Road Trip

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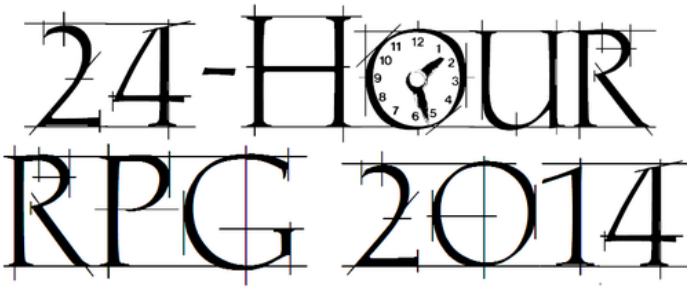

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Road Trip

In Road Trip players will take on the role of one of several people participating in a road trip. Each of them has some reason for being on the trip which they determine themselves and each of them has a relationship with each of the other people on the trip. The nature of that relationship is determined by the players involved.

The destination and purpose of the trip is determined by the players. Each trip will consist of a number of scenes, two per player, which are played out in order. Changes to characters from one scene carry over to the next scene.

To play the game , players follow a number of steps:

1) Discuss Boundaries
2) Determine the nature of the trip.
3) Determine the method of travel
4) Create characters and roles
5) Play out the scenes
6) Create an epilogue (optional)

Discuss Boundaries

As this is a fairly open-ended game, it is important that players have a brief discussion about boundaries. Boundaries can include both the setting and type of game to be played (ie, a fantasy game with adventurers on a quest). It can also include acceptable actions in game such as murder, robbery, sex, etc. Having an agreement in advance, particularly when playing with strangers, is very important.

Determining the Nature of the Trip

Each session will describe a trip. The trip can be of any sort. It could be a group of old friends on a trip to a specific place. It could be a family on vacation or a group of co-workers on a business trip.

The players should each propose at least one kind of trip and then, after some discussion they should pick one. If they are unable to agree, they should roll dice with the highest roll breaking the tie. There are some additional suggestions in the appendix.

Determine the Method of Travel

Players should discuss how they will travel. This will partially be determined by the nature of the trip, but could include nearly any method. Since there aren't any restrictions on setting, players could travel by magic carpet, airplane, car, starship or just about any other method agreeable to the players. Once again, if no agreement can be reached, roll dice with the highest roll choosing the method of travel. If dice were rolled for the nature, the same player cannot choose both the nature of the trip and the method of travel.

Creating a character

Character creation has several steps beginning with assigning attributes, then choosing traits, and finally identifying relationships.

Attributes

Road trip has three attributes: Adventure, Focus, and Loyalty. Each attribute is a five positions scale. The extremes of each attribute have names, but there are also numbers to go with them. The numbers are 2, 1, 0, 1, and 2. Although some attributes may seem negative, none are assumed to be negative: having an Adventure of Lemming isn't better or worse than Yolo, it's just different and either one could be more useful depending on the situation.

Adventure ranges from Banker at one end to YOLO at the other. It measures the character's willingness to deviate from the plan and their ability to follow or create a plan in the first place.

Focus ranges from Driven to Scattered. It measures the character's ability to stay on task and to follow through on a course of action.

Loyalty ranges from Lemming to Fickle. It measures the character's loyalty to both the group and to those with whom they have a relationship.

Each character gets one stat at each end of the scale and one in the middle. If a character has a Loyalty of fan-boy then they must have either a Focus of Scattered or an Adventure of Yolo. The other attribute will be in the middle. This means there are only six possible starting characters. To counteract that, each character can choose up to three traits.

Traits

Traits are specific things which affect a character's attributes, typically in a specific situation. For example, a trait might make a character more adventurous when it comes to sports or less focused where gambling is involved. Players should typically pick no more than two or three traits. There are some sample traits below, but players are welcome to create new ones following the same guidelines as those shown below.

Trait Name	Attribute Affected	Notes
ADD/ADHD	Focus (1 step right)	The character is easily bored and if things are going too smoothly they may lose interest in the task.
Defensive	Loyalty (1 step left)	The character is very defensive of someone else in the group and their loyalty is stronger if that person is attacked or questioned.
Fan-boy	Focus (1 step right)	Choose something your character is a fan of. Any instance of that time distracts them from the task at hand.
Goal-oriented	Focus (1 step left)	The character becomes more rigid when the goal of the trip is on the line.
Horny	Loyalty (1 step right)	The character loses loyalty if there is a person they have a sexual interest in nearby.
Idealist	Loyalty (1 step right)	The character's loyalty is reduced if the group is choosing an expeditious solution they know to be wrong.
Respect My Authority	Adventure (1 step left)	The character trusts law enforcement and similar types and will obey their directions.

Scofflaw	Adventure (1 step right)	The character has issues with authority figures and doesn't like to listen to them.
Shy	Adventure (1 step left)	The character is likely to listen to any NPC to avoid a controversy.
Supportive	Focus (1 step left)	Your character becomes more focused when supporting a specific member of the group.
Type T	Adventure (1 step right)	The character is a thrill-seeker and loves to do things that will provide an adrenaline rush.
Xenophobic	Loyalty (1 step left)	The character dislikes strangers and their loyalty is stronger when their circle of friends is attacked.

