True20 Damage and Recovery Clarifications

The following clarification of the *True20* damage system is reproduced from the *True20 Pocket Player's Guide.*

Damage

When you're hit with a damaging attack, you make a Toughness saving throw, which measures the ability to avoid or shrug off damage.

Resisting damage has a base Difficulty of 15 plus a modifier equal to the attack's damage bonus. For unarmed attacks, this is the attacker's Strength score. For weapons, this is the weapon's damage plus the attacker's Strength score. For example, an attacker with Strength +1, wielding a short sword (damage modifier +2) has a total damage modifier of +3. So, resisting this damage is Difficulty 18 (15 + 3).

Toughness Saving Throw = d20 + Constitution + Feats + Armor – Toughness save penalties from injury versus DC15 + Attack's Damage Bonus

If the Toughness saving throw succeeds, the target suffers no significant damage, nothing more than a slight scratch, bruise, or torn clothing. If the Toughness save fails, the target suffers damage; how much damage depends on the type of attack (lethal or non-lethal) and the amount the Toughness save result is below the Difficulty, as shown on the **Toughness Saving Throw Table**.

TOUGHNESS SAVING THROW

Result	Non-lethal	Lethal
succeeds	no effect	no effect
fails	bruised	bruised + hurt
fails by 5	dazed	stunned + wounded
fails by 10	staggered	staggered + disabled
fails by 15	unconscious	unconscious + dying

Non-lethal Damage comes from unarmed attacks (punches and kicks), as well as specific non-lethal weapons, like saps.

A failed Toughness save against a non-lethal attack means the target is *bruised*. Each bruised result imposes a –1 penalty on further saves against non-lethal damage, but does not affect saves against lethal damage.

If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *dazed*; mark down a dazed condition on the Damage Track. A dazed condition also imposes a –1 modifier on further saves against non-lethal damage.

If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *staggered*; check off the staggered box on the Damage Track.

If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *unconscious*; check off the unconscious box on the Damage Track.

Lethal Damage is inflicted by weapons, from cutting and piercing weapons like swords and spears to heavy bludgeoning weapons like hammers and maces.

A failed Toughness save against a lethal attack means the target is *hurt*. Each hurt result imposes a –1 penalty on further Toughness saves against lethal damage.

If the Toughness save fails by 5 or more, the target is *wounded*; mark down a wounded condition on the Damage Track. A wounded result also imposes a –1 modifier on further Toughness saves.

If the Toughness save fails by 10 or more, the target is *disabled*; check off the disabled box on the Damage Track.

If the Toughness save fails by 15 or more, the target is *dying*; check off the dying box on the Damage Track.

If the Toughness save fails by 20 or more, the target is dead, killed instantly by the damage.

Collateral Damage: Lethal damage also inflicts non-lethal damage. Whenever your hero suffers lethal damage, check off the corresponding non-lethal damage, so a hero who is wounded is also dazed, a hero who is hurt is also bruised, and so forth. The effects of the conditions are cumulative.

Damage Overflow: If a target suffers a result that is already checked off, check off the next highest result. So, if a target is already staggered and suffers another staggered result, check off the unconscious box. If the unconscious box is checked and the character suffers more non-lethal damage, check off the first available lethal box (so go to disabled, dying, and so forth).

DAMAGE TRACK

0	5+	10+	15+	20+
Bruised	Dazed	Staggered	Unconscious	
		☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐
Hurt	Wounded	Disabled	Dying	Dead

Impossible Toughness Saves: If the Difficulty of a Toughness save is so high the hero cannot possibly succeed, even with a 20 on the die roll, the Toughness save is still rolled to determine the effect (the amount by which the character misses the Difficulty). A natural 20 means the character is only dazed or wounded, regardless of the Difficulty. Fate intervenes to spare the character from otherwise certain doom. Narrators interested in realistic consequences for damage should ignore this rule.

Critical Hits: A critical hit increases an attack's damage bonus, meaning critical hits can potentially inflict more serious damage.

Option: Escalating Toughness

Toughness generally does not improve as characters gain levels, with the exception of feats like Defensive Roll and Tough, which provide Toughness save bonuses at the expense of not being able to take other feats. More experienced (high-level) heroes generally avoid harm more through Combat bonus (the ability to dodge or parry attacks), improvements in their Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws (which ward off many other hazards), and the ability to spend more Conviction on poor Toughness saves.

This creates a scenario where even veteran characters may fall victim to a bad Toughness save against an attack. If you want higher-level characters to be literally tougher, you can assign a Toughness save bonus based on role and level equal to the character's base Combat bonus. So a warrior, for example, gets a +1 Toughness bonus per level (the same as the warrior's Combat bonus).

This option helps with character longevity, but may produce less realistic results as high-level heroes become nigh invulnerable to smaller attacks, so it depends on the style of game you want to have. The default *True20* rule is a largely fixed Toughness bonus based solely on Constitution and any modifying feats or worn armor.

Damage Conditions

Damaged characters can suffer from any of seven *conditions*, given on the Damage Track and described here.

Dazed characters lose one full-round action after suffering a dazed result; they can take no actions, but retain their normal Defense. The following round, they can act normally.

Staggered characters lose one full-round action after suffering a staggered result. They can take no actions, lose their dodge and parry bonuses to Defense, and have a –2 penalty to Defense. In the following rounds, staggered characters can only take a standard or a move action, not both.

Unconscious characters pass out and are helpless, unable to do anything until they awaken.

Wounded characters are shaken, suffering a –2 penalty on all checks, including attack rolls and Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saving throws, but *not* Toughness saves or Constitution checks. This persists until all wounded conditions are eliminated. Additionally, a wounded character is stunned for one round after being wounded. They can take no actions, lose their dodge bonus to Defense, and have a –2 penalty to Defense.

Disabled characters are badly injured. If a disabled character takes a standard action, he falls unconscious and begins dying on the following round.

Dying characters have to make a Constitution check (Difficulty 10) at the beginning of each round. On a failed check, the character dies. On a successful check, the character lives for another round (and must make a check the following round). If the check succeeds by 10 or more (Difficulty 20), the character's condition becomes disabled and unconscious.

Dead characters are, well, dead. This usually means the end for the character, although some powerful healers can restore life to the recently deceased.

Recovery

Recovering from damage requires a Constitution check (Difficulty 10). A successful check erases the damage condition, while an unsuccessful check means there is no significant improvement for that time period.

You can make a recovery check once per minute for staggered and unconscious, once per hour for wounded, and once per day for disabled. Dying has its own particular check; once you are stable, dying becomes unconscious and disabled, which you recover from normally (one minute for unconscious, one day for disabled).

You can spend a Conviction point to get an immediate recovery check from non-lethal damage, rather than having to wait a minute. You can also spend Conviction on your recovery check.

Bruised and dazed conditions fade automatically at a rate of one per minute. Hurt conditions do the same at a rate of one per hour. You can spend a Conviction point to immediately erase all bruised, dazed, and hurt conditions after, but not during, a conflict. Warriors can use their role's core ability to spend a Conviction point to erase all bruised and hurt conditions at any time, even during combat.