
That Belongs in a Museum!

That Belongs in a Museum!

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What is the Game About?

You are a treasure hunter, an acquirer of artifacts, and you are one of the best. No matter what you do, you do it with style, and are better off for it.

You work for an organization dedicated to retrieving ancient, powerful relics before less savory individuals do. Break into ancient tombs and venture into dangerous environments to claim mystical artifacts before the bad guys do!

You can expect to:

- Venture into forgotten temples and ruins to recover powerful artifacts
- Attempt to foil villains at every turn, fighting and outsmarting them in exotic locations
- Travel to all parts of the world in search of treasures
- Pull off amazing feats of skill to keep up with a villainous organization that always has more resources than you
- Work together with other larger-than-life characters to save the world

The Moves

To act, you must make a move. Any time you roll dice, you are making a move. You do not say the move you are using when describing the action. You say what you want to do, and work together with the GM to determine which move you use.

For example, if you wanted to scale a cliff, you do not say “I want to defy danger”. You would say that you want to scale the cliff, and describe how you do it. You and the GM work together to decide that you would, in fact, be using defy danger. You make the roll and determine the result.

Player Moves

- **Lend a hand.** Aid an ally in a task.
 - Hand your two dice to the player making the movie. The player rolls all 4 dice, counting the two highest values.
 - If the move has consequences, you also suffer them.
- **Defy danger.** Act in the heat of the moment.
 - Roll + brawn or skill.
- **Recall knowledge.** Remember important information applicable to the situation.
 - Roll + brains.
- **Employ charm.** Use your charisma to deceive, intimidate, or persuade someone.
 - Roll + charm.
- **Take stock.** Observe your surroundings, assess the situation, read someone.
 - Roll + brains or intuition.
- **Throw down.** Attack someone with the intent to harm or subdue.
 - Roll + brawn or skill.
- **Take a breather.** Catch your breath.
 - Regain 2 stamina.
 - This does not cost stamina.

GM Moves

- **Foreshadow**
 - Set up trouble for the party in the future.
- **Separate them**
 - The character is trapped somewhere the rest of the party can't get to.
- **Injure them**
 - The character suffers an injury.
- **Take something away**
 - Their sentimental item is in danger.
 - Another character's sentimental item is in danger
 - They lose a useful item or tool.
 - They lose their objective (if it's an item)
- **Obstruct progress**
 - The path forward is obstructed.
 - The way they took is no longer available.
- **Go after their friends**
 - An ally is put into danger.
 - An ally suffers an injury.
- **Bad Guys Gain Ground**
 - The bad guys get closer to the artifact
 - The bad guys obtain valuable information

How to GM this Game

This game is Powered by the Apocalypse, which means that you GM it in a similar way to *Apocalypse World's* GM advice section. I would recommend reading that for guidelines on how to GM this game, as they can explain it much better than I can. However, here are some general genre guidelines for running this game:

- Player Characters are extremely competent and strong. Killing them is very hard.
- The bad guys can catch up to the players or cause trouble for them at nearly every turn.
- The game is not fully grounded in reality. Impossible jumps can be made, ridiculously hard shots can be hit, and the completely destroyed can be repaired.
- Ludicrous successes are rare, make them memorable.
- Set up opportunities for players to use their character's cool stuff; but also make situations that take advantage of their flaws. Read these for each character at the beginning of the session. Make sure that each character has a chance to shine or fail spectacularly.
- Look to pulp action for inspiration for descriptions and scenarios. See the "Credits & Inspiration" section of this book for some sources.

The Core Mechanic

The core mechanic of *That Belongs in a Museum!* is **2d6 + attribute**. There is a varying degree of success in your result. Consult the table below to see what the result of your roll means.

Result	Consequence
<6	Failure. You do not overcome the obstacle. Severe consequences.
7 - 9	Partial Success. You overcome the obstacle, but with a consequence.
10 - 22	Full Success. You overcome the obstacle, full stop.
>23	Ludicrous Success. You overcome the obstacle and gain some unforeseen benefit.

Failure. Whatever you are trying to do, you don't. You don't make the jump, completely miss the shot, or recall no applicable information. The GM can make a harder move. The harder the move, the more direct and unavoidable the consequences are. For example, a soft move would be saying that the sword is swinging towards you, but a harder move would be saying that the sword hits you.

