

BRP
EDITION

SAGA BORN

ROLEPLAYING GAME



SagaBorn Roleplaying Game

by Michael Bielaczyc

Powered by the Basic Roleplaying: Universal Game System
Alpha .1



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BRP: Universal Game Engine Notice

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INTRODUCTION

Well, here I am, working on a new base system for SagaBorn. This is a Work In Progress, which was only started in May of 2024. This is added to my normal work for SagaBorn, but after the OGL mess, I need a better system that is totally disconnected from any big corporation or strict license.

At first, I saw the big book labeled Basic Roleplaying System and thought, "What in the world is basic about that?" And it sat on my digital shelf for a long time. I am not sure how I got back to it, but then it all clicked. It was 300 pages of modular systems and rules you could pick and choose to make your game the game you want it to be. And the rules made sense, the math was easy, and it seems to allow infinite tweaks to really play the game you want to play. It will take a bit to iron out all the details and make the BRP system, SagaBorn, and the world of the Dark Return all mesh completely, but I hope you all enjoy the ride!

-Mike

THIS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS!

SagaBorn, Lone Wanderer, and the Dark Return are all created by a very small team of close friends and artists.

This book is an exploration of a new system and many things are currently a hybrid between the D20 SagaBorn system and the Basic Roleplaying System. We are all working hard to bring it all together, but with a small team this takes time.

All our files and changes will be publicly shared on www.sagaborn.com/sagabornbrp

What is the theme of SagaBorn?

SagaBorn takes place in Atheles, lands changed by the Dark Return, when fey, magic, and demons returned to the world. It is a grey-dark setting with the characters as heroes who are trying to save the world from darkness and make it a better place.

What does SagaBorn change with BRP?

- SagaBorn is a Heroic setting, and while it is still a struggle to survive, players should not be afraid to get into combat or go adventuring.
- The StoryGuide is a fan of the characters. Rulings should make the game more fun to play and never be adversarial.
- Hit Points are double the standard.
- Death comes at -10 Hit Points.
- All combat actions take place in the DEX phase.
- Weapons have more limited "classes" such as piercing or slashing.
- Talents are available to customize and refine your character.
- Saga Points allow characters to reroll dice. Players automatically get one at the start of any game session, and they can be purchased with Power Points or earned at Strongholds.

TERMS USED IN BASIC ROLEPLAYING

The following terms are used frequently in this book. Each is explained at length in relevant sections.

Ability: Something a character can do or feel, whether a skill, a passion, or some other factor rated on a 1–100 rating. Generally, when you roll an ability successfully, you get an experience check.

Augment: Using one ability to modify the chance of success using another ability, such as when one skill provides additional support to another, or a passion can help improve the chance of a skill succeeding.

Base Chance: The default chance at succeeding with a skill a character has no training or experience in.

For example, on the character sheet, Hide (20%) means that even if your character has not invested any skill points in the Hide skill, they have a 20% natural ability in it.

Base Range: The normal distance within which a missile weapon can hit a target.

Character (or Hero): The role you assume in a game session, described in game mechanics by values such as characteristics and skill totals. Generally, characters have names and backgrounds determined by the player, with assistance and/or approval from the StoryGuide. (see also **player character** and **nonplayer character**).

Characteristic: Your character's physical, mental, and spiritual attributes (Strength, Constitution, Size, Intelligence, Power, Dexterity, and Charisma), rated numerically on a scale (usually 3–18), with a human average being 10–11.

For example, if the initial maximum characteristic is 18, a STR 17 means your character is extremely strong, while a DEX 7 means they are a bit clumsy.

Characteristic Roll: One of your character's characteristics multiplied by a number (Intelligence $\times 3$, for example), expressed as a percentage, and rolled with percentile dice. A characteristic roll is usually $\times 5$, but other multiples may be used.

For example, if your character's Intelligence characteristic is 14, they have a 42% chance at

succeeding with a characteristic check with a multiple of $\times 3$.

Combat Round: A 12-second (or equivalent) amount of time imposed during combat or dramatic activities, where the order that actions occur is important. This is game time, not actual time—the events of a few seconds of action may take several minutes to play out between the players and StoryGuide.

Critical Success: This is the result of a skill check roll that is 1/20 (or 5%) of the regular chance of success. Generally, a critical success is rewarded with greater results, though in some cases a critical success is required for success at all.

For example, if the regular chance for success is 75%, any roll of 4 or under is a critical success (1/20 of 75% is 3.75, rounded up to 4).

D100: A percentile die roll, attained by rolling two 10-sided dice (D10s), with one representing the tens, and the other the ones. Some dice come already marked as 'tens' (00, 10, 20, etc.) and are always used as the first number in a D100 roll. A roll of 01 is the best possible result, while 100 (which usually reads as 00) is the worst.

For example, a roll of 60 (or 6) and 2 equals a result of 62.

Damage: A value representing injury, subtracted from a character's hit points. Weapons, unfortunate events, and other hazards inflict damage on characters.

Damage Modifier: A modifier to rolled damage due to above-average Strength and Size characteristics.

Damage Reduction: Some abilities, spells, or items may grant damage resistance for a specific time.

DEX Rank: Based on the Dexterity characteristic, this determines when your character can usually act during a combat round. Characters with higher DEX will generally act before characters with lower DEX.

Difficulty Modifier: The amount a skill's chance is adjusted by, based on the circumstances surrounding its use. These range from *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to skill), and *Difficult* (skill is halved) to *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the StoryGuide's discretion).

Experience Rolls: If you are successful with a roll for one or more of your character's abilities or characteristic resistance rolls (see below), you should mark your character sheet in the provided check box (sometimes this action is called an "experience check"), if appropriate. Later, between adventures or during down-time, you can determine if your character's ability has improved in that skill or if the characteristic has increased through successful use. Some skills cannot be improved by experience and must be improved through other means.

Fail: A roll of percentile dice above the required chance for success.

For example, a roll of 89 when the required chance was 56% indicates a failure.

Fatal Wound: A wound that costs your character more hit points than they currently possess. Without intervention (medical or otherwise) death comes at the end of the following combat round.

Full Turn: A period consisting of 25 combat rounds, equaling five minutes of game world time.

Fumble: A roll of 100 when rolling percentile dice to determine success. Generally, when a fumble is indicated something bad happens above and beyond a simple failure.

StoryGuide (SG): The director, or guide for the game, who helps you create characters, comes up with the adventure, and represents the world outside your character, rolling dice for the nonplayer characters and the opposing forces.

Game Time: The time that elapses as a scenario or campaign unfolds as experienced by your characters. This is not usually the same as the real time you and the StoryGuide spend playing.

Hit Points: A measure of the relative health of your character, represented in a value derived from their Constitution and Size characteristics. Attackers inflict damage in hit points, subtracted from the target's total hit points. Usually when your character reaches -10 hit points, they are dead.

"In character" or "Out of character": The distinction in the chat between players and the StoryGuide around the gaming table, representing the difference between real-world discussion and

game discussion. Both achieve the same goal, but represent different styles or aspects of play, and can be used interchangeably in play. Some groups or players lean towards one or another—it's an element of preference. "In character" discussion is flavorful and immersive, while "out of character" discussion is essential to describe rules mechanics and to speed along play through unnecessary detail.

For example, in character, you might say 'Sir Wilfric asks the innkeeper "Could you perhaps allow us the night's stay for a promise of future payment!"' while out of character, you might say "I try to Persuade the innkeeper to let us stay a night without pay."

Horror: An optional system where your character's mental health is measured by their capacity to withstand horrific sights, events, and revelations. As Horror gets lower, the grasp on reality diminishes. If your character takes too much Horror damage at once, they may experience detrimental effects.

Modifiers: Temporary additions or subtractions to your character's rating in an ability, usually from circumstances, environment, or equipment.

For example, trying to pick a lock with a bent paper clip is an example of substandard tools, for a -20% modifier. Using a standard lockpick does not modify the skill. Using a deluxe set of calibrated precision lockpicks and lockpicking equipment adds +20% to your character's skill rating.

Move (MOV): The rate of movement your character can make during a single combat round. This measurement is a flexible one, but usually translates to one meter of unhurried movement per point of MOV.

Nonplayer Character (NPC): A character or creature in the game world that is played or otherwise represented by the StoryGuide, instead of being played by you or another player.

Opposed Roll: When your character wants to attempt an action another character (or nonplayer character) wants to oppose with an "opposite" skill that cancels or thwarts the initial action. In this case, both skill checks are made, and the results compared.

For example, Stealth is usually opposed by Listen.

Percentile Dice: Two D10s rolled together, with one designated as the tens figure, and the other as ones. Some dice are numbered in units of ten, i.e., 00, 10, 20, 30, etc. See also **D100**.

Player Character (PC): This is your character, usually created and almost always controlled by you, comprised of abilities and an identity you assume through roleplaying. Your character is your representation in the game world and enables you to interact with the setting.

Power: A generic term for magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or super abilities your character may possess (see *Chapter 4: Powers*).

Power Points: The amount of willpower or energy your character has, represented as a total based on their Power characteristic. These are spent to use special powers or abilities and can be drained by other abilities. When your character reaches 0 power points, they fall unconscious. Power points can also be called **magic points** in appropriate genres.

Profession: Your character's job occupation, represented as a list of skills they have been trained to use (or have had the opportunity to learn).

Rating: The chance of success for an ability, rated as value from 1–100 (sometimes higher).

For example, Demolitions 43% is a rating of 43, meaning a 43% chance of success when the skill is attempted during normal circumstances. (see also skill rating).

Resistance Roll: When your character wants to attempt an action being resisted by an inanimate object or force, the relevant characteristic (for example, Strength) is opposed to another appropriate characteristic (for example, the stuck door's Strength).

Roll: A roll using D100 to determine whether an attempt at performing a skill, ability, or power was successful. The result of a skill roll is a **critical success**, **special success**, **success**, **failure**, or a **fumble**. Additional means of determining the quality of success are presented in optional rules.

Skill: An ability, training, field of knowledge, talent, specialty, or something your character knows something about (or is talented in), quantified as a skill level. Skills are used in skill rolls, where percentile dice are rolled against the skill's rating.

Skill Rating: The degree of competence your character has with a skill, expressed as a number from 00% (no skill whatsoever) to 100% or higher (world-class expert).

Special Success: A roll of 1/5 of the required score for success indicates that your character performed exceptionally well and achieves a superior result than a traditional success. This is especially significant in combat.

For example, a character with 70% in a skill who rolls 14 or lower has achieved a special success.

Success: The result of a percentage dice roll where your character performed the task adequately, and achieved an average quality of success. If the roll is very low, it may be a **special success** or **critical success**, as described above. If it is above the ability ranking, it is usually a **failure**. If it is very high, such as a 00, it might be a **fumble**.

For example, if your character has a 70% in a skill, and rolls 70 or lower, they have succeeded.



Creating a Character

You first need a character. The following is a system for developing your character. This system creates reasonably competent characters. Suggestions are provided in each step for more powerful characters. You should have a blank character sheet handy and maybe another sheet of paper for notes. You can download digital versions at www.sagaborn.com/SagaBornBRP.

Lifepath

Where do you start in the world of the Dark Return? Who is your SagaBorn hero? You can roll the dice using the charts below or use them as a guide to build the SagaBorn character you wish to play. These are not the only options, but they are a great starting point for characters who live in Atheles in the lands around the city state of Kowal.

These charts give brief explanations, which are further defined later in the book. For more information, please refer to the index for a listing of references and page numbers.

Species Lifepath

If you decide to choose for yourself rather than rolling the dice, note that the chart below represents the rarity of each species and heritage in Atheles.

Choose your species or let fate decide:

Table L1

Roll 1d10	
1-6	Terian: Species born and evolved in Atheles. Proceed to <i>Table LT1</i> .
7-9	Fey: Species originating from other worlds. Proceed to <i>Table F1</i> .
10	Elven: A specific species originating from another place, though conflicting origin myths abound. Proceed to <i>Table E1</i> .

Terian

Choose your terian biology or let fate decide:

Table LT1

Roll 1d10	
1-7	Teran: The most common biology in Atheles, they are resilient and skilled. Proceed to <i>Table LT2</i> .
8-10	Dworven: The oldest people of Atheles, the dworves are stout, strong, and ingenious crafters. Proceed to <i>Table LT3</i> .
10	Dweran: A person of both Teran and Dworven descent. Proceed to <i>Table LT4</i> .



Teran

Choose your Cultural background or let fate decide*:

Table LT2

Roll 1d12	
1	Tiren: The Kingdom of the Rising Sun. Tirians are an open-minded but militaristic culture. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
2	Uthgard: The Dragon Kingdom. Uthgard is a center of learning and engineering but has a long history of nationalism and invasion. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
3	Free Lands: The Free Lands are not a country, but are pockets of city-states or nomad tribes left on their own during the hard times since the Great War. This could be the independent city-state of Kowal or the Free Lands around Ferryport. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
4	Wastelands: The magic blasted lands of the old Aradan Kingdom are home to vicious beasts and nomad tribes. Life is brutal here, and its inhabitants are forged by its difficulties. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
5	Endamas: The kingdom of the Westlands. Once a large kingdom that stretched from mountains to sea, Endamas is still powerful, though smaller. Ruled by the fortress city of Bordon, its elected king and parliament are a rare democracy. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
6	Ish: The Great Empire of Ish has stood for millenia. Ish is prosperous and its people enjoy a renaissance of culture and education, but the government holds an iron fist over those who practice magic. Religion holds great power in this region. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
7	Mideon: The grasslands of Mideon are home to many smaller kingdoms which have struggled with one another for years. This is also home to the border keeps, ancient fortresses holding the beasts of the North at bay. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
8	Norhan: A kingdom ruled by the Council in the grand city of Seahaven. Norhan offers its people a stable life in a land of abundance. Due to the size of the kingdom, many smaller cultures vie for influence and control. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
9	Vanad: The Island kingdom of Vanad is known for its fierce people and seafaring. It is ruled by families that constantly struggle for power, both in their own lands and over the lands they raid. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .

10	Nomad: There are many empty lands in Atheles, perfect for traveling tribes seeking food and other resources. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
11	Zhou: The Eastern continent over the Inner Sea, the people of Zhou have traded with and migrated to Atheles for hundreds of years. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
12	A non-teran culture: Even though you are biologically teran, you grew up among another species. Roll or choose <i>Table L1</i> to determine which. (If you roll Terian, you grew up in a Dworven culture). Then proceed to roll on that species' culture chart to see where you grew up. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .

* Your cultural background and your current location may be different. You may choose or roll twice to determine where your ancestors came from and where you currently reside. This book mainly focuses on the Eastern lands of Atheles in the Kowal region, but your campaign can take place anywhere!

Dworv

Choose your dworven culture or let fate decide:

Table LT3

Roll 1d10	
1-6	Free dworv: Free dworves reject the religious structure of Greyhelm society. They often live in teran settlements or nomadic families. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
7-9	Greyhelm dworv: The religious dworves of the mountains in the kingdom of Greyhelm. Greyhelm was isolated from Atheles for hundreds of years, until recently. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .
10	Dragon dworv: The hairless dworves of the far South. They are called Dragon Dwarves due to their constant struggle against the dragon-like creatures of their homeland. Recently, Easterners have seen dragon dworves on pilgrimage from that faraway kingdom. Proceed to <i>Table LT5</i> .

Dweran

Choose your dweran culture or let fate decide:

Table LT4

Roll 1d10	
1-8	Teran Culture: You grew up in a teran community. Proceed to <i>Table LT2</i> .
9-10	Dworven Culture: Rarely, dwerans grow up in dworven communities. Proceed to <i>Table LT3</i> .

Terian Heritage Bonus

Choose your Terian heritage bonus or let fate decide:

Table LT5

Roll 1d10	
1-3	Craftsman: Gain +3% to a Craft skill and +2% knowledge on one of the following: stonework, woodwork, or metalwork. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
4-7	Skilled: Gain +1% to a single skill. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
8-10	Wanderer: Gain +1 to Survival. Also once per day, you may reroll a failed Knowledge check. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .

Fey

Choose your fey biology or let fate decide:

Table F1

Roll 1d10	
1-6	Elfling: Proceed to <i>Table F2</i> .
7-8	Feral elfling: Proceed to <i>Table F3</i> .
9-10	Faun: Proceed to <i>Table F4</i> .

Elfling

Choose your elfling background or let fate decide:

Table F2

Roll 1d10	
1-4	Tallgarden: You grew up in the elfling community of Tallgarden, a strong, peaceful community with close ties to the terans in nearby Kowal. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
5-8	The Vale: You are from the rolling hills and mound homes of Vale. The idyllic Western lands surrounding the Vale are a sharp contrast from the brutal lands of the East. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
9-10	Nomad: Some elfling families have no roots and instead allow their wanderlust to carry the tribe across all the lands. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .

Feral Elfling

Choose your feral elfling background or let fate decide:

Table F3

Roll 1d10	
1-5	Your people returned from the In-Between and found themselves in the North two decades ago. They are mostly reacclimated to Atheles but have trouble adjusting to civilization. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
6-7	Your people returned to Atheles in the Wastelands of the South. Their new home in Atheles is barely less dangerous than the In-Between. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
8-9	Your people recently returned from the In-Between and are unfamiliar with this strange land, though their people have legends of a home they left behind many generations past. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
10	You returned to Atheles from the In-Between very recently. You found yourself alone, hungry, and afraid of these strange new lands. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .

Faun

Choose your faun background or let fate decide:

Table F4

Roll 1d10	
1-5	Sylvan: Your family was isolated deep in the mountain forests during the Disappearance and is unfamiliar with happenings of the world outside your village. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
6-8	Warband: Your family fought in the Great War before being trapped in the In-Between. To survive those centuries in the In-Between, your band's fierce side emerged. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .
9-10	Nomad: Your tribe spent the centuries lost, traveling the limbo of the In-Between, doing its best to avoid the harsher regions. After returning to Atheles, your family has continued its nomadic lifestyle. Proceed to <i>Table F5</i> .

Choose your views of other species or let fate decide:

Table F5

Roll 1d10	
1-2	Isolationist: The other cultures bring trouble to themselves with war and violence. It's best to be left alone. Proceed to <i>Table F6</i> .
2-3	Hurt: You have been affected by the violence of others and hold a grudge. Proceed to <i>Table F6</i> .
4-6	Optimist: Fauns and other cultures, especially terans, should work together. Proceed to <i>Table F6</i> .
7-10	Mindful: You judge every other creature by its own merits. Proceed to <i>Table F6</i> .

Fey Heritage Bonus

Choose your fey heritage bonus or let fate decide:

Table F6

Roll 1d10	
1-3	Ancient fey: Gain +2 to save versus charm. May use the spell Calm Animal as a Standard Action. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .

4-7	Chaos fey: You are fearless. Gain +10 against fear-based magic. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
8-10	Wasteland fey: Gain +1 to Survival (Misc. Mod.). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .

Elven

The elves share a common biology, though their culture and histories are all very different.

Choose your elven background or let fate decide:

Table E1

Roll 1d6	
1	Losvari, the lost elves: The Losvari fought in the Great War on the side of Aradan. They were trapped in the In-Between after the war and have just recently returned. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .
2	Anavari, the wilde elves: The Anavari are mainly found in the bushlands between Ish and Endamas, but some tribes have migrated to the Wastelands and further north. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .
3	Kaelvari, the forest elves: The western wood elves. Their time during the Disappearance was more peaceful than most. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .
4	Alostrovvari, the sea elves: The elves of the sea. They are rare in the East, but some can be found along the Western coast of the Inner Sea. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .
5	Evantari, the high elves: The Evantari believe themselves above the others. There are no settlements of Evantari in the East, but some may have come here to hunt the Orovari. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .
6	Orovari, the dark elves: These pale skinned elves have been at odds against the other elven cultures as far back as their written history reveals. Since the Return, they have united the clans and begun to migrate south from the cold exiled lands in the far North. Proceed to <i>Table E2</i> .

Elven Heritage Bonus

Choose your elven heritage bonus or let fate decide*:

Table E2

Roll 1d6	
1	Alostrovari: Seafaring (once per day, when on a boat, you may reroll a skill check). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
2	Anarvari: Forager (once per day, when in the wilderness, you may reroll a skill check). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
3	Evantari: Dazeless (+10 against daze, sleep, or stun-based mind magic). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
4	Kaelvari: Fleet of Foot (in the forest, you move across difficult terrain at normal speed). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
5	Losvari: Demon Sense (+2 Expertise to knowledge checks about the Navirim and its inhabitants). Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .
6	Orovari: Gain +1 to Endurance (Misc. Mod.) and +2 Expertise to knowledge checks about nature. Proceed to <i>Profession Lifepath</i> .

*Your heritage bonus does not have to match your background. For example, you could be a Losvari elf who was raised by the Orovari.



Profession Lifepath

Your profession could be your current work, an old trade, or even just training you received when you were younger. Your profession decides your main skills as well as your starting equipment.

Choose your profession or let fate decide:

Roll 1d00		Rarity
1-3	Artist	Rare
4	Assassin	Very Rare
5-6	Athlete	Rare
7-11	Begger	Common
17	Crafter	Very Common
20	Criminal	Common
23	Detective	Common
26	Entertainer	Common
29	Explorer	Common
37	Farmer	Very Common
40	Gambler	Common
46	Herder	Very Common
54	Hunter	Very Common
60	Laborer	Very Common
64	Lawkeeper / Guard	Common
65	Mage	Very Rare
68	Merchant	Common
69	Noble	Very Rare
70	Occultist	Very Rare
72	Politician	Common
73-74	Priest	Common
75-77	Sailor	Common
78-80	Scholar	Common
81-84	Servant	Very Common
85-89	Soldier	Very Common
90-91	Spy	Rare
92-95	Thief	Common
94-100	Warrior	Very Common

History Lifepath

Follow along and roll for each table to help create a backstory that fits in the Dark Return setting.

Friends and Enemies

Who is the most important person in your early life?

Table H1

Roll 1d6	
1	Family
2	Friend
3	Enemy
4	Mentor
5	Religious Figure
6	Political Figure

Family

Where is your family now?

Table H2

Roll 1d6	
1	They are wealthy and powerful.
2	They have a bountiful life and security.
3	They have lost everything and search for ways to survive.
4	They make enough to scrape by, but are happy and supportive.
5	They are no longer of this world.
6	I do not know my family.

Religion

In the SagaBorn system, no powers or benefits come directly from the gods, so this is a roleplaying choice. There are many different churches and beliefs, so each of the options below can be viewed from many angles. A monotheistic church may believe that the Creator is the only god and the others are angels. Another church may believe the Creator is more a force of nature than a personal god and that Arias is the only true god. The beliefs of the people of Atheles are many and varied.

Choose your religious belief or let fate decide:

Roll 1d10	
1-3	Monotheistic
4-7	Polytheistic
8-10	Agnostic

The deities of Atheles are based on the ancient beliefs of the elves. Even if your character does not believe in the deities as gods, or you are monotheistic, you might still have a patron god that you pray to. Each culture has a different take on each god, but they all share common themes.

Choose your patron deity or let fate decide:

Roll 1d20	
1-2	The Creator: maker of the universe
3-4	Tanthias: god of order and light
5	Arias: goddess of love
6-7	Lunare: goddess of nature
8-9	Sartas: god of travelers
10	Rindlebok: the trickster
11-12	Rom: god of war
13	Volinus: The god of weather
14	Moorukk: god of Death
15-16	Trund: god of the earth and forge
17	Claravis: goddess of magic
18	Arcist: god of magic
19	Kala: goddess of fate
20	Orum: god of time

Magic

How does your character feel about magic and its return to Atheles? Elves, fauns, and elflings do not roll on this chart, as their cultures celebrate magic. Dworvs add +4 to their roll.

