

Police Cops

The loose cannon, fish-outta-water with nothing to lose; the strait-laced stickler who never met a rulebook he didn't love; the neurotic, maybe-autistic, with an uncanny ability to link clues together; the plucky goth kid, who can use computers for things they were never designed for; and the old guy who's been on the job longer than anybody, and knows his way around an interrogation room. You're Police Cops and you're on the case.

Police Cops works best with 4-5 players, and one Commissioner. The Commish is the GM. He's the one who shouts at the players for causing more collateral damage than the bad guys, and tells them to hand in their badge and gun, because they're off the case! The game is designed to play like a cop show, each session or two being an Episode with its own enclosed story, but still part of broader series.

Starting Up

To play Police Cops, there are a few things you'll need. Friends, scratch paper and pencils and an obnoxious amount of 6 sided dice.

Before you begin playing, there's a few conversations you need to have around the table. Firstly, this is Police Cops; you need to have a premise for the game. The more hackneyed and ridiculous the better. TV is rife with examples, just waiting to be plagiarised. Maybe you work on cold-cases, by investigating crime scenes, for a special victims unit brought in by the NCIS to look at bones. Choosing a theme song helps with this step. Maybe something by The Who?

Once that is done, each players needs to discuss what kind of character they would like to play. The point of this conversation is to make sure that there is not too much overlap in what people want to do. Having two hard-bitten, nothing to lose type guys is less fun. Everyone needs to be unique enough and fill a different role in the team. It doesn't matter if the kind of player you want to be wouldn't traditionally be involved with your particular area of law enforcement. This isn't GURPS, we're not going for realism here.

Character Creation

Character creation takes all of five minutes for the entire group, and attempts to facilitate the uniqueness of each character emphasised above.

The player immediately to the left of the Commish announces their character's name and one thing that their character is great at and writes it down. The next player on the left now announces that they are terrible at the thing chosen by the previous player, and then they choose something that they themselves are great at.

Go around the table like this, until each player has 3 abilities they are good at, and 3 that they are bad at. When that is done, players rate their chosen abilities from best to worst, assigning the modifiers +3D, +2D

and +1D to their good abilities, and -1D, -2D and -3D to their bad abilities. These are your Ability Dice.

Lastly, players have 9D to distribute among the following 3 stats, bringing none of them above 5D. These will be referred to as your Stat Dice.

Stats

Strong - This is how strong you are. It's used for shooting and beating up bad guys, as well as just being a badass.

Fast - This is how fast you are. It's used for rolling over the hood of your car, or jumping across buildings, and just being plain cool.

Smart - This is how smart you are. It's used for hacking into mainframes, putting clues together, and generally just knowing what's up.

Players also have access to any gear that would be standard for their department.

Playing the game

When The Commish thinks that there's a chance that a character may fail a given task, they call for a check. The Commish assigns the task a difficulty from 1 (fairly easy) to 10 (impossible?). The number of dice rolled is equal to Stat Dice + Ability Dice. If no Ability Dice apply, then you just roll your Stat Dice. A result of a 5 or 6 on a die is a success. If the number of successes is equal to or greater than the difficulty, the actions succeeds. Otherwise, it's a humiliating failure.

Bonuses

This is Police Cops. In Police Cops, you get bonuses for doing awesome, cliché cop things. Is that

Awesome Cop Things

- Driving your car through a fruit cart in a chase
- Taking your sunglasses off to make a pun to camera
- Two people typing on the same keyboard
- Tossing a scarf over your shoulder and reciting a catchphrase
- Running barefoot through broken glass
- Not looking at explosions

thing the player just did totally awesome? Then it deserves a bonus!

Bonuses are extra dice that are awarded, and that can be kept in reserve to be added to rolls at any time. A bonus can only be added before the dice are rolled. This allows you to potentially succeed at difficulty 10 tasks. You can only have 3 bonus dice in reserve at any time. No hoarding Bonus Dice. You can spend bonus dice all at once, or one at a time.

Opposing and Assisting

If two characters are opposing each other, then they must make opposing rolls. The winner of a contest like this is the player who rolls the most successes. If it's a draw, then the two characters are locked in a stalemate until they can change the situation significantly enough to require another roll. If it is an obvious attacker and defender situation, then a draw goes in favour of the defender.

If a player wishes to assist another player, they may only do so if they have an ability that is relevant to the situation. They add their ability dice to the roll of the player they are helping. Keep track of whose dice roll what, perhaps by rolling them separately or using different colours, to see who performed well in the task. Perhaps the person helping did nothing, or fumbled.

Combat

Combat isn't for just shooting a sucker, or beating up some dude who's not co-operating. Those are just regular checks. Combat happens when there are a number of people on opposing sides, kicking ass or shooting each other up.

Initiative

At the beginning of a combat, all players involved must make an initiative roll. An initiative roll is the total roll on your Fast dice (not the total number of successes). The round progresses in initiative order, from highest number to lowest. Each character has a chance to act when their turn comes around. When all characters have acted, that's the end of a round. Each round is about 10 seconds long.

Actions

There are three kinds of actions you can take in a round. You may make any two of them, in any order. Attack and Move may be made on your turn, Defend is made on somebody else's turn, if you haven't already taken two actions. If you must Defend before your turn, you're left with only one action on your turn.

Combat rolls are the same as any other check, and as such, can be modified by relevant Ability Dice.

- **Attack** – You make a Strong roll to shoot or hit, or otherwise be violent against another character.
- **Move** – You make a Fast roll to chase, jump, or any other movement related action.

- **Defend** – If you have an action left when somebody attacks you, you can defend by either rolling Fast, to try and dodge or take cover. If you're not defending from a bullet, you may defend by rolling Strong and attempting to block or disarm your attacker.

Damage

Damage happens when you get attacked and fail to defend, or if you otherwise sustain an injury. NPCs and enemies will generally go down to one or two bullets, but PCs are made of tougher stuff: Main Character Armour. Damage follows a track, as follows.

- **Healthy** – No problem at all
- **Just a scratch** – The equivalent of two bullet wounds in the arms and legs. No big deal.
- **Ah, that hurt!** – Actually, you're starting to lose a bit of blood after the third and fourth bullets. Use half the dice you usually would for tasks.
- **I'm Down** – Unable to do anything except crawl a bit and bleed.
- **Cliffhanger** – Removed from play for the Episode. Will they survive? Find out next week.
- **Dead** – Damn. Contract expired. Hire a new actor.