very rough draft.

Inspiration

A.D.A. was inspired ...

   ... by **TV-Shows and Movies**: Warehouse 13, The Librarian(s), Raiders of the Lost Ark

   ... by **RPGs**: Ironsworn, FATE, Blades in the Dark, Vaesen (Year Zero Engine), Tremulus RPG

Changelog

r202111-002

- renamed **Investigate** skill to **Logic**

- correcting character sheet

r202111-001

First Version

Basic Field Training

Aspects

Everything and everyone in A.D.A. can be described with aspects. They will help to form the story and form conflict. When you are unsure about where to go in the story, have a look at the available aspects and let them guide you. They are an instrumental part of the experience.

They are short sentences, phrases or even just single words that describes something about the character, environment or object you are looking at. Aspects are often double-edged: they can provide you support but can also be detrimental in your endeavours. If you can think about a way to use an aspect to your advantage and a way how it may hinder you, then it is a good aspect.

Throughout this book aspects will *be highlighted* so you can easily spot them.

You will encounter different type of aspects in your games. The main thing that differentiates these aspects are how long they last and to what they might be attached too.

World Aspects. These are the truth about your world. They are mostly permanent and will never go away, but might change slightly over long period of time. These are universal truths, describe problems or major threats in the world. They are always available to use.

Character Aspects. Aspects that describe a character, their persona, goals, believes and relationships. These differentiate characters from each other and makes them unique. Similar to world aspects these might change but only by inducing some form of stress. Believes need to be shattered utterly to be changed and certain ticks and behaviours are hard to shed. As these aspects are attached to characters they go wherever the character goes. If it isn't present in a scene they can't be used (for good or for worse).

Situation Aspects. They only exist for a short period of time. Mostly during a scene or until the situation resolves itself. These can be current

weather, an obstacle, environmental features or certain details that are specific to a scene. Situation aspects can change rather rapidly. They come and go and more often then not become obstacles the characters need to overcome. They can also be created by characters to gain an advantage.

Boosts. These are describe fleeting advantages that go away as soon as they are exploited or the situation changes to no longer support them. They can be unnamed and just signify a quick opportunity that needs to be taken. For example *off-balance* can be considered a boost. At any moment of time a character can rebalance himself, so the opportunity to strike is short.

Characters

Characters directly under the control of the player are called **agents**, whereas other characters are non-player characters or **NPC**s. As a player you take control of one or more of these characters that are interacting with the world.

A character is defined by

- Traits and Skills

- Abilities

- Personality

- Luck

All these definitions and more are noted down on your **Character Sheet**. This acts as a reminder on who you are in the world of A.D.A. Take care of all your characters as if they were yourself.

Traits and Skills

A character has three traits: **Physical**, **Mental** and **Social**. These describe in a general way on how a character interacts with the world. Each trait has associated skills that describe how these traits are effectively used. When you interact with the environment you will use these skills.

The skills are

Physical	Mental	Social
Physique	Will	Contacts
Fight	Empathy	Deceive
Stealth	Lore	Rapport
Intimidate	Logic	Notice

Traits and Skills have a rating between **0** and **4**. The higher your rating, the more likely you are to succeed at actions using that particular skill. Some effects can reduce and increase the rating of a trait or skill. The rating can never fall below **0** in such cases.

The rating of a trait is determined by counting the number of skills that have at least a rating of **1** under that trait.

> A character with skills **Stealth 2**, **Intimidate 1**, **Fight 0** and **Will 3** would have the following trait ratings: **Physical 2**, **Mental 1** and **Social 0**.

Abilities

Each character has unique abilities that can alter how a skill is used under certain circumstances. They can also define a way you can behave in precarious situations. They change the rules of the game in a profound way and are very powerful. Abilities allow a skill to be used for something it is normally not intended to do, or to empower an existing skill.

You always have a choice when to use your ability and when not. Some of them can only be used a very limited amount of times before the character has to recuperate again in order to use that ability again.

Personality

Beyond measurable characteristics an agent has mannerisms, experiences and behaviours that are unique to that character. These are specified as aspects. A new character starts with three such aspects: **High Concept**, **Believes** and **Impulse**. During the game the character might gain new aspects, change old ones or loose these entirely with the experiences. As with all aspects, these can be beneficial and as well be detrimental to your efforts.

