



A quick introduction into the rules of "Scath: Shadow of the Fomori"

Basic Rolls

Most rolls in the game of Scath use a D20, a twenty – sided die. Only magical powers and damage determination can use different dice.

The basic roll, or "check", that will be happening for most of the game, is either a skill check or an attribute check. They both work according to the same procedure. The gamemaster tells you which skill or attribute to roll against, you roll a D20 and try to roll below or equal to the number (from 1 = very poor to 20 = godlike ability) of said skill/attribute.

Example: Paul's character wants to attempt a "Speed" – check. His speed is 12. He rolls a 9. Success!

Should you roll over the number of the specified skill/attribute your character has failed whatever task he attempted to do.

No matter how high the number of your character's attribute/skill is, a roll of a natural ONE is always a success, a roll of a natural TWENTY is always a failure.

Levels of Difficulty

Not every task is of the same difficulty. Some things are nearly impossible to achieve for an untrained character, and challenging even to a trained one. On the opposite side, some tasks are easy enough that even an untrained character has a decent chance of success. This is where levels of difficulty come in.

Simply said, a level of difficulty is either a number that is added to a character's attribute/skill before his roll (when the task is easier than average) or a number that is subtracted from the attribute/skill (when the task is more difficult than average).

This modifier should be between + 5 and -5.

A negative difficulty level of -5 or -4 signifies a very difficult task (climbing a steep cliff in complete darkness, trying to lift something very heavy while on unsteady ground, sneaking through thick bushes). A negative difficulty of -3,-2 or -1 signifies a

task that is more difficult than the average one, but not of any significant difficulty (trying to see something in bad light, trying to shoot a moving target). Positive difficulty levels are exactly the opposite. +5 and +4 signify fairly easy tasks or decent help from the outside (climbing a not – too steep cliff with decent climbing equipment, breaking down a flimsy door with an axe), whereas +3, +2 and +1 signify tasks that are only slightly easier than average (hitting an enemy who is already fighting someone else, sneaking up on a distracted opponent, intimidating someone who is already scared of you).

Levels of Success/Failure

Sometimes it is not only important to succeed in a check but also to succeed more than just barely. The same goes for failures. A near miss can sometimes be *much* better than a complete failure.

To determine how many levels of success or failure you have rolled simply count the difference between the height of the attribute/skill you have rolled against and the number you have rolled. That is how many levels you have.

Example: John rolls on his “Climb” skill of 10 and rolls a 7. Three levels of success! If he had rolled a 14 he would have had four levels of failure.

The more levels of success you have, the faster, more thorough you managed to do whatever you wanted to, spending less effort and solving the problem in an elegant way. Everything beyond three levels of success indicates a task very well done.

The more levels of failure you have the more terrible your disaster. It will take you longer to try (and fail!), look really stupid in the eyes of others or might even end up hurting your character! Everything beyond three levels of failure is a minor catastrophe.

In the end it is up to the Gamemaster to determine whether the levels of success or failure are important for that specific roll and how exactly to interpret these levels you achieved.

Opposed Checks

Sometimes your character has to roll against an opponent. The most frequent instances will be when he is trying to sneak up to/past someone (your character's “Stealth” against your opponent's “Perception) or when trying to manipulate/intimidate someone (your character's “Diplomacy” or “Intimidation” against the opponent's “Mind”). Opposed “Brawn” checks can also happen fairly often, when characters try to overpower each other with brute muscle strength.

Opposed “Speed” checks can be used to determine who wins a race.

To determine who has won an opposed check you compare levels of success. Should both characters have the same levels the check is rerolled. Should both characters fail nothing happens.

Attributes

There are six main attributes. They are mainly used for rolls that are not covered by any skills. They also determine several resources used in the advanced rules of Scath.

1. **Brawl**: Your skill in close combat, both defensive and offensive.
2. **Speed**: Agility and dexterity, the speed and precision with which your body moves.
3. **Brawn**: Strength and toughness, the power of your muscles and your stamina.
4. **Mind**: Willpower, intelligence and perception, your brain and your senses.
5. **Charm**: Your social capabilities, both active and passive.
6. **Mystic**: Your magic sense, ability to cast spells and activate supernatural powers.

Skills

Skills are derived from attributes and are levelled up with a specific kind of training.

In the full game of Scath there are over 20 skills, but here is an explanation of the main 12 skills.

Climb: Used for any sort of vertical movement, mainly rocks and trees.