Roll 1d10	
1-2	You are afraid of magic. The thought seems alien and chills you to your core.
3-4	You are opposed to magic and its use. You believe magic is an abomination and should be weeded out and destroyed.
5-6	Magic makes you uncomfortable.
7-9	Magic has not been part of your life, so you have little opinion about it.
10+	You are open-minded about magic and those who use it.



Name and Characteristics

Write your character's name at the top of the page. This should be appropriate to the setting and game being played. If no idea suggests itself yet, wait until later. You can write your own name on the character sheet as your StoryGuide may need to keep track of which character belongs to whom.

- Roll 3D6 five times and write the results down. Assign one of these rolls to one of the following characteristics Strength (STR), Constitution (CON), Power (POW), Dexterity (DEX), and Charisma (CHA). Enter the results in the appropriate places on your character sheet.
- Roll 2D6+6 for the Intelligence (INT) and Size (SIZ) characteristics.

These numbers provide the statistics of your character, determining what characteristics the character is strong or weak in.

- If you wish, redistribute up to 3 points between your characteristics.
- No characteristic can begin at more than 19 points.
- If you aren't satisfied with the characteristics you have, and your StoryGuide approves, you can start over.

Point-based Character Creation (Option):

Usually, characteristics are rolled randomly. Instead, players can purchase characteristic points from a pool.

- All characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, INT, POW, DEX, and CHA) begin at 10.
- You have 36 points to spend on characteristics. This is the equivalent of the 'normal' power level for a campaign. No initial characteristic can be raised to higher than 19.
- Each point of STR, CON, SIZ, or CHA costs 1 point.
- Each point of DEX, INT, and POW costs 3.
- You can choose to lower your starting characteristics below the starting value of 10, to a minimum of 3.
- For each point of STR, CON, SIZ, or CHA you reduce below 10, you get 1 point to spend on other characteristics.
- For every point of DEX, INT, and POW you reduce, you get 3 points back.
- Only with a StoryGuide's permission can you raise or lower a starting characteristic beyond the range of 3–21.

Age

The default age for characters is 17+1D6 years old. You may choose any age appropriate for your characters Species.

Characteristic Rolls

Here's where you determine your characteristic rolls. By now you should know what your final characteristics are, but if not, hold off on this step until you've finalized them. Each has a place on the character sheet.

- Multiply STR×5 for your Effort roll.
- Multiply CON×5 for your Stamina roll.
- Multiply INT×5 for your Idea roll.
- Multiply POW×5 for your Luck roll.
- Multiply DEX×5 for your Agility roll.
- Multiply CHA×5 for your Charm roll.

Derived Characteristics

Now it's time for the derived characteristics: damage modifier, hit points, power points and experience bonus. If you're using optional systems, you should also determine your initial fatigue points and sanity points. Write the results on your character sheet.

- **Damage Modifier:** Add STR+SIZ and find the **damage modifier** corresponding to your character's total on the **Damage Modifier** table.
- **Hit Points:** Add CON+SIZ. Write that number in the **Hit Points** box on your character sheet and write it below. This is your character's maximum hit points. If your character loses hit points, mark them off, and erase the marks as hit points are healed or otherwise restored.
- **Power Points:** In the **Power Point** box, circle the number equal to POW and write the total on the line below. This is your character's maximum power points. These fuel magic spells, talents, and special abilities. Mark power points off as they're spent and erase the marks as they're

recovered or otherwise restored. The number written in the space, equal to your POW, is the value your power points return to with rest.

- **Experience Bonus:** Your character's experience bonus is equal to 1/2 their INT, rounded up.
- **Move (MOV):** Your character's MOV measures how fast during a combat round they can move. Medium sized characters can normally move 10 units per round. A unit is 5 feet. See **Movement Rates**.
- **Horror:** Multiply your character's initial POW score by $\times 5$ to get their current Horror Resistance total. In play, mark these off on your character sheet when your character suffers horror. When your character reaches 0 Horror Resistance, they are considered unplayable.

Profession and Skills

To determine the starting skills for your character, reference the profession chosen during your Life Path. Professions are described fully later in this chapter. Your StoryGuide may restrict available professions, so ask before making this choice. Some professions provide special advantages, such as the use of magic. Note these on the character sheet.

Once a profession has been chosen, determine the character's professional skill point pool. This represents what your character has learned in that profession, whether through training or on-the-job experience. As always, skill points are added to any bonuses granted from previous steps and to the skill's base chance.

The campaign's power level determines the initial skill point pool. Your StoryGuide should have decided by now what kind of game they will run, and how powerful and competent player characters should be.

- **Professional Skills:** Allot **250 points to professional skills**. No skill should begin higher than **75%**. If a combination of bonuses increases the skill to more than 75% before this step, do not add any

additional skill points.

For an original profession, allot the power level's number of skill points, as above. Your StoryGuide may have some restrictions on how these skill points can be spent.

- **Personal Skills:** Once all professional skill points have been allocated, multiply your character's **INT $\times 10$** to determine their personal skill point pool. Spend these skill points on any skills you like, with your StoryGuide's approval. Add points spent on a skill to its base chance, profession bonuses (if any), professional skill point allocations, and skill category bonuses (if any). The total must not exceed 75%.

Calculate the final rankings for all character skills from base chance, professional skill pool, personal skill pool, and the optional skill category bonuses. You might want to shift some points around at this time but try to keep the professional skill points and personal skill points separate.

Talents

Talents are special abilities a character is either born with or gains through training. Talents are a way for players to customize their character, moving beyond the basic Classes and Paths. Players gain 3 points to spend on initial Talents when creating a character. The cost for each Talent is shown in parentheses beside each description. As characters go up in level, they gain 1 or 2 additional Talent points every few levels, depending the StoryGuide rewards. These points can be spent right away or saved up and spent on a higher-cost talent later.

Possessions

Most characters have some sort of possessions, whether gear or weapons. The front of the character sheet has a section for weapons, and the back a space for possessions. Your profession describes your character's beginning

wealth level and the Status skill can provide guidelines for what sort of additional equipment that your character might be able to lay hands upon. It's not necessary to list every item your character owns, but merely those that might be important in play.

In most cases, your character has the following:

- A complete set (or sets) of clothing appropriate to their environment and setting.
- An amount of pocket money and personal savings based on their wealth level.
- A personal item showing some relation to their family or background. This can be an heirloom, keepsake, or some trinket with a strong emotional connection.
- Any trade tools or equipment suitable to their profession, if appropriate.
- Any weapon they have a skill of 50%+ in, if appropriate.
- Based on the setting, profession, wealth level, and Status, they may have a vehicle such as a horse, wagon, bicycle, automobile, personal flier, small space transport, or some other means of transportation. This is subject to your StoryGuide's approval.
- No detailed rules for finances are provided: the suggested wealth for professions and the Status skill are the best guidelines for determining what items and funds they begin play owning or having access to. Your StoryGuide should be able to help you describe this in an appropriate level of detail and may have additional restrictions or suggestions.

Size and Distinctive Features

This step is primarily cosmetic and is not entirely necessary.

You may now choose to determine your character's height and weight, based on SIZ. Generally, the SIZ range of 10–13 represents the human range of average weight and height. A person of SIZ 8 (normal minimum) is relatively small, and someone of SIZ 18 is exceedingly large. You can define this as you wish, either through exact numbers for height and weight, or

with descriptions such as "Tall" or "Slender".

Finishing Touches

This is the final step for various aspects of your character. If you couldn't think of a name beforehand in Step One, now is the time. Beyond that, you can come up with the rest of this section before play begins or as you get a feel for your character.

As desired, you should fill in all the blank spaces that describe the character, mentally and physically, and come up with some ideas about their background. In Step Nine you determined your character's distinctive features, so you should decide whether your character has other, less distinctive, features. What colors are their hair, skin, and eyes? How do they dress? Do they have any interesting mannerisms, or a motto or saying they use often? Do they have an interesting reputation?

If it is relevant, determine where your character is from. Where did they go to school (if at all)? What is their relationship with their family? Is the character a member of any significant organizations? Do they have an interesting past? Do they have any significant religious or political beliefs? If appropriate, you should work with your StoryGuide to determine these issues before play begins, or at least do some thinking about them ahead of time. In play you can also flesh out other details of your character's background as necessary or leave these aspects undetermined if they are not relevant.

The back of the character sheet has space for additional descriptive or background elements. Fill out as many or as few of these as you'd like, and check with your StoryGuide to make sure that they know about them and that they're suitable for the game.

Definitions

Characteristics

Your character is measured and defined by a set of characteristics, values that represent their physical and mental capabilities. Higher characteristic numbers are usually better (though a high SIZ can work against you for stealth). Characteristic values indicate raw natural gifts your character has. Characteristic values can change over the course of play. Injuries or adverse conditions can decrease characteristics, while training, exertion, and conditioning can increase them.

- Physical characteristics (STR, CON, SIZ, DEX, and CHA) have a maximum of 21 for humans.
- Mental characteristics (INT, POW, and EDU) can usually be raised without limits.
- Under most conditions 3 is the lowest value for any characteristic other than SIZ or INT, which have a minimum value of 8.

If other races or species are allowed in the campaign, they may have higher or lower characteristic maximums. Magic, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or superpowers can also raise characteristics, without limit.

Strength (STR)

Strength measures brawn and raw muscle power. The Effort roll (STR×5) is its characteristic roll. STR helps determine how much a character can lift or carry, push or pull, or how tightly they can hang on to something. In combat, STR limits what kind of weapons a character can wield, as well as helping determine how much extra damage (if any) they inflict with any hit. STR can be increased through exercise, while certain injuries and diseases can permanently reduce STR. A character with STR 0 is an invalid, unable to rise from their bed.

Constitution (CON)

Health, vigor, and vitality are all measured by

Constitution. The Stamina roll (CON×5) is its characteristic roll. CON determines how well a character can resist fatigue, poison, disease, drowning, and other hardships, and is a factor in calculating hit points. CON can be increased through conditioning. Diseases, poisons, and some injuries can temporarily or permanently reduce CON. A character dies when their CON falls to 0 for whatever reason.

Size (SIZ)

Size defines height, weight, and bulk. There is no SIZ-associated characteristic roll; on the character sheet the space is used to note your character's damage modifier. Resistance rolls using SIZ can determine whether a character can stand firm against resistance, see over an obstacle, or squeeze through a narrow hallway. A character's SIZ, as body mass, helps determine hit points and damage modifier.

SIZ	Rating	Height	Weight (lbs.)	Modifier	Species
1	Fine	1-11 inches	0-20 lbs.	+20% to Hide, Stealth, and Dodge Skills	Fae
2-3	Tiny	1' - 2.9' (12-35 inches)	5-30	+15% to Hide, Stealth, and Dodge Skills	Boggart, Miglin
4-6	Small	3' - 4.4' (36-52 inches)	16-60	+10% to Hide, Stealth, and Dodge Skills	Elfling, Goblin, Dworv
7-19	Medium	4.5' - 7' (54-84 inches)	55-225	Standard Size	Teran, Dworv, Dweran, Elf, Faun
20-25	Large	8' - 14' (96-168 inches)	120-500	-10% to Hide, Stealth, and Dodge Skills	Ogre, Orog
26-30	Huge	15' - 19' (180-228 inches)	250-800	-15% to Hide, Stealth, and Dodge Skills	Giant

Intelligence (INT)

Representing reason, mental acuity, and wits, INT measures how well a character learns, remembers, and analyzes information. The Idea roll ($\text{INT} \times 5$) is its characteristic roll. INT is critical in determining initial skill values. Possibly the most important characteristic, INT has no fixed maximum and can conceivably rise indefinitely through study and mental exercise. Wounds to the head, prolonged exposure to harmful drugs, or certain types of diseases can reduce INT. A character with an INT 0 has been reduced to a vegetative state, unable to survive independently.

Power (POW)

The most intangible of characteristics, Power represents willpower, magical aptitude, and spiritual development. POW is essential to leadership, intuition, and magic. The Luck roll ($\text{POW} \times 5$) is its characteristic roll. POW serves as the determiner for initial power points and initial Sanity points. Like INT, human POW has no set maximum, and can rise indefinitely. Magical influences can reduce POW (temporarily or permanently) and some magic is fueled by the permanent sacrifice of points of POW. For powers (see *Chapter 4: Powers*), POW is probably the most important characteristic. POW is the suggested basis for initial power choices, so a character with higher POW will have more powers (or more levels in those powers). A character whose POW score reaches 0 has lost their soul and becomes catatonic without any will or life force.

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity score measures balance, agility, speed, and deftness. Characters rely upon DEX when reacting to an attack, climbing, performing delicate work, or moving stealthily. The Agility roll ($\text{DEX} \times 5$) is its characteristic roll. Injuries or nerve diseases can reduce DEX, while rigorous training can quicken reflexes and improve balance. A character with DEX 0 is utterly immobile.

Charisma (CHA)

Charisma determines how likable or attractive a character is to others, and is based as much on presence, personality, and demeanor as simple physical appearance. The Charm roll ($\text{CHA} \times 5$) forms its characteristic roll. CHA is used to measure first impressions and indicates how eager others will be to associate with someone, through physical attraction or an appealing personality. CHA can be raised through physical conditioning, cosmetic surgery, or careful application of grooming and etiquette. It could even be improved by a small amount by possession of particularly impressive gear. It can also be reduced through injury or disease. A character with a CHA 0 is either utterly odious, provoking disgust from all who encounter them, or has become so nondescript that they barely register.

Characteristic Rolls

Some challenges do not intuitively map to particular skills. Can a hunter stay awake in a blind all night waiting for their quarry? Can a hardened detective piece together the tantalizing clue hidden in the scraps of evidence? In these situations, your StoryGuide can call for a characteristic roll: a D100 roll against an appropriate characteristic, multiplied by another number. Your StoryGuide decides which multiplier to use based on the difficulty of the task. Standard characteristic rolls use a multiplier of $\times 5$, though extremely difficult tasks may require a multiplier of $\times 2$, or even be based on the characteristic itself as a percentage. For more details on task difficulty and modifier selection, see *Chapter 5: System*.

Effort Roll ($\text{STR} \times 5$)

Most feats of strength involve matching STR against the SIZ of the lifted object on the resistance table (see *Chapter 5: System*). In cases when a SIZ rating is not available or is difficult to determine, use an Effort roll. Effort rolls can also be used as an easy way to determine things such as whether a character can pull themselves up onto a ledge. Are they worn out at the end of a long hike? An Effort roll is a quick way to decide.

Stamina Roll (CON×5)

Based upon CON, Stamina rolls measure endurance. Use a Stamina roll whenever physical or intestinal fortitude is in question. To list a few examples, a Stamina roll might determine whether a character can stay awake all night, or endure seasickness, ill-prepared food, or strong drink with no ill effects.

Idea Roll (INT×5)

An Idea roll represents the ability to make clever guesses, informed hunches, or reasonable deductions based upon nothing but observation and raw intellect. When no skill seems appropriate, an Idea roll can show understanding of a concept or the ability to unravel a puzzle. Memory is also part of the Idea roll: use an Idea roll to remember an important detail, retrace steps through a labyrinth, or memorize a lengthy formula.

Your StoryGuide may also allow an Idea roll if you are stalled, getting you back on track by revealing a hidden meaning of some already uncovered clue, or letting them know that something 'doesn't quite seem right' about a particular person, place, or thing. This type of Idea roll should only be granted at your StoryGuide's discretion and is not generally solicited by players.

Your StoryGuide may also require an Idea roll if you wish to have your character think or behave in a manner that represents player knowledge vs. character knowledge. If a character is a primitive hunter encountering modern technology, for example, your StoryGuide may require an Idea roll for them to be able to grasp basic concepts of the item, even if the player automatically knows what it is based on its description.

Luck Roll (POW×5)

Luck is the knack of being in the right place at the right time, having things work out despite the expectation, or the uncanny ability to escape a random peril unscathed. Does your character just happen to have that one special bit or equipment? Will a friendly passerby lend a hand

if they are stranded by the side of the road? Does the hideous creature attack the character or a nearby nonplayer character? Does a character fall through a weak floor, or snag their clothes on a splintered plank and escape plummeting to death? Luck rolls can be used to answer all these questions. Successful Luck rolls can create fortunate coincidences under normal circumstances or save someone from certain doom in an emergency.

Agility Roll (DEX×5)

Whenever a feat of deftness, balance, or agility is called for and no appropriate skill exists, use an Agility roll to measure success. An Agility roll might, for example, determine if a character can keep their balance on a heaving ship's deck, gather up all the pieces of a broken vase in a hurry, run carrying a precious elixir without spilling any, or grab the vine at the edge of a cliff before falling off.

Charm Roll (CHA×5)

Use Charm rolls to adjudicate interpersonal reactions not covered by an existing skill. Making a good first impression, seducing an acquaintance, or becoming the person a group turns to first for guidance are all good uses for a Charm roll. If a character is standing outside a trendy night club wanting to be let in, a successful Charm roll will get them noticed and waved through the door.

Derived Characteristics

In addition to characteristics (and their attendant characteristic rolls), a character is also defined by a set of derived characteristics, figured from their characteristics. If injuries, magic, or other factors increase or decrease a characteristic, all characteristics derived from that characteristic immediately change to reflect the new value.

For example, your character (CON 16, SIZ 14, HP 15) falls victim to a deadly poison, which reduces their CON value to 10. Your character's maximum hit points immediately drop from 15 ($16+14=30$, divided to 15) to 12 ($10+14=24$,

divided to 12). Additionally, their major wound total drops from 8 to 6. If wounds had already brought your character lower than 12 hit points, they would not take any additional damage, but they are limited to the 12 hit point maximum until their original CON is restored.

Damage Modifier (STR+SIZ, see table)

Bigger, stronger characters and creatures are more powerful in physical combat, inflicting more damage than average with each strike. Smaller, weaker beings inflict less damage with their attacks. The damage modifier reflects this advantage, expressed in terms of damage dice added or subtracted from the damage of successful attacks.

A character adds their full damage modifier to all hits with brawling or melee weapons. In the case of a negative damage modifier, subtract the appropriate dice from any inflicted damage. If the total is 0 or less, the blow is too soft to inflict any harm. An attack never does negative damage, so if the modified damage roll goes below 0, count it as 0.

Missile weapons don't allow a character to use their full damage modifier. If your character's damage modifier is positive, divide the results in half (round up) when using a thrown weapon or a bow. If the damage modifier is negative, keep the modifier as is. Self-propelled weapons (firearms, energy missile weapons, etc.) do not receive a damage modifier.

To calculate damage modifier, add the character's STR and SIZ, and find the result on the **Damage Modifier table** (following).

Damage Modifier Table

STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier	STR+SIZ	Damage Modifier
2-12	-1D6	73-88	+4D6
13-16	-1D4	89-104	+5D6
17-24	None	105-120	+6D6
25-32	+1D4	121-136	+7D6
33-40	+1D6	137-152	+8D6
41-56	+2D6	153-168	+9D6
57-72	+3D6	Each +16	Additional +1D6

Experience Bonus (1/2 INT)

The smarter a character is, the faster they can learn, especially under stress. To determine their experience bonus, divide their INT by 2, rounding up. Add the experience bonus to the learning roll for each experience check your character makes to improve a skill or characteristic. Consult *Chapter 5: System and Skill Improvement*.

Hit Points (Average of CON and SIZ)

Hit points represent your character's capacity to withstand punishment and physical injury. When you take damage, you subtract hit points from your total. Calculate maximum hit points by adding your character's CON and SIZ scores.

Your character loses consciousness when their hit points are reduced to 0 or less, and if their hit points reach -10, they die at the end of the following round. You can lose more hit points than you have, so keep track of any negative value. Lost hit points heal naturally at a rate of 1D8 points per game day, though medical attention can speed recovery. See **Damage & Healing**.

Power Points (Max = POW)

Power points (PP) represent your character's vital essence, their reserves of spiritual or life energy. Your character spends power points to cast or resist spells as well as some special abilities. Your character's maximum power points

are usually equal to their POW characteristic. Generally, spent power points regenerate at a rate of 1 per hour of sleep or total rest, or 1 for every two hours of normal activity. If your character is engaged in strenuous activity, they cannot regain power points. When your character's power point total falls to 0, they are completely exhausted and faint until regaining at least 1 power point. You cannot have negative power points.

Unlike hit points, power points can climb above the maximum for brief times under certain conditions.

Movement (MOV)

All medium humanoid characters begin with a movement (MOV) attribute of 10. This measures how much distance your character can move in a combat round. A unit is equal to 5 feet.

Movement rates are described further in **Movement Rates** in *Chapter 5: System*.

Horror Resistance Points (Max = POW×5)

As described in **Horror**, **horror points (HRP)** represent your character's mental and emotional fortitude, and their ability to withstand shock, terror, and cosmic awfulness. Your character's base SAN points equal their POW×5.

Whenever your character is exposed to a horrifying situation or mind-bending strangeness, they must roll D100 against their current SAN point total. If your character fails (or perhaps even if they succeed) they lose sanity points.

A character who suffers sufficient SAN loss will likely go mad. Your character's **temporary insanity score** (like a Major Wound Threshold) equals ½ their current SAN. Losing this many SAN points in a five-minute period results in some form of temporary insanity.

Sanity points do not naturally regenerate and can only be recovered under very specific circumstances. Characters can gain SAN beyond their base value, to a maximum of 99. Certain types of blasphemous knowledge can limit a character's maximum allowable SAN score.

Skill Category Bonuses

If you and your StoryGuide want your character's characteristics to influence their skill ratings, you should employ this system. As described in the *Chapter 3: Skills*, each skill is grouped into skill categories. Each category is linked to one or more characteristics that are used to compute a skill category bonus for each category. To compute the bonus for each skill category, use the chart below:

Skill Category Modifiers

Category	Primary
Combat skills	DEX/2
Communication skills	CHA/2
Manipulation skills	DEX/2
Mental skills	INT/2
Perception skills	POW/2
Physical skills	STR/2

Professions

In addition to being defined by characteristics, your character is also defined in terms of their **skills**. These are learned through life experience, often as part of education and a **profession**. A profession is a job or vocation your character is assumed to be a part of when they begin play (or was a part of before play began), guiding skill allocation. A profession is just where they start when play begins and is not a limit to what they can do and become. They can grow and change over the course of a campaign far beyond their profession.

Professions are not necessarily the jobs you have, but the training you received before you were an adventurer. In fact, you could still practice the profession between adventures if you wish! You could have been an apprentice in the trade, a professional who lost their trade due to an unforeseen circumstance or even grown up in a family that left you with certain skills. If you and your StoryGuide have ideas for new professions, you should try them!

A List of Professions

Artist

You make your living through making art, whether drawing, painting, sculpture, design, photography, filmmaking, or any other means of creative expression in a physical or digital medium. Performers should refer to the Entertainer profession.

- **Wealth:** Any, but usually Poor or Average.
- **Skills:** Any two Art skills, any Craft, Insight, one appropriate Knowledge skill, Language (Other), Language (Own), Listen, Research, Spot.

Assassin

As a coldblooded professional assassin, death is your trade. Whether you kill for money or some other cause, you are skilled in the termination of other living beings, usually in secrecy.

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent. You may also have a wide range of weapons and false identities, as appropriate to setting.

- **Skills:** Dodge, Hide, Listen, Spot, Stealth, and five of the following as appropriate to setting: Brawl, Disguise, Drive, Electronics, Grapple, Firearm (any), Fine Manipulation, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Ride, Throw, Track.

