



# Destiny

## hand of fate

take your characters fate into your own hands



# Destiny

The diceless rules of Destiny are “driven” by edges and complications which may go beyond what you see in Fate. This is because choices and the twists they create serve to provide the variation and unpredictability previously governed by dice. Destiny’s rules can be characterized as “standardised” ways of obtaining twists via player choice. In this regard it is possible to mix and match various rules from Destiny with normal diced play of Fate. Even Destiny’s core mechanic “The Strategic Edge” can be taken as a modular plug-in to Fate. Destiny concentrates on Dynamic conflict the most tense exciting element of game play and is intended to give more player choice and encourage better visualization of those times, but many of Destiny’s rules such as risk taking and sacrifice can be exploited outside of this context.

## The Pace of Destiny.

The default pace of Destiny is meant to be turn based. However Strategic Edges and most of these rules are indeed scaleable to differing paces in fact because they give a convenient language for describing ones approach in conflict and apply quite well for making scene based resolution vivid. In exchange based “strategic” conflict you can still use the two strategies per character but the results of strategy are simply composited together into a single result for the exchange (without the ordering of action considered significant).

## Allocating of Ability

In Destinies turn by turn play an exchange each combatant allocates Ability between Attack and Defense actions. A separate MOS is calculated for Attack and Defense. Ability ranges nicely on a scale of none to ten.

- 10 Legendary,
- 9 Epic,
- 8 Superb,
- 7 Great,
- 6 Good,
- 5 Fair,
- 4 Average,
- 3 Mediocre,
- 2 Poor,
- 1 Terrible,
- 0 Abysmal

*“The above method not only allows the expression of aggression, it moderates the impact of differences in ability over the course of an exchange. This allows edges(like strategy) to become more note-worthy in context.”*



## Risk Taking

### Trading reliability for potency.

This is a balanced choice. In essence you are attempting a more extreme gain while sacrificing the “likelihood” of that gain or the opposite.

**Bold:** Decrease your effective ability for this action by 1. If your action succeeds you increase your margin of success by 2 (effectively you trade for a +1 in MOS).

**Careful:** Increase your effective ability for this action by 1. If your strategy succeeds you decrease your margin of success by 2 (effectively you trade for a -1 in MOS).

## Sacrifice Moves

### Trading twists for twists.

The quickest description is gain an edge now - and a complication a moment from now or accept a complication now in order to gain an edge a moment from now. Often an extreme move of desperation which impedes your own ability by its performance whether it succeeds or not, it benefits your action in part because it is radical and you do “pay for it” when is the question....The devil is in the details.

**Short Term:** Are you diving to a dangerous but currently useful location? Are you throwing your sword? Normal examples of this might be seen as folks dropping a weapon in order to speed their attempt at escape or exploiting a political ally in a haphazard fashion.

**Substantive:** These sacrifice moves result in long term depletions voluntarily accepted which go beyond the immediate scene. Common examples include over using a mystic source, or even straining a muscle for a jump beyond your normal extremes or drawing too heavily on that previously mentioned political ally. They are analogous to self wounding.

## Beyond Defense

### An Immediate Twist

The results of a “defense action” are not really adequately described by use of the results table (The standard Fate results table is geared for Exchange based conflict and so are oriented towards a more composite end result). So in turn by turn pace what are the “results” of a quality defense?

A defense does not advance you towards your “end goal” except by proxy and the most common gain beyond the fact that you are not harmed is a temporary edge, this edge may be thought of as similar to a variable version of “clipped” result, and depending on the nature of the defense may be applied towards either an escape or a follow up action targeting that adversary,( in fencing / debate the follow up might be called a riposte or a biting counter point)

Defense is generally applied to all adversaries during the exchange (this is somewhat cinematic), but may be complicated by larger numbers of attackers and similar factors. Also you may apply distinct defensive strategic methods to each source of attack.

This defensive “carry over” should be expressed according nature of the action. More protracted effects should be reserved for the results of Aggressive Action which follows up and which corresponds to the normal result table used in Dynamic Conflict.

## Attempting A Scene Change:

Often considered Escape / Withdrawal may change the mode of conflict creating a transitional scene most often in physical conflict called a “chase” with MOS interpreted as distances between combatants. Scene changes usually allow recovery of some or all fatigue and repercussion effects. Transitional scenes only allow partial recovery.