Diplomacy: Used to make people do what you want, to a certain degree.

Dodge: Used to avoid taking melee damage by sidestepping it. Can only be used once per turn and does not cost an action.

Empathy: Used to determine the intentions and feelings of the people around you.

Handle Animal: Used to calm or nurture natural animals. Does not work on monsters or corrupted creatures.

Heal: Used to heal your own and other people's wounds. A successful healing check can be used once after every battle and instantly regenerates 1D3+1 health. It can also be used to stop someone from bleeding to death.

Intimidation: Used to cause fear in others, making them flee or obey. Not usable in combat.

Knowledge: Used to determine whether your character has information about a specific thing. A character can have several different "Knowledge" skills.

Parry: Used to intercept your opponent's melee attacks, thus preventing him from dealing damage. Ranged attacks can only be parried if your character has a shield.

Parry can only be used once per turn and does not cost any action.

Perception: Used to determine whether you see, hear or smell things.

Survival: Used to find your way in the wilderness, make campfires, set traps for small animals and follow trails.

Stealth: Used to hide and sneak, preventing others from perceiving you.

Feats

Feats are special abilities that give a character a bonus to certain tasks, allow him to perform advanced actions (both in and out of combat) and permit him to break the general rules of the game under certain circumstances. There are over a hundred different Feats your character can learn in Scath: Shadow of the Fomori.

Focus Points

These points represent a character's will and determination. They can be used to influence certain very important actions. Focus Points regenerate up to their maximum number after a couple of hours of sleep (which will most likely not happen in the short “Dark Flame” adventure).

You can spend a focus point both in and out of combat. Some of the effects, however, can only be triggered in combat. The effects are:

1. “First Focus”: +4 on your initiative roll at the start of a combat. Can be used *after* the roll has been made.
2. “Lucky streak”: Reroll a single D20 roll both in and out of combat. No die can be rerolled more than once, no matter where the reroll comes from. The number of the second roll is always the one applied, even if that result is worse.
3. “Determination”: You can buy an additional action point in combat, thus raising the amount of action points you can use up in that combat round to three.
4. “Second Wind”: You can spend focus points both in and out of combat to regenerate health. For each point you spend you regenerate 3 HP. Only one focus point per turn can be used like this.
5. “Conquer Pain”: You can ignore the fact that your health has reached zero or less and fight on. Should you take additional damage however, you will have to use another focus point. Should you reach the point of ultimate death (the negative number of your Brawn) even focus points cannot help you anymore.

Teampoints

Teampoints symbolize a way for allied characters to help each other. You can use a teampoint only in combat, and they automatically regenerate to their maximum number as soon as the combat is over and you rest for a couple of minutes.

A character uses a teampoint in an ally’s or enemy’s turn. He activates it as soon as an allied character attempts any type of D20 roll, but before the die is cast. That ally adds +2 points to the skill/attribute he is rolling against, effectively giving him a 10% higher chance of success. Only one teampoint can be used per roll.

In the complete rules there are also combination attacks that you can activate with teampoints, actions that two or more player characters can perform together, but for the sake of simplicity these are not available in this scenario.

Magic

All Chosen Ones in Scath have access to magical powers. These are symbolized by the “Grants” (spell-like abilities), “Spirit Dice” and “Spirit Points”.

Spirit Dice are between 2 and 5 D6 (depending on the character's level) that a Chosen One can roll. He can choose how many dice he wants to roll, but cannot go over his maximum. With the result of these D6 added together he has to beat the Spirit – Level of the Grant he is trying to cast. Weaker Grants have spirit levels of 5+, 7+ or 9+, whereas more powerful spells can have a Spirit level of 20+!

Should the character roll below the spirit level he cannot successfully cast the spell.

Should he roll as high or higher than the spirit level the spell is cast.

In addition to that, however, special things happen if a character rolls two of a kind, three of a kind or even more on his spirit dice, thus making it more dangerous the more dice you chose to roll.

Two of a kind make your character lose **Spirit Points**, which represent his spiritual energy and connection to his elemental spirit. Once his Spirit Points are depleted he cannot attempt to cast any more spells. Three of a kind make the spell fail, no matter how high the roll was, and also cost Spirit Points. Four of a kind can hurt the character himself, and five of a kind *really* will mess up the day of everyone close to the unfortunate caster...