The **High Concept** defines who the character is in the first place, what it does. This could be a previous profession, a title or just a lifestyle.

Examples: *Former Captain of the 55th Precinct* / *Hopeless Playboy* .

A character has **Believes**. Why does he do things that he does?

Examples: *People never change* / *Violence is not an option*

Lastly if a certain line is crossed, the character acts on an **Impulse**. Something he has difficulty to keep under control. Often then not, impulses make matters worse than they already are.

Examples: *Shoot first, ask questions later* / *Always defending my honor*

Luck

Their skills and abilities only takes agents so far. What separates them and lets them succeed is **Luck**. Each character has a limited pool of **Luck Points** that can be used to alter fate in critical situations.

Luck can be earned when something does not go the way you planned and let the universe decide for you. It will not forget though and grant you a luck point to be used later. Cosmic Karma.

Character Creation

To create a new character (or agent) you will need to fill out **Form 26-A: Agent Evaluation Form** (or character sheet). It acts as a reminder to the agents capabilities and motivations throughout the game. You can find a character sheet example at the end of the book.

Employee Profile

A employee profile gives you a starting point in creating your agent. These give you starting skills as well as a set of abilities unique to that profile. These profiles try to categorize common aspects of agents, but this doesn't mean that your agent is stuck at doing one thing. It is an area of focus and preference not a playstyle. A list of available profile can be found in the **Filing Cabinet**.

To create a character using the employee profiles, follow these steps:

1. Choose **Employee Profile**

2. Create an aspect for **High Concept**, **Believe** and **Impulse**

3. Note down the starting rating of the **Starting Skills** as denoted by the Profile

4. Distribute 4 more skill points to the remaining skills

    (a) Put 1 point to a skill that you feel represents your **Believe** best

      (b) Put 1 point to a skill that you feel represents your **Impulse** best

      (c) Put 2 more points to skills of your own choosing

5. Choose one of the abilities of the profile

6. Mark your current stress level as *Low*

7. Give the agent a name

When assigning additional skill points to your skills during character creation take note of the following rules:

- You can increase the rating of any skill by adding **1** to that skill for every skill point you are using.

- You can't increase the rating of any skill higher than **2**.

Actions

Characters will inevitably get into situations where matters have to be taken into their own hands. Suspects need to be chased, high security buildings hacked into and informants interrogated. Actions shape the story and inevitably there might be something going horribly wrong.

Action Roll

If the outcome of an action is uncertain, you will tempt fate by rolling dice. Follow these basic steps:

- Choose a Skill or Trait that is appropriate to the action

- Roll an amount of six-sided dice corresponding to the rating of that skill

- Determine the outcome of the roll

Should you have a rating of zero and you are attempting an action, roll two dice and pick the lower of these dice as your result. Even you rolled two dice, only one is considered when determining the outcome of the action.

To determine the outcome of the action look at **the dice with the highest result**:

- You **succeed** the action, if the value is **6** - things go as you have planned.

- You **partially succeed** the action, if the value is **4 or 5** - you succeed but at a cost.

- You **fail** the action, if the value is **1, 2 or 3** - the goal is out of reach and there might be consequences.

If you roll 2 or more **6** in a single role, you would **critically succesd** this action instead. It counts as a normal **success** but there might be additional benefits depending on the action.

Changing Fate

Sometimes it is crucial that you succeed at an action, or at least not fail. In such cases you can use your **Luck Points** to change the outcome of a roll.

Invoking Aspects

Aspects describe everything that happens around you. A character can take advantage of that and invoke an aspect. You can only invoke aspects that are availble in your current situation and if you have at least one **Luck Point**. You can invoke an aspect at any time, even after you have already rolled for the action.

To invoke an aspect, describe how the aspect provides you an advantage for the action and loose one **Luck Point**. Then choose one:

- Add +1 to the value of any die. This can't take the value of the die higher than **6**, but can turn a success into a critical success.

- Reroll all dice

You can only invoke the same aspect once per action, but you can invoke different aspects for the same action.

Sometimes effects will grant you a **free invoke**. In this case you will not loose a **Luck Point** by doing so. Instead remove one free invocation from that aspect. **Boosts** are a special kind of free invocation. After it has been invoked, the aspect seizes to exist entirely.

