Core Mechanics

The Basic Roll

When the outcome of a character's action is uncertain or risky, the game uses a simple dice mechanic to determine what happens.

Step 1: Frame the Action as a Closed Question

Before rolling, frame the action as a question that can be answered with "Yes" or "No."

Examples:

- "Can I navigate through the superstorm to reach the settlement?"
- "Do I sense the thermal vents through the cave wall?"
- "Can I convince the Council of Windkeepers to grant me access to the archives?"

Step 2: Assemble Your Dice Pool

Start with one **Action Die** (d6). This die is always rolled.

Then add:

- **Chance Dice** (d6) for each advantage, favorable Tag, or helpful circumstance
- **Risk Dice** (d6) for each disadvantage, opposing Tag, or complicating factor

Chance and Risk Dice cancel each other out 1:1. Only roll the remaining dice after cancellation.

If all Chance and Risk Dice cancel each other out completely, you roll only the Action Die. This represents pure chance—no advantage or disadvantage, just the uncertainty of the moment.

Step 3: Roll and Read the Dice

Roll all dice in your pool. The **highest single die** determines the outcome:

Highest Die	Outcome
6	**Yes, and...** The action succeeds, and something extra happens in your favor
5	**Yes...** The action succeeds as intended

Highest Die	Outcome
4	**Yes, but...** The action succeeds, but there's a complication or cost
3	**No, but...** The action fails, but you gain something or avoid the worst
2	**No...** The action fails as expected
1	**No, and...** The action fails, and something extra goes wrong

If you roll multiple dice of the same highest value, the result shifts one step toward "Yes" (in your favor).

Examples:

- Two 5s = "Yes, and..."
- Two 4s = "Yes..."
- Two 3s = "No..."
- Two 2s = "No, but..."

When to Roll

Not every action requires a roll. Use the dice when:

- **The outcome is uncertain**
- **Failure has interesting consequences**
- **Success isn't guaranteed**

Don't roll when:

- **Success is automatic** (the character's Tags clearly outweigh obstacles)
- **Failure is automatic** (the action is impossible given the circumstances)
- **The outcome doesn't matter to the story**

Zoom In / Zoom Out

You can approach any situation at different levels of detail:

Zoom Out: Resolve the entire scene with a single closed question and one roll.

- "Do we make it across the Deep Roads to the next settlement before our supplies run out?"

Zoom In: Break the scene into multiple questions, each requiring its own roll.

- "Can I spot the correct tunnel branch?"
- "Do I notice the unstable rock formation before it collapses?"
- "Can I repair the damaged water reclamation unit?"

Choose the approach that serves the story and creates the most engaging play.

Tags as Tools

Tags are short phrases that describe anything important in the game—characters, objects, locations, situations. They're the primary way advantages and disadvantages are determined.

Using Tags:

- When a Tag is relevant and helpful to your action, add a Chance Die
- When a Tag works against you, add a Risk Die
- The GM (or group consensus in GM-less play) decides which Tags apply

Examples:

- Your "Weather Working" Skill adds a Chance Die when you try to calm the winds around your settlement
- Your "Overwhelmed by Thermal Noise" Frailty adds a Risk Die when you enter the sweltering margins of the day side
- The scene Tag "Superstorm Approaching" adds a Risk Die to outdoor travel
- Your "Wind Compass" Gear adds a Chance Die when navigating by wind patterns

Conditions

When something happens that temporarily affects your character—injury, exhaustion, fear—you gain a **Condition** Tag.

Examples:

- Injured
- Exhausted
- Frightened
- Overheated
- Disoriented
- Psychically Drained

Conditions add Risk Dice when relevant. They're removed through:

- Medical attention (for physical Conditions)
- Rest and recovery (for exhaustion or psychic depletion)

- Narrative resolution (for emotional or situational Conditions)

The GM or group determines when a Condition is severe enough to persist and when it can be cleared.

Details and Scene Tags

The environment itself has Tags that emerge from play:

- **"Wind Turbines Damaged"** (adds Risk Dice to power-dependent actions)
- **"Geothermal Vent Nearby"** (adds Chance Dice to staying warm)
- **"Storm Clouds Gathering"** (adds Risk Dice to outdoor activity)
- **"Ancient Structure Discovered"** (adds Chance Dice to research or exploration)

These Tags remain in play until the fiction changes them. Players and GMs create and modify them through successful actions and narrative developments.

Opposition

When facing sapient opposition (NPCs, creatures, rival settlements), their relevant Tags add Risk Dice to your roll. The GM can frame their own closed questions for NPCs taking independent action.