Athlete

Whether professional or amateur, state-sponsored or still in school, you excel in a style of sports or exercise, honing your body and resolve for solo or team athletic competition.

- **Wealth:** Poor through Wealthy, usually Average or Affluent.
- **Skills:** Climb, Dodge, Jump, Stealth, Throw and choose five of the following as appropriate to setting and sport: Brawl, First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Listen, Martial Arts, Spot, Ride, Swim.

Beggar

You survive by begging for money, food, and other necessities. You may call yourself a hobo, homeless, or a wandering vagabond. Perhaps you had a run of bad luck, are of a discriminated-against group, have a criminal past you cannot escape, or insanity or substance abuse drove you to this state.

- **Wealth:** Destitute, though some beggars are actually Poor and only pretend to be worse off.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Fast Talk, Hide, Insight, Knowledge (Region: local area), Listen, Persuade, Sleight of Hand, Spot, Stealth.

Crafter

Whether a village blacksmith, a glassblower, or a maker of finely tuned watches, you make trade goods by hand and sell them to interested buyers. You usually work in a shop, whether you own it or are merely employed there.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Appraise, any one Art, Bargain, any two Craft skills, Spot, Research, Status, and

choose two of the following as appropriate to setting and trade: Fine Manipulation, Heavy Machine, Repair (Electrical), Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical).

Criminal

You make your way through the world by breaking the law, whether by strong-arm theft, organized crime, picking pockets, or some other means of gaining valuables or money illegally.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, sometimes Wealthy, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Hide, Stealth, Drive or Ride, and choose any six of the following as appropriate to setting and racket: Appraise, Brawl, Climb, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, Firearm (any), Gaming, Grapple, Insight, Jump, Knowledge (Law), Listen, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any, usually knives or clubs), Persuade, Spot, Throw.

Detective

Whether employed by the police or working privately, you use skills of observation, deduction, and criminology to determine who has committed crimes. You may have a wide range of forensic and scientific skills or operate on gut instincts.

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent.
- **Skills:** Firearm (Handgun), Knowledge (Law), Listen, Persuade, Spot, Research, and choose four of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Art, Brawl, Disguise, Dodge, Drive, Fast Talk, Firearm (any), Grapple, Hide, Insight, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Language (Own), Medicine, Ride, Science (any), Technical (Computer Use), Stealth, Track.

Entertainer

You use your performing talent to entertain audiences of all sizes, improvisational or scripted, in person or through broadcast transmission or prerecorded distribution.

- **Wealth:** Destitute to Wealthy, usually

Average.

- **Skills:** Art (any), Disguise, Fast Talk, Fine Manipulation, Insight, Language (Other), Language (Other), Listen, Perform (any), Persuade.

Explorer

You have made it your life's work to seek out the unknown corners of the world, go where none have gone before, and to bring back knowledge of what you have found, either for glory or in the name of discovery.

- **Wealth:** Affluent or Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Climb, Language (Other), Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Spot, and four of the following as appropriate: Knowledge (Anthropology, Group, History, Natural World, or Region), Drive, Fast Talk, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Rifle), Navigate, Pilot (Aircraft or Boat), Ride, Science (Geology), Swim, Track.

Farmer

As a farmer you dwell in a rural or barely tamed area, coaxing a living out of the land through growing crops or tending animal herds. It is a hard life with long days of backbreaking labor, but nonetheless satisfying.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Craft (any), Knowledge (Natural History), Listen, Spot, and five of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Brawl, Drive, Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), First Aid, Heavy Machine, Knowledge (History), Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Science (Biology, Botany, or Geology), Track.

Gambler

You survive by the whim of chance, or by cheating fate in games of luck and skill. Inevitably, you travel around; drifting from one gambling arena to another, sometimes one step ahead of the law, hoping your luck won't dry up.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average.

- **Skills:** Bargain, Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Gaming, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Persuade, Sleight of Hand, Spot.

Herder

You make your living tending herd animals, riding the open range and taking care of the herds, finding strays and bringing them to market when it is time to sell.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Average, occasionally Affluent.
- **Skills:** Craft (usually knots), Firearm (Rifle), Knowledge (Natural History), Knowledge (Region: the Range), Listen, Navigate, Ride, Spot, Throw, Track.

Hunter

Whether for survival or for the thrill of the hunt, you specialize in tracking and either trapping or killing wild animals or other beings.

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, unless a big game or sport hunter, then Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Climb, Hide, Listen, Navigate, Spot, Stealth, Track, and three of the following as appropriate to setting and concept: Firearm (Rifle or Shotgun), Knowledge (Natural History or Region), Language (Other), Melee Weapon (usually Spear), Missile Weapon (any), Ride.

Laborer

You are a blue-collar worker, whether on a factory line, in a warehouse, or simply heavy labor. Your muscle and ability to do repetitive tasks are more important than any brainpower you can muster.

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average.
- **Skills:** Climb, Craft (any), Drive, Brawl, Grapple, Heavy Machine, and four others, as appropriate to setting: Appraise, Fine Manipulation, Language (Other), Literacy, Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Technical (Computer Use).

Lawkeeper / Guard

You have the authority and the jurisdiction to uphold and defend the law, ideally in defense of the common folk. Your enforcement of the law and legal code is supported by the power structure in your community.

- **Wealth:** Usually Average. Corrupt lawmen are sometimes Affluent.
- **Skills:** Brawl, Dodge, Fast Talk, Knowledge (Law), Listen, Spot, and four of the following, as appropriate to setting and concept: Drive, Firearms (any), First Aid, Grapple, Insight, Knowledge (Region or Group), Language (Other), Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Pilot (any), Ride, Status, Technical (Computer Use), Track.

Mage

You understand and can use magic or sorcery. Through chant and gesture, you can produce magical effects, and you dedicate yourself to improving and increasing your repertoire of spells and your personal access to power points.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Insight, Knowledge (Occult), two other Knowledge skills, Language (Other), Listen, Perform (Rituals), Persuade, Research.
- **Special:** You can use magic or sorcery. Work with your StoryGuide to determine your initial spells (see *Chapter 4: Powers*).

Merchant

You make a living in retail or wholesale, purchasing resources for less and selling for more. You might work in or own a shop, or you might be mobile: a traveling salesman, a wandering tinker, an adventuresome spice merchant, or an international sales representative.

- **Wealth:** Average to Wealthy, usually Affluent. Your StoryGuide and player should determine whether the character owns their own shop or trade vessel.
- **Skills:** Appraise, Bargain, Fast Talk,

Knowledge (Accounting), Knowledge (Business), Persuade, Research, Status, and any two other skills as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept.

Noble

You were born into wealth and a ruling class. In a society that recognizes such social distinctions your status is often associated with ranks and titles, but even if such titles are meaningless you are still easily recognized as among the elite. You are accustomed to an elegant and extravagant lifestyle, and you know and are known to the wealthy and other highborn of society.

- **Wealth:** Affluent to Wealthy, usually Wealthy.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Drive, Etiquette, Language (Own), Language (Other), Literacy, and Status, plus any other three skills as hobbies or fields of interest.

Occultist

You are a student of obscure secrets, hidden lore, and magical power, believing in the influence and primacy of supernatural forces. If appropriate to the setting, your StoryGuide may allow you to use powers (probably magic or sorcery) perhaps studied while a member of an occult organization or secret society.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Anthropology), Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Language (Own), Research, and any two other skills as appropriate to setting, usually from the following: Art (any), Craft (any), Knowledge (Archaeology), Medicine, Science (any), Status.
- **Special:** If magic is present in the setting, you may have magic powers. See *Chapter 4: Powers* for more information.

Politician

You have been elected or appointed to a position of authority and make your living taking part in or directing government activities, whether city-wide

or greater. You could be a medieval magistrate or a galactic senator, depending on the setting.

- **Wealth:** Affluent to Wealthy, usually Affluent.
- **Skills:** Bargain, Etiquette, Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Status, plus any three other skills as appropriate to the setting, usually from the following: Knowledge (Accounting, Group, History, or Region), Listen, Language (Other), Language (Own), Perform (Oratory), Research.

Priest

Your faith and belief in the divine have led you to the calling of the priesthood, and you spend your time preaching or in activities befitting the worship of your deity (or deities). You could be an ascetic monk or a televangelist, depending on the setting.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Affluent, usually Average, possibly Wealthy if you are the religious leader of a large group of worshipers, at your StoryGuide's discretion.
- **Skills:** Fast Talk, Insight, Knowledge (History), Knowledge (Philosophy), Knowledge (Religion), Language (Own), Perform (Ritual), Persuade, and two of the following: Knowledge (Occult), Language (Other), Listen, Literacy, Perform (Oratory), Research, Status, Teach.
- **Special:** Your affiliation with a faith or cult may grant you access to magical or supernatural powers. See *Chapter 4: Powers* for more information.

Sailor

You ply the ocean waves, working hard to maintain your vessel's integrity, whether as a pirate, a naval officer, or an ancient world trader.

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Climb, Craft (any), Dodge, Grapple, Navigate, Pilot (Boat), Swim, and any three of the following: Artillery (any, usually shipboard), Command, Language (Other), Listen, Repair (Mechanical), Repair (Structural), Spot.

Scholar

Study and learning define your life, and you specialize in one or more fields of knowledge, eagerly seeking out all there is to know within your intellectual domain. You might teach this knowledge to students or hoard it for your own use.

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent, usually Average.
- **Skills:** Language (Other), Language (Own), Persuade, Research, Teach, and choose five Knowledge or Science skills appropriate to setting and related to your field of study.

Servant

You are employed as a helper or servant, tending to the household affairs and domestic needs of an affluent employer. You might be a gentleman's manservant, the adjutant of a general, or you could be a scullery maid in a sprawling castle.

- **Wealth:** Poor to Average, though sometimes servants have limited access to their employer's lifestyle of Affluent or Wealthy, at your StoryGuide's approval.
- **Skills:** Craft (any), Etiquette, Hide, Language (Own), Listen, Stealth, and choose four of the following as personal specialties, as appropriate to the setting and concept: Bargain, Drive, First Aid, Insight, Knowledge (Accounting), Language (Other), Persuade.

Soldier

Whether through enlistment or conscription, you are a professional soldier, charged with the defense of your country or organization. You might be a mercenary or sellsword, or you might actually believe in the cause you fight for. Either way, you've received martial training, and work in a squad of other soldiers, doing what you're ordered to.

- **Wealth:** Poor or Average, but frequently given access to expensive or otherwise-

prohibited equipment.

- **Skills:** Brawl, Climb, Dodge, First Aid, and six of the following, as appropriate to setting: Artillery, Command, Drive, Firearm (usually Rifle, but any), Grapple, Heavy Weapon (any), Hide, Language (Other), Listen, Jump, Medicine, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), Navigate, Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Spot, Stealth, Throw

Spy

You are skilled in subterfuge and infiltration, entering countries or organizations under cover or in secret, finding out their secrets, and reporting them back to an enemy or interested party.

- **Wealth:** Average or Affluent, depending on the setting.
- **Skills:** Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Listen, Research, Spot, Stealth, and three of the following, as appropriate to setting: Art (Photography), Brawl, Disguise, Etiquette, Firearm (any), Grapple, Knowledge (any), Language (Other), Language (Own), Martial Arts, Navigate, Pilot (any), Psychology, Repair (Electronics), Repair (Mechanical), Ride, Swim, Technical (Computer Use), Throw, Track.

Thief

You take what you want, either to survive or because it appeals to you. You could be a lowly pickpocket, an infamous brigand, or a glamorous international jewel thief. You flaunt the law to steal, either armed, through clever deception, stealth, or some combination of all three.

- **Wealth:** Any, subject to StoryGuide's approval.
- **Skills:** Appraise, Dodge, Fast Talk, Hide, Stealth, and five other skills from the following list, as appropriate to setting and concept: Bargain, Brawl, Climb, Disguise, Fine Manipulation, Firearm (Pistol, Revolver, or Shotgun), Grapple, Insight, Listen, Jump, Knowledge (Law), Persuade, Repair (Mechanical), Spot.

Warrior

You specialize in individual combat, surviving by your reflexes and your weapon skills. Perhaps you adhere to a code of honor like chivalry or bushido, or you are a mercenary or barbaric adventurer. Soldiers fight in groups or squads, while warriors look only to their own prowess.

- **Wealth:** Destitute to Average, usually Poor.
- **Skills:** Brawl, Dodge, Grapple, Melee Weapon (any), Missile Weapon (any), and five other skills from the following list as specialties, as appropriate to setting and concept: Climb, Firearm (any), Hide, Listen, Jump, Language (Other), Martial Arts, Ride, Spot, Stealth, Swim, Throw, Track.

You can examine your character sheet and reflect on the choices you've made during character creation. Perhaps some of the skills indicate a personality type, such as studious, eclectic, violent, or some other such adjective. You might try to find the character's 'voice', or some other means of expression that makes them come alive at the gaming table. Not everyone wants to be a method actor, though, and don't feel that you need to come to the table with an in-depth personality and back-story for your character. Some of that will come during the roleplaying experience, and some of it will come naturally as your character is faced with adventure and adversity.

The hard part is over—now the fun can begin!

Finishing Touches

At this point you're finished with character creation, assuming your game doesn't have magic spells, mutations, psychic abilities, sorcery, or superpowers for your starting characters. If these are available, turn to Chapter Four: Powers and begin selecting those, with your StoryGuide's assistance.

Background is often an important part of a character, but this is the least quantifiable in game rules. Try to come up with elements of experience or identity that drive your character, asking some simple questions such as any of the following:

- What tragedies and successes have they experienced?
- Where did they grow up?
- Who was the most influential person in their life?
- Who are their family? Are their parents still alive?
- Are they in love? Are or were they married? Children?
- Are they happy in life?
- Do they have many friends? How about enemies?
- What do they want to achieve?

3. Skills

Your character must make many decisions, face many challenges, and accomplish many tasks during play. Most important actions are defined as **skills** your character can attempt. This section lists the most common skills, defines them, and relates them to tasks your character can attempt in play.

Defining Skills

A skill represents a specific set of knowledge and aptitude. Every skill is rated on a percentile scale from 0 to 100 (or higher). This is called a **skill rating**. The higher, the better.

The list of skills in this book is far from comprehensive: different games may demand additional skills, and the StoryGuide is encouraged to create new skills as desired. Additionally, the StoryGuide may wish to rename or reclassify skills, eliminating some, add new specialties (described below) or remove them, as appropriate.

Skill Specialties

Many skills are broad and require you to define a specialty, a more focused aspect of that skill. Art, for example, is a broad category, so it is divided into specialties such as Drawing, Painting, Sculpture, Writing, etc. These are listed after the skill name in parentheses. Thus, Melee Weapon (Sword) and Melee Weapon (Spear) are considered two different skills. At the StoryGuide's discretion, if your character lacks a skill rating in an appropriate specialty, you can use a related skill or specialty's rating halved (rounding up), to make skill rolls.

For example, your character can use half their skill rating in Science (Astronomy) to make skill rolls that would normally require Science (Physics) or Science (Mathematics), as these are related skills. However, this astronomical acumen is useless if the StoryGuide calls for a Science (Biology) or Knowledge (History) skill roll.

Using Skills

Whenever your character wishes to take an action or accomplish a task where the outcome is in doubt, you must declare the desired action. The StoryGuide will then call for a D100 roll against the appropriate skill

rating. In general terms, a D100 roll equal to or under the modified skill rating grants success at the task, while a roll higher than the rating fails.

The difficulty of the task or other circumstantial modifiers can adjust a skill's rating up or down. The difficulty modifiers are *Automatic* (no roll required), *Easy* (the skill is doubled), *Average* (no modification to the skill), *Difficult* (the skill is halved), and *Impossible* (no roll, or a 01% chance at the StoryGuide's discretion). See **Modifying Action Rolls** for more information. If no modifier is indicated, assume the roll is at *Average* difficulty.

In most cases, the appropriate skill for a given action is obvious. Unforeseen circumstances, however, can lead to new uses of a skill. You are encouraged to find alternative applications of your character's skills, but all such skill uses must meet with the StoryGuide's approval.

While many skills are oriented towards actions, they also indicate general knowledge of the kinds of tasks governed by that skill.

For example, a medieval warrior might use the Melee Weapon (Sword) skill instead of Appraise to judge a sword's quality. The Martial Arts skill might similarly be used to know about the different dojos in a city and who their senseis are.

Skill Categories

Skills are divided into six skill categories:

- **Combat** skills measure proficiency with weapons and combat maneuvers.
- **Communication** skills govern conversation, reading, and interpersonal exchanges.
- **Manipulation** skills define tasks that require precise hand-eye coordination.
- **Mental** skills measure specific knowledge and individual judgment.
- **Perception** skills gather and interpret information from the environment.
- **Physical** skills govern feats of strength, agility, and athletics.

Skill categories serve as general guides to the kinds of actions a skill can accomplish, as well as offering a framework for you and the StoryGuide to create new skills. Skill categories tie your character's skill ratings to their most influential characteristic scores through category bonuses, an optional system.

Skill Category Bonuses (Optional)

As described in **Skill Category Bonuses**, your character receives a bonus or penalty to skill categories based upon their characteristic scores. Apply the category bonus to every skill in that category, in addition to the listed base chance, if any, as listed in the skill description. See the **Skill Category Bonus Table** for the formulas used to calculate skill category bonuses.

Base Chances

Most reasonably healthy and physically fit people can swing a club, climb a tree, or speak their native tongue. Every skill, therefore, has a base chance associated with it: your character is assumed to have this basic rating in the skill before any additional skill points are added. If skill category bonuses (see **Skill Category Bonuses**) are being used, add (or subtract) them from each skill's base chance.

A skill's base chance depends greatly upon the era of a campaign: characters in a campaign set in medieval Europe have higher base ratings in Knowledge (Religion) than modern U.S. citizens, while U.S. citizens might have an advantage in Medical skills due to rudimentary first aid training in public schools and the workplace. Each skill description lists several base chances for different eras, as appropriate. The StoryGuide should feel free to alter the base chances for skills to suit different settings.

Acting without Skill

Sometimes your character must attempt an action using a skill without any skill rating (0%). If the StoryGuide agrees that succeeding at the task is possible, make a roll using one of these options:

- **Skill Category Bonus:** If using the optional skill category system, use the skill category modifier as the base chance. Raw talent can sometimes overcome a lack of training. If successful and the skill can be improved by experience, an experience check should be made.
- **Wild Chance:** Try, but with only a 1% chance of success or a last-ditch 'Hail Mary' effort of POW×1 if blind luck can be a factor, with the StoryGuide's approval. No experience check is allowed for this, as it is blind luck versus any sort of skill or natural talent.

Measuring Skill Ratings

Your character's skill ratings define their capabilities during play. But what does a given skill rating mean in more general terms? Use the following guidelines as a guide to proficiency. At certain skill ranks and in non-critical or non-dramatic circumstances, a roll may not even be required—under routine conditions, characters at a certain level of competence can regularly perform these skills without needing to roll for success, though *Automatic* success does not merit experience checks.

Skill Rating Table

Skill Rating	Competency	Description
00–05%	Novice	A complete amateur with little hope of succeeding
06–25%	Neophyte	Either a beginner or with a small amount of knowledge of the subject at hand.
26–50%	Amateur	A little talent, some training, or hobby-level dabbling.
51–75%	Professional	Your character can reliably make a living using the skill.
76–90%	Expert	Advanced expertise in the given field: your character has a reasonable chance to succeed even at Difficult tasks.
91% or higher	Master	Few attain this level of mastery. Only the most difficult tasks are beyond your abilities.

Skill List by Category

A complete list of skills divided by category follows.

Combat:

Brawl, Grapple, Siege Weapon, Martial Arts, Melee Weapon (various), Missile Weapon (various), Parry (various), Shield

Communication:

Bargain, Command, Disguise, Etiquette (various), Fast Talk, Perform, Persuade

Manipulation:

Acrobatics, Art (various), Craft (various), Demolition, Fine Manipulation, Repair (various), Sleight of Hand

Mental:

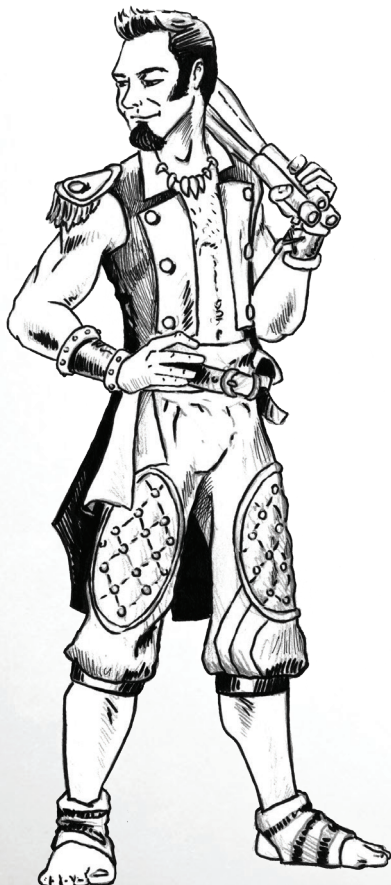
Appraise, First Aid, Gaming, Knowledge (various), Medicine, Strategy, Spellcraft, Survival

Perception:

Insight, Listen, Navigate, Research, Sense, Spot, Track

Physical

Athletics, Climb, Dodge, Hide, Jump, Pilot (various), Ride (various), Stealth, Swim, Throw



Alphabetical Skill List

An alphabetized list of all skills in this section follows. Each entry lists the category of the skill, and its base chance.

Skill	Category	Base%
Acrobatics	Manipulation	10%
Appraise	Mental	15%
Art (various)	Manipulation	05%
Athletics	Physical	10%
Bargain	Communication	05%
Brawl	Combat	25%
Climb	Physical	40%
Command	Communication	05%
Craft (various)	Manipulation	05%
Demolition	Manipulation	01%
Disguise	Communication	01%
Dodge	Physical	DEX×2
Etiquette (various)	Communication	05%
Fast Talk	Communication	05%
Fine Manipulation	Manipulation	05%
First Aid	Mental	30%
Gaming	Mental	INT+POW
Grapple	Combat	25%
Hide	Physical	10%
Insight	Perception	05%
Jump	Physical	25%
Knowledge (various)	Mental	05% or 00%
Listen	Perception	25%
Martial Arts	Combat	01%
Medicine	Mental	05%
Melee Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty
Missile Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty
Navigate	Perception	10%
Parry (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty
Perform	Communication	05%
Persuade	Communication	15%
Pilot (various)	Physical	01%
Repair (various)	Manipulation	15%
Research	Perception	25%
Ride (various)	Physical	05%
Sense	Perception	10%
Shield	Combat	per shield
Siege Weapon (various)	Combat	per weapon specialty
Sleight of Hand	Manipulation	05%
Spot	Perception	25%
Stealth	Physical	10%
Strategy	Mental	01%
Survival	Mental	05%
Swim	Physical	25%
Teach	Communication	10%
Technical Skill (various)	Mental	05%
Throw	Physical	25%
Track	Perception	10%

Describing Results of Successes

Generally, the results of skill rolls are obvious, but if in doubt, use the following guidelines when determining outcomes:

- A **fumble** usually means that the opposite of the desired result has been achieved, providing misleading information, creating some sort of setback, or even putting the character at a disadvantage.
- **Failure** means that the desired result is not achieved.
- A normal **success** means that a reasonable and average goal has been achieved. The StoryGuide is the ultimate arbiter of the results, but the effect should be obvious.
- A **special success** has double the effectiveness of a regular success and/or provides additional information about the subject.
- A **critical success** has triple the effectiveness of a regular success, and/or provides considerable information about the subject.