Combat Rules

When a combat starts in Scath:Shadow of the Fomori, everything switches over to a slightly different rule system. Most of the rules still apply, but a lot of combat rules are added to it. Combat is divided into “combat rounds”. Each round is approximately 10 seconds. During each round every character has two action points he can use up. There are multiple basic actions and some advanced actions (these can only be used by specific characters). Most actions cost action points. You can use any combinations of actions, but once you have run out of action points your turn is over.

Initiative

Before a combat starts and everyone switches into combat rounds there is a “roll for initiative”. Every character, no matter whether they are player characters, allies or enemies, rolls 1D20 and adds their “Speed” attribute. The resulting number is their Initiative. Combat starts with the participant who has the highest Initiative. Once he has finished his turn the second highest can use his action points. This goes on until every participant has had their turn. In the second round of combat the participant with the highest Initiative starts again. No second roll for initiative is made.

Rules for a basic attack:

A single attack is the most important thing in combat. There are several different ways a character can attack, be it offensively, defensively, ranged, melee etc., but they all boil down to four steps:

Step One: Roll to hit. This roll is done by the attacking character's player. If the attack is ranged, the player makes a SPEED check. If the attack is melee, the player makes a BRAWL check. If the check fails it means your opponents defence was too good to overcome/your shot went wide. If you succeed with the check your character managed to get himself into a position which is favourable enough to strike/your shot is flying in the right direction.

Step Two: Roll to evade. The defending character can now choose to make a PARRY or DODGE skill check, assuming he still has both of these actions available

this turn. If the check succeeds he can avoid all damage from the attack. If the evade fails, the attack connects. A character can only parry ranged attacks if he has a shield.

Step Three: Roll damage. Every melee and ranged weapon has its own damage value. Check your character sheet for details

Step four: Subtract Armour. After damage is rolled the defending character subtracts his **ARMOUR VALUE**. This Value consists of the protective clothing (made of linen, fur, wood, metal or bone) a character is wearing, as well as natural armour (scales, hard muscle, magical protection etc.) he might have. After subtracting the AV the remaining number is how much health the character that was hit loses.

Basic Combat Actions

Every character can use these types of actions.

1. Ready: (One Action Point) Draw a weapon, notch an arrow, rise up from the ground, pick something up.

2. Move: (One Action Point) Move a number of meters according to a character's Speed. In difficult (dense brushes, hip – high water etc) terrain that distance is halved.

3. Run: (Two Action Points) Move your character's Speed x 3 in a (more or less) straight line. Move Speed x 1 in difficult terrain.

4. Aim: (One Action Point) Must be used directly before a ranged or melee attack and gives a +2 Brawl/Speed bonus for that attack.

5. Attack: (One Action Point) Make one single melee or ranged attack against a single target. See “Rules for a basic attack” on page 4 for details.

Note: Most characters can only do one attack per turn. A character can only attempt more than one attack if some special ability on his character sheet allows it.

6. Charge: (Two Action Points) Run up to your character's Speed x 2 (halved in difficult terrain) meters towards an opponent and strike him with a single melee attack. You receive a + 5 Brawl bonus and a + 2 damage bonus. This bonus only applies if you move in a more or less straight line and move at least three meters.

7. Free Actions: (Zero Action Points) Some Actions, most notably speaking a short sentence, dropping weapons or other things to the ground, parrying and dodging do not cost any action points.

Death

Once a character reaches zero health he is dying. He falls to the ground unconscious and is bleeding heavily. He is no longer able to take any actions. He loses one health per turn. As soon as he reaches his negative Brawn level of health he is dead.

Additionally, with heavy wounds there is a risk of bleeding to death more quickly.

Every turn he is bleeding out and unconscious a character must make a “death – saving – throw”. If he rolls a 1 to 18 he is fine. If, however, he rolls a 19 or 20, he dies immediately, no matter his health. The need for these saving throws can be stopped by a successful “Heal” check, which also prevents the character from losing one health per turn in later turns, effectively stabilizing him.

Natural regeneration

Without magical or mundane healing, a character regenerates 1 health for every four hours of rest. A successful “Heal” - skill check raises this rate to 1 health for every three hours.

A character is considered “resting” when he is not doing any physical work that is more exhausting than a slow, pleasant stroll. Ideally the character should be sitting down, lying down or even asleep to rest optimally.

Rough external conditions (like extremely cold or hot weather, strong wind, “unclean” surroundings etc.) can negatively influence a character's healing, pushing it down to 1 health every five or even six hours of rest.