

This is a draft document, it is still under progress so do not take any of these FAQs as fact quite yet!

➤ What is FFDC?

FFDC stands for **Free-Form Difficulty Class**, it's a simplified version of the d20 system's game mechanic on the chances of success.

FFDC (or FDC for shorter) was made mainly to solve *disputes*, most commonly known as the whole 'did my attack win or not' fight and other general stalemates caused by roleplay battling with no rules or storyline.

➤ How does it work?

FFDC uses a **d20 die** as the random roll plus the **positive and negative modifiers** that increase and decrease the roll when certain factors come into play.

Each point on a d20 die is the equivalent of **5%** chance for each value shown, all the sides of the die are face-value and are calculated exactly how they're shown.

There is an extra rule involved when a player rolls a 1 or 20 called the Natural Roll.

When a player rolls a **1** they automatically **fail**.

When a player rolls a **20** they automatically **succeed**.

The attacking player specifies the **DC** (Difficulty Class) telling their opponent on how hard it will be to defend or dodge it. The defending player then adds any modifiers that could make it easier or harder to defend.

After the **DC** and modifiers are set, the d20 is rolled. If the defender rolls equal or greater than the DC, the attacker's attack **fails**. If the defender rolls lower than the DC, the attacker's attack **succeeds!**

➤ That's way too complicated, how do I use it?

If the description is a little too boring, here is the summary;

1. Character A attacks, mention DC, mention modifiers
2. Character B defends, mention modifiers
3. Roll d20, calculate
4. Winner may write their version of the outcome (attack succeeds/defender evades)

➤ I'm afraid this would just clutter up my posts, is there an easier way?

FFDC doesn't clutter posts up as much as you think, instead of phrasing it like you would talk in a table-top RPG just write a number at the end of your sentence, it's a good way of describing a reason for modifiers too if it's done in this way.

Here's an example for you.

Character A: writes a post attempting to attack B **[DC8]**

Character B: writes a post detailing how B defends or dodges A's attack, adding any extra information to justify any modifiers applied **[+2]**

ROLL: 10+2 = 12

Character B: <writes his next post as if he dodged the attack successfully>

If the attacker wants to add modifiers to his DC, they can write the DC as **[DC8-2]** or simply write the result as **[DC6]**, (8 minus 2) If the defender or attacker has more than one modifier to apply, they can write a number **[+/-#]** for each sentence written for each modifier.

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Character A: <Attacks, catching their opponent by surprise> [DC8+2] OR [DC10]

Character B: <Defends, even though he has a cut arm [-2] and stumbled over some loose rocks [-2]

- How do I know I'm using the right values for DC and modifiers, going too high or low?

If you follow these guides, you can decide for yourselves on what is fair;

DCs		
Easy	5	Easiest to avoid
Moderate	10	Recommended level of difficulty
Hard	15	Use responsibly
Prohibited	20	Only for extremely difficult or special actions
Modifiers		
Slight	1	Minor flukes maybe?
Minor	2	Most common modifier
Moderate	4	Recommended highest
Major	8	Use sparingly
Intense	16	You better have a good reason to resort to this

Remember that each value is the equivalent of **5%**, make sure any modifiers you use would be significant enough to affect the outcome by 5%. Using *hundreds of tiny modifiers* for trivial things is as bad as using high DC/Mods for trivial things, and both are considered **cheating**.

- What about if my character is proficient at...?

It's quite natural that characters would be more proficient or more skilled in some encounters than others. If a character is a martial artist and a melee-type DC were to come his way, their player is allowed to apply a modifier on the basis that they're 'skilled' in that area.

Characters can have a consistent modifiers if they're skilled in an aspect of battle (hand-to-hand), in relation to weapons (swords, guns) plus any special effects in play, like magic. The modifier must be adjusted to the level of skill the character possessed, this list should help give you a feel for what is right;

Skill proficiency modifier		
Inducted, just started	0	Because a character knows something, doesn't mean they're good at it
Amateur, learning	1	Basic level of skill
Novice, learning well	2	Greater level of skill
Skilled	4	Accomplished in all basic and advanced skills, recommended average
Expert	6	Spent many, many years to perfect their art, do not overuse
Master	10	Legendary skill, definitely do not overuse

- Can I use an attack that can't be blocked or dodged?