As noted above, skills where outcomes are very specific and where detail is required, have retained the defined result.

Skill Descriptions

A comprehensive, alphabetical list of skills follows. Each entry contains the following information:

- **Skill Name:** The name of the skill.
- **Base Chance:** The skill rating all characters have in the skill, specialized by era if applicable.
- **Category:** The skill category the skill falls into, for purposes of general classification and optional category bonuses.
- **Description:** A brief description of the kinds of tasks that can be accomplished using the skill.
- **Specialties:** A listing of the skill's distinct specialties, if any. Not all skills with specialties have them elaborated upon in a bulleted list—only those that are more mechanical in nature, such as Combat skills, are detailed in this manner.
- **Effects:** The results of a skill roll, for each degree of success, where required. In brief, a skill result is a fumble (the worst possible result, usually a roll of 99 or 00), a failure (a roll above your skill rating), a success (equal to or below your skill rating), a special success (1/5 or less of your skill rating), or a critical success (1/20 or less of your skill rating). *Chapter 5: System* explains this

in detail. See also **Describing Results of Success.**

- **Setting Notes:** Additional information about the skill in different settings. If this entry is not present, the skill works unchanged in almost any setting.
- **System Notes:** Relevant rules or systems, if any.

Acrobatics\$\$

Base Chance:

Category:

Appraise

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Mental

Use this skill to estimate an object's worth, be it an old painting, a gemstone, a weapon, or a riding horse. Failure means they have no idea, while a fumble yields false information. A special or critical yields additional information.

Art (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

Use this skill to create a work of art in paint or sculpture, or to compose a story, poem, or musical work. A critical or special success yields a timeless classic of considerably more value and prestige, a failure is mediocre hackwork, and a fumble may harm the creator's reputation. You would use Perform for acting, dancing, singing, or playing a musical instrument.

Specialties: Calligraphy, Composing, Conceptual Art, Digital Art, Drawing, Painting, Photography, Poetry, Sculpture, Sketching, Songwriting, Writing, etc.

Setting Notes: Art is universal, though it may have era- or setting-specific specialties.

Athletics

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Physical

Bargain

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

Use this skill to haggle over prices, and whenever opposing opinions meet in negotiation and compromise. Use opposed skill rolls to decide important deals, and simple skill rolls for trivial attempts (saving money on equipment or lodgings, for example). Bargaining is about compromise: use Fast Talk or Persuade to resolve arguments that are absolutely won or lost. A fumble might mean turn a merchant into an enemy, success means you get a deal, and better results yield higher discounts or more favorable conditions for your side.

Brawl

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Combat

Use this skill for unarmed combat: kicks, punches, head butts, etc.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumbles Table**.

System Notes: Brawling can be used to parry (see Parry) but a successful parry inflicts minimum weapon damage on the parrying arm or leg, as appropriate. Using Brawl against a foe that has grappled your character (see Grapple) is *Easy*. Used in conjunction with Martial Arts and with the Natural Weapon and Unarmed Combat powers from *Chapter 4: Powers*.

Climb

Base Chance: 40%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to climb up or down walls, trees, cliffs, or any other surface. Ample hand and footholds are assumed to be present: modify the difficulty based on conditions or the surface being climbed. Fumbling means you fall hard (see **Falling**), failing means you're stuck or you fall (StoryGuide choice, based on circumstances), and superior successes let you climb faster and farther.

System Notes: Generally, climbing is at 1/5 the MOV rate, and animals with natural climbing ability can move at their full MOV rate. Climbing ladders is *Automatic*. Very tall ladders or trees is *Easy*. Climbing without using your character's feet is *Difficult*. For extended climbs, the StoryGuide should call for a skill roll once every minute, or 10 meters of climbing. Your character can take no other action while climbing, and all actions taken while clinging to a surface are *Difficult*, with any fumble causing a fall.

Command

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

Use this skill to inspire, direct, and coordinate subordinates, guiding them in complex tasks and improving the effectiveness of the group. Military officers, noblemen, politicians, and business executives are made or broken based on their ability to manage and lead. Personality, a strong voice, and an iron will are invaluable tools of command. A fumble incites insurrection, failing is uninspiring and confusing, and success allows you to add 1/5 your Command skill as a complementary skill bonus to all your subordinates for each round you command them, so long as they follow your orders. Roll every round in combat, or every turn in mass combat.

System Notes: Used primarily in combat, though it can extend to corporate negotiations, etc. Artillery, Heavy Weapon, Melee Weapon, Missile Weapon, and Strategy are the most appropriate skills to receive this benefit.

Craft (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

Use this skill to construct or make things, from a chair to a meal to a house. Specialized tools are often required for this skill, and it takes time and raw materials. This skill can also be used to identify how an object was made, and possibly identify the crafter who made it. A fumble destroys the material and yields nothing useful, success means it works, and a better quality of success yields a finer, sturdier, or more valuable version of the thing being made, perhaps with additional qualities like a +10% or +20% to its efficacy when used, higher hit points, etc. This is about function and practicality: fashioning objects solely for aesthetical purposes falls under Art.

Specialties: Blacksmithing, Carpentry, Ceramics, Cooking, Leatherworking, Locksmithing, Metallurgy, Stonemasonry, and others as appropriate.

System Notes: Using Craft without the proper tools is *Difficult*. See *Chapter 8: Equipment* for more information about making, modifying, or repairing equipment. Possession of a fine item of clothing or gear may even increase CHA while the item is worn or displayed.

Demolition

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Manipulation

Use this skill to store, transport, set, and detonate explosives, from kegs of gunpowder to dynamite, Molotov cocktails, advanced plastic explosives, and anti-matter bombs. Anyone can simply set off a bomb: this is to achieve a specific effect with the explosion; collapse a building safely, destroy a bridge, or blow the door of a safe without harming the contents. Demolition also covers knowledge of appropriate accessories for explosives, including primer cord, fuses, and detonators. Use Science (Chemistry) to produce explosive compounds or Technical Skill to fashion other explosives. A fumble blows things up in your face, a failure means the desired effect is not achieved (a misfire or dud), and superior successes yield more impressive results, whether more damage, less collateral damage, special effects like Knockback, additional area of effect, etc.

System Notes: With a skill rating of 60%+, normal uses of this skill automatically succeed. Unstable explosives (sweaty dynamite) may call for a Demolition every round they are being handled or used. Demolishing a massive structure (bridge, dam, bunker, or building) is

Difficult unless your character has access to blueprints or plans of the target. Trying to use this skill without appropriate tools (fuses, etc.), or using explosives outside your character's normal field of expertise may be *Difficult* or even *Impossible*. Some types of explosives such as grenades might be used without this skill. See *Chapter 8: Equipment* for explosives and their effects.

Disguise

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Communication

Use this skill to employ posture, costume, voice, and other tricks to appear as a different person, or a different kind of person. Dim light, theatrical makeup, and significant facial alterations (a haircut or wig, false beards or a quick shave) can add up to a +20% bonus, at the StoryGuide's discretion. Onlookers who scrutinize your disguised character or engage them in conversation can make an opposed Spot or Insight skill check against your character's Disguise roll to see through the ruse. Your disguised character can use their Fast Talk skill for the opposed check if they engage the onlooker in conversation, distracting them from close scrutiny. A fumble is blatantly obvious, a failure doesn't fool anyone who gives a second look, and superior successes may even add a complementary bonus to Communication rolls against those being fooled, or makes detection more difficult.

System Notes: Using this skill to impersonate a particular kind of person (soldier, policeman, etc.) is a normal action. Impersonating someone vastly different (other species, alternate body type, another gender, etc.) or a specific well-known person (a noble, a celebrity, etc.), or attempting a disguise without appropriate clothing or props is *Difficult*. The StoryGuide may assign additional penalties for cultural or language barriers, or if multiple *Difficult* conditions apply. Too much of a stretch may simply be *Impossible*.

Dodge

Base Chance: DEX×2

Category: Physical

The best defense in combat, as any combatant knows, is to not be there. Dodge allows your

character to evade incoming attacks, using agility to avoid or minimize injury.

Effects: A successful Dodge roll modifies the result of a successful attack, turning it into a failure. A special result for a Dodge roll modifies an attack two steps (a special success becomes a failure), and a critical success on a Dodge roll modifies a successful attack three steps (a critical attack becomes a failure). See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Natural Weapons Attack and Parry Fumbles Table** for specific effects. A successful Dodge roll cannot reduce an incoming attack's success lower than failure.

System Notes: As described in **Dodge** in *Chapter 6: Combat*, your character may either Dodge or Parry in a combat round but cannot do both. If your character is attacked by many foes, they may make multiple Dodge attempts in a round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative -30% penalty to the skill rating. Some missile attacks are *Difficult* or *Impossible* to dodge (see *Dodging Missile Weapons*).

Etiquette (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

Most cultures, castes, or groups have social rules and codes of behavior. Proper dress, modes of speech, specific behaviors, body language, or even trials by combat can all play a part in a group's etiquette. Use this skill whenever your character needs to behave appropriately, whether attending a Victorian dinner party, an important job interview, or joining an organized crime family. Etiquette rolls might gain an audience with an important nonplayer character or impress others with your knowledge of their social mores. A fumble represents a disastrous faux pas, a fail does not impress, and success or better yields superior results and improves one's reception.

Specialty: By group. To learn the manners of a second group, learn a second Etiquette skill with that specialty.

System Notes: The StoryGuide should only call for Etiquette rolls in important circumstances: for example, the first time interacting with an important group, a significant occasion, or when trying to advance status within the group.

Fast Talk

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

The preferred weapon of salesmen, spies, or con artists, use this skill to convince a target quickly of something they may not believe, or convince them to make a rapid decision against their better judgment. Use this to bluff one's way past a doorman or make a hard sell go quickly. Fast Talk is quick to use, and usually temporary: a few minutes and a successful Idea roll later, and the target may come to their senses. To truly change someone's mind, use the Bargain or Persuade skills. A fumble usually draws hostility, failing gets you nowhere, and success or better has improved effectiveness, or even convinces someone permanently of your position.

System Notes: Good roleplaying and/or an effective argument might make a Fast Talk attempt *Easy*, just as poor roleplaying and/or a flimsy argument might make it *Difficult*. Trying to Fast Talk a target after a first attempt at Bargain, Fast Talk, or Persuade fails is *Difficult*.

Fine Manipulation

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

A measure of steadiness and hand-eye coordination, this skill covers any careful use of the hands and fingers. Use it when picking locks, disarming a trap, tying or untying knots, and disassembling mechanical devices. A fumble bungles things, perhaps breaking or jamming the item being manipulated. Superior successes take less time, make it easy in the future, show no signs of tampering, or some other similar benefit.

System Notes: Using this skill without appropriate tools, where required, is *Difficult*.

First Aid

Base Chance: 30%

Category: Mental

Use this skill to stop bleeding, bandage wounds and treat minor burns, set a broken limb, resuscitate someone who's drowning, or revive an unconscious person. It extends to triage and rudimentary medical care but has little effect on poisons, diseases, or subtle physical ailments: these must be treated with the Medicine skill, though your StoryGuide may allow a Difficult roll for emergency treatment of poison or disease. First Aid takes a full combat round and cannot normally be performed while in combat. If interrupted, the attempt must be restarted.

Effects: First Aid has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** The patient takes 1 general hit point of damage, and their condition remains unchanged.
- **Failure:** No effect, and no further First Aid attempts may be made.
- **Success:** One of the following (player choice):
 - Heal 1D3 hit points to a single wound or injury.
 - A character at 0 or negative hit points in this or the previous round, can be restored to life if their hit point total is brought to 1+.
 - Reviving an unconscious character.
 - Stopping bleeding damage from a bleeding special success or any other ongoing damage to a hit location (see **Hit Points per Hit Location**).
- **Special:** As above but healing 2D3 hit points.
- **Critical:** As above but healing 3+1D3 hit points.

System Notes: Keep track of individual injuries, as First Aid can be used on each injury, potentially healing it up to the amount of hit points the injury inflicted. Only one attempt may be made per wound. Hazardous or unsanitary conditions may make rolls *Difficult*. Your character may add 1/2 of their Medicine skill rating and 1/5 of their Science (Pharmacy) skill rating as a temporary bonus to First Aid rolls. Modern medical equipment (painkillers, bandages, or medicine) may add up to a +20% bonus to skill ratings, while futuristic medical technology (artificial spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) can make all First Aid rolls *Easy*.

Gaming

Base Chance: INT

Category: Mental

Use this skill while playing games, from chess

or backgammon to gambling contests involving cards, dice, or other random or strategic elements. Gamblers make their living using this skill, but to most others it is merely a source of entertainment. A fumble cleans you out and potentially puts you into debt, failure means you lose the round, success yields a minor win, and superior successes reap greater benefits and perhaps even improves one's status.

System Notes: Use this to resolve games where skill and strategy play some part, with other players making an opposed roll. To cheat, use Sleight of Hand or Fast Talk, opposed by Observe or Insight. Utterly random outcomes use Luck rolls.

Grapple

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Combat

Use this skill for wrestling or any fighting where the goal is to subdue a target without causing harm. Usually this is non-lethal, but it can be used to deliver real harm.

Effects: Grappling has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** Roll on the **Natural Weapons Fumble Table**.
- **Failure:** The target eludes being held, or an attempted escape fails.
- **Success:** The target is grappled, attacker can apply one grapple effect (see **Grapple Effects** below) next round if the hold is maintained.
- **Special:** The attacker automatically succeeds in their next Grapple roll to maintain the hold and gains a +3 characteristic bonus on any resistance rolls for grapple effects made this round.
- **Critical:** The attacker automatically succeeds in their next Grapple roll to maintain the hold, and the target's characteristics are halved in any resistance rolls for grapple effects during the remainder of that combat round.

System Notes: The attacker must make a Grapple successfully to establish a hold on the target. Successful attacks grab a random hit location (if that system is used). Grapples can be parried with the Grapple skill: if the defender parries with a weapon or shield, the attacker automatically grabs the weapon arm or shield arm if the Grapple roll is successful. Once a hold is established, the attacker must make a

successful Grapple roll each round to maintain the hold. Taking any action other than one of the grapple effects breaks the hold. Once held, the target can attack their attacker if they have a limb free, using Brawl or any small weapon (knives or handguns). If both hands are free, the target can attempt to Grapple back.

Multiple attackers can attempt to grapple a single target, though no more than two attackers can hold any one location. Combine the STR ratings of both attackers in all contested tests.

Grapple Effects

An attacker with a hold on their target can attempt any of the following effects, one per round, beginning the round after the Grapple takes hold. Some effects can only be used if the attacker has grabbed a specific body part (see below). As some effects involve specific hit locations, the StoryGuide may need to interpret results.

- **Change Hold (Any):** Match DEX vs. DEX on the resistance table. If successful, the attacker shifts hold to a different hit location of choice. If unsuccessful, the target can take an action, though the attacker still has a hold on the original location.
- **Disarm Target (Arm):** The attacker matches STR+SIZ vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker succeeds, the target drops anything in that hand, and the arm remains immobilized. If unsuccessful, the target hangs on to the held item(s), though their arm remains immobilized. The attacker retains the hold.
- **Grab a Second Location (Arm/Leg):** The attacker tries to grab and hold another hit location of their choice. Match the attacker's DEX vs. the target's DEX+SIZ on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, they grab the second location and keep the already held limb trapped. If unsuccessful, the target immediately matches their STR vs. the attacker's STR on the resistance table to break all holds. The attacker can hold as many locations as they have hands.
- **Injure The Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** The attacker elbows, gouges, or squeezes, inflicting 1D3 damage plus their damage modifier to the target (general or to the held hit location). The target may immediately match their STR vs. the attacker's STR on the resistance table to break the hold.
- **Immobilize Limb (Arm/Leg):** Match the attacker's STR vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, no action can be taken with that limb until the hold is broken. If unsuccessful, the target can take an action, though the attacker still has a hold on

the limb.

- **Immobilize Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** Match the attacker's STR vs. the target's STR on the resistance table. If the attacker wins, the target can take no action at all until the hold is broken. If unsuccessful, the target can still take actions, though the attacker still has a hold.
- **Knockdown Target (Head/Chest/Abdomen):** The attacker automatically overbears the target, dragging both characters prone. The target must make an Agility roll or suffer 1 point of general damage (or to a random hit location).
- **Strangle Target (Head):** The target must make a CON×1% roll each round or suffer 1D3 damage to their general hit points. The target may immediately match their STR vs. the attacker's character's STR on the resistance table to break the hold. Once the attacker begins strangling, they do not need to make further Grapple rolls each round to maintain the hold. The target must attempt to break free (see **Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation**).
- **Throw Target (Special):** Match the attacker's STR+DEX against the target's SIZ+DEX on the resistance table. Throwing a target releases any hold. If the attacker is successful, the target is thrown 1D6 meters, is automatically knocked down, and must make an Agility roll or suffer 1D6 general damage (or to a random hit location). A roll of DEX×1% allows them to land on their feet without taking damage. If the roll is unsuccessful, the target is not thrown and may take an action, though the attacker retains a hold. A throw may be attempted with any limb held, but a successful roll with the head simply inflicts 1D6 points general damage (or to the head hit location) and does not result in a throw.

Siege Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon specialty

Category: Combat

Use this skill to operate explosive weapons or large direct-fire weapons that push the limits of portability, such as includes bazookas, rocket launchers, heavy machine guns, tripod-mounted laser cannons, and others. Use the Artillery skill for heavier ordnance such as cannons, siege engines, or vehicle- or pintle-mounted weapons.

Specialties: Heavy weapons fall between traditional weapons and artillery and are often used to deliver explosives. Specialties are by weapon type, and include Bazooka, Flamethrower, Mini Gun, Rocket Launcher, etc.

See **Weapon Classes** in *Chapter 8: Equipment* for more details.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Missile Weapon Fumbles Table** for specific effects. Heavy weapons usually impale or knockback.

System Notes: Most heavy weapons employ automatic fire, or shoot explosive ordinance. See **Autofire** and **Explosions**. All missed shots go somewhere; the StoryGuide should decide where missed explosive shots impact.

Hide

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Physical

The art of concealing an object or oneself from view. Your character should use this skill to escape during pursuit, keep an object from easy detection, or avoid surveillance. A fumble draws immediate attention, failure means that Spot roll to find the hider becomes *Easy*, a success requires a Spot roll to be found, and superior successes either make the Spot roll *Difficult* or *Impossible*.

System Notes: Hide checks are opposed by the Spot of an observer or searcher. Adequate cover is essential; hiding in scant cover is *Difficult*, and a total lack of cover (wide open, broad daylight) makes it *Impossible*. Special clothing or gear (face paint, camouflaged clothing, etc.) can add a bonus of up to +20%, depending on its quality. Environmental conditions may offer additional bonuses. Someone hiding should keep as still as possible; moving while using Hide *Difficult*, and moving more than a meter in a combat round requires both Hide and Stealth rolls. Hide is only effective against visual and aural detection; advanced sensors may find a hiding character by body heat, or a keen nose might find them using the Sense skill.

Insight

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to evaluate another person's character, emotional state, and motives based

on body language, speech patterns, and other intangible factors. Insight allows a gambler to sense a bluff, or a detective to sniff out a lie. A fumble provides misleading information, failure yields nothing, success lets you know what the target might be thinking, and superior successes reveal to you their innermost thoughts (within reason).

System Notes: This skill can be opposed by Etiquette, Fast Talk, or even Persuade. Using this skill on close friends, family members, or spouses is *Easy*. If using the **Personality Traits** system, Insight can determine the strength of those traits in general terms (such as "Very selfish", for example).

Jump

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to leap for height or distance, jump over obstacles. Under normal circumstances, a reasonably fit human can jump their height horizontally and half their height vertically from a standing position, and roughly three meters horizontally with a running start. A fumble results in a fall (1D6 general hit point damage or to a hit location), a success results in a jump as described above, a special success increases the amount by 50%, and a critical success doubles it. Jump can also reduce falling damage by 1D6 per level of success (normal success by -1D6, special by -2D6, critical by -3D6).

System Notes: A standing jump requires 1 DEX rank. A running jump uses the same DEX rank as normal running movement. Performing flashy or showy jumps (somersaults, flips, etc.) is *Difficult*.

Knowledge (various)

Base Chance: 05% or 00% (see below)

Category: Mental

This skill represents experience or academic study of a branch of knowledge. Use a Knowledge skill to remember pertinent facts, to analyze or identify clues, make logical suppositions, and recall impressive trivia. For more scientific ones, see Science. A fumble results in misleading and inaccurate falsehoods, and successes yield more useful and detailed

information.

Specialties: Accounting, Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Law, Occult, Religion, etc. (see nearby list) The StoryGuide should determine whether the Knowledge skill has a base chance of 05% for specialties that are common, or 00% for those requiring research and study to even have a rudimentary understanding of.

Setting Notes: In fantasy and historical settings, only a small subset of specialties exist. As settings grow more modern, specialties increase.

System Notes: The optional EDU characteristic and Knowledge roll cover most common knowledge—specialized information is represented by an appropriate specialty of a Knowledge skill.

Knowledge Specialties

The following list of specialties is by no means comprehensive and should be expanded as needed. Some specialties have subspecialties, specific focuses on a single subject within that field. Write them like this on your character sheet: Knowledge (Group/Templars) or Knowledge (Templars), as desired.

Academic Lore (Ancient Eras Only): In eras when the whole of written knowledge can be contained in a single library, this represents how 'learned' one is. Use it like a Knowledge roll for nearly any area of knowledge.

Accounting: Use it for analyzing bookkeeping, financial analysis (debt, bankruptcy, wealth, net worth, etc.), and to identify financial irregularities (strange spending, embezzlement, or odd windfalls).

Anthropology: The study of cultures, including customs, art, and behavior. Use it to identify a person or artifact's native culture or to determine a culture's social mores and behaviors.

Archaeology: The study of ancient and vanished cultures. Use it to identify an artifact from a dead culture, spot a fake, or conduct an excavation and make reasonable inferences about the history of a site or region.

Art History: The study of art from various eras and places, including style, famous artists, and

specific works. Use it to identify the origin of a piece of art, spot a fake, or attribute a work to a known master.

Blasphemous Lore: The study of horrific occult secrets and ancient evils. The more of this knowledge your character has, the less their grasp on sanity. See the optional Sanity rules for more information. Blasphemous Lore skill begins at 0%, not 05%, and cannot be increased with experience.

Business: The study of entrepreneurial practices, guild regulations, corporate laws, and management techniques for a commercial enterprise. Use it to identify major players in a field or market, predict economic trends, and turn a profit.

Espionage: Knowledge of spy organizations, famous or notorious spies and agents; methodology, notable figures, organizations, tactics, etc. Use it to know about agencies and their modus operandi. Codebreaking is handled with Science (Cryptography).

Folklore: Knowledge of the customs, stories, lyrics, tall tales, and legends of a particular people or region. Use this skill to identify or remember elements of a folk tale or fable, whether rustic or supernatural.

Group/Subspecialty: General information about a particular culture, nationality, group, club, or social class. Use this skill to identify a member of that group, know 'who's who' within that group, and remember social customs and mores of the group.

History: The study of past events and eras. Use this skill to remember the significance of any place, person, event, or object, or to correctly guess when an object or document was made.

Law: The study of legal practice and precedent. Use this skill to judge the legality of a proposed action, find legal precedents, free oneself from trouble with the authorities, or build a case for or against a criminal.

Linguistics: The study of language itself, from the foundations of grammar and vocabulary to how societies shape languages. Use this skill to identify unknown languages or puzzle out a few words or grasp a basic meaning, although this skill is no substitute for the appropriate Language skill.

