

# RAGING HEARTS

PASSION ON THE BATTLEFIELD

A ONE-ON-ONE BATTLE MINIGAME

BETA VERSION



# Preparation

## On your own index card

### *Approaches*

Each fighter approaches this battle in a unique way. Whether they use swords, bows, magic, guns, or their fists, they choose to fight emphasizing a particular approach. Assign each of the modifiers **+2**, **0**, and **-2** to one of the following approaches:

**Strong** - synonyms: athletic, muscular, large, barbaric

**Smart** - synonyms: intelligent, wise, tactical, strategic, clever, cunning, manipulative

**Quick** - synonyms: acrobatic, dextrous, sneaky, stealthy

While you are most skilled in a certain approach, you have to use the appropriate approach for what you're actually doing. You cannot sneak up on your opponent using the Strong approach, and you cannot throw a boulder using the Quick approach.

### *Hits and Damage*

Draw a row of 6 boxes, labelled "stress." Below them, draw three lines, labeled "mild damage", "moderate damage", and "severe damage." (See interior page for diagram.)

### *Special Move*

Heroes always pull out a new special move during a big fight. Write this aspect down on your own notecard. You can invoke it whenever it feels like the right moment during the fight (spend one token to invoke the aspect).

**An aspect is a word, phrase, or sentence that describes something centrally important to your character or the arena. Aspects allow you to change the story in ways that tie in with your character's tendencies, skills, or problems. During battle, you invoke aspects by spending tokens to give yourself an advantage or create a disadvantage for your opponent.**

## On a shared index card between the fighters

### *Right and Wrong Spectrum*

Draw a line on the notecard. Label one side "right" and the other side "wrong". Using two different tokens, place a token on the spectrum where your fighter thinks your opponent lies.

At any point during the battle, you can move the token representing the other character along the spectrum. If your character's opinion of the other fighter changes during the battle (positively or negatively), move the token representing them further toward the respective end of the spectrum.

If you ever move the token all the way to the "right" end of the spectrum, the battle ends. You are now in agreement.

## *Two Personal Aspects*

On either side of the index card, write down two personal aspects of your character. Make these have both good and bad angles, so that they could be used in a positive or negative light. These aspects should be:

- **You mental state going in to the fight** (e.g., I'm so anxious I'm vibrating with energy; I am confident to the point of hubris)
- **You motivation for fighting** - a personality trait or a piece of your shared history (e.g., He destroyed my village; I cannot abide any undead to live)

## *Aspects of the Arena*

On a separate index card, write down 4 aspects of the arena - the space in which you're battling. Each person picks 2, one they think will benefit the other person and one that will be a detriment to the other person (e.g., An open field with room to fly; a cramped basement just barely tall enough to stand)

Flip a coin to determine who chooses the first arena aspect, then go back and forth until all 4 are chosen.

While these aspects can be used during battle to create advantages and disadvantages, they also set the scene. "An open field with room to fly" implies that your fighter will be able to fly freely throughout the scene - no roll required. However, in "a cramped basement just barely tall enough to stand," your fighter will need to make an Overcome action to spread their wings.

## *Audience*

Other players may have a stake in the outcome of this battle as well. Each of the audience members can interfere with the fight once at any time, during setup or battle.

- Each audience member gets **one token** to spend to invoke aspects and interfere with the fight.
- Each audience member gets **one aspect** - a personality trait or piece of personal history. Write this down on a card so you remember.

# Setup

## Your index card

Approaches (add modifiers)	Stress	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Mild Damage	_____					
Strong	Moderate Damage	_____					
Smart	Severe Damage	_____					
Quick							
Special Move							
Describe your special move.							

## Shared index card

Right	_____	Wrong
Arena Aspects:		
Arena aspect 1		Arena aspect 2
Arena aspect 3		Arena aspect 4
Fighter 1		Fighter 2
personal aspects:		personal aspects:
Mental state		Mental state
Motivation for fighting		Motivation for fighting

# How to play

## Debate

Each round starts with the two fighters making impassioned speeches. Do you care deeply about the other fighter and just want the best for them? Do you think there's still good somewhere in the darkness of their heart? Do you want them to yield and repent to you? Now is the time to make your case!

If there is an audience, the audience **votes as players (not characters)** at the end of the Debate stage. Whoever the audience votes for gains an extra token. In the case of a tie, neither fighter gets an extra token.

## Fight

The two fighters clash in the arena. Flip a coin to determine who moves first. Describe what you're trying to do, then roll your dice.

## Dice

Roll 4 Fate Dice or 4d6. Add all 4 together to get your total.

### If you're rolling 4 Fate Dice:

- - means -1
- Blank means 0
- + means +1

### If you're rolling 4d6, the numbers will translate to modifiers:

- 1-2 means -1
- 3-4 means 0
- 5-6 means +1

## Aspects

If you want to create an advantage for your fighter or a disadvantage for your opponent, you can invoke an aspect. When you explain your move, say that you are invoking an aspect and explain how.

- Aspects must be invoked before you roll. You can invoke one aspect per move.
- When you invoke an arena aspect or your own aspect, give the token to the GM.
- When you invoke your opponent's aspect, give the token to your opponent.
- If you invoke an aspect to create an advantage for yourself, add +2 to your roll.
- If you invoke an aspect to create a disadvantage for your opponent, subtract -2 from their roll.

Once you roll your dice, add your approach bonus and any aspect bonuses. If you are rolling against your opponent, compare the total to the number rolled by your opponent. If you are rolling against something else in the arena, the GM will tell you if you succeed or fail.