# The STRATEGIC Edge

Every action in a dynamic conflict contains elements of **instinct**, **directness**, **response**, **manipulation**, **complexity**, **deception** and **analysis**. These amount to methods of obtaining an edge, a strategic edge. For simplicities sake and playability an actions methods will generally be treated in terms of its most dominant strategic element.

## Direct or Simple

defeats Instinctive (+2) and of benefit vs Deceptive (+1)

## Responsive or Manipulative

defeats Direct (+2) and of benefit vs Analytical (+1).

## Deceptive or Complex

defeats Manipulative/Responsive(+2) also benefits vs Instinctive (+1).

## Analytical or Perceptive

defeats Complex/Deceptive (+2), also benefits vs Direct (+1)

## Instinctive or Wild

defeats Analytical (+2) and of benefit vs Responsive(+1)

The advantages of strategy are what is called in game theory non-transitive... Sounds fancy but what it boils down to is nobody is "right" because whatever strategy you use there is at least as many strategies which defeat it as it defeats. The more you break up your choices they more you keep your adversaries on their toes but it is possible to vary between just two of the five options and have it work, this allows Players and Game Masters to give characters a characteristic style without making them totally predictable.

## Strategy CARDS

### - "The Hand of Fate"

Whenever an action is initiated play one of 5 cards face down . (Defenses and attack actions may be chosen simultaneously in exchange based play or sequentially in turn based Margins of success for a defense are used to gain an edge or force a complication on your adversary for the next action.

You will need at least a couple sets of cards per player and the Game Master will need enough to manage the tide of villains.

The cards don't have to be that big of deal, they can be simple 3x5 cards with a word on one side. But it might be fun to have a glossy card stock print of artwork with a graphical montage of characters who exemplify the strategy on the card. Strategy Cards should also list what stratagems they defeat and are beneficial against described to the left.

Prior to actions being resolved reveal the strategy of opposed actions and be sure to describe how your action employs the method and gain the edge as a reward, Cooperate in your descriptions as even the losing strategy can contribute to the description.

## Describing The Methods?

### Direct / Simple also known as Proactive

This is seen by some as no strategy at all.. but rather an attempt to perfect the actions and forms of combat itself. While this does involve minor assumptions it is really only in the vaguest way predictive ignoring most deceptions and complexity, it relies somewhat on forcing a quick resolution, it is to the point with little or no wasted effort, the simplest and most basic strategy. Pure acts "without strategy" are effectively Direct.

### Responsive / Manipulative

This is the strategy that uses its adversaries action and inaction against itself. These strategies attempt to control the situation by force and by using the visible actions and status of the situation to immediately adjusting your own actions and exploiting them, in most cases it resolves concurrent with your opponents actions and hence matches the speed of the direct proactive maneuvers and when applied against a proactive challenge and defeats it because of the added benefit of analysis. (These actions tend to be of somewhat reduced potency in result in order to achieve quickness). The reliance on fairly immediate perception of the situation makes this vulnerable to the deceptive and complex challenges.

### Deceptive / Complex

Taking an indirect route and hiding true intent behind a layer of complexity or outright hidden intent and so defeat strategies such as responsive maneuvers but their complexities and deceptions get ignored by those taking the direct route and can be figured out... by analytic response. Those acting instinctually cant seem to resist apparent openings left via deception and are defeated by it.

### Analytic

This strategy looks for deceptions analyses the opponents actions but in some ways it is out right predictive.. Adjustments to ones own performance based on a more precise perception of the situation much like reactive but it often extends the performance attempting to achieve optimal assuredness at the expense of speed, it over comes many deceptive and/or complex challenges by avoiding reactive conclusions, but is vulnerable wild unplanned action which are not suited to prediction.