Literature: The study of significant prose, poetry, and essays, usually from a single culture. Use this skill to properly identify a quote or allusion to a specific work, identify when and where an unknown fragment might have been written, attribute a mysterious work to a known author, spot a literary fake, or quote ominously appropriate passages from famous works of literature.

Occult: Knowledge of magic, obscure legends, and so-called 'secret history' that covers everything from arcane philosophies to modern conspiracy theories. Use this skill to realize the significance of alchemical or astrological symbols, identify which magical tradition created a ritual workspace, know the names of powerful spirits, or identify the secret factions conspiring to manipulate a situation.

Philosophy: The study of existence and its meaning, from basic logic to existentialism, nihilism, and beyond. Use this skill to remember the precepts of a particular philosophy, identify the philosophical leanings of an author or speaker's argument, and to engage in philosophical debate.

Politics: The study and knowledge of political systems or other means of governance imposed upon or elected by the citizenry. Use this skill to understand the major power blocs in an area, how to influence the political structure, and how citizens will react to political change or influence.

Region/Subspecialty: General information about a specific city, region, or nation, including important people, local landmarks, and regional history. Use this skill to find cheap lodgings in a bustling city, remember the best roadside inn in the province, understand local politics, or find specific merchants or tradesmen.

Religion/Subspecialty: Details of the myths, liturgy, and practices of a specific religion. Use this skill to avoid violating taboos, recall the laws and obligations of a faith, successfully debate points of theology, identify regalia or religious texts, sort orthodoxy from heresy, or properly lead a religious ceremony.

Streetwise: Knowledge of the shadier segments of a society, from the protocols of the poor to the ways of the criminal underworld. Use this skill to find a safehouse, identify a fence for stolen goods, or know who to ask for other semi-legal or illegal favors.

Listen

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to hear, interpret, and understand sounds, whether murmurs behind a closed door, furtive whispers, stealthy footfalls, and snapped twigs. Use this skill to see if a noise wakes a sleeping character, or to see if they can recognize a specific sound or voice. The normal range for hearing a human voice speaking at a polite volume is 15 meters—louder voices carry farther, and quieter ones have a shorter range. A fumble means a misunderstanding or complete ignorance of a sound, while successes yield awareness and information about its source.

System Notes: Listen is both active and passive skill: your character can attempt to Listen for suspicious noises, or the StoryGuide can call for Listen rolls when appropriate. Oppose Listen with Stealth to resolve attempts to sneak past a wary or unwary listener. The StoryGuide may choose to make Listen rolls secretly and inform you of the result, to avoid giving anything away if the roll fails.

Martial Arts\$\$

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Combat

This represents study and mastery of a specific fighting style. Use this skill to make specific moves and strikes that cause maximum damage to the target. Martial Arts is always used in combination with another skill: Brawl, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, or Grapple, as appropriate. This skill is not necessary to make those attacks—it represents a greater level of training that allows greater effectiveness.

Specialties: By martial arts tradition: boxing, capoeira, escrima, fencing, jeet kune do, karate, kenjutsu, kickboxing, kung fu, kyujutsu, pugilism, savate, etc. The StoryGuide may limit the types of combat skills that can be paired with a Martial Arts, such as only allowing Missile Weapons (Bow) with kyujutsu, for example.

Effects: Martial Arts is not rolled separately when making an attack. Roll against the primary skill and compare the result to the Martial Arts skill.

Results have these effects:

- **Fumble:** Use the appropriate fumble result (see the attack and fumble tables in *Chapter 6: Combat*).
- **Failure:** If the rolled result is above the Martial Arts skill rating but still equal to or below the combat skill, the attack hits normally. Attacks rolled above the combat skill miss, regardless of the Martial Arts skill rating.
- **Success:** If the rolled result is less than or equal to both Martial Arts and the combat skill, roll for base damage twice and total the result. Your character's damage modifier is never doubled.
- **Special:** As above. For a special success, the additional base damage roll is added to the effects of the combat skill's special result, if any.
- **Critical:** As above. If the combat roll is a critical success, the target's armor protection (natural or worn) is ignored, and the additional base damage roll is added to the effects of the combat skill's special result, if any.

System Notes: The Martial Arts skill works in conjunction with one other combat skill, and usually with a narrow range of specialties for that skill. This power can be used in conjunction with the Natural Weaponry mutation and the Unarmed Combat power.

If multiple attacks are made in a round, the attacker must allocate the Martial Arts skill accordingly, dividing it as desired between the multiple attacks, or applying it only to a single attack.

For example, if your character has Brawl 120% and Martial Arts 46%, and is making two attacks at 60% in around, you must choose to divide the Martial Arts skill between these two attacks (23% each, or some combination equaling 46%), or choose to have it apply to only one of the attacks.

Due to its relative power, the StoryGuide may rule that the initial skill rating in this skill be limited, that increases to this skill may be limited to training rather than normal experience, that training may be incredibly difficult to obtain, or all three of these conditions.

Medicine

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Mental

Use this skill is used to diagnose and treat serious injuries, treat diseases, counter poisonings, and make general health recommendations, as well as perform surgery and advise long-term care for chronic health conditions.

Effects: Medicine has specific results:

- **Fumble:** The patient takes 1 general hit point (for injuries) while treating injuries, or loses characteristic point (for poisons or illness), and their condition remains unchanged.
- **Failure:** The patient's condition does not change, and a second attempt can only be performed on the next day.
- **Success:** Pick one of the following effects (player choice):
 - Any effect of a successful First Aid roll.
 - The patient's healing rate doubles from 1D3 to 2D3 hit points per week.
 - Ongoing characteristic or hit point damage from poison or disease is halted.
 - A poisoned or diseased character is stabilized and recovers 1D3–1 hit points or characteristic points per week. This result can only be picked once per week of treatment.
- **Special:** As above, but an injury is healed by 2D3 hit points, or 1D3 characteristic points are recovered.
- **Critical:** As above, but a wound or injury is healed by 1D3+3 hit points, or 1D3+1 characteristic points are recovered.

System Notes: Each use of Medicine applies to a single malady: once it has been treated and is completely cured, additional successful Medicine rolls have no effect. Other wounds or maladies, however, can be treated. Unsafe or unsanitary conditions may make Medicine rolls *Difficult*. Special equipment or medicine may add up to +20% to the skill rating, while futuristic medical technology (artificial spray skin, medical scanners, nanotech healers) make Medicine rolls *Easy*. Treating common and non-life-threatening ailments is *Automatic*.

Melee Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon

Category: Combat

Use this skill to wield a particular type of weapon in hand-to-hand combat, whether attacking or parrying.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See **Weapon Classes** of *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons from that category of weapon only: but the StoryGuide may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Melee Weapon Attack Fumbles Table** and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles Table** in *Chapter 6: Combat* for specific effects.

System Notes: Your character can attempt more than one parry per round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative -30%. At the StoryGuide's discretion, your character can wield a weapon from a related or similar weapon category, with the roll being *Difficult*.

Missile Weapon (various)

Base Chance: As per weapon

Category: Combat

Use this to wield any hand-held self-propelled missile weapon such as bows, crossbows, throwing axes, spears, throwing stars, javelins, blowguns, spear guns, or even boomerangs. For grenades, use Throw.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon classes. See **Weapon Classes** of *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons from that category of weapon only: but the StoryGuide may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Missile Weapon Fumble Table** for specific effects. Arrows and pointed weapons usually impale. If you wish to know where a missed missile weapon attack goes, see the Throw skill.

System Notes: All missile weapons have a minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon, as listed in *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Typically, the attacker's damage modifier is halved for missile weapons, and for entirely self-propelled weapons (blowguns, crossbows,

etc.), the damage modifier is not applied. Missile Weapon can be used for aimed attacks.

Navigate

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to find the way to a destination whether with a compass, sea charts, the stars, or simply using perception, memory, and intuition as a guide. A fumble means one is hopelessly lost and subsequent roll by anyone to become un-lost is *Difficult*. Failure means delays and a slowed rate of travel, while successes mean finding one's way effectively and even making better-than-expected progress.

System Notes: Attempt a Navigate skill roll every four hours of an ongoing journey. Use of a map or compass may improve the skill ranking by up to +20%. Navigating in a featureless landscape (at sea, in darkness or bad weather, in a desert, or in dense jungle) without instruments or maps is *Difficult*. Advanced navigational aids (global position service technology, etc.) or familiarity with the area make Navigate attempts *Easy*.

Parry

Base Chance: As per weapon

Category: Combat

Use this skill to use a weapon or shield to parry or block an incoming attack. This skill is covered in detail in *Chapter 6: Combat*. Refer to the **Attack and Defense Matrix** for more information. The StoryGuide may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender's SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack.

Specialties: Specialties are equivalent to weapon or shield classes. See **Weapon Classes** of *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Each specialty applies to weapons or shields from that category of weapon only: but the StoryGuide may allow use of a similar weapon class as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles Tables** in *Chapter 6: Combat* for specific effects.

System Notes: Your character can attempt more than one parry per round, but each roll after the first is made at a cumulative -30% . At the StoryGuide's discretion, your character can parry with a weapon or shield from a related or similar category, with the roll being *Difficult*.

Perform (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Communication

Use this skill to perform, whether acting, dancing, playing an instrument, singing, or exhibiting some other forms of artistic expression. A fumble is a humiliation, failure is uninspiring, while successes yield positive attention, cheers, and perhaps critical acclaim and financial rewards. If recorded and distributed, it may continue to inspire and earn far after the original performance.

Specialties: Act, Conduct Orchestra, Dance, Juggle, Orate, Play Instrument (subspecialty), Recite, Ritual, Sing, etc.

System Notes: Successful use of the Perform (Ritual) skill may augment a magic power or cause it to have additional benefits, at the StoryGuide's discretion.

Persuade

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Communication

Use this skill to convince someone that a particular idea or belief is right, correct, or otherwise acceptable, regardless of their original opinion (if any) whether through Socratic logic, structured debate, fiery oratory, empathy, or brute intimidation. Listeners may be convinced to take action or grant a request. Like Fast Talk, truth is irrelevant. Unlike Fast Talk, the effects of successful persuasion last indefinitely, until another Persuade roll or dramatic experience shifts the subject's opinion. A fumble means the subject may become hostile, embracing the opposite of the desired opinion. Failure is unconvincing. Success sways their opinion, and

superior successes yield even better results.

System Notes: Using Persuade across a language barrier (if both speakers have lower than 50% in the language) is *Difficult*, as is convincing someone of something that runs counter to their personality or core beliefs. The StoryGuide may reward effective arguments or good roleplaying with a bonus of up to $+20\%$. Depending on circumstances, Persuade could take minutes, hours, or even days, and extended efforts may take multiple rolls to complete.

Pilot (various)

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to steer, maneuver, and control a vehicle through the air, on or under the water, or in space. Larger vehicles may require multiple pilots, and a roll should be made every four hours when not in combat, and once per round during combat or when performing vehicular maneuvers.

Specialties: Airplane, Airship, Balloon, Boat, Helicopter, Hovercraft, Jet Aircraft, Jetpack, Starship, Submarine, etc. At the StoryGuide's discretion, a pilot may pilot a vessel with a similar specialty as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

Effects: Most day-to-day piloting is *Automatic*—roll only under adverse conditions or for extraordinary situations. A fumble almost inevitably causes an engine to stall or even crash, failing means the destination is not reached in the desired timeframe, success gets where one desires, and superior successes yield more expert piloting and results. See **Aerial Combat** and **Chases** for more information, and the **Chase Trouble Table** for mishaps.

Repair (various)

Base Chance: 15%

Category: Manipulation

Equipment and other objects get damaged or stop working. Use Repair to fix them or make slight modifications and adaptations.

Specialties: Electrical, Electronic, Engineering, Hydroelectric, Mechanical, Structural, Quantum, etc.

Effects: A fumble damages the item further and could even hurt the one making the repair attempt (1D3 hit points for either, for example) and makes further repairs *Difficult*. Failure accomplishes nothing, success restores 1D3 hit points and the item becomes usable again or returns to working order. Superior successes yield similar benefits, perhaps using the First Aid skill and the StoryGuide's judgement as a guide. A critical may even improve the item in some small way, such as adding to its total hit point, armor points, or adding a slight bonus when it is utilized.

Research

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to locate and identify potential sources of information in a library, archive, or network. Successful rolls yield the desired information from books, documents, articles, databanks, archives, or websites, with superior successes granting additional or more specific information. Despite the wide range of types of resources, the principles are the same. An attempt at this skill takes four hours normally, though electronic methods are much faster. A fumble leads to a disastrous misunderstanding and results in faulty information. Failure wastes time without any solid results or provides the barest minimum of information after twice the normal amount of time.

System Notes: The StoryGuide is advised to make a failed Research roll take longer, give slightly misleading or complicated information, raise some sort of alarm or unwanted attention, or some other setback than simply not yielding any results. Failure is rarely enjoyable in games, and for mysteries, inaccessible clues are a dramatic dead-end.

Ride (various)

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to ride, handle, and care for of a

specific kind of living animal. With Ride your character can steer a mount through special maneuvers or rough terrain, coax it to top speed, or to keep control if it rears or stumbles. A fumble causes a loss of control of the mount, perhaps resulting in being thrown to the ground for 1D6 hit points of damage (general or to a random hit location). A successful Jump roll subtracts 1D6 from the damage total, while the mount gallops away at top speed. Failure causes the animal to balk, and successes yield it performing as desired or even exceeding expectations. Superior successes may yield bonuses to combat actions while mounted.

Specialties: By animal type. See *Chapter 11: Creatures* for example mounts. At the StoryGuide's discretion, a similar type of animal may be ridden as if *Difficult*. If successful, make an experience check. If the experience roll is successful, start a new skill with a specialty at that rating, plus the gained experience.

System Notes: Resolve races between the same breeds of animals using opposed Ride checks. Combat and Ride skills must be 50%+ to fight normally in mounted combat. If the Ride skill is less than 50%, a Ride check is required every round to keep control of the mount. If the combat skill is less than 50%, all attacks are *Difficult*. Even if both skills are higher than 50%, use the lower of the two skill ratings for attacks and parries. If the mount falls, collapses, or dies, treat the rider as if they have been thrown. See **Mounted Combat** for more information.

Sense

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

The skill primarily governs taste, touch, and smell; but can extend to some of the less commonly known other senses (physical orientation, gravity, pressure and balance, temperature, etc.). Use it to notice or identify a particular type of stimulus that is not sight (Spot) or sound (Listen), such as finding an item in the dark by touch, identifying a mysterious odor or faint taste, feeling a hairline fracture, etc. At the StoryGuide's discretion, this might even extend to a "sixth sense" or intuition. A fumble is disastrously misleading or reveals complete ignorance of the stimulus, failure is simple failure to notice, and various degrees of success yield more accurate perception.

System Notes: Like Listen and Spot, Sense is both active and passive: you can request your character to make a Sense roll, or the StoryGuide can call for a roll in appropriate situations. Strong or familiar stimuli are *Easy* rolls to Sense, while faint or unfamiliar ones is *Difficult*.

Shield

Base Chance: As per shield type

Category: Combat

Use this skill to block incoming attacks with a shield or other appropriate implement. All shield blocks follow the same rules for parrying: see **Shields** and **Parry** in *Chapter 6: Combat*. One can attack with a shield, treating this skill as if it were a Melee Weapon skill. Damage ratings are given for shields in the weapons lists. Shields do crushing special results, can cause knockbacks, and can be used for aimed attacks.

Effects: See the **Attack and Defense Matrix** and the **Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles Table**.

System Notes: Shield blocks are parries. A character may make more than one shield roll in a round, but each additional roll incurs a -30% penalty to the shield or parry skill rating. Large shields can provide cover against missile or even firearms attack.

Sleight of Hand

Base Chance: 05%

Category: Manipulation

Use his skill to manipulate small objects (dice, cards, coins, wallets, letters, etc.) in a misleading manner or without attracting attention, such as when picking pockets, cheating at cards, or performing stage magic. A fumble is glaringly obvious: whether the item is dropped, or the would-be thief is caught with their hand in the target's pocket. Failure means nothing is accomplished, and a unsuspecting target succeeding in an Idea roll may realize that they are being duped.

System Notes: The skill is opposed by Spot where appropriate. Once an object has been palmed or taken, use Hide to hide it from a concerted search.

Spellcraft

Base Chance: 0%

Category: Mental

To Do \$\$

Spot

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to search a room for potentially important details, find a hidden compartment, notice a fleeting detail, recognize a disguised foe, or spot enemies lying in ambush. A fumble is a hugely distracting misperception or mistaken impression, and different degrees of success yield more useful and pertinent information.

System Notes: Spot is both an active and a passive skill: your character can make a Spot roll to actively search or examine, or the StoryGuide can call for a Spot roll to see if your character notices a fleeting detail. Hiding or deliberate concealment requires an opposed Spot vs. Hide test to resolve. Spot is also often opposed vs. Disguise or Sleight of Hand. In complete darkness, Spot is *Impossible*, and low light or thick fog makes it *Difficult*.

Stealth

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to sneak through an area without drawing attention. No cover is required, but a light tread, confidence and discipline are both called for. To avoid being seen while immobile, use Hide. A fumble draws unwanted attention, a failure means that no progress is made, and the character is obvious to anyone who looks, while successes offer successive degrees of concealment.

System Notes: Stealth assumes slow movement. Moving farther than 1/2 one's MOV in a combat round is *Difficult*. Environmental factors (ambient noise, thick carpets, creaky floors, etc.)

or gear (soft-soled shoes, noisy armor, bulky equipment, etc.) can modify Stealth rolls, at the StoryGuide's discretion. Stealth is opposed by Spot or Listen, as appropriate.

Strategy

Base Chance: 01%

Category: Mental

Use this skill to guide forces in battle, from a small squad to a massive army or fleet, organize and coordinate logistics for an army, plan and execute a large scale military enterprise, and determine what another strategist might be thinking. This skill also assumes a basic knowledge of military history and tactics, and significant figures therein. A fumble represents a military disaster and might lead to utter defeat, while various degrees of success yield strategic advantages and may mean bonuses to morale and combat effectiveness.

System Notes: Massive military engagements should be resolved in abstract, with an opposed Strategy roll between the opposing leaders influencing the outcome (multiple rolls may be required for larger or longer engagements). Using Strategy in unfavorable conditions (outnumbered, poorly supplied, etc.) is *Difficult*. This skill is often used alongside Command: Strategy represents the plan, Command is how clear it is conveyed to those who must execute it.

Survival

Base Chance: 5%

Category: Mental

To do \$\$\$

Swim

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to move through or under water. Generally, Swim rolls should only be used for dangerous or stressful situations. Floating, dog paddling, and treading water

under normal conditions are *Automatic*. A fumble means that you begin drowning (see *Choking, Drowning, and Asphyxiation*). Once your character begins to drown, only a *Difficult* Swim roll or outside assistance can get them back to the surface to breathe again. Success means normal maneuvering in the water, while superior successes mean additional speed and maneuverability.

System Notes: In calm waters, Swim rolls are only needed once per turn. Swimming in rough waters requires a Swim check each round. Swimming while carrying something requires an Effort roll or a STR resistance roll, depending on the situation. Specialized equipment (floats, swim fins, etc.) offers modifiers of up to +20%. Actively swimming costs 1 fatigue point per turn. Resolve races in the water as opposed Swim rolls, costing 1 fatigue point per round. Subtract any ENC a swimmer has from their Swim rating. If their ENC exceeds their STR, they sink and must shed weight or drown. Armored characters have a penalty applied to Swim (see **Armor**). To remove armor in water, make a Swim roll once per combat round per point of the highest value of the armor (maximum roll if random armor values are used). Natural armor or armor conferred by a power has no penalty in water.

In underwater melee combat an attacker uses the lower of their combat or Swim skill ratings to resolve attacks, and trying to Dodge is *Difficult*. Only impaling weapons are useful—all others do 1D3–1 points of damage per hit. Water resistance also adds 3 points of armor value to any target. See **Underwater Combat** for more information.

Teach

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Communication

Use this skill whenever your character attempts to train or teach information or technique to another, using lecture, exercise, or physical sparring. A fumble is retrograde and causes students to perhaps lose 1D2 skill points if they do not make an Idea roll to recognize the shoddy teaching, while success teaches as per the normal rules for training and superior successes improve skill training to 1D6 (special) and 1D6+2 (critical).

System Notes: To teach a particular skill, the teacher must have twice the student's skill rating, or a skill rating of 50% (whichever is lower). See **Skill Training** for more detail.

System Notes: A Track roll takes 1D3 minutes, and an extended tracking attempt may require multiple rolls. Depending on the environment, the roll may be *Difficult* (a rainy night) or *Easy* (a bright snowy day). If a trail is lost, finding it again is *Difficult*. Trying to conceal one's tracks is an opposed Track roll. Advanced equipment may add up to +20% to the skill rating.

Throw

Base Chance: 25%

Category: Physical

Use this skill to hit a target with a thrown object, or to throw a weapon otherwise not balanced for throwing (such as throwing a greatsword or shield). This covers improvised thrown objects, grenades, sticks of dynamite, weapons not usually thrown, or non-weapons. Lassos are also covered by this skill, as well as catching items. If the weapon is made to be thrown, use Missile Weapon.

Effects: Throw has specific effects:

- **Fumble:** The object is dropped or lost. In combat, use the **Missile Weapon Fumbles Table**.
- **Failure:** The object misses and goes 1D6 meters in a random direction.
- **Success:** The object lands where intended. Roll damage normally, if any.
- **Special:** The object lands where intended and does the special damage type as appropriate to its shape (see **Special Successes**).
- **Critical:** The object lands where intended to exceptional results, ignoring armor and doing critical damage, if appropriate.

System Notes: Add 1/2 damage modifier (round up) to a thrown weapon's base damage. Most items can be thrown the thrower's STR in meters, and range beyond that is *Difficult*. Thrown objects can be aimed.

Track

Base Chance: 10%

Category: Perception

Use this skill to identify tracks or follow a trail—whether person, vehicle, or animal over the ground, through brush, snow, and across broken ground. A fumble loses the trail and perhaps the tracker themselves. Various degrees of success yield better results, including potentially being able to assess information about the subject being trailed or predict accurately where they are going.



Talents

Warrior

Fighter Talent Tree

1. Gain Health
2. Heroic Surge or Power Attack
3. Weapon Specialty
4. Extra attack
5. Good Position or Natural Strength
6. Bonus Attack

Gain Health (2): Add Con + SIZ and add that number to your total Hit Points.

Heroic Surge (prerequisite: Gain Health): Once per encounter, the fighter may take a bonus Heroic Action or Move Action.

Powerful Attack (prerequisite: Gain Health): Before rolling on attacks, you may choose to suffer a -10 melee attack roll penalty while gaining +1d8 to the melee damage roll.

Weapon Specialty (prerequisite: Heroic Surge or Powerful Attack): You may choose a specific weapon to specialize in, gaining a +5 bonus to the weapon skill. Weapon choice cannot be changed.

Extra Attack (prerequisite: Weapon Specialty): You gain an additional attack each round.

Good Position (prerequisite: Extra Attack): Once per round as a reaction, when a Fighter is flanked, they get a free move of up to 5 ft. This does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Natural Strength (prerequisite: Extra Attack): Gain 2 STR.

Bonus Attack (prerequisite: Good Position or Natural Strength): Once per round, a Fighter may make an additional attack as a Free Action. This is in addition to the Extra Attack and attacks gained from any other source.

