

Rockistan by Remi Trébet ©2004

Welcome to Rockistan. Rockistan is a small Southeast Asian country near Kazakhstan. Until recently, Rockistan had been ruled by a Theocratic Totalitarian Fascist regime, but a great revolution has brought Western Democracy to the formerly oppressed masses. You play the first bands to emerge from the long silence of Rockistan's recent past. You must teach a country how to rock once again

Rockistan is played in turns. Each turn you get 10 actions. You write these down and give them to Remi (from here on out referred to as the 'Moderator') on or before every Pay Day Friday starting 4/16 and every two weeks thereafter, but before you get into the mechanics of gameplay, you need to create a band.

Creating a Band

There are many steps needed to create a band. First you should assign your Band Stats, then choose a Genre, assign Equipment, and, finally, choose Characteristics for the individual band members. Read the entire Creating a Band section before starting, though, because some things are left undefined until their individual section.

Stats

Stats are the hard numbers your band uses to achieve each Action you assign it. They are the basis of the game, although both the Support and Monetary stats (money, cred, listeners/fans/heads, and equipment) can have an effect on gameplay, as well.

You start with 15 points to divide among your stats. The stats are Chops, Inspirations, and Charisma.

Chops: Technical Proficiency. Raised through the Practice Action.

Attracts Listeners.

Performance bonus based on Chops score. This insures a steady, consistent show.

Business Savvy. Give a bonus to Business Actions.

Improves quality of recordings.

Inspiration: Creative Ingenuity. Raised through the Search for Inspiration Action.

Turns Listeners into Fans.

Randomized Performance bonus. The show could be incredibly great, or truly awful.

Only score used to write songs (Although both Chops and Charisma can give bonuses in recording and performance.)

Charisma: Force of Attractive Personality. Raised through the Groom Action.

Turns Fans into Heads

Performance bonus based on number of Heads in the audience.

Schmoozing. Bonus to all Social Actions.

When performing your stats are added together for your Performance Base. Your highest stat defines your Performance bonus. If two or more stats are the same, the Performance bonus is determined randomly. The other bonuses are applied automatically to the sort of action they define.

Genre

Genre defines the type of music your band plays. Genres give advantages and disadvantages. You may choose two genres, or you may double up the advantages (and disadvantages) and be a 'pure' band. If it doesn't seem possible to double up, just ask Remi. Also, if your favorite musical style is missing, please ask, and it will be added.

Genre List

Genres are listed Advantage first, Disadvantage second.

Rock: A pure rock band, no advantages or disadvantages.

Alternative: You start with 100 more Listeners. You start with no cred.

Classic: You never lose Fans or Heads when your Cred goes down. Your Inspiration may never be your highest

stat.

Folk: Your Equipment Cap is 1.5 times the amount of money invested in equipment (normally it is equal to the amount spent, so a \$20 equipment rig would have a Performance Cap of 20, but for the same amount a Folk Artist would have a Performance Cap of 30). You gain Heads only when you're the Headlining act.

Glam: You get a small bonus whenever you take the Groom action. Your shows cost 1.5 times more to put on.

Indie: You start with 10 more Cred than a normal band, and gain slightly more Cred when playing shows. You lose more Fans and Heads when your Cred decreases.

Industrial: You start with \$30 more in equipment (remember, \$1 = \$100). You can only start with one member.

Jam: You attract Heads with both Charisma and Chops. You play long shows, and your equipment wears out twice as fast.

Metal: You attract Fans with both Charisma and Inspiration. These fans are Violent, and may get you banned from venues with their rowdy and destructive behavior.

New Wave: You get a small bonus whenever you take the Search for Inspiration action. Your Chops can never be your highest score.

Prog: You get a small bonus whenever you take the Practice Instruments action. Your Charisma can never be your highest score.

Psychedelic: One of your band members has the Visionary Characteristic in addition to the one you assign them. Unlike most Characteristics, Visionary has a set definition and only one ability (*Visionary:* When songwriting, you may double the band's Inspiration, ignoring your Performance Cap). However, you will also greatly increase the Visionary member's Peace.) Your entire band is more susceptible to Addiction to drugs and alcohol.

Punk: You can write two songs in a songwriting action instead of just one. You gain less Inspiration when you take a 'Search for Inspiration' action.

Reggae: You get your drugs for free. You get your drugs for free.

Speed: Your shows cost 1/2 as much to put on. Your band member's health is worn down more rapidly.

Twee: You attract Listeners with all three Stats. Your Fans and Heads are Wimps, and some of them won't show up if there's a heavier band on the ticket.

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Support

Support is a measure of your fanbase. These are the people who will come to your shows, buy your records, and generally help out the band monetarily, and, in a few cases, in other ways. You start with 100 Listeners, 10 Fans, and no Heads.

Listeners: The lowest level of support. These people will listen to your music. They might come to a show, a few might buy your record.

Fans: Fans are the middle level of support. Fans will always come to your show, they will buy t-shirts and other merchandise.

