

The 'Enhanced Action' ruling for DERP

By Ian Thomson

Picture by Ralph Horsley

Introduction

In the DERP Rulebook, certain situations are theorized where the requirement for immediate swift action means that re-rolling failures by use of ability pools does not adequately reflect the situation. The rules further suggest that a single unadjusted die roll remedies this problem. Here we provide an optional mechanic for easily elaborating on (and making fairer) such a situation – slightly revised from information in *Demons of the Dying Earth* (Pelgrane Press, 2003).

The 'Enhanced Action' Mechanics

Use this ruling when all involved have to react in an instant, and therefore no pool use can be involved. Athletics is the ability likely to be most commonly used with this ruling, but others (including Perception and Wherewithal) may also occur reasonably often.

An Example: Avoiding the leap of the gid is one good example. For instance, two gids simultaneously spring from hiding to attack Nartwil the Swordsman and his packbearer, Oglod. Nartwil's player knows that Nartwil has Athletics 16, whereas Oglod has Athletics of only 6. The GM calls for a single die roll for each character, to signify whether they can leap aside and gain time to draw a weapon. Noting a discrepancy between the capabilities of the two characters, Nartwil's player loudly proclaims the need for this ratings difference to be illustrated by the rules.

The following table provides for such things:

Ability Rating	Adjust Roll
0-2	-2
3-6	-1
7-12	0
13-17	+1
18+	+2

This ruling falters only when characters begin to reach very high levels of proficiency in certain abilities, but the GM can simply cap the bonus at 2. Should your characters' and GMCs' ability ratings already routinely outpace this table, feel free to expand the spread upward to better suit your version of DERP gaming.

Incorporating Pools:

Any GM who wants to bring pools into this ruling simply subtracts 1 point from the appropriate pool of a PC whenever they succeed with an adjusted roll in this way.

IE on any rolled failure, no point subtraction is applied.

(Once a PC has run out of pool points they can no longer make adjustments, and must accept an unadjusted roll in any further 'Enhanced Action' situation.)



Surprise

The revised Surprise Rules (*Turjan's Tome*, p25) also now have an optional alternative:

When contesting Concealment or Stealth against Perception, use the 'Enhanced Action' ruling here. (IE each participant rolls only once.) Bear in mind that the GM applies further penalties to the chronically under-alert.

This method negates the need for repeated rolling on pools, which can take away some of the excitement - especially if the GM is rolling 'secretly'.

The Perception roll must beat the other ability in order to notice the obscured being or object. In a situation where action is about to occur, each two-level higher success (EG: IS vs. HBS = two levels higher) marks either a bonus of 1 to a surprise Attack, a bonus of 1 to a Defense roll, or a free action. The GM decides which best suits.

Note that in the situation of any rolled failure vs. any rolled success, this means that the one to succeed effectively 'Wallops' (DERPG, p33) the other.

Also note that the GM can simply decide beforehand (when writing a scenario) that a creature has hidden with an IS, PS or HBS, depending on their assessment of its competence. This reduces the need for dice rolls whilst the adventure is in progress.