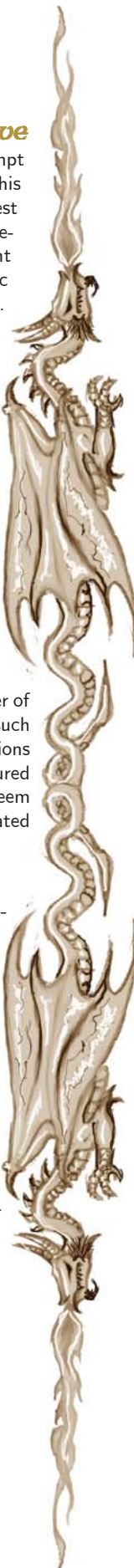
### Instinctive / Wild / Chaotic

This fast but unplanned barrage of action can overwhelm those who try to find its plan... It doesn't have any...It invests little in any given sub-action lacks the follow through of direct action and so is cut short by resolute direct action.

## Why Use the CARDS?

In many situations all it takes is a description when it is players versus the supporting cast this is more than reasonable and may even play more smoothly than using the cards. However when it comes to player vs player conflicts the cards can help enable it without even Game Master adjudication. The cards can also act as a memory aid and inspiration for a beleaguered GM who is trying to control and make the actions of NPC's interesting and fair.

There is a "Hold your breath moment just before the cards are flipped that is extremely appealing in play, the fact that this moment is tied to the actual methods chosen for the characters and trying to out guess and be a step ahead of their adversaries makes it even more interesting.



## More On Understanding The Strategic Methods

### Archetype And Attribute Correspondences :

The strategic methods have several "correspondences" that you might find familiar and which might make the strategic styles more comfortable or understandable.

Direct/Simple : strategy of the **Strong**

Manipulative/Responsive : strategy of the **Agile**

Deceptive/Complex : strategy of the **Witty or Charming**

Analytical/Predictive : strategy of the **Intellectual**

Instinctive/Wild : strategy of the **Healthy**

Direct/Simple = **Soldier**

Manipulative/Responsive = **Fencer**

Deceptive/Complex = **Rogue**

Analytical/Predictive = **Veteran / Wizard**

Instinctual/Wild = **Barbarian or Chaos Knight**



## Initiative & Seeking the Initial Edge

During the initial moments of conflict everyone's action is jockeying for position in an attempt to establish initiative and positional advantage for the next phase of action, therefore ability is allocated between trying to gain position and preventing your opponent from gaining position. It is possible for both to get into an advantaged position to harm each other. The one with the higher MOS is said to have initiative and their action resolves first next round (in addition to the carry over benefit).

### The Lancelot Example

The Champion of King Arthurs Court makes a good foil to show multiple adversaries versus one hero.

Let us take an unarmed and unarmored, Lancelot who is currently only a Superb Knight is accosted by a couple of Flunky knights both are only fair combatants, they are quite prepared for a fight and have him outnumbered.

GameMaster: "Upon leaving her chambers you find yourself confronted by two knaves in full battle dress advancing with weapons drawn"

Lancelot's Player asks if either has a coat of arms so he can attribute their cowardice to their families?

GM: No there is no crest or coat of arms in evidence they are operating as blank shields.

LP Grumbles "More like assassins"

GM: But I supposed a couple distinctive features are noticeable, One is rather shorter than average and the others armor looks old.

LP: "Hrumpf" are there any weapons handy, I'm pretty sure I'm not wearing mine

GM: "Maybe in the corridor outside, or a dagger hanging from their belt"

The GM plays face down two responsive / manipulative cards one representing the methods and allocates tokens up to the adversaries abilities behind his screen to indicate the plans for each of Mordred's flunky knights and asks Lancelot's player what his character wishes to do. (The GM could have done this with a pencil and paper but has decided he likes the props to help his memory with multiple opponents involved)

LP: "Lance will make a move towards the window like he plans to escape then pull a switch and see if he can close in on the stumpy one and get him between himself and the one in shabby armor" - "I'm putting 4 pts into getting position on the near one and 4 pts into making sure nobody gets position on me."

GM says, Lancelot's inferior weapon reach (being unarmed) is certainly a complication when closing on an armed foe.

LP: "Expected that, but his lack of armament would make his escape deception even more believable and Mordred probably

had to pick knights less familiar with Lancelot's prowess to get them to confront him?."