Partial Success. You do what you are trying to do, but with a price. You make it to the other side of the cliff, but are hanging on by one hand. You shoot the bad guy, but it's a grazing wound. The GM can make a soft move against you. You should work with the GM to come up with a compromise to your intended action.

Full Success. You accomplish your task, with no consequences. You make the jump, you kill the bad guy, you recall the applicable information. The GM cannot make a move against that player.

Ludicrous Success. You accomplish the task, and more. You make the jump, and collapse the ledge the bad guy is standing on. You shoot the guy and hit the bad guy behind them. You recall exactly what you need to know, and a little extra. The GM cannot make a move against that player.

Making a Move

When you want to make a move, you follow three steps.

- 1) Decide which move you will use.
- 2) Roll 2d6 + applicable attribute.
- 3) Determine your degree of success.
- 4) Resolve consequences.

Stamina

Every character has a reserve of energy called stamina, which they use to perform moves.

Each character starts with 12 stamina dice. Whenever you perform a move, you must take 2 dice from your stamina pool and move them into your expended pool.

If you only have 1 stamina die left, you cannot make any other move than Take a Breather, unless you gain a die from another source, such as using style.

If you have 0 stamina left, you cannot make any moves, and you are unconscious. You regain 1 expended stamina die on your turn instead of making a move and regain consciousness.

Injuries

As a consequence for a partial success or failure, the GM can inflict injuries upon your character. When you take an injury, you must move a number of your available stamina into your injury pool.

Dice in this pool cannot be recovered by Taking a Breather. They can only be recovered by receiving medical attention or taking an extended rest of, at minimum, 24 hours.

Style

Each character has a secondary resource called Style, which represents how cool your character is.

Every character has 3 style dice. Style can be expended whenever you do something from your Cool Stuff List. When you expend style, you can roll that die in addition to your normal stamina dice.

6's on this die explode, which means that when you roll a 6 on this die, you can reroll until you do not get a 6, adding these numbers to the total.

Creating a Character

1) Distribute attribute points.

- Each character gets 5 attribute points to distribute between the brawn, brains, charm, intuition, and skill.

2) Choose Playbook.

- Choose your playbook from: Academic, Muscle, Mechanic, or Sidekick.
- Write down your playbook's technique.

3) Choose your Playbook Moves.

- Each playbook has 4 moves. Each character chooses two of these.

4) Write your Specialty.

- Choose something your character is an expert in.

5) Write your Cool Stuff.

- Write down 5 cool things your character does.

6) Write your Flaws.

- Write down 2 flaws that always affect your character.

7) Choose your sentimental item.

- Choose 1 item of emotional significance.

8) Choose your Gear.

- Choose 4 things your character brings with them on the mission.

Attributes

There are 5 attributes in *That Belongs in a Museum!* They are:

- Brawn
- Brains
- Charm
- Intuition
- Skill

Brawn is how strong or fit your character is. Your physical might.

Brains is how smart your character is, in the traditional sense. Your formal education.

Charm is your charisma or your force of personality.

Intuition is your gut feeling, your awareness of your surroundings and other people.

Skill is the application of your knowledge into physical actions. Your physical dexterity and precision.

When creating a character, you distribute 5 points between the attributes.

You cannot put more than 3 points into an attribute.

Creating Lara Croft: Attributes

Lara is a very physically skilled adventurer, so we will want either brawn or skill to be the highest stat. Lara is not very burly, but she does need incredible strength to pull off the things she does in the game. I will be going with skill as her highest attribute. Lara is also well-educated and street-smart, so both brains and intuition need to have points in them. Her final array would look like this:

- **Brawn:** 1
- **Brains:** 1

- **Charm:** 0
- **Intuition:** 1
- **Skill:** 2

Playbooks

A playbook is like a character class, it has a set of moves that only that playbook can use. There are 4 playbooks:

- Academic
- Muscle
- Mechanic
- Sidekick

The **Academic** is the formally educated one. You could be a college professor, a researcher, a scientist, or anything else you can think of. The academic can help the party by solving problems, recalling applicable knowledge, and uncovering secrets.

