Fourth Edition: Pocket

Contents

INTRODUCTION

This game is based heavily on 4th Edition - but in a strange way. My mission was to make a game that can interface with the vast majority of *content* for 4E, but ultimately beholden to only what I think is valuable. The 4E DMGs will still be of use if you want to run 4th Edition: Pocket (4EP), but so long as your players have access to the excellent, abandonware Character Builder, they won't need anything else.

There are a few awkward artifacts resulting from this ethos, but I've found them to be worth the brevity.

CHARACTER CREATION

Make a character like normal. Keep all of your special powers from your class and Feats or whatever, then ignore any of your basic powers that aren't:

- **Total Defense**: Total Defense now grants resistance 5 + CON modifier against all damage types until the end of your next turn.
- **Coup de Grace**: if a character is helpless, you may now simply kill/defeat them outright.
- **Second Wind**: use as written.
- **Move Actions**: use Shift and Run as written.
- If you're playing a defender class, you can keep Opportunity Attack.

Next is the matter of your HP and defenses. Leave your defenses as they are, but take half your total AC rounded up and add it to your HP. Your defenses are still relevant should a check need to be made against them for an adjudicated action or a power that is reliant on them.

PLAYING 4E POCKET

The core mechanic is to roll a d20, add relevant modifiers, and compare the result to the DC set by the GM. Usually the DC should be open information - the only time it shouldn't is if your characters don't have complete information about what they are attempting.

SKILL CHECKS

When you use a skill, roll a d20 and add your skill modifier and any additional modifiers, then compare the result to the DC set by the GM.

POWERS

Here's a rundown on Powers if you're uninitiated with 4E or need a refresher. It might seem like a lot, but once you've got this down, you'll never have to read a 5-paragraph plain language spell that ultimately just tells you "the enemy can't take actions" again!

Here's the thing: almost everything is Powers. Your feats help to augment your capabilities, but your Powers are the stars of the show when it comes to the Stuff you can do. 4E has some 9000+ powers to choose from, and while they might not all be winners, enough of them are to have a good time no matter what you want to do.

TYPES AND LIMITS

Powers come in four flavors: Standard, Movement, and Minor, and Free. You can use one of each type of power every turn. You may substitute a Standard action to use a Movement action (or Minor action), and a Movement action may be substituted to use a Minor action. Note that you may not use the same power twice in one turn (with a few noted exceptions).

Powers also have rate limits - At-Will powers may be used whenever their conditions are met, but Encounter and Daily powers may only be used once per encounter and per extended rest respectively.

Powers often include attacks as part of their procedure. Use them as normal, substituting the new attack procedure for the old one.

TARGETS

To target a creature, it has to be within your range and line of sight unless otherwise noted.

Melee: *melee weapon* powers have the range of your weapon, growing in range with a Reach weapon, for example. *Melee X* powers can only target within X squares, no matter your weapon's range. *Melee touch* powers can be used on any target you can reach with your hand.

Multiple targets are resolved with a single damage roll.

Blasts fill an area that is specified by the number of squares on one of its sides, and is adjacent to the user's square, but does not include it (a Blast 3 power fills a 3x3 square that shares an edge with the user).

Bursts extends in all directions from its center for a specified number of squares. A *Close Burst* is centered on the square of the user of the triggering power. A Close Burst does not affect the character using the power. All other bursts affect their center square, so a user might und up targeting themselves with their own power.

KEYWORDS

Powers come with mostly self-explanatory keywords that explain their damage type (such as Force or Necrotic), the way their effects work (such as Fear or Illusion). Some keywords hold a little more meaning, though:

- **Effect**: a power's "effect" entry details what your power does whether or not it hits.
- **Implement**: implement powers get stronger in some way when your character is using an implement such as a wand, staff, or holy symbol.
- **Prerequisite**: you need to meet the prerequisite to select this power at all. If you no longer meet the prerequisite for one of your powers, you can't use that power.
- **Reliable**: if you don't hit with a reliable power, it doesn't expend your use of that power.
- **Requirement**: you need to fulfill the requirement in the moment to use this power. Generally, requirements are things that you can change quite easily, such as the type of weapon you wield.
- **Stance**: a stance power lasts until the end of the encounter after using it or until you enter another stance.
- **Sustain**: if a power allows you to "sustain" it, you can keep its effects active for as long as you like if you spend the appropriate action type on your consecutive turns.

COMBAT

At the start of each round, each side rolls a d20: the highest rolling side takes their turns all at once in any order they so choose (this goes for actions too - you might decide to shove an opponent, then your ally grapples them, then you attack, for example!), then the other side takes their turns in the same manner. You should discuss your actions as a team, but the GM should also impose some kind of time limit on this, adjusted to experience and taste.

ACTIONS AND ATTACKS

ATTACKS

Attacks are simple. Roll the damage listed for when your power hits, and inflict that amount to your target's HP. If your target has **Cover** of some kind, make a check with a DC of their level + 12.

Critical hits are no longer part of the attack procedure: see the section on Tension.