Relationships

Each character should have a relationship with at least one other person on the trip. It's best if there are two and at least one is not entirely friendly. This doesn't mean they have to hate the other person but their relationship could be adversarial (like a parent and child or boss and subordinate) or it could be rivalries (like siblings or co-workers). It's best if everyone can get along if they choose to but there are chances for friction.

Playing the Game

The game is played as a series of scenes. Each player will control two scenes. The scene is set by something which creates a disruption in their travel plans. The scenes are typically played in chronological order although flashbacks will sometimes make sense. The game encompasses the road trip and so it can start with a scene while the group gathers for the trip and it ends when the characters arrive at their destination. Timing should be such that the last scene describes their arrival at the destination of their trip.

Before declaring the first scene, each player should lay out his character sheet where the others can see it to help them identify scenes.

Scenes

Players take turns describing their scenes, each of which is some sort of complication which puts their trip in jeopardy. There are some suggested complications or distractions in the appendix. Within the context of the scene the player should declare one attribute which will be tested by the scene: Adventure, Focus, or Loyalty.

The character declaring the scene is always involved in resolving it. Other characters can choose to be involved in the resolution as they see fit with one exception. If they person declaring the scene is at the opposite end of the spectrum from them in the attribute being tested, then they have "friction" over this kind of problem and must be involved.

> *Example: Steve declares a distraction involving Adventure (he's noticed that they are driving past a place where they can drive their own demolition derby cars). He's a Yolo and Bruce is a Lemming. Bruce must be involved in the resolution of the scene. If there are any other Lemmings on the trip, they have to be involved too.*

Resolving the Scene

Ideally the characters are able to come to a resolution through role-play. In the event that doesn't work, have each character in the argument roll one die for each step they are from center. High roll determines the outcome.

Once the scene is resolved, the player who declared the scene chooses someone who then moves the attribute tested in the scene one step closer to the direction in which the scene resolved.

> *Example: Steve manages to convince the others that stopping for demolition derby cars is no big deal. They all agree. Since he declared the scene, Steve can designate one participant in the scene to move their Adventure one step to the right. Had the scene resolved against the demolition derby, Steve would still have designated someone, but they'd have move their Adventure to the left instead.*

Ending the Game

The game ends once each player has initiated two scenes and they have been resolved. At this point the players have the option of creating an epilogue. This can take the form of describing how things went when they arrived at their destination (assuming they arrived) or it can be discussion of their plans for another road trip.

The Appendix

This appendix is meant to provide some ideas for road trips. It's not perfect and you'll definitely need to apply some creativity depending on your earlier choices. So a vehicle problem for a group of fantasy adventurers might mean a thrown horseshoe or a broken wheel; for modern road trippers it could mean a stolen car, an accident, a flat tire, a flight delay or a derailed train; for star travelers it could mean a miscalculated warp jump or a broken ship.

Appendix 1: Nature of the Trip

This is, of course, only a small fraction of the kinds of road trips someone could have. In a serious jam you could just roll here, but more likely reading through this list. Don't forget that trip can take place in any time so this list could find a family trying to get to a planet that's famous for fun (for example).

1.	A family heading to a major theme park
2.	A family heading to a reunion.
3.	A family out to see the sites and do some camping.
4.	A rock band on their way to their next gig.
5.	A traveling road show (maybe entertainers, a circus or a carnival).
6.	Actors on their way to a play or festival.
7.	Adventurers on their way to their next dungeon.
8.	Business people on their way to a trade show.
9.	Business people on their way to meet a potential client
10.	Elderly people on their way to a casino or other destination.
11.	Honeymoon couple (and friends?) on their way to Niagara Falls.
12.	Kayakers on a trip.
13.	Kids (groupies) trying to get to a concert.
14.	Pilgrims on their way to a holy site or a revival.
15.	Rebels trying to sneak into an enemy system for sabotage.
16.	Scouts heading to a camporee or other big camping event.
17.	Soldiers on their way to the site of a battle.
18.	Surfers in search of the perfect wave.
19.	Teachers leading a field trip.
20.	Veterans returning to civilian life.

Appendix 2: Sample Complications and Distractions

As above, the goal of this list is to be inspirational as much as expositional. Looking over the list may turn up the perfect complication or it may inspire a great one no on the list.

	Complication	**Typical Attribute**
1.	Attractive person shows interest in character.	Loyalty
2.	Competition to prove quality of team.	Loyalty
3.	Delayed flight or departure.	Adventure
4.	Detour due to construction	Adventure
5.	Drugs or alcohol (could be a bar)	Focus
6.	Flat tire or mechanical failure of some sort.	Adventure
7.	Former friend	Loyalty
8.	Hitchhiker or person in need at the side of the road.	Focus
9.	Interesting landmark or other location along the way.	Focus
10.	Inter-group rivalry.	Loyalty
11.	Lost Reservation/Missed connection	Adventure
12.	Lost wallet	Adventure
13.	Map malfunction or GPS failure	Adventure
14.	Member of rival group attempts to convince character to betray companions.	Loyalty
15.	Once in a lifetime opportunity – concert or event near the path of their trip.	Focus
16.	Overslept.	Focus
17.	Person in distress	Focus
18.	Potentially better offer.	Loyalty