Here are the Academic Moves:

- **Trust Me, I Have a Doctorate:** You can treat minor injuries. Roll + brains; on a partial success, one of your allies can move one injury die back into their available pool. On a full success, they can move two.
- **Measured Action:** When you Defy Danger, you can use your Brains instead of Brawn or Skill.
- **Cold Calculation:** When you throw down, you can use your Brains instead of Brawn or Skill.
- **Academic Immunity:** When in danger, people generally ignore you. You're too weak to cause any trouble, right?

The **Muscle** is the one who gets their hands dirty. You could be a soldier, a professional athlete, or even a boxer. The Muscle can help the party by taking down bad guys and overcoming dangerous physical obstacles.

Here are the Muscle Moves:

- **In Shape:** When you Defy Danger, you can put one of your expended dice back into your available pool.
- **Deadly Hand:** When you get a partial or higher success when Throwing Down, your target will die if that was the intent of your action.
- **Vice Grip:** It is impossible for you to fall or drop anything.
- **To the Limit:** When you reach 0 stamina, you do not fall unconscious. You can crawl, maintain your position, or Take a Breather.

The **Mechanic** is the fixer of the group. You could be an actual mechanic, a secret agent, or even a professional NASCAR driver. You can help the party by crafting items to help solve problems, driving a getaway vehicle, or fixing a broken device.

Here are the Mechanic Moves:

- **Jury Rig:** Given enough time and resources, you can roll + skill or brains. On a partial success, you create a one-time use item that is useful to your current situation. On a full success, you create a fully functional item applicable to the situation.
- **Gearhead:** You can fix anything at any time, with any tool on hand.
- **Saboteur:** You can spend a short amount of time to completely destroy a device, rendering it completely unusable and beyond repair.
- **Flesh Repairman:** You can roll + skill to do some field surgery. On a partial success, an ally can move an injury die back to available. On a full success, they

can move two. After these dice are expended, they go back into the injury section.

The **Sidekick** is the moral support of the group. You could be literally anything! You can help the party by enabling the others to conserve resources, be cool more often, or aiding them in tasks.

Here are the Sidekick Moves:

- **Cheerleader:** When you Lend a Hand, your ally regains [1] expended stamina die.
- **Helping Hand:** You can donate stamina dice to another player at any point in the session.
- **Share the Spotlight:** When you expend style, an ally regains one spent style die.
- **Jack of All Trades:** When you Lend a Hand, you can roll + any attribute you want.

Creating Lara Croft: Playbook

Lara Croft can go a few different ways here. The Academic would work if you wanted to express her scholarly side, or Muscle for her more physical side. I'll be going with Muscle for this example. For her playbook moves, I will emphasize her physical skill and endurance. In the games, she constantly goes for hours at a flat sprint, climbing and fighting people for extended periods of time. So I will pick the *In Shape* and *To the Limit* Muscle moves.

Specialty

Every character has a specialty, a field of knowledge that they know everything about. Choose one field that your character is an expert in. No matter what, your character knows literally everything there is to know about that topic.

If you are trying to recall knowledge and it relates to your character's specialty, you do not need to make a roll, you automatically get a full success.

Creating Lara Croft: Specialty

This choice is pretty obvious. Lara is a scholar of archaeology and history; she constantly knows obscure facts about historical places or people. So her specialty will be "ancient civilizations".

Cool Stuff

Your Cool Stuff list represents your character's signature moves, something that you do extremely well.

When you create a character, you write 5 cool things that your character can do. These usually take the form of a conditional statement, but do not always have to. When you make a move that is related to one of your Cool Stuff list entries, you can use a Style die as part of the roll.

For examples of Cool Stuff, see the back of the character sheet.

Creating Lara Croft: Cool Stuff

Lara Croft has tons of cool stuff she can do, but we can only pick 5, and they have to be suitable for this type of game. Here is what I'm going to go with:

- I can understand any language, no matter how obscure the dialect.
- When I shoot, I do not miss.
- I can leap seemingly impossible distances.
- I can survive normally fatal falls.
- When in a hand-to-hand fight, it's hard to keep me down.

Flaws

Every character has flaws, and you choose 2 at character creation. You must always act on your flaws at all times, no matter what.