- You fail if your total is less than your opponent's total.
- It's a tie if your total is equal to your opponent's total.
- You succeed if your total is greater than your opponent's total.

**EXAMPLE:** If you want to use your +2 Strong approach to toss a boulder onto your opponent, you spend a token to invoke the arena aspect "canyon full of boulders," then roll your dice, adding +2 for your Strong approach and +2 for the aspect.

The three types of actions you can take are:

## Overcome

You use the overcome action to change aspects that are causing disadvantage to you. That disadvantage may have been established in the beginning - e.g., a flying character in a cramped basement arena. Or that disadvantage may have been invoked against you by your opponent in an attack action.

**EXAMPLE:** If your opponent has invoked the “canyon full of boulders” aspect of the arena to toss a boulder on you, you can use the Overcome move to try to throw the boulder off.

If you use this action against the other fighter, they will roll against you, using the Defend action. If you use this action against something else in the arena, the GM will tell you if your roll is high enough to be successful.

- **Fail:** Fail, or succeed at a serious cost. The GM will explain the cost. They can place a negative aspect on you for free.
- **Tie:** Succeed at minor cost. The GM will explain the cost. They can spend a token to place a negative aspect on you.
- **Succeed:** You accomplish your goal.

## Attack

You attack when you try to hurt your opponent, whether physically or mentally—swinging a sword, shooting a rifle, or casting a spell.

Your opponent will roll against you using the Defend action.

- **Fail:** Attack doesn't harm your opponent, and the GM will explain how you gain a momentary disadvantageous aspect or are left open to a counterattack.
- **Tie:** Attack doesn't harm your opponent.
- **Succeed:** Attack hits and causes damage.

## Defend

You defend when you're actively trying to stop someone from doing either of the other two actions—you're parrying a sword strike, trying to stay on your feet, blocking a doorway, and the like.

Usually this action is performed on someone else's turn, reacting to their attempt to attack or overcome.

- **Fail:** You suffer the consequences of your opponent's success.
- **Tie:** Look at your opponent's action to see what happens.
- **Succeed:** Your opponent doesn't get what they want.

You can make all of these moves against either the other player directly, or against aspects of the arena.

## Hits

If the attacker succeeds against the defender, the defender takes a hit. Subtract the defender's total roll from the attacker's total roll to determine the number of shifts the hit is. This is how much stress or damage the defender must absorb.

**EXAMPLE: Attacker rolled +6. Defender rolled +4. The hit is 2 shifts.**

When you take a hit, you need to account for how that hit affects you. One way to absorb the hit is to take stress; you can check stress boxes to handle some or all of a single hit. Each character can take up to six shifts of stress.

As you take more hits though, you start to show damage. **Mild damage = 2 shifts; moderate damage = 4 shifts; severe damage = 6 shifts**

Taking damage creates a new negative aspect on your character. Write this aspect down on the lines you drew on your index card.

You can choose to take damage before you fill up your stress boxes, if you choose. You can also choose to take severe or moderate damage before you take mild damage. You can split a hit between stress and damage, or between two types of damage.

However, if you take a type of damage, that hit fills up the entire damage slot even if it was not the total number of shifts listed above.

**EXAMPLE: All you have left open is a severe damage slot. You take a 3 shift hit. You must put that hit in the severe damage slot, even though it is not the full 6 shifts.**

If you can't (or decide not to) handle the entire hit, you fall.

## The Arena

At the end of each round, the GM asks each player **"do you yield?"**

After asking each player if they yield, the GM can spend a token to introduce a new arena aspect. Add it to the shared index card.


## Ending Battles

**If a fighter yields when the GM asks, the battle ends.** The fighter who yields determines how they exit the battle.

**If a fighter's token is moved all the way to the "right" side of the right/wrong spectrum, the battle ends.** The fighter who moved the token determines how they end the battle peacefully.

**If a fighter takes the maximum amount of stress and all their consequences, they fall.** The fighter who did not fall determines how they end the battle.



A pair of red boxing gloves is shown in the foreground, with the left glove partially visible and the right glove more prominent. The gloves are made of a smooth, slightly shiny material. The background is a dark, textured surface with a repeating geometric pattern of triangles and squares. The overall color scheme is dominated by the red of the gloves and the dark tones of the background.

Raging Hearts is a system-agnostic PVP minigame meant to be incorporated into a ongoing campaign in other systems. Sometimes two of the player characters just can't get along and the only solution is to battle it out! This game will require a commitment to roleplaying on the part of both fighters - it's intended to replace crunchy, numbers-driven battles with a more structured cinematic feeling. The GM oversees the fight, but the fighters drive it. This game is played using existing characters, so the character-generation process is minimal.

## Tone

Two evenly matched heroes stare each other down across an arena. Perhaps one is starkly good and the other indisputably evil - or perhaps they are both somewhat in the right but still fundamentally opposed. Either way, it has come down to this: a final fight to determine whose belief gets to move forward.

## Inspiration

Epic shonen anime battles. Professional wrestling. Boxing movies. The kind of fight scene that they play sad piano over, where characters cry and shout "I thought we were brothers!"

This game is based on the mechanics of Fate Core.

## Supplies

Index cards, tokens, fate dice/4d6, coin

*Thank you to Kay Rossbach for proofreading and Lukas Schmitt for the name!*

By Jay Ross  
[jayrossart.com](http://jayrossart.com)

*Photo by rawpixel on Unsplash*