Encounters and Conflicts

Duskara is not a combat-focused game, but conflicts—physical, social, or environmental—are inevitable. This section provides structure for resolving meaningful confrontations.

Conflict Types

Physical Confrontation

Direct action between characters or against hostile forces.

Examples:

- Defending a settlement from claim-jumpers
- Escaping a collapsing cavern
- Subduing a panicked storm-beast

Resolution:

- Frame as closed questions: "Can I disarm the rival before they sabotage the turbine?"
- Apply relevant Tags (combat Skills, environmental factors, opponent's abilities)
- Interpret outcomes narratively, not as hit points

Social Confrontation

Persuasion, negotiation, deception, or manipulation.

Examples:

- Convincing the Council to fund an expedition
- Negotiating water rights between settlements
- Deceiving a rival about the location of a salvage site

Resolution:

- Frame as closed questions: "Can I persuade the Archivists to grant me access to restricted data?"
- Apply relevant Tags (social Skills, Relationships, Nemesis opposition)
- Consider long-term consequences of outcomes

Environmental Confrontation

Surviving or overcoming natural hazards.

Examples:

- Navigating a superstorm
- Surviving a thermal surge on the day side
- Escaping a collapsing tunnel

Resolution:

- Frame as closed questions: "Can we reach shelter before the superstorm hits?"
- Apply environmental zone modifiers and hazard Tags
- Use psychic abilities where appropriate

Opposition Strength

When facing sapient opposition, their strength is represented by adding Risk Dice:

Minor Opposition: +1 Risk Die

- Inexperienced rivals
- Small-scale threats
- Routine challenges

Moderate Opposition: +2 Risk Dice

- Skilled opponents
- Organized groups
- Significant hazards

Major Opposition: +3 Risk Dice

- Legendary figures
- Elite forces
- Catastrophic threats

NPCs may also have their own Tags (Concept, Skills, Gear) that add additional Risk Dice when relevant.

Creatures and Native Life

Duskara's native life has adapted to the planet's extreme conditions. Most creatures are not hostile, but they can be dangerous when threatened or when their territories overlap with human activity.

See the **Creatures and Enemies** section for specific examples.

Zoom In vs. Zoom Out in Conflicts

Zoom Out: Resolve the entire confrontation with a single question.

- "Do we drive off the claim-jumpers and secure the mining site?"
- Fast resolution, emphasizes outcome over details
- Best for conflicts where specifics aren't crucial

Zoom In: Break the confrontation into multiple questions.

- "Can I identify their leader?"
- "Do I convince the leader to negotiate?"
- "Can I disarm the hostile faction member?"
- Detailed, tense, allows for tactical decisions
- Best for climactic or complex confrontations

Choose based on narrative importance and player engagement.

Example Conflict

Situation: The characters are defending their settlement's water reclamation station from saboteurs hired by a rival settlement.

Approach: Zoom In (multiple questions for tension)

Question 1: "Can I spot the saboteurs before they reach the pumps?"

- **Dice Pool:** 1 Action Die + Chance Die (Perception Skill, high vantage point) - Risk Die (darkness, saboteurs are experienced)
- **Result:** "Yes, but..." → You spot them, but they see you too and split up

Question 2: "Can I intercept the one heading for the main control panel?"

- **Dice Pool:** 1 Action Die + Chance Dice (athleticism, knowledge of station layout) - Risk Dice (saboteur's evasion skill, low light)
- **Result:** "No, but..." → You don't catch them, but you trigger the alarm, alerting the settlement

Question 3: "Can I talk the saboteur down before they complete their mission?"

- **Dice Pool:** 1 Action Die + Chance Dice (Relationship with rival settlement, appeals to shared values) - Risk Dice (saboteur's loyalty to employer, time pressure)

- **Result:** "Yes, and..." → The saboteur stands down, and reveals who hired them

Consequences

Conflicts should have lasting impacts:

Physical: Conditions (Injured, Exhausted), gear damage, environmental changes **Social:** Relationship shifts, reputation changes, new alliances or Nemeses **Environmental:** Structural damage to settlements, resource status degradation, ecological disruption

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