Major NPCs might have their own Concept, Skills, and Gear, which function like player character Tags.

Solo Play

Duskara is designed for emergent, collaborative storytelling—but the wind speaks even when no one else is listening. This chapter offers guidance for playing the game solo, exploring personal stories of pilgrimage, loss, resilience, or ritual purpose.

The solo rules use the **Loner engine** as their base, adapted to match Duskara's tone. You'll use oracles to answer questions, a twist system to escalate tension, and light prompts to track changes to your character.

These rules assume you are playing a single character. Simply scale narrative focus across scenes or divide attention across their individual arcs.

Consulting the Oracle

When you want to test your expectations, ask the Oracle a **closed question**—one that can be answered Yes or No.

Roll:

- **1 Chance Die** (d6, use one color)
- **1 Risk Die** (d6, use a different color)

Interpreting Results

Situation	Outcome
Chance > Risk	**Yes**
Risk > Chance	**No**
Both ≤ 3	Add **but...**
Both ≥ 4	Add **and...**
Equal values	**Yes, and...** + increase **Twist Counter** by 1

This gives you combinations like “Yes, and…”, “No, but…”, etc.

Advantage and Disadvantage

- **Advantage:** Add a second Chance Die and keep the higher.
- **Disadvantage:** Add a second Risk Die and keep the higher.

Use **context, not math**. If a tag, Trait, or situation favors you narratively, grant yourself Advantage. If a complication or flaw applies, take Disadvantage.

This should feel intuitive and fast—not like bookkeeping.

The Twist Counter

Start with **0**.
Whenever your Oracle roll results in **doubles**, increase it by **+1**.

When the **Twist Counter** reaches **3**, a twist occurs. Reset the counter to 0, and roll on the table below:

D6	Subject	Action
1	A third party	Appears
2	The hero	Alters the location
3	An encounter	Helps the hero
4	A physical event	Hinders the hero
5	An emotional event	Changes the goal
6	An object	Ends the scene

Interpret this two-part phrase in the context of your current scene. Don’t overthink—follow the wind.

Mood of the Next Scene

Sometimes you’ll know where the story is headed. Other times, let fate guide you.

Roll 1d6 to determine the tone of the next scene:

D6	Mood
1–3	Dramatic Scene (obstacles increase)
4–5	Quiet Scene (recovery, bonding, reflection)
6	Meanwhile… (cut to another character, faction, or location)

Open Questions or Inspiration

When faced with an open-ended question (“What does the wind carry?”), use the **Inspiration Tables** on the next page.

Roll 1d6 for each: a verb, a noun, and optionally, an adjective. Interpret the result freely.

Here are the full **Inspiration Tables** for use in *Windcallers* solo play. You can roll 1d6 on each table to form a prompt like:

- **"Shatter the Hollow Mask"**
- **"Observe a Distant Flame"**
- **"Betray the Quiet Storm"**

Use them freely for narrative inspiration, ritual detail, or scene framing.

Inspiration Tables

Verbs

D6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Observe	Call	Shatter	Protect	Listen	Carry
2	Follow	Ignite	Break	Offer	Weave	Seek
3	Conceal	Reveal	Guard	Awaken	Bury	Reflect
4	Escape	Pursue	Bind	Echo	Watch	Cut
5	Transform	Seal	Channel	Forget	Find	Twist
6	Uncover	Repair	Steal	Echo	Remember	Guide

Adjectives

D6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Forgotten	Flickering	Hollow	Distant	Sacred	Shifting
2	Cold	Broken	Hidden	Weeping	Ancient	Whispering
3	Silent	Cracked	Unnamed	Twisted	Burning	Breathing
4	Ghostly	Radiant	Buried	Wind-torn	Fading	Bound
5	Pale	Harmonic	Scorched	Veiled	Lost	Rooted
6	Frozen	Ethereal	Dim	Thorned	Devoted	Stormbound

Nouns

D6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Name	Storm	Memory	Shrine	Flame	Echo
2	Song	Path	Mask	Stone	Bond	Hollow
3	Eye	Wing	Wind	Blade	Thread	Scar
4	Dream	Root	Silence	Mirror	Offering	Voice
5	Gate	River	Dust	Circle	Mark	Shadow
6	Wraith	Light	Ritual	Step	Gift	Secret

When the Story Ends

When you reach a satisfying conclusion:

- Add a new Trait to your Windcaller (Skill, Flaw, Gear, etc.)
- Update NPCs, Locations, and Events for future stories
- Optionally, **evolve your Attunement** or **add a Ritual Scar**

You’re writing wind-memory. It will return later, in another game, with different eyes.

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