INTERRUPTS AND REACTIONS

A **reaction** is resolved after/during another combatant's action that triggers its use, and generally can't invalidate the triggering action. An **Interrupt** action happens *before* the triggering action, and can render the triggering action invalid, causing the action to be lost.

ACTION POINTS

Action points may be spent to gain another Standard Action on a turn: using an Action Point allows for repeat usage of powers. You get one action point when you take an extended rest, and the GM may award them at their discretion.

When you take an extended rest, your number of action points resets to 1.

GRIDS AND TERRAIN

The game uses a grid to play, just like base 4E. Occasionally your GM might introduce a type of square that deals damage or blocks vision but not movement, but the only two kinds of terrain that are critical to have in your memory are **Impassible** and **Cover** squares.

Impassible terrain blocks line of sight and movement, and you may not move diagonally around a corner of Impassible terrain.

Cover is terrain that provides protection against ranged attacks, but does not fully block them. To hit a target in cover, make a check with the ability your power uses to attack: if the result is equal to the target's level + 12, you hit.

TENSION

As you fight and do cool stuff, your party gains **Tension**. Tension is a collective pool of points you may use to refresh powers, inflict more damage, gain action points, and automatically pass death saves. Be a good teammate and consult with your party members to use draw from the Tension pool.

For each round of combat up to 4 and for each non-minion enemy you defeat (and for every 4 minions you defeat), your party gains a point of tension. Elite enemies count for 2, and Solo enemies count for 5. The GM may award additional tension for doing cool action movie shit.

USE CASES

- An attack may be elevated to a critical hit with 2 points of Tension.
- A death save may be passed automatically with 2 points of Tension.
- An Encounter power may be refreshed mid-battle with 3 points of Tension.
- An action point may be gained with 4 points of Tension.
- A Daily power may be refreshed mid-battle with 6 points of Tension.

CONDITIONS

BLOODIED

When a character has half or less of their HP left, they are Bloodied. This doesn't do anything on its own, but certain powers and their effects are stronger against Bloodied targets,

COMBAT ADVANTAGE

You automatically grant Combat Advantage to attackers when you are Flanked (there are enemies adjacent to you on opposite sides of your square), Prone, Dazed, Blinded, or Stunned.

DYING

When a player character reaches 0 or less HP, they may still act at the cost of being Dazed and making death saving throws: roll a d20 and call low or high; if the result is above 10, it's high, otherwise it's low. If you call three wrong death saves before your HP returns to a positive value, your character is dead. If a character does not act during their turn, they do not have to make a death save.

Keep track of your character's negative HP. If it reaches their bloodied value in the negatives, they die.

OTHER CONDITIONS

- **Blinded**: you have only a 1-in-10 chance of hitting with an attack and grant combat advantage.
- **Bloodied**: you are subject to any effects that depend on a bloodied target.
- **Dazed**: you may only take one action on your turn of any type and grant combat advantage.
- **Dying**: as dazed, but you also make a death saving throw every round that you take action.
- **Helpless**: you can be targeted with a Coup de Grace.
- **Immobilized**: you cannot voluntarily move from your current square but may still take actions as normal.
- **Marked**: attacks you make that don't target the creature that marked you only deal half damage.
- **Slowed**: you may only Shift for your move action.
- **Stunned**: you can't take actions and grant combat advantage.
- **Weakened**: your attacks deal half damage.
- **Invisible**: you can't be targeted with a non-area attack and targets that can't see you grant combat advantage.

RESISTANCE AND VULNERABILITY

When you are granted **Resistance**, you reduce damage of the listed type by the Resist value. **Vulnerability** increases any damage you take of the listed type by the Vulnerable value.

EVERYTHING ELSE!

You know how to play an RPG. Resolve other actions with a check or skill check, and the GM will adjudicate it. Bust through thin walls, shove and grapple. Judo throw two goblins at once. Get creative and think outside of the rules - that's why there's a GM.

Rule of thumb is that an easy DC is 8 + Level, a moderate DC is 12 + Level, and a hard DC is 18 + Level. Feats that relate to features or mechanics that are missing or changed beyond recognition should be charitably interpreted to give bonuses or special effects to these unique actions.

HEALING AND RESTING

HIT POINTS

When your HP reaches zero or below, you're Dying. Getting healed to above 0 HP means you're no longer dying.

Temporary HP is granted by certain powers and effects. It doesn't stack: each new source of Temp HP must either replace your current Temp HP value or be discarded.

When you take damage, Temp HP is reduced before HP.

HEALING SURGES

You can heal yourself by using your second wind, and an ally can heal you by using a healing power on you. Most methods of healing require spending *Healing Surges*, but certain powers might not. When you use a healing surge, heal HP equal to your surge value (usually a quarter of your HP rounded down) plus any other situational bonuses.

RESTING

A **Short Rest** takes 5 minutes and allows you to refresh your Encounter powers and spend as many Healing Surges as you'd like.

An **Extended Rest** takes 24 hours of rest and refreshes all of your hit points, powers, and healing surges. You also lose any unspent action points and reset to having 1, along with your party's tension going to zero.