Berserker Talent Tree

1. Rage
2. Fast Movement
3. Powerful Attack
4. Extra attack
5. Rage Mind or Natural CON
6. Focused Rage

Rage: Once per encounter as a Free Action, a Berserker rages and gains +2 DMG to melee attacks and DR 1. Lasts 1 minute, as long as attacking a hostile target or moving to attack. Multiclass characters cannot cast spells or maintain spell concentration during this period.

Fast Movement: A berserker adds 10' to their base movement speed. They can not gain this bonus if wearing heavy armor.

Powerful Attack: Before rolling on attacks, you may choose to suffer a -10 melee attack roll penalty while gaining +1d8 to the melee damage roll.

Extra Attack: You gain an additional attack each round.

Rage Mind: While Raging, gain immunity to Charm and Fear effects.

Natural Constitution: Gain 2 CON.

Focused Rage: The berserker's Rage now gains +4 DMG and DR 3. Lasts 1 minute, as long as attacking a hostile target or moving to attack. Cannot cast spells or maintain spell concentration. Once per encounter.

Archeon Talent Tree

- Magic Sense
- Mage Bane or Disperse Magic
- Resist Magic or Spell Siphon
- Extra Attack
- Spell Shield
- Disruption

Magic Sense: When an archeon spends time around a place, person, or creature, they can detect if magic has been used, and if it was ravaging magic. They must spend 30 minutes in the area or with a person to detect this automatically. An archeon can spend 12 seconds to determine if anyone within 30 ft. is a magic user with a DC 20 Awareness check. If an archeon witnesses the use of magic, they can tell if it's ravaging magic with a DC 12 Awareness check. If an archeon spends an hour with a person and succeeds at a DC 16 Awareness check, they can tell if that person has used ravaging magic (if the character has any ravage points, the archeon can tell).

Magebane: Once per round, an archeon may roll two d100's during an attack and choose the highest roll against any creature or person using magic spells. They can also use Magebane during Heroic Actions against spellcasters.

Expert

Factor Talent Tree

1. Contacts
2. Barter
3. Evasion
4. Loyalty
5. Blend In
6. Examiner
7. Improved Barter
8. Masterful Contacts
9. Masterful Intuition
10. Broker

Disperse Magic: Once per round, when you would normally be affected by magic you can negate it so that you take no damage. You must be aware of the attack and not Flat-Footed. It is handled like a Heroic Action: Survival versus Spellcraft. Attempting to Disperse Magic does not count as an action; it is a Reaction.

Resist Magic: An archeon gets to roll 2d100 and choose the highest roll on Will or Fortitude Saves to escape or resist a persistent magical effect.

Spell Siphon (2) - an archeon can absorb a spell that affects them, causing it to not affect the archeon with a successful opposed Heroic Action (Will vs. Spellcasting). They may store the siphoned spell and cast it once. Storing the spell causes damage equal to the mana per round it is stored.

Extra Attack: You gain an additional attack each round.

Spell Shield: Once per encounter, as a Move Action, an Archeon may create a shield that blocks magical energy. The shield is directional and protects those behind the Archeon up to 10 ft. This negates any magical spell damage, including Area of Effect. This does not stop the spell; targets outside the Archeon's Shield will take damage as normal. An Archeon can maintain a shield for 4 rounds.

Disruption: Once per encounter, as a Move Action, an Archeon can disrupt a Mage's ability to cast magic or cancel a spell already in effect. The target must be within 40'.

Each round, a Mage must make a Heroic Action (mage's Spellcraft Skill vs the archeon's Survival Skill) in order to cast spells or spend mana. An Archeon can maintain Disruption on a mage by spending a Free Action each round.

Spells are automatically canceled for as long as the archeon maintains concentration. The cost of concentration varies per spell. 3 mana or lower (Free Action), 5 mana (Move Action), 7 mana (Standard Action). When an Archeon stops concentrating or is knocked unconscious, the mage's spell becomes active again, unless the spell's duration is complete.

Contacts: A factor knows people. The factor gains +1 to Awareness and Persuasion skill checks with people they know. They gain a +1 to finding or identifying a person of interest or knowing a place to get rare goods. e

Barter: A factor can automatically negotiate a 10% decrease or increase in the cost of retail goods bought or sold.

Loyalty: Once per round, as a free action, a factor can give an ally who is guarding them in combat a +1 bonus to an attack roll.

Blend In: A factor is good at blending into their environments. They and their companions gain a +3 to skill checks for disguise in any environment.

Examiner: A factor can identify one item per day as per the Identify spell.

Improved Barter: A factor can automatically negotiate a 20% decrease or increase in the cost of retail goods bought or sold.

Masterful Contacts: The factor gains +3 to Awareness and Persuasion skill checks with people they know. They gain a +3 to finding or identifying a person of interest, or knowing a place to get rare goods.

Masterful Intuition: A factor is a master at reading others. They gain +5 expertise bonus to all Awareness skill checks involving diplomacy.

Broker: A factor gains +4 to finding the sources of any rare or wondrous goods. They also automatically negotiate a 30% decrease or increase in the cost of retail goods bought or sold.

Rogue Talent Tree

1. Trapfinding
2. Sneak Attack
3. Artful Dodger
4. Evasion
5. Improved Evasion
6. Gut Feeling
7. Trap Mastery
8. Expert Mobility
9. Crippling Strike

Sneak Attack: Once per round on a successful hit, deal extra damage to a target who is flanked, has lost Dex bonus to AC, or is unaware of your presence. *The weapon used must be a light or medium melee weapon or a ranged weapon.*

Trapfinding: Search and disarm traps with difficulty greater than DC 20. Use either Awareness or Thievery skill for detecting traps. Only Thievery may be used to disarm a trap.

Artful Dodger: Once per round, use a Free Action as a Move Action. Useful to get into position or hide!

Evasion: Upon a successful Reflex save against an attack that deals half damage, you evade the attack and take no damage.

Improved Evasion: Upon failing a save, take only ½ damage.

Gut Feeling: You sense the presence of any traps when entering an area. An Awareness or Thievery check is still required to find the trap, but you will know something dangerous is nearby.

Trap Mastery: Once per round as a Free Action, you may search for traps, disarm traps, or open a lock.

Crippling Strike: Upon doing Sneak Attack damage, the target must make a DC 16 Acrobatics Save. If the Save is successful, the target moves at ½ speed for 1 round. If the Save fails, the target is momentarily incapacitated and gets no Move Actions for 1 round.

Expert Mobility: You never provoke an Attack of Opportunity for moving.

Ranger Talent Tree

1. Expert Tracker
2. Sneak Attack
3. Rapid Attack
4. Artful Dodger
5. Evasion
6. Favored Enemy

7. Improved Evasion
8. Woodland Stride
9. Crippling Strike

Sneak Attack: Once per round, on a successful hit, you can deal 1d6 extra damage to a target who is flanked, has lost their Dex bonus to AC, or is unaware of the ranger's presence. *The weapon used must be a light or medium melee weapon or a ranged weapon.*

Expert Tracker: Roll 2d20 and use the higher number when using Awareness or Survival to hunt a target.

Expert's Stamina: Once per day, recover hit points equal to 1d8 + your Con modifier as a Free Action. At level 4, gain an additional 1d8.

Track: Find tracks or follow tracks for 1 mile with a successful Survival check. You must make another Survival check every time the tracks become difficult to follow.

Artful Dodger: Once per round, use a Free Action as a Move Action. Useful to get into position or hide!

Evasion: On a successful Reflex save against an attack that deals half damage, you take no damage.

Favored Enemy: When fighting a Favored Enemy, add your Sneak Attack bonus every time you hit. There is no limit per round. A ranger can make an Awareness or Knowledge check to identify these creatures, DC 10 + target's CR. Refer to **Table: Ranger Favored Enemies**.

Favored Terrain: In favored terrain, a ranger leaves no tracks, ignores difficult ground, and gains +2 to Initiative. Refer to **Table: Favored Terrains**.

Advanced Skills: Select two Skills that can advance beyond Rank 5 up to Rank 9. Both of those Skills gain 1 additional rank.

Improved Evasion: If you fail a save, take only ½ damage.

Crippling Strike: Upon doing Sneak Attack damage, the target must make a DC 16 Acrobatics Save. If the Save is successful, the target moves at ½ speed for 1 round. If the Save fails, the target is momentarily incapacitated and gets no Move Actions for 1 round.

Swift Tracker: Continue to Track as a Free Action each round at maximum speed.

Woodland Stride: You do not suffer impairment, penalties, or damage from difficult terrain, magical or otherwise.

Mage

Bard

1. Bardic Knowledge
2. Perform
3. Mage Lore
4. Soothing Song
5. Hymn of Horror
6. Inspire Greatness

Bardic Knowledge: Add your bard class level to all Knowledge checks.

Perform: You're skilled in poetry and song, history and verse, and can play at least one musical instrument. Use the Persuasion skill to distract, encourage, or enchant others. Each round, you may use a Heroic Action (if target resists bard's Persuasion vs target's Awareness) to grant a +2 or -2 to one d20 roll of an affected creature.

Mage Lore: Roll 2d20 when making a Knowledge or Spellcraft check regarding magical history, lore, or effects.

Soothing Song: Heal all within earshot for 1d8+4 HP by performing, uninterrupted, for one hour. If interrupted, the spellsong fails, but you may continue to attempt the spellsong until successful.

Hymn of Horror: Use your performance to foster a sense of growing dread in your enemies, causing them to become Shaken. To be affected, an enemy must be able to see and hear your performance. The effect persists until the enemy is out of range or is unable to see or hear the performance. This performance cannot cause a creature to become Frightened or Panicked, even if the targets are already Shaken from another effect. Hymn of Horror is a mind-affecting fear effect, and it relies on audible and visual components. *Range: 30 ft.*

Inspire Greatness: A single target (self or other) gains 2d20 on Attack Rolls and +1d8 Damage on a successful hit. This requires a Move Action to start and a Free Action each round to maintain. Lasts 5 rounds after you stop singing. *Range: 30 ft.*

Luminar

1. Spellbook (includes spell sight and elemental choice)
2. Energy Burst
3. Mage Lore
4. Energy Blast
5. Energy Wall
6. Call of the Elements

Spell Book: Use a Spell Book to keep track of your spells. This does not have to be an actual book—it could be a staff inscribed with runes, detailed tattoos, pieces of leather inscribed with small text, or anything else that makes sense to you.

Elemental Focus I, II, III, IV: Elemental Focus is the magical ability that targets an object to become a bonded focus between you and the element. It takes a Free Action to cast and the target must be an object touched. Elemental focus counts as a spell for detection, dispels, and other abilities; but does not count against spell memory or cost mana.

You pull energy from yourself to create a focus for elemental magic. While natural elements may be available, elemental foci allow you to bond with the element and allow for it to be shaped into spells. Effects to the body due to creating the foci have no detriment, but instead describe how it feels to create them.

Fire

Focus: a burnable item or a piece of metal
Transfer heat into your focus item. Flammable items burst in flame. Metal becomes hot for the duration of the spell. Duration: 1 hour per spellcaster level. Your body cools by a few degrees for 10 minutes as you transfer heat into the focus item.

Water

Focus: a jar or small container
Fill a vessel with spit, sweat, or blood to create a focus, causing you to feel dehydrated for 10 minutes. The water focus lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

Ice

Focus: metal bar
Your body warms as you transfer heat from the focus item, rising a few degrees for 10 minutes. The ice focus lasts 1 hour per level.

Air

Focus: a jar or container
Exhale air into a vessel as a focus. This causes you to be short of breath for 10 minutes. The air focus lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

Electricity

Focus: a copper wire bound upon itself creating a twisted loop
Imbue the wire with electricity from your body, causing your heart to skip beats for the next 10 minutes. The electrical focus lasts 1 hour per caster level.

Earth

Focus: a jar or container filled with soil or a rock, stone, or gem

Imbue the earth with part of yourself, which may be saliva, breath, blood, or spirit. You feel numb for 10 minutes after imbuing the focus. The earth focus lasts 1 hour per spellcaster level.

You gain one elemental focus per level of this ability. This allows the mage to add their elemental ability to certain spells, which has the following effects:

- Fire causes flammable items to catch fire and burn. Low melting point metals melt.
- Water puts out mundane fires.
- Ice slows creatures by 1/2. Athletics savings throw to negate.
- Earth covers the objects in dust and dirt, outlining any invisible objects or creatures.
- Electricity does an extra 1d4 damage to anyone in heavy metal armor (chainmail, breastplate, half plate, .or full plate).
- Air knocks Medium or smaller creatures prone. Reflex savings throw to negate falling.

Energy Burst: Fire a small orb of energy (caster's active Elemental Focus: fire, water, earth, air, ice, or electricity) at the target. You must succeed on a Magic Attack to hit the target. The orb deals 1d4 +1 points of Elemental Focus damage. Add 1d4 +1 damage every 2 levels (+1d4+1 at level 2, 4, 6, and 8). *Range 40 ft.*

Mage Lore: Roll 2d20 when making a Knowledge or Spellcraft check regarding magical history, lore, or effects.

Energy Blast: Up to 3 times per day, cast a small orb that explodes with your active Elemental Focus (fire, water, earth, air, ice, electricity), doing 4d4 damage to all within a 15' radius. Or you may choose for the Energy Blast to heal 4d4 HP to all within a 15' radius. *40' range.*

Energy Wall: Once per day, summon a 15'x 15' x 2' wall of energy that does 6d4 damage of your active Elemental Focus damage (fire, water, earth, air, ice, electricity) to any who cross through it. The effect lasts 2d4 rounds. *60' range.*

Call of the Elements: Once per day, summon a raging storm of your active Elemental Focus (fire, water, ice, air, electricity, earth), doing 8d6+8 damage to all creatures within a 40' radius. DC 18. Reflex save for half damage. You may also choose to stun all creatures within a 40' radius. A DC 18 Will save negates the stun. *80' range.*

Wylder

1. Spell Memory (includes spell sight and elemental choice)
2. Wild Magic
3. Discordian Shield
4. Chaos Wave
5. Focused Wild Magic
6. Magical Attack

Spell Memory: Wylders do not require a spellbook. You may remember a limited number of spells at a time. This is based on class, level, and ability modifier. You may memorize a number of spells equal to your *Spell Memory Allotment* for a given spell level plus your INT modifier.

Wild Magic: A burst of energy explodes from your hands toward your target. On a successful magic attack, you inflict 1d4+1 points of damage, gaining 1d4 in power every 2 levels (+1d4 at level 2, 4, 6, and 8). It is a force effect. *Range 60'.*

Alternatively, you may charge your weapon with this ability as a Free Action. Upon a successful hit, add Wild Magic damage to your melee weapon damage.

Elemental Focus I, II, III, IV: Elemental Focus is the magical ability that targets an object to become a bonded focus between you and the element. It takes a Free Action to cast and the target must be an object touched. Elemental focus counts as a spell for detection, dispels, and other abilities; but does not count against spell memory or cost mana.

You pull energy from yourself to create a focus for elemental magic. While natural elements may be available, elemental foci allow you to bond with the element and allow for it to be shaped into spells. Effects to the body due to creating the foci have no detriment, but instead describe how it feels to create them.

Fire

Focus: a burnable item or a piece of metal
Transfer heat into your focus item. Flammable items burst in flame. Metal becomes hot for the duration of the spell. Duration: 1 hour per spellcaster level. Your body cools by a few degrees for 10 minutes as you transfer heat into the focus item.

Water

Focus: a jar or small container
Fill a vessel with spit, sweat, or blood to create a focus, causing you to feel dehydrated for 10 minutes. The water focus lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

Ice

Focus: metal bar

Your body warms as you transfer heat from the focus item, rising a few degrees for 10 minutes. The ice focus lasts 1 hour per level.

Air

Focus: a jar or container

Exhale air into a vessel as a focus. This causes you to be short of breath for 10 minutes. The air focus lasts for 1 hour per caster level.

Electricity

Focus: a copper wire bound upon itself creating a twisted loop

Imbue the wire with electricity from your body, causing your heart to skip beats for the next 10 minutes. The electrical focus lasts 1 hour per caster level.

Earth

Focus: a jar or container filled with soil or a rock, stone, or gem

Imbue the earth with part of yourself, which may be saliva, breath, blood, or spirit. You feel numb for 10 minutes after imbuing the focus. The earth focus lasts 1 hour per spellcaster level.

You gain one elemental focus per level of this ability. This allows the mage to add their elemental ability to certain spells, which has the following effects:

- Fire causes flammable items to catch fire and burn. Low melting point metals melt.
- Water puts out mundane fires.
- Ice slows creatures by 1/2. Athletics savings throw to negate.
- Earth covers the objects in dust and dirt, outlining any invisible objects or creatures.
- Electricity does an extra 1d4 damage to anyone in heavy metal armor (chainmail, breastplate, half plate, .or full plate).
- Air knocks Medium or smaller creatures prone. Reflex savings throw to negate falling.

Discordian Shield: A swirling vortex of chaos energy grants a +2 shield bonus to your AC and DR 1. This can be cast as a Standard or Move Action and lasts as long as you wish.

Chaos Wave: As a free action, a wave of chaotic energy bursts from your body in all directions, doing 4d6+3 damage to all in a 10' radius. You may do this 2 times per day.

Focused Wild Magic: At level 8, you have learned to control the wild magics that flow through you. Your Wild Magic ability allows you to cast a burst of wild force doing 4d4+4 points of damage. Now that you can focus this energy, you can change the energy type to any Elemental Focus you have. *Range 120'*

Alternatively, you may charge your weapon with this ability as a Free Action. Upon a successful hit, this adds the Wild Magic damage to your melee weapon damage.

Magical Attack: When casting a spell that costs mana, you may, as a Free Action, make one melee attack with a weapon.

Common Talents

- **Advanced Skills (2):** Select two Skills that can advance beyond 90% to 96%.
- **Agile (1):** Gain a +2 % to your Acrobatics Skill and Dex-based Heroic Actions.
- **Alertness (1):** Gain a +2 bonus to your Awareness Skill and all Wis-based Heroic Actions.
- **Animal Affinity (1):** Gain a +2% bonus to all Persuasion checks with animals.
- **Animal Companion (1):** You bond with an animal follower who is loyal and understands your commands. The animal is typical of its species but can improve as the character gains experience.
- **Blind Fight (1):** In melee, any time you miss because of Blindness, you may reroll your miss chance once for another chance to hit. An Invisible attacker gets no advantages related to hitting you in melee. You do not lose your Dex bonus to Armor Class, and the attacker doesn't get the usual +2 bonus for being Invisible. The Invisible attacker's bonuses do still apply for ranged attacks, however.
- **Charge (1):** This will allow you to move an additional 10' and attempt a non-damaging Heroic Action during a single Move Action per round.
- **Cleave (2):** If you deal enough damage to make an enemy Disabled (typically by dropping it to below 0 HP or killing it), you get an immediate, extra melee attack against another creature within reach. You cannot take a 5' step before making this extra attack. The extra attack is with the same weapon and at the same bonus as the attack that dropped the previous creature. You can use this ability once per round.
- **Dazeless (1):** You can not be dazed by magic and gain +2 to all saves versus mind-affecting

magic.

- Deceitful (1): Gain a +2 Expertise bonus to all Persuasion Skill checks concerning disguise, forgery, or lying.
- Deflect Arrows (2): You must have at least one hand free (holding nothing) to use this feat. Once per round, when you would normally be hit by a ranged weapon, you can deflect it so that you take no damage. You must be aware of the attack and not Flat-Footed. It is handled like a Heroic Action, but attempting to deflect a ranged weapon doesn't count as an action. Unusually large ranged weapons and ranged attacks generated by spell effects cannot be deflected.
- Deft (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to all Thievery Skill checks and Dex-based Heroic Actions.
- Enlarge Spell (1): You may double the range of a spell by doubling the mana cost.
- Expanded Critical (1): Add one to your potential critical range for all weapons.
- Extend Spell (1): You may double the duration of a spell by doubling the mana cost.
- Far Shot (1): When you use a projectile weapon, such as a bow, its range is increased (multiply its range by 1.5). When you use a thrown weapon, its range is doubled.
- Fast Healing (1): Gain back double the normal hit points at rest and recover an additional +3 HP to all magical healing.
- Feint (1): You attempt to confuse an adjacent opponent. With a successful Heroic Action, your opponent loses their Dex bonus for 1 round.
- Focused Ravaging (1): A ravaging spellcaster can focus where a spell's energy comes from, dealing the spell's mana cost in damage to the target. The caster must succeed at a Heroic Action vs the target (Spellcraft skill vs Will save), otherwise the energy comes from the spellcaster. Range 30 ft.
- Focus spell (1): Spend 2 additional mana on a spell to add +1 to spell save DC. You may spend up to 8 mana to gain +4 on a single spell casting.
- Grappler (1): Roll 2d100, choose the highest roll, whenever you are engaged in a task that involves grappling, tripping, or feats of strength against another.
- Great Fortitude (1): Add +2 as a Misc. Modifier to your Endurance Skill and Con-based Heroic Actions.
- Healing (1): During combat, you may spend your Standard Action to bind an injury. By binding, the target heals and stabilizes at 1 HP. During rest, a healer may use this Talent to allow another character to recover HP at double their normal rate.
- Hidden Spell (1): You can cast a spell with just your mind so others don't see you casting. Hidden Spells cost 1 additional mana. An enemy must succeed at a DC20 Awareness to recognize that you are casting a spell. This adds +10 to the DC of Spell Sight.
- Investigator (1): Gain a +2 Expertise bonus to Awareness checks while gathering information, examining a location, or sensing a person's motives.
- Improved Initiative (1): Gain a +2 bonus to your initiative.
- Knock Down (1): Gain +3% on any attempt to knock over a foe.
- Linguist (1): Learn 3 languages of your choice. Gain +2 to Knowledge and Thievery checks to create or decipher secret codes.
- Magical Aptitude (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to your Spellcraft skill.
- Maximize Spell (2): By tripling the mana cost for a spell, all numeric effects of that spell are maximized. For example, if the damage of a spell is 1d6, you would automatically roll a 6.
- Marksman (1): Ranged attacks with a bow or crossbow add your Dexterity bonus to the damage.
- Multi-Shot (2): Once per round, as a Standard Action, you can fire two arrows in a single shot at a single opponent. Both arrows use the same attack roll (with a -2 penalty) to determine success and deal normal damage. Range: 60 ft.
- Mythic Heroic Action (1): Gain a +2 bonus to any Heroic Action.
- Negotiator (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to your Persuasion skill and Cha-based Heroic Actions.
- Nimble (1): Once per round, when leaving an area that would normally provoke an attack of opportunity, you avoid that attack of opportunity.
- Opportunistic (1): You may make additional attacks of opportunity per round equal to your Dex.
- Over-Extended Attack (1): You may add an additional 1d6 damage to a successful melee hit, but you also receive the same damage as you strain your body in the attack.
- Point Blank Shot (1): You do not suffer any negatives for firing in melee range.
- Powerful (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to your Athletics Skill and Str-based Heroic Actions.
- Shield Bash (1): As a Free Action, you can attempt to knock an adjacent opponent prone with a shield as a Heroic Action. If successful, it knocks down the opponent and does 1d4 damage.
- Sidestep (1): If your opponent misses you with

an attack, as a Reaction, you can move 5'. This does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

- Spell Mastery (2): Gain a +3 bonus to all Spellcraft checks.
- Spell Endurance (1): Gain a +1 bonus to your touch AC versus spells.
- Spell Penetration (1): Gain a +2 bonus to rolls against a creature's spell resistance.
- Spell Potency (1): Gain a +1 bonus to all spell save DCs.
- Spell Reach (1): You may cast a touch-based buff spell on a target within 30 ft.
- Sprint (1): As a single Move Action per round, you may move double your normal movement speed with no disadvantage. While running, you retain your Dex bonus to AC. You may do this 3 times per combat encounter.
- Stealthy (1): Gain a +2 bonus to Thievery Skill checks that include hiding or moving silently.
- Studious (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to Knowledge Skill and Int-based Heroic Actions.
- Stunning Strike (1): You may choose to suffer a -5 penalty to an attack roll, but if the attack is successful, your opponent is Stunned for one round.
- Survivalist (1): Gain a +2 bonus as a Misc. Modifier to your Survival Skill and Wis-based Heroic Actions.
- Take a Hit (1): You can take a hit and suffer less damage. Damage Reduction (DR) 1.
- Taunt (1): As a Free Action, you may taunt your opponent, convincing them to focus on you for 1 round. You must succeed at a Persuasion Heroic Action versus a single opponent.
- Toughness (1): Gain a +2 bonus to Max HP for each HD you have.
- Weapon Dexterity (1): You may use your Dex bonus on small and medium melee weapons as your Attack bonus
- Whirlwind Attack (2): Once per round, you can attack all those within melee range with your full base attack bonus. Dice are rolled for each target attacked, and after the first, you suffer a -1 penalty to your attack roll for the other targets.