GM: "Hmmm I think we're still early in Lancelot's career here (only superb) so maybe his reputation doesn't have everyone cowed yet and besides who said Mordred sent them :-). We'll give you an extra edge for the particularly appropriate deception. You might want to put more points into defense to describe the getting the one between you and the other element"

LP: "OK up that to 5 in defensive positioning and leave his attempt to flank at 4"

GM turns over the Strategy cards and pushes forward green and red tokens he allocated behind his screen, for the hapless knights. Rusty put 1 into preventing you gaining position on him (this point was effectively wasted) and 4 into trying to get position on you. and Stubby put 2 into preventing you gaining position on him and 3 into trying to get position on you.

GM: "In unison they try to cut off your apparent escape perhaps hoping to have you plunging towards their braced weapons next action, Strategic benefit grants you 2 pts."

LP: Excellent, put 1 in defense and 1 in offense

GM you are quite balanced I see. You had 5 in preventing them getting position on you, now it's 6 and 5 on flanking Stubby

Though Rusty almost manages to move out from behind Stubby, in spite of his efforts. Rusty is left with a -1 position to affect you (which we could call interference from his allies position)

Unless Stubby can garner some advantage via his upcoming defense against the attack I predict you will be launching against him, his next action against you will be from a -2 position (effectively turned around and off balance)

GM Now you have 5 allotted to gaining position on Stubby and compared to Stubby's 2 pts in positional defense this gives you 3 pts of positional edge in your next action directed against Stubby.

The GM places 2 cards on the table one for each and puts a few tokens on each. and says "Well Lancelot what will you do?"

Player: Hey, that defensive positioning sure is efficient against multiple opponents

GM: "yup, this is rather cinematic, of course if these fellows were soldiers using team fighting styles they could have an additional edge. And the alternate rule which requires you allocate ability against any you attempt to affect is more than a little nasty."

Player: "Gulp"

GM: "Though actually in some genres attacks can be allocated in the same efficient fashion against everyone in reasonable range with an outnumbered complication of course. And in fact in scene base resolution it is handled this way as you allocate an attack versus all you are engaged against"





## Further Options Advancement In Diminishing Returns

Fate uses it's skill pyramid to enforce skill diversity in character design and development, in Destiny the emphasis of choice means diversity is encouraged but not required. After all being a one trick pony "should" rightly deprive you of screen time and that is the real determinant, of player power. Advancement costs the same as the level you are advancing to, no counting your skills and no looking at every other skill you have to figure out what you can advance. Each phase you gain from 2 to 6 expertise depending on desired skill breadth for the game, these are spent on getting ranks in skills. If you don't have enough expertise points to advance a rank simply allocate the points and when you accumulate enough your character advances. Lancelot is an example of a character that probably cannot be designed in a satisfying way using the standard Fate skill pyramid.



## Fate Bearers and the Immersive Player :

Fate Points allow things that other games have relegated to luck of the die saving throws and prohibitions to be a real choice... and that is seriously cool and fits well with Destiny. However since any mechanics can interfere with seeing the world from the characters point of view if you let it and this choice isn't entirely "in character" as it is at least influenced by the metagame concern represented by Fate points. To help enable more immersive play, any player may choose another player (with the prospective players cooperation of course ) to act as a "Harbinger of Fate" or "Luck Bearer", This other individual then chooses and allocates the players Fate Points and does the description about how luck shows it's hand.

## Scene Based Conflict

Leaving the ladies rooms you are accosted by two villainous knights in full battle regalia.

LP: Do I know them?

GM: doesn't look like it. But they seem pretty determined.

LFB: A Fate point says, he figures out he's met the one on the lists during the fight.

LP: Figure I'll trounce the cads, knocking one out the window and run the other off.

GM: Hold on, select a pivotal strategy for attack and another for defense for each adversary, and we will see, you you are unarmed and unarmored for petes sake.

LP: Those are my goals though ;-), just want them to look and feel like buffoons who can't even defeat an outnumbered, unarmed and unarmoured man.

GM: OK I guess on the recognition and that might take a Fate point for the window trick?

LFB: Nyeah, I have faith.

GM: Hmm, turning over the cards, you did beat ones strategy completely guess that window bit worked and he gets dumped into the moat, your responsive defense and manipulative attack both beat his direct attack and deceptive defense, and the other is close but getting run off ? hmm I guess he leaves you a little worse for the wear and doesn't quite feel humiliated you are nearly epic after all.