Heads: Heads are the top level of support. Heads buy everything they can afford. They come to every show in the area. Heads will also help you promote your shows and records.

Money, Cred, Equipment

You start with \$30, 10 Cred. You can spend up to \$20 on Equipment.

Money: Money allows you to buy things. Equipment, recording time in a studio, t-shirts, promotion, and many other things can be purchased with money. Money is spent, and once used, cannot be used again. Money comes in \$1 increments. \$1 is equal to \$100 'real-world'.

Cred: Credibility, the currency of The Scene. Cred can help you book shows, gain fans, and get good deals on equipment and promotional materials. Cred is only reduced when you do something that is perceived as 'selling out'. High ticket prices are the most obvious sign, but success can sometimes be a cred-killer as well. You need a certain amount of Cred to do some things, but you can use Cred over and over until you lose it.

Equipment: The amps, guitars, mics, and other instruments your band uses when performing and recording. Equipment defines the upper limit of a band's performance ability, the Performance Cap. \$1 in Equipment is 1 points towards your Performance Cap, so a band with \$40 in equipment has a Performance

Cap of 40. This Performance Cap applies to writing and recording songs, as well as performing in a live show. You do not have to define what Equipment your band uses, but if you do, you will get a \$1 bump in your Performance Cap for each piece of equipment defined (Note: There's an upper limit to this bonus, so don't abuse it by, say, defining 30 \$1 effects pedals and a \$2 guitar)

Band Members

Every band is made up of individuals. Keeping these individuals happy is a big part of keeping the band functioning. Each member starts out perfectly happy, only through the rough grind of practice, performance, recording, and everything a person in a band must do they lose mental and physical health. You may start with up to 3 band members. Peace, Constitution, and Unity all start at 100.

Name: The name of the band member; he's a vital part of the team, not a faceless goob.

Position: This is what the member plays in the band. It's unimportant, except that if you lose this member they must be replaced by a new member in the same Position. New Positions may also be created when a member is added, as long as you aren't replacing someone.

Peace: Mental Health. This indicates how well this band member is coping with their life. Can be raised through Resting, or raised more through the Rest Action, Meditation. Parties, drugs, sex, and booze can also help raise a character's Peace.

Constitution: Physical Health. This indicates how hale and hearty the band member is. Constitution can be raised through Resting, or raised more through the Rest Action, Exercise. Drugs, sex, booze and partying will not lower Constitution until Constitution drops below 50.

Unity: This reflects how happy this member is with the band. It is a composite score of Constitution and Peace, but can be affected by other

Characteristics: Everyone brings something to the band. A Characteristic is a special ability that each member can access. A Characteristic is a single word that describes a particular strength of the member. This word can be invoked once *every other* turn. The Characteristic can describe a specific skill (Accountant, Writer, Bouncer) or a more general attribute (Tough, Smart, Pleasant, Sneaky). Characteristics are applied after something happens, so if there's a riot at your show, you write down on your next orders that your Bouncer member protected your band from injury during the riot (reducing the injury to your Lead Singer), but if you have another riot at your next show, the Bouncer member may not use their Characteristic again. You will gain Characteristics, both good and bad, during the course of the game.

Name the Band!

Now you know what your band is good at, who makes it up, and what they play. Name it and get ready to play!

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Band Name:

Genre:

Chops:

Inspiration:

Charisma:

Listeners/Fans/Heads:

Money/Cred:

Equipment:

Band Member Name:

Characteristic:

Band Member Name:

Characteristic:

Band Member Name:

Characteristic:

Playing the Game

Each turn you get 10 actions. You may choose from the Action List below. The Actions are divided into subcategories that are related to one another. The order actions are done in is important. For example, partying before you play a show is not a good idea, and you must book a show before you play it. Actions can also have consequences beyond the simple Action. If you have Merchandise to sell, you will automatically sell one at a show. However, if you want to sell Merchandise outside of a show, you must first find some place that will sell your Merchandise, and then you must Distribute it to them.

The beginning Action List is by no means exhaustive. If there's something you want to do that's not listed, ask for it, and it will be added. New actions will also be added as I see the need (for example, there may be a 'Take out a Loan' action in the future, for all those bands whose skill is outstripping their equipment)

Starting the Game

At the start of the game every band knows the following things:

1. You are currently in the capital city of Rockistan, Berry. There are other cities out there, but you'll need to research these cities and bring the Rock to them.
2. There are three Open Mic nights in Berry. All you have to do is tell the venue you're going to show up the Turn beforehand, and you can play. However, the more bands that play, the fewer songs you can play, the less time you get to set up. Plus, you play for free. Open Mics are only for gathering new Listeners/Fans/Heads. There are other venues, larger venues, but you'll need to research them.
 - A) The Grind, a coffeeshop. Contact: Gabby
 - B) Button Down club. A very small rock venue. Contact: Moe
 - C) The Lot. A parking lot in a bad part of town. Contact: Ishmael
3. The big record store (with mostly American and European music) is called Neverland Records. There are probably other places you can sell your stuff, but you'll need to research them.
4. There's a radio station called Rockistan FM that will play local bands. Contact: Gregor

Gathering Information

As you play you will gather information on venues, contacts, places to sell Merchandise and You may share your contact information with another band, or you can choose not to. None of the information your band knows will be disseminated unless you mention it on your Action sheet (disseminating information is not an Action, just put it in non-Action part of your orders)

Action List

This is a list of the Actions available to you. It will be updated when new Actions are added. If you really want an Action to succeed, add some 'Roleplaying elements', there are a few suggestions throughout. Here's some more: Describe a song, create an album cover, do an 'interview' with your band.