You can invoke a flaw by taking a -2 to your roll when the flaw applies. You couldn't invoke "afraid of heights" when standing on the ground, for example.

For examples of Flaws, see the back of the character sheet.

Creating Lara Croft: Flaws

The first flaw I can think of when it comes to Lara is her obsession with stopping Trinity and recovering the artifacts they are after. This one can be invoked pretty regularly, like if the party is planning to flee for their lives but Lara wants to stay and get the artifact before the whole temple comes down. The second is a little bit harder, but I will say that it is definitely her devotion to her friends. She will do everything in her power to attempt to save her friends, even when it puts her in greater danger. So Lara Croft's flaws would be:

- I am obsessed with stopping the enemy, I will never pass up an opportunity to swipe something from under their noses.
- My devotion to my friends is boundless. If they are in danger, I will do everything in my power to save them.

Sentimental Item

Every character has an object that is extremely important to them. Choose an item on character creation that your character has that means something emotionally to them.

If your character loses this item, they are emotionally distraught, and you must roleplay them in this way.

This item can be taken away or put in danger by the GM Move “Take Something Away”.

Creating Lara Croft: Sentimental Item

This one is also pretty obvious. The necklace Lara wears is her first archaeological find, she keeps it around for remembrance. I do not think she would be okay with losing it. Her sentimental item is:

- Jade necklace, first archaeological find

Gear

When creating your character, you also choose what kind of gear your character carries with them on their journeys.

Choose 4 objects that your character carries with them. It can be anything from guns to swords, rope to duct tape. These items can be used at any point in the game.

However, the GM can also take away these items or put them in danger using the Take Something Away GM Move.

Creating Lara Croft: Gear

Here we can list some items from the games that Lara uses. I chose:

- Recurve bow and arrows
- Rope with grappling hook
- Climbing pick
- Handgun

IOU

Your characters do not exist in a vacuum, awaiting you to play them in another mission. They have lives before and after missions, where they interact with other characters to pursue their own goals. Often, these goals intersect, and characters end up helping each other.

At the beginning of the session, each player gives another player 2 of their stamina dice (using different colored dice for each player really helps).

Your character owes the recipient for something that happened before the session, what is it?

At any point during the game, you can use one or both of these dice in place of your normal stamina dice. When you roll a loaned stamina die, 6's on that die explode. When expended, the die goes back to the available pool of its original owner.

For example, before the session started, Lara Croft and Indiana Jones are friends. Lara and Indy decide that Lara wanted a book that was in Indy's university's library, and he helped get it for her. In return, she helped him translate the clue that led to this mission. The players exchange dice, and the two characters can use these dice to attempt to get a higher result. When Lara uses Indy's dice in a roll, she then hands them back to him and he puts it into his available pool instead of her putting it in her own expended pool.

Turn Order

Action begins when the GM asks “What do you do?”. When this happens, the first person to declare what they are doing goes first. Play then continues clockwise around the table until everyone has made a move, this counts as 1 turn.

On a player’s turn, they may make a move. If you are at 0 stamina, regain 1 stamina and regain consciousness.