GM: It really could have gone either way with their three twists in their favor if you hadn't out guessed their strategies, it might have been you taking the brunt of their goals.

LP: Speaking of which ?

GM: Well the one you recognized a boulder from the list with too much ego for his ability, you dumped into the moat seemed to actually want to hurt you some sort of revenge thing maybe, the other it is less certain,"he might have muttered something about, not worth twice the coin..."

Sometimes a few moments in time take quite a bit of time to do and spurs some interesting results, other times it only takes a few moments to decide the entire course. Done correctly you get out of it what you put in and get out of it what you want.

## Fate Bearer Example

**Lancelots Player:** puts down 6 of his ability for an attack against rusty, says "I'm going to push stubby into his buddy (thats a launched attack, direct right?), and another for defense I figure stubs should discourage attack."

**GameMaster:** 6 wow, Sure, it can be "direct" unless you "guide him", that would be manipulative or "wait til you note rusties plan or ... "

**LP:** OK I get the point, I'm calling it direct and with me having 3 pts of position on him, stubby ought to make a handy weapon, heavy and full of metal and pointy bits, maybe I will get lucky and they will skewer each other..

**GM :** looks to Lances Fate Harbinger who is sometimes a little dense, "Is that fate point expenditure I here?"

**LFB:** Hmm, I've been hoarding those things in case somebody insults guynafar and he needs a reason resist his tendency to solve things with immediate violence, besides he's so good at violence and this seems a job for super knight.

**GM:** "Hmmm, we seem to have a power trip going on", raising an eyebrow towards Lances player."Are we resenting your character not being in this example?"

**LP:** "Not a problem I do have the advantage after all."

**LFB:** "See waste of a point."

**GM:** Even so you should divide that attack between both, unless you can think of a reason why an armor slamb dance wouldn't normally affect them both.

**LP:** I see OK 4 against stubby and 2 against rusty.

**GM:** Ah that sounds almost like a change of mind (you had it as attack against rusty),

**LP:** Decided I had better capitalize on my position in a long term way against Stubby and angling his head towards rustys feet, sounds fun.

**GM:** turns over the deceptive defense card for Stubby, and a Responsive one for Rusty...(and pushes forward the colored tokens for each) Rusty put four points on attack figuring he didnt need to defend much.

**LP:** Wow does he still get a defense?

**GM :** Sure two points worth from strategy, and you have to get past his weapon reach remember.

**LP:** My reach with throwing Stubby ought to be alright.

**GM:** ah, yes I'll give you that however rusty successfully dodges past stubby and launches an attack (spending 1 on the dodge and getting 2 from strategy at least beats the 3 pt attack). And Stubby figured he'd attempt to twist one way then the other turns into a real hazardous stumble (7 total attack from lancelet because of position versus stubbies 3 defense) and his helm goes flying it hits the block floor, this last is a reward for the bit of detail about aiming his head at the floor.

**LP:** Cool do I recognize the twit

**GM:** Ummm, what did you say your carousing and/or Heraldry skill was?

**LFB:** And you guys give me a hard time for conserving those points, "Of course he recognizes Mordrauts recent flunky" and pushes forward a fate pt and it obviously isnt from some pointless "party".

**LP:** Now he chimes in!

**GM:** Not sure if one point will be sufficient this isn't likely to be someone who has faced Lancelot before, Additionally the Heraldry Lancelot has is "primarily" foreign.

**LP:** Damn I knew that "French" aspect was more negative than positive.

**GM:** Just a passive implication of it.

**LFB:** "I've got it! The fellow did face Lancelot on the lists got beaten he's here for a little revenge and had his helm knocked off apparently the previous break was never repaired quite right and the helm fell just the same way that time and that kicks off Lances memory"

**GM:** Ooooh, I guess you did have a reason to pick him as "Fate Bearer"

Since Lancelot is such a one trick pony with regards to skills it is probably appropriate for his Fate Bearer to fore stall on use of Fate Points in Lancelots main arena and apply them more aggressively to areas Lancelot is difficient in.

Lance Dyas

<http://www.dyasdesigns.com/roleplay/Fate/Destiny.pdf>