Attacks should allow the defending character to have a chance to **avoid** pain and death, forcing an un-

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blockable and un-dodgable attack is actively god-modding and is **cheating**.

However!

Having attacks that are dangerous to block or too difficult to dodge are still options you can take, so long as they're **not both** unblockable and undodgable at the same time.

One attack could have a condition that if the attack is blocked instead of dodged, they can increase the DC by a fixed amount as a **penalty** for not taking the correct choice in defending themselves. If the defender instead dodges, the DC of the previous attack stays the same.

➤ My opponent keeps racking his DCs too high and countering all my modifiers, what should I do?

Kick their ass, no, **really**, kick their ass off the channel.

Unless it was just a joke, which I suppose wouldn't be the case in this FAQ, that sort of behaviour only proves to everybody that they're a god-modder, exposing their cheating ways for what they really are, especially since free-form RPs can be quite vague on what is legal or not.

FFDC was designed to solve disputes fairly, but like any other system, if people abuse it, there's not much we can do except exclude them from play so people can continue playing and have fun.

➤ I think my opponent is fixing rolls OR
How can I make d20 rolls fair and accountable?

When it comes to dice rolls, I always use random.org's **integer generator** on Advanced mode, this can be found at <http://random.org/integers/?mode=advanced>

In Advanced mode you can set true-random number generations (as opposed to fake random rolls by computer programs) to a **keyword** that can be retrieved later on for others to view and verify for themselves.

On the link above, follow these steps to set it up for FFDC;

1. Set *Generate _____ random integers* to **1**,
2. Set *values between* **1 and 20**,
3. Select '*Use pregenerated randomization based on persistent identifier*'

The best practise for the pregenerated randomization is to decide on a name like **testbattle** then add three digits on the end '**001**', the three digits represent the amount of times you have rolled, so if a dispute on the legality of the dice roll is concerned, you can link a URL with the result intact.

When using this method of dice rolls, it's much easier to choose one person to roll for everybody else, otherwise disputes about 'which keyword was used' and other confusions will ruin the game.

➤ I keep getting whipped by low rolls, how do I force a success without cheating?

Just because you are unlucky doesn't mean you're allowed to force a success, that's **cheating**.

However an optional element to FFDC can be used called **ACTION POINTS** full capitalisation courtesy of Lazo

Each character can have a set amount of ACTION POINTS (**AP** for short) which they can use to make **free modifiers** to their rolls. If the defender is three (3) points short of succeeding on a current roll, they may **pay three (3) AP** to succeed on that roll.

AP once spent cannot be reused, if the difference is greater than the amount of AP available, it cannot be used to succeed a roll. AP recovery is allowed but must be decided upon before playing.

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The amount of points for each character can be decided at the start between players, as it is an optional addition to the ruling, it is not required to use the FFDC system.

➤ How should I do combos, specials or elaborate moves with FFDC?

FFDC wasn't really designed for turn-by-turn use but for moves that are more complex or drawn out than single strikes are possible and equally simple. I have written some suggestions on how to structure your moves with FFDC.

For **combos**, you could do it in stages with increasing DC requirements for each outcome, [DC6,10,15].

6-9 has the *minimal* outcome, **10-14** has the *moderate* outcome and **15+** has the *best* outcome. You can use comma-separated DCs [DC#,#...etc] for any attack with varying levels of success or failure.

With **Tiered DCs** like this, opens up the possibilities of outcomes that are not purely successive or failed attempts. Much like getting side-swiped by a car instead of clearing it or getting run over.

For **elaborate/special moves**, you could do it as a single DC event with only one connection, if the defender fails to succeed the attack will be allowed to perform the entire attack out correctly, depending on the attack itself. You can do it in stages or as one connection, depending on how

➤ What's this 'connection' stuff you kept mentioning in the above FAQ?

A **Connection** is when an attack successfully strikes the defender and **no more attempts at defending can be made**. This is so special attacks can work as intended, connections are required to ensure the defender 'takes it' how they should, unless specified.

