

TIM'S RISUS STUFF

Description: A nice web page containing rule modifications and additions for S. John Ross' *Risus: The Anything RPG*. Likes to be visited and clicked on. Gets jealous of other, more frequently visited RPG pages. Offers easy access to the author for feedback.

Clichés: RPG House Rules Page (4), RPG Fan Page (4), RPG Author Page (2)

Combat Rules for Risus

Inappropriate Cliches, Pumps, and Double-Pumps

For serious gaming in Risus, the inappropriate cliché rules are... well, inappropriate. However, if they are not used, pumps and double-pumps become quite nonsensical - regardless of how much a character pumps a cliché, the opponent will lose a maximum of one die.

Serious games can use the following rule: if the pumped cliché wins the round, the losing cliché takes one die of damage for each full 6 points that the pumped cliché rolled higher than the opposing cliché (minimum of one die).

Optional Inappropriate Cliches, Pumps, and Double-Pump Rules

- If the pumped cliché wins the round, the losing cliché takes one die of damage for each even numbered die that the pumped cliché rolled.
- Funky Dice (provided by Alexander Cherry) - the losing cliché takes one die of damage for each X points, with X being the die base of the pumped cliché (i.e., d8, d10, etc).

Health Rules for Risus

Risus is a wonderful gaming system, but the only way of recording damage is a loss of dice in a given cliché. From time to time, the Laws of Dramatic Necessity might dictate that the player characters will need to take some damage from an unknown source. Perhaps a robber bludgeons them with a blackjack from behind, or a sniper takes a pot-shot at them from a hidden location and hits them in the leg. Using the basic Risus rules, there is no way to handle this, until now. Enter health dice.

Health Dice

Each Risus character has a number of health dice. Health dice are not distributed as are normal clichés. The number of health dice a character has is determined by dividing the number of starting dice allocated to that character by five, rounding towards one. In addition, each Risus character gets another health die for each significant physical cliché, subject to GM approval. So, a five dice character, with the clichés Armchair Quarterback (3) and Couch Potato (2) would have one health die ($5 / 5 = 1$, no significant physical clichés). However, a ten dice character, with the clichés Professional Quarterback (4), Avid Bodybuilder (4), and Hopeless Romantic (2) would have four health dice ($10 / 5 = 2$, two significant physical clichés). Finally, a three dice character with the Slothful Layabout (3) cliché would have one health die ($3 / 5 = 0.6$, rounded towards 1 = 1, absolutely no significant physical clichés).

Damage Resolution

If a Risus character takes damage from a source that is not directly attacking a cliché (i.e. the robber and sniper described above), subtract the damage from the character's health dice. As with other clichés, if health dice reaches zero, the opponent has won and decides the ultimate fate of the character.

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Health Rolls

Whenever a Risus character wants to do something that a recent wound or other damage could hinder, the player rolls the characters current health dice. If the number rolled beats the target number that the GM sets, it is a success! Otherwise, it is a failure. The target number should follow a similar scale to that described in the Risus rules.

Sanity Rules for Risus

I am a big fan of Risus, the cool, free, anything RPG by S. John Ross. However, the one thing it is missing to really support the games I like to run, is some way of keeping track of sanity. In the Risus rules, for example, there is no game mechanic to simulate the mind wrenching horror if a Risus character were to accidentally stumble upon great Cthulhu, or to witness his best friend and adventuring companion turn into Y'Golonac. So, here is my attempt at creating some sanity rules for the Risus game.

Sanity Dice

Each Risus character has a number of sanity dice. Sanity dice are not distributed as are normal clichés. The number of sanity dice that a Risus character has is determined by averaging (round off all fractions) all the Risus character's cliché dice. As an example, a Risus character with the following clichés - Historical Bookworm (4), Know-it-all College Student (4), Carousing Partier (2) - would have 3 sanity dice ($4 + 4 + 2 = 10$, $10 / 3 = 3.3\sim$, rounded off to 3). Similarly, a Risus character with the Computer Programmer (3), Insomniac Video Gamer (3), In-your-face Skateboarder (2), and Heavy Metal Guitar Player (2) clichés would have 2 sanity dice ($3 + 3 + 2 + 2 = 10$, $10 / 4 = 2.5$, rounded off to 2).

Sanity Checks

When a sanity check is called for, the player rolls the number of sanity dice that the Risus character has. If the player rolls higher than the target number that the GM has assigned the sanity wrenching experience or entity, the Risus character emerges unscathed. If the roll is lower than the target number, the Risus character has been unable to handle the situation. Subtract the rolled number from the target number and consult the table below to find out the hapless Risus character's fate.

The sanity target number should be reflective of the general danger of the sanity wrenching experience. For example, coming across a fresh corpse in the basement of an abandoned building, the player should roll to beat a target number of... say... 6. If the fresh corpse was once a good friend or family member, the target number should be... like... 12. And if the fresh corpse of a good friend or family member sits up and lunges at the Risus character, anywhere around 18 would be a good target.

If a Risus character were to accidentally stumble upon great Cthulhu, or to witness his best friend and adventuring companion turn into Y'Golonac, the target number would have to be up around 50 or so...

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The Failed Sanity Check Table

# target missed by	Result
1-5	Temporary insanity for 1d6 combat rounds.
6-10	Temporary insanity for 4d6 combat rounds.
11-15	Temporary insanity until sunset or sunrise, whichever occurs first.
16-20	Temporary insanity for 1d6 days.
21 +	Indefinitely insane.

Both temporary and permanent insanities are left up to the GM to decide specifics. For a temporary insanity, the Risus character might faint, become hysterical, suffer nervous twitches, pick up a phobia or fetish befitting the sanity wrenching experience or entity, or sit in a corner and babble. For an indefinite insanity, the Risus character might receive a phobia, become catatonic, schizophrenic, obsessed, or some other mentally incapacitating hook. Indefinite insanities usually last 1d6 game months, but that can be adjusted by the GM for extremely good or extremely bad sanity check rolls.

Optional Sanity Rules

- If any player rolls all odd results on their Risus character's sanity check, it is considered a "critical failure", and the GM can assess whatever penalty he so desires - however, it should be either exceedingly horrific or exceeding silly (this is Risus, after all).
- If any player rolls all ones on their Risus character's sanity check, it is considered a "critical failure", and the GM can assess whatever penalty he so desires - however, it should be either exceedingly horrific or exceeding silly (this is Risus, after all).
- Funky Dice and Double Pumps (provided by Alexander Cherry) - average the points spent on cliché dice to obtain the amount of points to be spent on sanity dice. So the Historical Bookworm (4), Know-it-all College Student (4), Carousing Partier (2) character would have 20 points to spend on sanity dice ($24 + 24 + 12 = 60$, $60 / 3 = 20$) which could purchase 2d10 or 3d6 sanity dice. Points not spent are lost.



Tim Huntley is member #C-5 in the International Order of Risus and has never asked S. John Ross to remove his pants.

S. John Ross' *Risus: The Anything RPG* can be found at:
<http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/risus.htm>

You know you want it.