Design Intentions and Notes

- I chose a PbtA format to emulate the high adventure feel of pulp action stories. I really like the variable success format with consequences. Action heroes rarely ever *completely* fail.
- The moves are focused mainly on the actions treasure hunters would be using on an adventure. Defy Danger and Throw Down will probably be used the most often. It is up to the GM to propose different kinds of scenarios to take advantage of the other kinds of moves. Riddles or puzzles are good uses of the other moves. Just have them make the Recall Knowledge move. Employing charm isn't always persuasion or deception; it can also be used to intimidate people as well.
- Stamina at 12 is the result of playtests, but it is not perfect. You can adjust this number up and down depending on how easy/hard you want your game to be. This is the same as style at 3.
- Injuries are made to slow the players down and make them worry more about resource management. You can inflict varying levels of damage this way. I would not recommend going above 4 at a time though, unless it's a catastrophic injury.
- The playbooks represent the different kinds of heroes I've seen in movies or read in books. I used to have three others: the Face, the Nerd, and the Turncoat. However, I thought that these could be simplified into the current four. I am not completely satisfied with the playbook moves as it is my first time designing a game that uses them. I wish I had more active moves rather than passive ones.
- Specialty shouldn't be too broad of a field, but shouldn't be too specific either. It is up to the table to decide what constitutes too narrow or too broad.
- Cool Stuff and Flaws can be really hard to write. I added the recommendations to the back of the character sheet to make coming up with stuff easier. I made this so that every character would be unique and be able to fill very specific niches.
- Sentimental item is a recurring theme that I saw in movies and video games. It is meant to be a small object that you not like losing. A good example of this is Indiana Jones' hat. He almost gets his arm crushed in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* because he didn't want to lose his hat.
- IOU is supposed to convey the feeling of an ongoing story despite the game being a oneshot.
- I am aware that Lend a Hand is technically overpowered, but I am leaving it that way. I think that if you just spam Lend a Hand over and over, you weren't really looking to have fun in the first place, just break the system. Yes you may win, but you are not playing in the spirit of the game. I would rather make it very fun for the type of player who likes to play the sidekick rather than make it a mediocre choice for everyone. If you think it is too strong, you can replace the advantage mechanic with a simple +1 or +2 bonus.

Credits & Inspiration

Other Games

- *Apocalypse World* by Vincent and Meg Baker
- *Blades in the Dark* by John Harper
- *Mouse Guard* by Luke Crane
- Other Powered by the Apocalypse games by various

Movies

- *Raiders of the Lost Ark* by Steven Spielberg
- *Big Trouble in Little China* by John Carpenter
- *The Mummy* by Stephen Sommers

Video Games

- *Uncharted* by Naughty Dog
- *Tomb Raider (2013)* by Crystal Dynamics
- *Assassin's Creed* by Ubisoft
- *Prince of Persia* by Ubisoft

Books

- *A Princess of Mars* by Edgar Rice Burroughs
- *Battlefield Earth* by L. Ron Hubbard
- *Pirates of Venus* by Edgar Rice Burroughs

Special Thanks To

- Devon Current
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Name

Sentimental Object

Brawn

Brains

Charm

Intuition

Skill

Playbook

Technique

Playbook Move 1

Playbook Move 2

Gear 1

Gear 2

Gear 3

Gear 4

Specialty

Style

Expendable Style

Available (12)

Expendable

Injury

That Belongs in a Museum!

General Moves

- **Lend a hand.** Aid an ally in a task.
 - Hand your two dice to the player making the movie. The player rolls all 4 dice, counting the two highest values.
 - If the move has consequences, you also suffer them.
- **Defy danger.** Act in the heat of the moment.
 - Roll + brawn or skill
- **Employ Charm.** Use your charisma to persuade, deceive, or intimidate.
 - Roll + charm
- **Recall knowledge.** Remember important information applicable to the situation.
 - Roll + brains
- **Take stock.** Observe your surroundings, assess the situation, read someone.
 - Roll + brains or intuition
- **Throw down.** Attack someone with the intent to harm or subdue.
 - Roll + brawn or skill
- **Take a breather.** Catch your breath.
 - Regain [4] stamina
- **Bad Guys Gain Ground.**
 - The bad guys get closer to the artifact
 - The bad guys obtain valuable information
- **If you are at 0 stamina**
 - Regain 1 expended stamina die

Cool Stuff Suggestions

- If someone's shot at, I can get them out of the way.
- When I jump, I make it.
- If it runs, I can drive it.
- I can knock anyone over.
- I can carry anything at any time.
- I can use anything as cover.
- Any object in my hands is a deadly weapon.
- No one can be faster than me.
- I've never been in a crash, never will be.
- I can catch anything.
- My grapples are unbreakable.
- When climbing, I can always have a hand free.
- Even when something is unfamiliar, I know a little about it.

Flaws Suggestions

- When it would be most inconvenient, my hands are greasy.
- I panic around snakes.
- When I see blood, I feel nauseous.
- When I'm up high, I try to get down as fast as possible.
- Vehicles never start when I need them too.
- Guns jam on me all the time.
- I have the worst luck when it comes to traps.
- The enemy always seems to know where I am.
- I constantly drop what I'm holding at the worst times.
- I'm a magnet for bullets.
- I can't resist pushing the button.
- People constantly get the drop on me.