Compelling Aspects

Sometimes the universe is not kind to you or you put your fate in the hand of it, be guided by its decision, no matter the cost. Aspects are not always to your advantage but can also be of advantage to your opposition. Or your impulse is taking over and you have no control about your actions.

In such cases you can **Compel** an aspect. Describe what the aspect is compelling you to do. You might be compelled to use an action you would normally not take in that situation or you fail at an action entirely.

Then choose one:

- Accept the consequences of the compel and get one **Luck Point**

- Loose one **Luck Point** to prevent the consequences from happening

Same as for invoking, there are **free compels**, an advantage the opposition has over you. If you try to take an action and there are aspects with free compels that would fit, you are compelled. Only one free compel can be activated at a time. So if multiple aspects would fit the situation then you process them one after each other.

Type of Actions

In A.D.A. there are three actions you can take: **Overcome**, **Create Advantage** and **Skirmish**. Not all skills are applicable to all of the actions, but most of them are.

Overcome

During your investigations, the characters will encounter several obstacles and opposition. The **Overcome** action lets you deal with these problems. Most of the actions will fall into this type and it is broadly available for most of the skills. You can either use this action to deal with an aspect (such as *Locked Door*) or create a broader goal such as climb a tree. The action should have a goal defined before you roll and a possible consequence if you fail to achieve this goal.

Then perform an Action Roll and compare the outcome:

- On **Critical Success**: You attain your goal and get a *boost*

- On **Success**: You attain your goal without any consequence

- On **Partial Success**: You attain your goal but with consequences

- On **Failure**: You fail at your goal and suffer consequences

Create Advantage

The **Create Advantage** action lets you change the environment and situation to your benefit. You will create aspects or try to take advantage of existing ones to provide help to you or your allies. This could mean actively interacting with your surroundings or being observant.

If you create a new aspect ...

- On **Critical Success**: You create the aspect and get two free invocations

- On **Success**: You create the aspect and get one free invocation

- On **Partial Success**: Choose one - You create the aspect with consequences *or* you get a boost

- On **Failure**: Choose one - You create the aspect but gets one free compell *or* you don't create the aspect

If you use an existing aspect ...

- On **Critical Success**: You gain two free invocations on this aspect

- On **Success**: You gain one free invocation

- On **Partial Success**: You gain one free invocation with consequences

- On **Failure**: The aspect gains one free compell

Skirmish

Sometimes conflict is inevitable and you need to harm another character or being. This can be either a physical or mental attack. Someone will get hurt.

- On **Critical Success**: Choose one - You inflict two stress *or* you inflict one stress and gain a boost

- On **Success**: You inflict one stress

- On **Partial Success**: You inflict one stress and endure one stress

- On **Failure**: You endure stress in the amount of the value of the action roll

Stress and Scars

Stress

Conflict leaves it marks. These marks come in form of stress and scars. Stress is the immediate consequence of such conflicts. It can be physical such as a strained ankle or a cut. But it also can be mental, such as fear or headaches. Stress is measured in four different levels, which are (in order): **Low, Moderate, High, Dangerous**.

Whenever you **endure** Stress, for every point of stress you endured you move one step along this scale.

> Your character starts with **Low** Stress. If you endure 2 stress, then you would move from **Moderate** to **High** stress.

As fast as stress is acquired, as quickly it can dissipate. When a scene ends, all of your stress is reset to **Low**. This represents your characters getting to catch a breath and treat simple wounds.

Scars

When the stress gets too much to bear, it will inflict scars. If your stress level is at **Dangerous** and you would endure stress, you inflict a scar on the character. All remaining stress you would endure is reduced to zero. Scars are character aspects and are noted on the character sheet. As such they can be invoked and compelled.

> Your character is at **High** stress. When you endure 3 stress, the stress moves to **Dangerous** and the remaining 2 stress inflict a scar.

Scars come in three different types. Similarly to stress these can be considered mental or physical, whatever the originating stress was.

Fleeting scars can be tended to in the field. You will need provisions and some time to do so. After the scene where this scar was inflicted has passed, you can try an **Overcome** action to get rid of this scar.

Sticky scars are harder to get rid off. The time and material needed exceeds what can be done in the field. These scars will only heal if treated between assignments at the agency.

Lasting scars will accompany a character the longest. The stress that inflicted these will take months or years to heal the wounds.

