

I KNOW KUNG-FU

This FU Hack helps you recreate the amazing action of the film *The Matrix*. It is assumed that all the characters were born batteries, and have the ability to enter and exit the Matrix. This game is based on *The One* film - it is a shame there were NO SEQUELS. Like the rest of FU, it is fast and loose and designed to cut to the heart of the genre. A lot of this is inspired by Steve Darlington's excellent *Matrix* RPG, *There Is No Spoon*, which you must check out for a different approach to gaming *The Matrix*, and some excellent advice. Enjoy.

CREATING CHARACTERS

All the normal character creation rules apply, with the following exceptions.

DESCRIPTORS: Characters begin with a Body and Mind descriptor. The other two start as “open slots” that will be filled in play. These are how the character imagines themselves within the world of the Matrix.

GEAR: A character may start play with 0, 1 or 2 pieces of Gear. A character might want a “flip phone” so they have instant access to their controller, but don't have to. “Open slots” will be filled during play.

GOALS: Characters have two goals, a Deal and a Fate. I took this straight from the brilliant mind of Steve D. A character's Deal is an immediate goal, something they must achieve, what drives them to action. You earn a FU point whenever you make significant gains towards accomplishing your Deal. Deals might be stuff like “Finding the One”, or “Take down the Donald Trump program”, or “Keep my girlfriend safe”.

Fate is what the Oracle says is going to happen to the character. It should be general, vague, like something the Oracle might say. Ambiguity is the key, and self fulfilling prophecies are great. There is no guarantee that your Fate will come to pass. “Your love will die in your arms”, “They will call you the betrayer”, and “You will bring balance to the Force” are examples of Fates. When your actions bring you closer to fulfilling this prophecy you earn a FU point. A player might take specific action to cause this to happen, or a GM might set up a scene using a Fate as inspiration. Either way is fine, and earns the character in question a FU point.

DEFINING DESCRIPTORS AND GEAR IN PLAY

Characters will begin play with only a few descriptors and either 1, 2 or no items of gear. Unused descriptors and gear “slots” can be filled during play.

DESCRIPTORS: A character can fill an open descriptor slot by taking a short moment to “download” the skill. The Edge slots (those that begin play open) can only ever be filled with learnt skills or knowledge - Kung-Fu, jet fighter piloting and bomb defusing are fine, but handsome, strong or skinny are not. The Mind and Body descriptors can never be “downloaded”.

GEAR: A character can fill an open gear slot with any item of “found” gear. If they want a motorcycle, they can pull the rider off a passing bike and claim it as an item of Gear, noting “fast motorcycle” on their character sheet. If they break into the police station and find a shotgun, they can write that down in an empty slot. Less plausible items can be acquired too, but require the character to talk with their controller. They might request guns, helicopters or forged ID papers and the controller will “place” them in a nearby or convenient location. Getting to these may be part of an adventure itself.

CONTROLLERS: A character can contact their controller in order to access “specialist” gear. Also, filled gear or descriptor slot can be re-opened by contacting the controller. In this case, whatever was filling the slot previously is removed and is no longer available



to the character. You can speak to a controller to find out information about your situation and surroundings - such as the location of Agents, or the layout of a building. Finally, you can contact your controller to escape the Matrix.

Contacting a controller requires access to a phone - either a cell phone or a land-line and takes an action. To exit the Matrix or re-open a gear or descriptor slot you just need to use the phone and take the action - the controllers are pretty savvy and know what you want. If you want intel on your surrounds, then you have to have a conversation with the controller. If you are asking for gear, then you need to articulate what you want, and the controller will tell you where they are putting it - it will never just “magically appear” in the character’s possession.

MANIPULATING REALITY

FU points allow a character to manipulate reality. All characters begin with 1 point, used in the usual manner. This point is “refreshed” each time the character re-enters the Matrix. Using FU points for bonus dice is the easiest way to simulate cool physical stunts and awesome Gun-Fu. Characters can also spend FU points on the following stunts.

RE-OPEN SLOT: Spend a FU point to instantly re-open any or all descriptor and Gear slots.

BULLET TIME: Reality slows down, allowing the character to see the situation clearly and take advantage of it. Spend a FU point and describe your cool manoeuvre. Double the number of Bonus dice you roll for an action. ONLY Bonus dice are doubled, not Penalty dice and not the basic die you always begin with.

EXITING THE MATRIX

When a character exits the matrix they return to their physical body, no doubt aboard some type of dingy submarine. This game is not about playing in this world, but if you must, take note of the following:

- FU points cannot be used
- Both Edge slots must be filled immediately
- Gear slots can be filled as is appropriate
- Descriptor and Gear slots cannot be re-opened

When a character exits the Matrix, any physical injuries they may have suffered in the alternate reality are healed almost instantaneously. Mental conditions can be removed when appropriate.

OPTION: When a character exits the Matrix, set an egg timer. They cannot re-enter the Matrix (and probably play) until the timer runs out. This represents the vagaries of what is happening on the submersible.

ADVERSARIES

AGENT

DESCRIPTORS: Tough, Strong, Fast, Awareness

GEAR: Gun

CONDITIONS: Trapped, Out of Action

NOTES: Obviously, these guys are tough! Often many of their descriptors will come into play at once. To really beef them up, give each Agent 1 FU point to be used in the same way as characters. Spend a point to “jump” from bystander to bystander.

AGENT SMITH

DESCRIPTORS: Tough, Strong, Fast, Awareness, Overconfident

GEAR: Gun

CONDITIONS: Trapped, Out of Action

NOTES: 3 FU points. Smith can spend FU points like characters. He can also spend them to jump into the bodies of Coppertops, and to multiply himself (one FU point for each doubling - 2, 4, 8).

COPPERTOP

DESCRIPTORS: Oblivious, and one other

GEAR: Gun OR knife OR nothing

CONDITIONS: Confused, Trapped, Dazed, Out of Action

NOTES: Coppertops are all the unaware minds trapped in the Matrix - the cops, celebrities, drug dealers, bag ladies, farmers, soldiers, guitar heroes and business folk, to name a few.

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This work pays homage to one of my favourite films. I am making no claim to product identity.

NAME

CONCEPT

BODY

DESCRIPTION

MIND

EDGE

EDGE

DEAL

FATE

GEAR

CONDITIONS

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ANGRY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRAPPED | <input type="checkbox"/> DAZED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SCARED | <input type="checkbox"/> BLINDED | <input type="checkbox"/> INJURED |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TIRED | <input type="checkbox"/> HUNGRY | <input type="checkbox"/> DYING |

RELATIONSHIPS

NOTES

FU

THE ODDS

ROLL	RESULT
6	Yes, and...
4	Yes...
2	Yes, but...
5	No, but...
3	No...
1	No, and...