- Wild Empathy (1): You can improve the attitude of an animal. During combat, with a successful Persuasion Heroic Action, you may stop a hostile animal from attacking or viewing you as a threat for 1 round. Out of combat, you may persuade an animal to follow your directions or leave you alone at SG discretion.



4. Magic (Powers)

Characters may have extraordinary powers above and beyond their skills. While *Chapter 2: Characters* provides guidelines for creating characters without powers, this chapter covers those with powers. Several power sets are presented here. Some are not immediately compatible with one another, while others are easily used together.

Magic

Characters who use magic spells are called magicians, and these rules refer to them as such. Magicians use chants and gestures to produce immediate magic effects. Magic is quick and easy, drawing from the magician's POW and using it for resistance rolls, where required.

How Magic Works

Magic is treated like any other skill: each spell a magician knows is a different skill, with a percentage chance for success. The magician spends power points (based on their POW) to fuel spells. When a magician casts a spell, they spend the relevant power points, and percentile dice are rolled. If successful, the spell takes effect. If the roll fails, 1 power point is lost and nothing happens.

Like skills, a spell can have an additional effect with a special or critical roll. See **Magic Spell Success Levels** for guidance about each level of success.

Most of the time, the magician can attempt to cast the spell again on the next round if they have enough power points remaining.

Magic can be learned from an instructor and improved through experience. If using **Skill Category Bonuses**, spells are Mental skills and that modifier is applied.

Costs of Magic

Magic spellcasting always has a cost. Magic spells can also be cast in increments, called levels. Generally, each level costs 1 power point to cast. Some spells cost more than 1 power point per level. If a magician is reduced to 0 power points, they fall unconscious. The normal rules for power points apply to any power points lost through casting spells. Even if the roll to cast a spell is a failure, the spell costs 1 power point. If the roll fumbles, the spell costs the same amount as if it was a success (costing the number of levels in the spell).

Power points regenerate as per the **Power Point Recovery Rate Table**. Usually, this is 1 per hour if sleeping and 1 per 2 hours if awake and active.

Casting Time

Only one spell can be cast per combat round, but a magician can cast several levels of the same spell together in the same attempt. Spells each cost 1 DEX rank to cast per level of the spell and are considered as attack actions if cast in combat.

For example, if a magician with DEX 15 wants to cast a spell in a combat round, the spell is cast at the DEX rank -1 per level of the spell. Thus, a level 1 spell is cast at DEX rank 14 (15-1=14).

A magic spell with more levels is cast later in the round. *Chapter 6: Combat* covers spell casting times, and the following sections describe magic spell levels in more detail.

Spell Level

Each spell is expressed with a level that determines how powerful it is. By default, a spell is level 1, costing 1+ power points to cast. A spell can be made even more powerful by adding additional levels (and power points). The effect of each additional level is provided in each spell's description.

Adding more levels takes longer than casting the spell at level 1. Each level of a spell lowers the magician's DEX rank by -1 for the combat round.



For example, a magician with DEX 15 casting a Fire spell at level 2 does so at DEX rank 13 (15-2=13) rather than the normal DEX rank 14.

There is a limit to how many levels can be added to a spell, equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ your character's INT (rounded up).

For example, a magician with INT 15 is limited to spells of levels 1 through 8. If the additional time to cast lowers their DEX rank to below 0, the spell is cast in the next round, subtracting the number below 0 from their normal DEX rank in that next round.

This likely only occurs if a magician's DEX rank is low or has been lowered due to other activities in the combat round.

Overcoming POW

Any time a spell affects a living target, the caster must overcome the target's POW or power points in a resistance roll. Each spell description designates which value is used. If it is power points, the value is determined before any points are spent on the spell. This is not required if the target of the spell is willing to accept the spell's effects, and beneficial spells such as Heal or Enhancement do not require a resistance roll unless the recipient actively does not wish to be aided. In these cases, use a resistance roll. An unconscious or otherwise debilitated target automatically fails a resistance roll using POW or power points.

Combining Spells

Two low-level spells of the same type cannot be combined to make a higher-level spell.

For example, a magician cannot combine two Protection 2 spells to make a Protection 4 spell.

If two or more spells of unequal levels are applied to the same person, place, or thing at the same time, only the higher-level spell takes effect, though all the power points to cast those spells are still spent. If the durations overlap, the lower-

level spell takes effect for the remainder of its duration once the higher-level spell has expired, if it has not expired already. At no time do two or more of the same spells apply to the same subject at the same time.

Memorization of Magic

A magician must commit spells to memory to use them and can memorize a number of spells equal to half their INT (round up). For example, a magician with INT 15 can memorize eight spells at a time ($15 \times \frac{1}{2} = 7.5$, rounded to 8). Any other spells the magician wishes to carry and have available must be carried in their grimoire, a type of spellbook used by magicians. It takes 1 hour for a magician to memorize a spell, and if their INT is already full, one or more spells currently memorized must be forgotten. Memorizing a magic spell is called **readying it**, while forgetting it is called **dismissing it**. Dismissing a spell also takes 1 hour. Spells remain memorized until dismissed, even if the magician sleeps or is rendered unconscious by force or some other means.

Grimoires

A magician can cast a spell directly from their grimoire, but this takes one combat round per level of spell effect desired. A magician can use another character's grimoire if they can read it (with a successful Language roll) and can make a successful roll of $INT \times 1$ for each spell they attempt to use. If they fail either roll, they cannot understand the other magician's grimoire, with its occult codes, unfamiliar symbology, and idiosyncratic style of organization. After such a failure, the magician can get no other knowledge out of the grimoire. If their Language skill in the relevant language increases through training or experience, they can attempt to read the spellbook again. Once a spell is successfully read, it can be re-read (and potentially memorized) without rolling, though it must be cast normally.

Some magicians can be illiterate, with non-textual means of transcribing a spell, whether through pictographs, tattoos, occult symbols on great stone columns, or another means. Your

StoryGuide should work out how accessible these alternate methods are to the magician and others.

Initial Spells by Power Level

A magician automatically knows how to ready, memorize, and dismiss spells, and can freely add any currently memorized spells to their grimoire at any time (or can transcribe any currently memorized spells to a new grimoire if the original is destroyed or lost). The magician can spend skill points from **Step Three** of character creation, and **Step Seven** if they have an appropriate profession (Occultist, Priest, Shaman, or Wizard) for spells.

Following are the starting spells by game power level:

- **Normal:** A magician knows four spells of their choice, with a beginning skill equal to $INT \times 1$.
- **Heroic:** A magician knows six spells at $INT \times 1$.
- **Epic:** A magician knows eight spells at $INT \times 1$. If desired, the magician begins with a familiar (the POW cost is assumed in the past, so no need to adjust).
- **Superhuman:** A magician begins with 10 spells at $INT \times 1$, a wizard's staff already constructed (its power points are based on their current POW score—the sacrifice of POW is assumed, no need to adjust), and a familiar of their choosing (as above).

The normal restrictions for having spells in memory apply, and all known spells are available in the magician's grimoire.

Gaining POW

A magician must have a high POW, as they spend power points for spells and POW helps with spell resistance rolls. Fortunately, a magician can increase their POW in several ways.

Any time a magician overcomes the magical resistance of a target of equal or greater POW, their POW has been exercised successfully and

may increase. This includes situations when the magician's defensive (passive) POW resists an attacker's (active) POW if that POW was higher than their POW. Overcoming or resisting a target of lower POW does not provide a chance for improvement. Only POW resistance rolls qualify, not those opposing power points vs. power points.

When successful in a POW resistance roll against an equal or higher POW, place an experience check next to the POW characteristic. When checking for experience, the magician's POW may increase (see **POW Increases**). Each successful improvement improves POW by 1D3-1 points. As with other experience checks, this only applies once per adventure, not for each spell resisted.

Gaining New Spells

A magician can get new spells by seeking them out, discovering them, and buying or otherwise attaining physical copies of other grimoires, scrolls, etc., then transferring the spell into their own grimoire. Alternately, a magician can take one game month per spell to study the principles of any desired spell, assuming they have some sort of references. At the end of this month, a successful roll of $INT + POW$ means that the spell is learned and in the magician's grimoire. It begins at a rating of $INT \times 1$.

If a magician is trying to invent a new spell, discuss it with your StoryGuide. The magician must then spend six months researching it, attempting a roll of $INT + POW$ each month. Failure adds another month to the overall time. In all, after six successful rolls, the spell is known at a skill rating of $INT \times 1$.

Use of Spells by Non-magicians

Other heroes can use spells that are imbued into magic items, potions, or weapons.

Becoming a Magician

If a character does not begin play as a magician

or lacks access to magic spells and wishes to learn them, they must first find a wizard (a highly-skilled magician) to teach them. The apprenticeship to become a magician is a full-time job, and takes an amount of time equal to 30 minus the character's INT in months of uninterrupted study, during which time they learn their initial roster of spells, prepares a grimoire, and increases the number of magic spells they can hold in INT from $\frac{1}{4}$ INT (the limit for a non-magician) to $\frac{1}{2}$ INT. The wizard may charge for their services as described in **Skill Improvement**. At the end of this apprenticeship, the character emerges as a magician, with skill ratings in four spells equal to INT \times 1, having constructed a grimoire of their own, and possessing knowledge of how to bind a familiar and make a wizard's staff.

Magic Spell Success Levels

As each spell uses a roll to determine success or failure, success levels can also measure the quality of the magic spell roll. However, unlike skills, magic spells are not cut-and-dried in how their effects should be applied based on the result of the roll. Many magic spells have effects that are either "on" or "off", with no difference between a critical, special success, and a normal success. Your StoryGuide should consider the spell's nature and potential effects when deciding these outcomes. Following are guides to success levels and how they might apply to magic spells:

- **Fumble:** All power points intended to be spent on the spell are lost. Additionally, the magician cannot attempt use of this spell for one combat round after the round the spell failed in. If the spell involves doing damage, the magician should make a Luck roll: success indicates that the spell just fizzled and does not work, while failure indicates that the spell struck an unintended target (an innocent bystander, an ally, valuable equipment, etc.) causing collateral damage and potentially complicating the situation.
- **Failure:** The spell doesn't work but causes no harm or complications. One power point is spent, but the spell has no useful effect.
- **Success:** The spell works as described and the requisite power points are expended.
- **Special:** The spell works with increased effectiveness. If it does damage, the spell

does special damage, as if it were an attack (see *Chapter 6: Combat*). If one of the special success damage types (crushing, entangling, impaling, knockback, or slashing) is appropriate, your StoryGuide should incorporate it into the spell's effectiveness.

For example, a special success roll for a Lightning spell might cause knockback.

At your StoryGuide's discretion, another aspect of the spell (range, influence, etc.) may enjoy 150% effect. Alternately, if the spell requires a resistance roll, increase the spell's level by $\times 1.5$.

- **Critical:** The spell works perfectly. If it causes damage, it ignores any armor the target possesses and does the maximum possible damage. If it does not normally cause damage, your StoryGuide should determine an appropriate aspect (or aspects) of the spell and double its effectiveness. Alternately, if the spell involves a resistance roll, your StoryGuide may temporarily double the power's level or the relevant characteristic for the resistance roll.

These outcomes may require additional interpretation, or your StoryGuide can just use the results of dice rolls without any adjustment for degrees of success. This should be applied fairly and consistently, and the players should be told whether detailed success levels are being used.

Magic Spells

Following are a variety of basic spells. These are defined in the following manner:

- **Name:** The common name of the spell. You may choose to call it something more flavorful, if desired.
- **Range:** The maximum effective range for any spell is 100 meters unless otherwise specified. If it directly affects a target (living or otherwise), the target must be within line of sight.
- **Duration:** Spells usually occur instantly in the Powers Phase of the combat round they are cast in. They usually last for a single combat round, 10 combat rounds, or for 15 minutes, as indicated in each spell

description.

- **Power Point Cost per Level:** The power costs this number of power points to cast per level.

Magic Spell Summary

Following are the most known magic spells. Each spell's cost per level is given in parentheses, and each spell's effect lasts for the duration of the spell.

- **Blast (1):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of magical damage per level.
- **Change (1):** Transforms 3 SIZ points of an item or being per level.
- **Conjure (type) Elemental (1):** Summons or dismisses an elemental of a specific type.
- **Control (3):** Allows control over a target's mind, requires a resistance roll.
- **Countermagic (1):** Reflects incoming spells back at the magician.
- **Dark (1):** Fills an area with darkness.
- **Diminish (1):** Reduces one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.
- **Dispel (1):** Eliminates existing spell effects, may banish supernatural beings.
- **Dull (1):** Reduces a weapon's attack chance and damage.
- **Enhance (1):** Increases one of the target's characteristics by 1 per level.
- **Fire (1):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of fire damage per level.
- **Frost (1):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of frost damage per level.
- **Heal (3):** Heals 1D6 points of damage per level.
- **Illusion (1):** Creates 3 SIZ points of an illusion per level.
- **Invisibility (1):** Each level makes 3 SIZ points of an object or person invisible.
- **Lift (1):** Lifts 3 SIZ points of an object or person per level.
- **Light (1):** Fills an area with light.
- **Lightning (1):** Ranged, does 1D6 points of lightning damage per level.
- **Perception (1):** Allows the magician to detect one thing within range.
- **Protection (1):** Adds 1 point of armor value per level against physical attacks.
- **Resistance (1):** Reduces damage from heat and/or cold by 1 point per level.
- **Seal (1):** Joins two inanimate objects together.
- **Sharpen (1):** Increases a weapon's attack chance and damage.
- **Speak to Mind (1):** Allows mental communication between the magician and a

target.

- **Teleport (1):** Teleports 3 SIZ points per level anywhere within range.
- **Unseal (1):** Separates two connected objects.
- **Vision (1):** Allows the magician to see what is happening elsewhere, or in the past.
- **Wall (1):** Creates a barrier to protect your character.
- **Ward (1):** Defines an area protected by Blast and Countermagic.
- **Wounding (3):** Causes 1D6 points of damage per level.

Blast

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to attack a single target with a beam of magic energy. The target takes 1D6 damage per level. Under most circumstances, non-magical armor absorbs the damage, and this spell can be dodged. If Blast is parried with a shield, the shield takes the damage, with any remainder going to the target.

Countermagic may stop Blast, but Protection does not work. Resistance does not work against Blast.

Change

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to change a targeted being or object into a variety of shapes from the same relative type (animal to animal, vegetable to vegetable, mineral to mineral, etc.). Each level affects 3 SIZ of the target if the magician can overcome the target's POW in a resistance roll. If the target is willing (or the magician themself), no resistance roll is required. To target something larger than 3 SIZ, use enough levels to affect the creature or object's full SIZ. The targeted being is then transformed into a creature or object of that exact SIZ. The new shape has the outward attributes and limitations of the shape (including natural abilities, if any), but characteristics remain unchanged. Whenever applicable, the target's characteristics and skills are used, or the base rating in a newly acquired skill (such as Fly).

Chapter 11: Creatures describes a variety of sample creatures. Either use the standard writeup or customize one if it is used regularly. If estimating a creature's capabilities, assume that

large claws do 1D6 plus damage modifier, and a bite or horn will do 1D3 plus damage modifier.

If the target has already taken hit point damage before the spell is cast, the new form appears in a similarly wounded state. Similarly, any power points, fatigue, or other conditions existing on the target are not affected, as appropriate.

In addition to the number of SIZ points this spell can affect, additional levels can be used to affect more than one object (for example, casting one spell to affect two or more beings, provided enough SIZ is covered), or extending the duration of the spell by 15 minutes. When the spell is cast, the magician should specify how additional levels of the spell are being used.

Conjure (type) Elemental

Range: 12 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost per Level: 1 per point of elemental POW

This spell conjures or dismisses a specific type of elemental, chosen when the spell is taken. For the duration of the spell, the elemental must be directed by the magician's full attention. Each point of POW the elemental possesses costs 1 power point.

The following elementals are described in *Chapter 11: Creatures*.

- **Air:** Called sylphs, they usually appear as beautiful, near-transparent humanoids, either naked or clad in diaphanous clothing. They have transparent wings, either feathered or like those of an insect. They usually glide aboveground.
- **Earth:** Called gnomes, they are usually thick-bodied humanoid beings made of earth and rock, frequently male, with mossy beards and roots that cross their bodies like veins.
- **Fire:** Called salamanders, they usually appear as hairless humanoids wreathed in fire, with darkened skin glowing in cracks from within. Alternately, they appear as reptiles or serpents.
- **Water:** Called undines, and often appear as beautiful mermaids, half-fish and half-human, pale green and blue. When they appear on land, their fishtails are replaced with human legs.

Elementals may appear in entirely different forms, and other types may exist.

Control

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use this spell to control the thoughts and/or actions of one intelligent being. The magician must succeed in a POW vs. POW resistance roll against the target. Each level of the spell allows the magician to control one being. This spell cannot be used on unintelligent animals. Each attack is independent with a POW vs. POW roll made against each target. The magician must concentrate on the spell, using no other spells or doing anything more than moving slowly and speaking briefly, or the target will simply stand idle. The magician must make an Idea roll if distracted,

The magician controls the movements and speech of the target(s). The target cannot speak or perform any voluntary action other than those specified, but if the magician wishes, the target can speak freely or have a limited range of free actions. Having more than one target do different things requires an Idea roll each combat round to maintain coordination between different targets. If the magician is forced to fight or concentrates on any other activity, the target(s) collapses into sleep. Once control is lost, a collapsed target will revive and regain control with a roll of CON×1. The roll may be attempted once each combat round after collapsing.

If the target is commanded to perform an action it would normally find objectionable, a *Difficult* Idea lets it resist. Success means that the target balks and does not follow the order for one combat round, standing still or otherwise idling. Failure means the target performs the action as required. The action can be commanded again in the following round, with a new Idea roll. If the action commanded is wholly objectionable, such as murder of an ally, the Idea roll is unmodified. If the command is suicidal, the Idea roll is *Easy*. If the result of the Idea roll is a special success, the target breaks free from the Control spell in an obvious fashion. If the result of the Idea roll is a critical success, the target breaks free unbeknownst to the spell's caster.

When the Control spell is done, the target may make an Idea roll. If successful, they remember every detail of actions taken under the spell's influence. They do not necessarily remember who the spellcaster was, unless it is obvious.

Countermagic

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 5 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to create a magical shield around the magician or any desired subject they wish to keep magic from affecting. Any incoming spell must have its level overcome the level of the Countermagic on the resistance table. If the attacking spell's resistance roll succeeds, the spell penetrates the Countermagic, but must still overcome the POW of the target, if required. If it does not require a resistance roll, it acts as if no Countermagic spell was cast. If the Countermagic spell succeeds on the resistance table, the incoming spell has rebounded on the original caster. If that caster has Countermagic on themselves, the spell must overcome that Countermagic to have an effect. Any spell failing to penetrate two Countermagic spells dissipates and is no more. Countermagic protects the target and anything they are carrying, within reason (if in doubt, use the character's STR as a guideline as to how much they can carry).

If the character or object to receive the Countermagic already has a Protection spell, the Countermagic is not effective unless its level overcomes the level(s) of Protection on the resistance table. If successful, both spells take effect. Countermagic is effective vs. Blast and Lightning, but not against Fire or Frost.

Dark

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to dampen all light within a circle 3 meters in radius plus 3 meters per level. This darkness is absolute, and light cannot shine through it. The spell must be cast on an object; it does not hang in mid-air. The affected area is in total darkness to anyone seeing in the normal range of visible light, even if a torch or other light source is active within the spell's radius. Dark can be cast on an object that Light has previously been cast upon. Each level of Dark cancels a single level of Light.

Diminish

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to overcome the target's POW with a resistance roll and reduce their STR, CON, SIZ or DEX by -1 per level of the spell. Pick which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent casts can reduce the same characteristic or affect a different characteristic. This spell affects any attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Characteristics cannot be reduced below 1, and points of Diminish more than that have no further effect.

Dispel

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this power to rid oneself (or another target) of detrimental or positive effects of a spell. Like Countermagic, it must overcome the level of the spell on the resistance table. Dispel must be directed at a particular spell in effect on the target. Identify the spell's effects to be eliminated (if numerous magic effects are in place, the StoryGuide decides which are affected). If the target is protected by Countermagic, it must get through the Countermagic to affect the target. If the Dispel is intended to be effective against multiple spells, the spell's level is rolled against each of them on the resistance table. In the case of multiple targets, the caster must either specify whether the Dispel is intended to work against a single spell or all of them.

If multiple spells are to be dispelled, the one with the highest levels is checked first against the Dispel power on the resistance table. Any effects that are not dispelled remain, and any failure to Dispel a spell means that the Dispel spell ceases working and cannot be pitted against further spells.

Dispel can also be used against someone as they cast another spell, to prevent the spell from being cast. This is handled in the Statement of Intent phase of combat. With a successful Luck roll, a magician who can act in the round, but has not already done so, can abandon their intended action and attempt to use Dispel against a spell as it is cast. Dispel can be used as a held action. To interrupt a spell from being cast, the magician must cast equal or higher levels in Dispel or the Dispel doesn't work.

Dispel can also be used to banish or destroy lesser summoned creatures (elementals or minor demons) or a possessor (for example, a being that has seized control over a host's body using the Control spell). In these cases, the Dispel's

levels are compared against the creature's own POW characteristic. If the creature's POW is overcome on the resistance table, it departs as quickly as possible. If it is a possessing being, the creature flees the host body immediately. If multiple appropriate beings are within the range of the spell, you must clarify which one is being targeted, or all of them are targeted, with the highest POW being the one attempted first. If the Dispel succeeds on the first, it then moves to the second, etc. If it fails, it does not have further effect on any remaining beings.

Dull

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to reduce the attack chance of a weapon by -5% and its damage by -1 point. More than one level can either reduce the attack chance more (to -10%, -15%, etc.) or reduce damage by -2, -3, etc., or it can be distributed equally among several weapons up the level of the spell and within range. If a weapon leaves the range, it is no longer affected. Damage cannot be reduced below 1 point, and a roll of 01% always hits, regardless of modifiers.

Enhance

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to overcome the target's POW in a resistance roll and add +1 to one of the target's STR, CON, SIZ or DEX per level of the spell. Pick which of the target's characteristics will be affected before the spell is cast. Subsequent castings can increase the same characteristic or affect a different characteristic. This will temporarily affect other attributes derived from these characteristics, such as hit points, power points, characteristic rolls, characteristic modifiers, etc. Hit points and power points above the target's normal range are lost.