When it comes to writing a successful connection post, the attacker must **NOT control other characters directly** to make their attack work. Forcing a character to stand and stare for a while is disallowed, but you can make them 'trip up on something' or make them 'stunned' as a reasonable explanation.

➤ What would the best use for modifiers?

The best use for modifiers in the higher ranges would be for attacks that have **certain weaknesses or exploits**. For instance, if a character shoots a fireball at another character, a large positive modifier could be applied if the defending character shoot water at said fireball, therefore giving a great chance it would fizzle into steam.

In reverse, if the defender defends themselves in a **completely dangerous way**, such as trying to stop a bolt of lightning with their bare hands, they would receive a big negative modifier for defending themselves in a very 'wrong' way. The modifier can be avoided if the character were insulated from the electricity.

Consistent modifiers can be applied for things like injury or fatigue, most characters cannot function as well as they become injured or tired, this guide should give you some idea on how to use this aspect;

Injuries	
Slight	0
Minor	-1 to -2
Moderate	-3 to -4
Serious	-5 to -8
Critical	-9 to -16
Fatigue	
Slight	0
Light	-1

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Moderate	-2
Heavy	-4
On empty	-8

➤ So this is just like DnD isn't it?

Yes, you caught me. While originally this was mostly new ideas, it seemed that Wizard's d20 system possessed a few game mechanics most effective in moderating an RP such as these. While there are artistic licenses involved, FFDC is a **simplified form of the d20 system** and more open-ended to suit the free-form RPs played by those on IRC channels.

➤ Am I allowed to suppress the 'Natural roll' ruling for a certain attack?

Generally **No**, the natural roll rule is to enable characters to have a **stroke of luck** (good or bad) to mix up the situation. No skilled character is perfect nor is any incompetent character completely useless. Think of it as something like Sodd's law or dumb luck taking the form of the **1** and **20** roll numbers respectively.

However some *exceptions* can be made when the defending character really has **no chance of succeeding or failing**. This exception can only be used if they try to defend themselves against an action they are **wholly unable to handle**. So an ordinary person with no strength enhancements, trying to lift a mountain single handedly cannot use a natural roll to succeed.

In short, Natural rolls occur only when there's even the **slightest chance of success or failure**, actions with certain consequences may be excluded from the ruling.

➤ How can I make reversals or counter-attacks with FFDC? OR
How can I enhance my actions with FFDC?

As in the nature of battle, characters should be able to divert attacks, reverse attacks or outright punch their opponent in the face after they throw a bad punch. Enhancing attacks so they can do more theoretical damage or make them more effective is allowed too, but none of these come for free.

Reversals, counter-attacks and enhancements can be done through **modifiers**, they are considered penalties as doing them are more difficult to perform than regular evasion and defensive measures. It's pretty much **trading power for accuracy**.

If you want a guide, try this out;

Defensive		
Minor	-1 to -2 roll	Distancing a defending character away from another attack
Moderate	-3	Perform a reversal, diverting an attack to make their opponent stumble
Strong	-5	Perform a strong reversal that can cause the attacker some significant harm

Offensive		
Minor	-2DC	Add additional stunning to an attack, causing an opponent to stumble
Moderate	-4DC	Add more force or effectiveness to an attack
Strong	-6DC	Critical hit, striking with enough power to cause an injury

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➤ **MISCONCEPTION:**
Powerful attacks have high DCs INVERSELY
Weak attacks have low DCs

FFDC does not calculate attack damage, it is merely a device used to **calculate and randomise the chance of success**. There is no reason for a powerful attack to have a low DC, or a weak one to have a high DC.

In fact, in terms of fairness, **most powerful attacks should have a low DC** to prevent one-hit kills all the time. The only exception to this rule would be for attacks with conditions that need to be met to reduce their DC considerably.

When using FFDC, players should concentrate on how easy or hard it is for their **attack or action to succeed**, not how powerful it is or how profound the effect it will have on their opponent.

If a powerful character swings their sword across another, their DC is dictated on what chance the sword has to connect, not how hard the strike will be.