Performance Actions

Research Venues in Berry: An attempt to find Contacts. This will find a Venue and a Contact if successful, although if you hear about a Venue through the Weekly Report (see the Weekly Report section), you can try to find a Contact for the particular Venue. You need to have a Contact for a Venue before you can book a show there (so even if you hear that a band played at a place called the Nut Job, you can't play there until you have a Contact at the Nut Job). If you lack something to play a venue (Cred, Performance Cap, Fans, etc) a Contact will tell you so.

Book a Show in Berry: You need to have a Contact Name for a Venue before you can book a show there. You can book a show as far in advance as you want, but you can't book a Show and Play it in the same Turn. So you Book a Show on Turn 1, play it on Turn 2, get the results of Playing the Show on Turn 3. You also set the ticket price. The ticket price can be in person-per-dollar increments. Example: The band Elixir might set the price of their show at the Chaingang Discotheque could be set at 10-people-per-\$1, or 5-people-per-\$1. A combination of fair ticket price, more bands on the showbill, and the better the bands, the more people will show up to a show.

Play a Show: You perform, gain and lose fans, maybe make some money. You can play a show without original songs (it'll be all covers, and that will only take you so far). For a small bonus, you can write out your setlist. You will automatically Sell Merchandise, if you have some, at a Show. You can play an Open Mic for free, but if you play a larger venue you'll need to put money into it (for lights, a soundman, pyrotechnics, etc), but this money will increase your chances of the show being a good one.

Recording Actions

Write a Song: Create a Song to play during a Performance or Recording Session. Each Song you create has a Song rating that is a general indicator of the quality of the song. Better songs mean better performances and recordings. You should name the song.

Record a Song: This commits one song to record. This recording has a Record rating, that is a combinations of the Song rating and your Chops bonus. The proliferation of cheap recording gear means anyone can record a song. This costs nothing.

Release a Single: You create a 2-Song Single on CD. You must have 2 Songs to put on the Single. This costs \$5. To keep the EP in print costs \$1 per turn. If you want to sell any EPs you need to play shows and promote the record. It also helps if the songs are good, but that's not absolute.

Self-Improvement Actions

Practice: Practice your instruments. This raises your band's Chops

Search for Inspiration: Look around for things that will fire your band's imagination and songwriting ability. This raises your band's Inspiration

Groom: Look in a mirror and pull faces, work on your hair, apply some anti-zit creme. This raises your band's Charisma

Research: Find a new Venue, City, Store, Radio Station, etc. this will make it easier to find Contacts at said locations.

Social Actions

Find a Contact: This is a more general version of 'Research a Venue' (and, unlike Research a Venue, gains a Charisma Bonus). This is an attempt to find someone with some contact to a helpful organization. You might end up with a Radio Contact, a Store Contact, or a New City Contact. You can, of course, specify what kind of Contact you are looking for.

PARTY! (Drink/Do Drugs/Have Sex): Going out and having a good time. You can always drink, you can sometimes find Drugs to use (50% of the time), you can rarely have Sex (25% of the time). These activities can have a very positive effect on your band member's Unity and Peace, in direct relation to the difficulty of achieving said activity. However, the chance of receiving Negative Characteristics (Addiction, for example) are there. Everything in moderation. You may specify which sub-action you wish to achieve, for a small bonus, but if you're unsuccessful, you'll end up drinking, and with reduced benefits to your Peace and Unity.

Throw a Party: You have a large gathering (usually at your house). This can improve a band member's Peace, you might meet a new Contact, you could even Perform a Show (although it would be rude to Sell Merchandise afterwards). All the effects of the PARTY action come into play as well, although the bonuses are reduced because your band is running around hosting and whatnot. Throw a Party is a grab-bag action. If you want to Play a Show at a Party, you must declare that the Party will go off on the *next turn*, and that you plan to play it as a show. Otherwise Throw a Party goes off on the same round it is declared.

Business Actions

Create Merchandise: Creates one kind of Merchandise (t-shirt/hat/poster). Declare what it is, how much you spend, and how much you're selling it for. Example: Band X makes t-shirts. They make 10 for \$1 and will sell them each for \$1 (I know, I know, expensive shirts, abstract a little). If they manage to sell them all at shows and through stores, they will have made \$9 profit. The bigger the difference between the cost of the object to make and the cost of the object to buy, the harder it is to sell. So one shirt made for \$1 sold for \$2 will sell more