A character can only have one of each type of scar. Whenever a scar is inflicted, you have to create an aspect that corresponds to one of these types. If you have a scar of every type and another scar would be inflicted, the character can't bear it anymore and is taken out.

Consequences

When you are partially succeeding or even failing at certain action you will have to face consequences. These will inadvertably change the course of your story. There are two kind of consequences: **Minor** and **Major**.

Minor Consequences

A minor consequence is working against your current plans. They will introduce some sort of obstacle or opposition into the situation. Imagine what could make your current situation worse, or roll two six-sided dice and look up the result on the following table:

d6	First	Second
1	an aspect	appears / shows up
2	a character	leaves / is concealed
3	an object	is altered / changes
4	a location	challenges you
5	an organization	reveals something
6	an event	helps you

Major Consequences

A major consequence is a much worse effect than a minor consequence was. It requires immediate attention and can even end a scene and start a new one. Image what would need immediate attention in the current situation, or roll two six-sided dice and look up the result on the following table:

d6	First	Second
1	an aspect	is captured / has captured something important
2	a character	is lost / breaks
3	an object	has a terrible secret
4	a location	has been working against you all along
5	an organization	is acusing you
6	an event	is attacking / hurting you

Oracle Roll

Since you are playing alone, there might be times where things become unclear or more information is needed. This would normally the time to ask the Game Master a Yes-or-No question. In such situations you can make an **Oracle Roll**. These work similarly to normal action rolls, but give you a answer to your question.

Check the available aspects in the current scene. Sometimes the answer can be established from them. If not consider the rating of your question on how likely it would be that the answer would be "yes".

Likelihood	Rating
Unlikely	0
50/50	1
Likely	2
Very Likely	3

Roll as many dice as the choosen rating and compare the outcome (do not consider critical successes) to the following table:

Outcome	Answer
Failure	No
Partial Success	Yes, but with minor consequence
Success	Yes

The Flow of Play

In A.D.A. you will send one or two agents on cases to investigate mysterious events and tell the story of what happens during this mission. You advance through this story by moving from scene to scene. In a scene you encounter different opposition that you will need to overcome in

order to investigate and gather clues. Each clue brings you closer to
the artefact and its powers.

In roleplaying games you not only play *with* your character, you play
as your character. The character sheet gives you information on what
it might to or wouldn't do in a situation and this can be completely dif-
ferent from your own behaviour.

If you come to a situation where you don't know what could happen
next, you can try out what feels right to you or you can ask a question
to the Oracle. Above all if it is interesting, dramatic and fits the fiction,
you're on the right track.

Embrace all failures. They make the story interesting by introduc-
ing new obstacles and hazards your characters need to overcome and
represent the chaos and unpredictability of the artefacts in the world.

Above have fun. There's no wrong in playing A.D.A. if you're having
fun then you are right, even if you don't get every rule correct the first
time around.

Filing Cabinet

Employee Profiles

> **Work in Progress**
>
> Employee Profiles are not complete! It should be fine to play without any abilities.

Commander

High Concept.
    Starting Skills. *Contacts* 2, *Fight* 1
    Abilities.

Inspector

High Concept.
    Starting Skills. *Investigate* 2, *Notice* 1
    Abilities.

Protector

High Concept.
    Starting Skills. *Physique* 2, *Empathy* 1
    Abilities.

Entertainer

High Concept.
    Starting Skills. *Rapport 2, Lore 1*
    Abilities.

Artefact Detention Agency
Agent Evaluation Form

F o r m
23-A

1. Name

b. Profile ☐ n/a

2. Personality

a. High Concept

b. Believe

c. Impulse

3. Skills and Abilities

Rate skills on a scale of 0 to 4
0=insignificant ... 4=expert

a. Physical		b. Mental		c. Social	
Physique	☐	Will	☐	Contacts	☐
Fight	☐	Empathy	☐	Deceive	☐
Stealth	☐	Lore	☐	Rapport	☐
Intimidate	☐	Logic	☐	Notice	☐

d. Abilities

4. Health

a. Fleeting Scar

b. Sticky Scar

c. Lasting Scar

5. Other aspects not covered above

Evaluate Stress and mark
appropriate level with paperclip

Low	☺
Moderate	
High	
Dangerous	☹