Fire

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to create a pillar of fire doing 1D6 fire damage to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. Multiple levels may be used to set up several fires instead of one large fire or can

combine the effects.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the affected area. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resistance spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only one combat round unless cast on or consuming something flammable. If so, the blaze continues, damaging anyone or anything within it at the rate of 1D4 points per combat round (see **Fire and Heat**).

Levels of this spell can be used to cancel levels of Frost on the resistance table, but Fire has no effect against other forms of supernatural cold.

Frost

Range: 100 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to create a pillar of intense cold doing 1D6 cold damage per level to everything in a circle 1 meter in diameter. Multiple levels may be used to set up several frosted areas instead of one large one, or can combine the effects.

A target can attempt to dodge out of the affected area. The spell's damage is absorbed by armor, Protection, and Resistance spells, but Countermagic has no effect. The spell lasts only one combat round unless something brittle is frozen. In this case, the brittle item may shatter (see **Cold and Exposure**).

Levels of this spell can be used to cancel levels of Fire on the resistance table, but Frost has no effect against other forms of supernatural flame.

Heal

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 3

This spell heals 1D6 hit points of damage per level. Restoring a character to a positive hit point total with Heal can restore them to life if successfully cast by the end of the round following that in which the victim suffered the mortal wound. Any limbs severed or lost through a major wound or use of the hit location system are still severed or lost, though the hit points are still restored. Heal has no effect on disease, poison, or radiation, though it can restore lost hit points caused by them.

Illusion

Range: 30 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to create up to 3 SIZ points per level of an object's appearance. This is visual only, with no sound, scent, touch, or taste. If touched, it remains but is insubstantial. Illusions can be used to mislead or terrify opponents, or entrap them, disguising walls, concealing traps, etc. The illusion is immobile unless the caster concentrates on the illusion to the exclusion of all else. Those witnessing an illusion may attempt to detect the falsehood in one of several manners, depending on the circumstances:

- If the illusion should have sound, a successful Idea roll reveals it. If the illusion does not need sound, a *Difficult* Spot roll is required to see through it. If some form of sound accompanies the illusion, a *Difficult* Listen or Sense roll is required to notice it is not real.
- If the viewer suspects it is an illusion and attempts to disbelieve it, roll the magician's POW vs. the viewer's INT on the resistance table.

Invisibility

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to turn 3 SIZ per level of an object or another being invisible. Items or living beings cannot be turned partially invisible, though components can if the object consists of more than one "piece".

The magician must concentrate on the spell and must do no more than walk or speak to maintain the invisibility. Fighting, taking injury, using another power, performing some athletic maneuver, or similar distractions break the effects and end the spell. Any attacks against an invisible character or object are at 1/5 the attacker's skill rating. Any parries are equally difficult, requiring a successful Listen, Sense, or Spot roll to even make the attempt. This power does not stop sound or other sensory clues from the target, and successful use of a Listen, Sense, or Spot skill reduces the penalty of attacks to *Difficult* instead of 1/5.

An invisible character can move, attack, flee, or stand still while the spell is active. Invisibility can be dispelled by the magician at any time, though starting it again requires another casting.

Lift

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to lift 3 SIZ per level of an object or being and move it through the air. This spell can be cast on oneself, using it to fly. The target of the spell is moved up to 24 meters per combat round. Each level of the spell above the minimum necessary to move the SIZ add +6 meters movement per combat round. No resistance roll is required for weight equal to or below the number of SIZ affected by the spell (for example, casting Lift 4 allows your character to manipulate up to 12 points of SIZ without needing to make a roll on the resistance table). If the target does not wish to be lifted (or is held by or connected to something), the magician must overcome its POW or SIZ with a resistance roll (StoryGuide choice).

The spell may also be used to slow a falling object that is otherwise too large for the level of the spell. For each level less than needed, the object is slowed as if it were falling that difference times 3 meters, up to a 12-meter reduction.

The spell may also move an object such as cart or sledge along the ground. In this case, each level of the spell can affect 6 SIZ of the targeted object or character. This spell can also be used to throw an object already lifted, with a *Difficult* roll of the caster's Throw skill.

Light

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to illuminate a circle 3 meters per level in radius. This light is around the brightness of a torch or small light bulb. The spell must be cast on an object; it does not hang in mid-air. Light can be cast on an object that has had Dark previously cast upon it, canceling both spells on a level-for-level basis.

Lightning

Range: 60 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to throw a lightning bolt doing 1D6 damage per level directly to the hit points of the desired target (usually a living being). If

cast, the spell will hit if not dodged or parried. If two targets are equally close, the Lightning strikes the target wearing or wielding the most metal. Countermagic protects against the spell, and other insulation may protect the character (StoryGuide's discretion). When used on a metallic object, Lightning has a chance equal to the magician's POW multiplied by its level of traveling (and jumping) along any connected or nearby metallic surface to strike any other characters touching the metal surface for ½ damage. Additionally, it can "fry" any electronic equipment it targets, using the magician's POW against the item's hit points in a resistance roll.

A target can dodge or parry Lightning with a shield. Dodging lightning is *Difficult* if wearing metal armor, and if Lightning is parried successfully with a non-metallic shield, the shield takes the damage, with any remainder carrying over to the target. Parrying Lightning with a metallic shield is useless, as the Lightning conducts through the shield and to the target.

Perception

Range: 60 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to point out the direction of the nearest example of one type of thing (specified by the caster when the spell is cast), such as the nearest trap, secret door, gold, magic, stairway, unfamiliar thoughts, etc. within range. Additional levels let the caster seek out more than one thing at the same time. The StoryGuide can determine if similar things are close enough to count.

For example, Perception 2 can find the closest two traps, or it may find the closest trap and the closest secret door.

Protection

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to add +1 point per level to the target's armor points (even if no armor is worn). Any Countermagic cast upon on the target must overcome the Protection spell on the resistance table. If successful, both spells remain on the target and in effect. At your StoryGuide's discretion, this spell can also provide protection against damage types not normally blocked by armor.

Resistance

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to gain 1 point of resistance per level against damage taken from extremes of temperature or the environment, such as Fire or Frost spells. If the protected character is hit by more than one such attack, each damage roll is reduced by the level of the effect.

Protection and Resistance

Protection and Resistance apparently serve the same purpose: keeping your character from taking damage, but they do differ.

- **Protection** is like armor and is subtracted from any physical damage taken, but it is not effective against environmental extremes.
- **Resistance** lowers the amount of damage taken by environmental extremes (heat, cold), but is not effective against attacks or physical damage.

Some attacks, such as a flaming sword or a falling flaming roof beam, may be affected by both spells at once, with Protection reducing the points of damage from the blade itself, and Resistance reducing the extra damage from the flames.

Seal

Range: Touch

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to bond the edges of any two inanimate objects which are at rest and fitted to one another, such as a door in a door frame, a lid on a box, or a knife in a sheath. The two objects become joined as if they were one object and cannot be separated while the spell is in effect. The objects can be battered open or destroyed, their hit points and other values combined, when applicable. Seal adds +20 hit points to the combined hit point total of the two items.

Each level adds either 15 minutes to the duration of the spell or adds +20 additional hit points to the hit points of the sealed objects. The caster may split levels between these two benefits, deciding how before casting the spell.

Sharpen

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to add +5% to the attack chance and +1 damage to any weapon (including blunt weapons and missile weapons) it is successfully applied to, up to the maximum damage possible using that weapon. Additional levels can either add multiples of +5% and +1 point of damage to the weapon (+10% and +2 damage, +15% and +3 damage, etc.), or can be distributed equally among several weapons, up to the level of the spell and within range.

For example, Sharpen 6 can be used to add +5% and +1 damage to all six bullets in a revolver.

The damage bonus is only applied to the weapon's natural range of damage, with the user's damage modifier (if applicable) applied separately, unmodified by the spell.

Speak to Mind

Range: 100 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to speak to one other mind per level, whether intelligent or not. Only surface conversation or feelings are transmitted, and the target may need to make an Idea roll to understand if not traditionally intelligent. Language is not a barrier to this spell, however. Multiple targets of the spell cannot communicate to each other using this spell, though casting Speak to Mind 1 on a target, lets them communicate with one other mind.

Teleport

Range: 1,000 meters

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use Teleport to instantaneously teleport 3 SIZ per level from its current location to another place within range. Only complete objects can be teleported—it is impossible to teleport a part of a living being away. If an object is not directly affixed to another object, it can be teleported.

For example, a gun can be teleported out of a target's holster, but not the engine block out of a car.

Additional levels above the target's SIZ can be used to increase the range by an additional +1,000 meters. If the target of the spell is affixed to something or is a living being that does not wish to be transported, the caster must overcome the item's hit points (or armor value) vs. their POW on the resistance table. For a living target, the target's POW is the opposing force. A willing target (such as oneself) does not require a resistance roll.

A fumble may send the item or person being teleported into a solid object, perhaps even underground. The caster should attempt a Luck roll if a fumble has been rolled. If the Luck roll is successful, no damage or ill effects are taken, and the teleported character or object narrowly escapes a grim fate. If the roll fails, the unlucky target immediately takes 3D6 points of damage and suffers an injury from the **Major Wound Table**, modified as appropriate.

Attempting to Teleport a foe or item into a solid structure allows the target the same chances as described above (a Luck roll). It costs 3 power points per level to consciously teleport something or someone into a solid structure or object (plus a 0/1D3 Sanity roll). If the subject of the teleportation into a solid substance is another item, your StoryGuide decides what happens. A living being becoming fused with a solid item is usually traumatic, and the target must find some means of extricating themselves from the item or structure (such as another Teleport spell). Failure to do so can cause any Major Wound (as above) to have permanent effect.

Unseal

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to open unlocked doors or boxes and cause weapons to fly out of their sheaths and drop to the ground. It will not undo a locked container, or some object that has been fastened shut. It can be cast to cancel Seal if the level of Unseal overcomes the level of Seal on the resistance table.

Vision

Range: 100/10 meters

Duration: 10 combat rounds

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to see what is happening in any area within 100 meters of a familiar area, or

within 10 meters of an unfamiliar area. This gives full vision and hearing, as if in that area, allowing that point of view to have any mobility they possess, while within the spell's range. A caster physically near an area within the 10-meter range can cast it into that area, regardless of familiarity.

Each additional level allows viewing of a place or events that have transpired for up to +1 additional day. When viewing an area, the caster's perception of time is unaltered—10 combat rounds of the spell take 10 combat rounds to view—but can be ended at any time by the caster.

This spell may also be used to touch an item and receive a vision of its previous user or owner. Each additional level used gives another use or another mental image. When casting, designate how to allocate extra levels. Furthermore, each level of this spell allows a cumulative 10% chance of learning the activating word for a magical device. This spell can only be attempted once for any single object until the spell's skill ranking is increased by at least +5%.

While using the Vision spell, the caster may not use any other spell or the Vision spell's effects end.

Wall

Range: 12 meters

Duration: 15 minutes

Power Point Cost per Level: 1

Use this spell to form a wall-like barrier out of the ground, formed from one particular type of available material that would normally be able to be sculpted into such a wall, such as earth, snow, ice, stone, metal, wood, concrete, gravel, sand, etc. The wall usually appears immediately before the caster to protect them against attacks or attackers, though it can appear anywhere within range. When created, the barrier is 1 square meter per level of the spell. These square meters can be distributed as desired along the dimensions of width, height, and length.

For example, casting Wall 9 and spending 9 power points lets the caster create a wall 3 meters high, 1 meter thick, and 3 meters long or 1 meter high, 1 meter thick, and 9 meters long.

This wall can be shaped in whatever simple form desired, such as a straight or curved wall, a half-sphere, etc.

Regardless of the substance it is made of, a Wall has 30 hit points. Each additional level above and beyond those defining its size adds +30 hit points to its hit point total, though an attacker generally

only needs to destroy one or two 1-meter segments to create adequate space to move through it. At the end of the spell's duration, the Wall dissolves, crumbles, melts, retracts into the earth, or gradually disappears, as appropriate.

If desired, the Wall's 30 hit point value can be based on the guidelines in the **Armor Values of Substances** and **Object SIZ Examples** tables.

Ward

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use Ward to form a protective square of up to nine square meters around the person or object needing guarding or protection. The Ward is defined by four objects (called the wards) enchanted in a preliminary ritual to gain the effect. These wards do not gain any magical enhancement other than being attuned to one another for the purpose of the spell. Ward acts as a combination of Countermagic and Blast. Any power points passing through the region defined by Ward (in either direction) must overcome Countermagic 1. Any object crossing the line from either direction receives Blast 1. Each extra level adds +3 meters to any dimension of the area defined by the ward, or another level of Countermagic and Blast. The spell must be successfully cast to set up the wards and successfully cast again to take them down without harming the caster. The spell's effects last until the wards are moved by the original caster, or destroyed, or the spell is dispelled.

Only the caster may move the ward objects without disturbing the spell. However, Dispel may be cast upon them. Physically interfering with the objects sets off the Countermagic and Blast capabilities, as if the Ward was triggered. If some other means of manipulating the objects is attempted, each ward has 30 hit points and acts as if it had Seal cast upon it.

Wounding

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Power Point Cost per Level: 3

Use this spell to cause 1D6 points of magic damage per level directly to the target. Wounding requires a successful Brawl roll to touch the target in combat, or an Agility roll if not in combat. Either roll becomes *Easy* if the target is unsuspecting. Armor does not protect against this

damage, though any Protection subtracts from the spell's damage. The Brawl attack does not do any damage, regardless of what powers or weapons are being used, and it may be parried, dodged, or blocked as per a normal Brawl attack.



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5. System

The entire purpose of a game system is to answer two questions: “How do the players determine whether they succeed or fail?” and “How well do they succeed or fail?” Basic Roleplaying answers those questions with a clean and intuitive system using dice rolls to simulate the probability of whether an action succeeds or fails, and qualities of success to determine a range of possible outcomes.

Routine actions in routine situations without challenge should almost always succeed. However, when the action becomes dramatic or extraordinary, it’s time to roll dice for the resolution. You will want to know if skills succeed when danger threatens, or if they fail miserably in the face of stress. Dice allow crises and decision points to be resolved impartially without the constant need for intervention of your StoryGuide.

Some skills, especially weapon skills, are inherently dramatic and dangerous, and always are rolled for, as are accidents such as falls. All rolls to determine success or failure use percentage dice (D100s), with lower being better. Other types of dice establish the damage done by various weapons or determine other supporting information. *Chapter 6: Combat* discusses attacking and defending in combat.

Usually, your StoryGuide tells you when to roll and what sort of roll to make— whether it be a skill roll, a resistance table roll, a characteristic roll, etc., but this chapter is useful for everyone who wants to know how the game works.

Actions

Regardless of genre, all good stories (and roleplaying adventures) have one thing in common: conflict. Characters are called upon to accomplish all sorts of things against the odds, from finding and interpreting clues to overcoming enemies in deadly combat.

Percentile rolls determine the success or

failure of actions whose outcome is in doubt. Other dice can help define the results of a roll (damage, etc.), but percentile rolls are the core of the system. To see if an action succeeds, roll D100 and compare the result to the chance, determined by the type of roll and its potential modifiers. If the percentile roll is equal to or less than the target, the action succeeds. Rolls higher than the chance of success fail.

Automatic or Impossible Actions

Not all actions require a die roll. Routine activities attempted under normal conditions should generally succeed unless they’re outside the ability of the characters. No D100 roll is necessary for any action your StoryGuide deems simple or routine, without challenge or conflict.

On the other hand, your StoryGuide may decide that truly overwhelming tasks, like performing heart surgery without medical training or building a computer out of coconuts are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. If your StoryGuide rules that a task is *Impossible*, no die roll will be sufficient—all attempts fail.

Evaluating Success or Failure

Sometimes your character’s efforts can have very different results: a good toss at darts will hit the board, while a lucky or exceptional throw hits the bull’s-eye. There are five degrees of success for any type of action roll. Ranked from worst to best, they are as follows:

Fumble

Bad luck or incompetence sometimes conspire to produce the worst possible result, a spectacular failure called a fumble. A roll of 100 is always a fumble, no matter what the skill rating is. Fumbles never yield any beneficial results, and always end up impeding or even harming your character and/or allies through disastrous or unintended results. *Chapter 3: Skills* and *Chapter 6: Combat* discuss the specific consequences of fumbled rolls.

Failure

Rolls higher than the base chance fail. Unless an action is Automatic, there is always some chance of failure: no matter how high the modified base chance, rolls fail on results of 96 or higher. Some failures cost nothing more than perhaps a little dignity, while others can be expensive in time, money, or physical damage. See *Chapter 3: Skills* for the consequences of failed rolls. The exception are resistance rolls, where a difference of 10 characteristic points is enough to make only a roll of 00 a failure.

Success

Any roll equal to or below the base chance qualifies as a success. Successes accomplish the action with average results. Weapon skills that achieve a success inflict the listed damage dice, and other skills have the results suggested in *Chapter 3: Skills*.

Special Success

Some results are better than average and yield extra benefits. Actions achieve special success if the roll is equal to or less than 1/10 the skill rating. In combat, an attack that rolls a special success can inflict a knockdown or impale based on the type of weapon (see *Chapter 6: Combat* for additional detail), while the skill descriptions in *Chapter 3: Skills* provide guidance for special successes.

Critical Success

Sometimes your character will perform an action so well they achieve extraordinary results. A roll of 1 is a critical success. A critical success yields the best of all possible results. Weapons that critically hit utterly bypass the target's armor and do maximum damage; while skill rolls achieve far better results than normal. Refer to *Chapter 3: Skills* for suggested critical results.

Types of Rolls

Skill Rolls

Most actions your character attempts are resolved with skill rolls. Here, the percentile roll uses your character's rating in the appropriate skill as the chance of success. Any skill which normally has a base chance of 5% or higher always succeeds on a roll of 01–05 chance of success, even if difficulty, conditional modifiers, or other factors reduce the skill rating below 5%. See **Modifying Action Rolls**. See *Chapter 3: Skills* for more information about each skill.

Characteristic Rolls

Some actions are not easily linked to a specific skill: pulling oneself up a rope, for example. For these situations, use a characteristic roll, with a chance of your character's characteristic multiplied by a number. CON, INT, DEX, and CHA are common characteristics to use, and most characteristic rolls have a ×5 multiplier. Your base characteristic rolls were defined in character creation. Depending on the difficulty of the action, your StoryGuide may use a higher or lower multiplier. See **Difficulty Modifiers**.

Special Skill Rolls

Special circumstances may require something other than a standard skill roll. These cases arise when two characters work together, work against each other, or attempt to do two things at once.

Cooperative Skill Rolls

Two or more characters can attempt to work together on an action, if reasonable. This is a type of augment. Your StoryGuide may impose restrictions on how many characters can contribute to a particular activity, as it may be limited by physical or other practical concerns. Some tasks simply cannot be assisted, depending on circumstances.

Whenever working together on an action, pick one character as the lead. All the other characters pitching in should make skill rolls. Take the best result or a fumble, if one occurs.

- **Critical Success:** Modify the primary character's skill rating by +50%.
- **Special Success:** Modify the skill rating by +30%.
- **Success:** Modify the skill rating by +20%.
- **Failure:** If no helpers succeeded, the primary character's skill rating is modified by -10%.
- **Fumble:** A fumble from any helper is so distracting that the primary skill is modified by -50%.

One reason for cooperative skill use is to increase the chance of the primary character's success, as well as the chance of special and critical successes.

If the primary skill roll is successful, everyone involved who made a successful skill roll can make an experience check. If not, no one gets an experience check.

Another reason for cooperative skill use is when direct assistance is not possible, such as helping provide guidance from afar.

Heroic Actions (Opposed Skill Rolls)

Sometimes two characters use skills in direct opposition to each other.

Let everyone involved in the opposed skill check roll as normal (with any applicable modifiers) and compare the results. The highest successful result rolled that is not a critical success is the winner. Any critical is an automatic winner, if multiple criticals are rolled, the active character wins (the one who initiated the action).

For example, if two characters have the same skill rating of 87% and one rolls an 86 and the other rolls a 22, the roll of 86 is the winner. Both rolls are successful, but one has a higher result than the other.

The higher a character's skill at an attempted action, the greater the chance they will defeat less skilled (but still successful) opponents. Ties are resolved by comparing unmodified skill ratings, with the higher skill rating being the winner.

For example, Ruhm the berserker tries to pin Braggo the minstrel against the wall of the tavern using the table they are sitting at. Ruhm will use Brawl (45%) vs. Braggo's Dodge (65%). Whoever rolls the highest while still being a success wins the opposed roll. Ruhm rolls a 43 and Braggo a 27. Ruhm wins the Heroic Action.

Heroic actions allow for many different types of actions vs. NPC's and monsters, let your imagination be the limit!

Modifying Action Rolls

Some actions are easier or harder than others, and sometimes challenging circumstances or lucky breaks help or hinder a character. Skill ratings are often modified based on their circumstances.

There are two main ways action rolls are modified: difficulty modifiers and situational modifiers.

Difficulty Modifiers

Some actions are simple enough that even an unskilled person succeeds without much effort, while others are challenging enough to give an expert pause. When an action itself is easier or more challenging than usual, adjust the skill roll by a difficulty modifier. The standard difficulty levels are: *Automatic, Easy, Average, Difficult, Very Difficult, and Impossible*. These levels can apply to skill rolls, characteristic rolls, or similar rolls.

Difficulty	Roll Adjustment
Automatic	No Roll Needed
Easy	Double Your Skill
Average	0
Difficult	Half Your Skill
Impossible	No Roll Needed

If something is deemed impossible, it can not be done unless some extraordinary tips the action in favor of the hero. Your StoryGuide is the ultimate authority about when an action receives a difficulty modifier.

Automatic Actions

Any activity that is so mundane, routine, or under the most favorable of circumstances and without any drama or conflict can be assumed to be *Automatic*, with no roll necessary to determine whether it succeeds. Everyday physical and intellectual actions attempted under average conditions always succeed, unless there is some reason they should carry the chance of failure. Your character should be able to perform *Automatic* actions at reasonable levels of competency in their chosen profession without needing to roll each time they wish to succeed—rolling for skills are at dramatic or difficult times, when success or failure is of importance to survival or destiny. *Automatic* skill use never yields an experience check.

Easy Actions

Some actions are *Easy*, even for the untrained. Shooting a target at point-blank range, climbing a tree with many handholds, or recalling the most fundamental points of an academic discipline are all *Easy* actions. For an *Easy action*, double the skill rating for the active character. Easy characteristic rolls use a multiplier of $\times 10$ or double the normal characteristic roll. However, success at an Easy skill roll does not merit an experience check.

Average Actions

Most actions fall within this category. If a skill

or characteristic roll doesn't have a modifier before—such as an *Easy Listen* roll—assumed it's *Average*. Use the base rating for *Average* actions, though they may have circumstance modifiers.

Difficult Actions

Fighting an opponent you can't see, climbing a smooth surface, or remembering obscure scientific minutiae are all *Difficult* tasks. To determine the skill rating or characteristic rating for a Difficult action, divide the appropriate skill or characteristic roll in half (round up).

Impossible Actions

As described above, truly overwhelming or ridiculous actions, like performing heart surgery without barber tools or building a bridge out of coconuts, are beyond the abilities of even the most accomplished experts. These are *Impossible* tasks. All attempts fail, no matter how well the player rolls. Your StoryGuide may allow a flat 01% chance of success, depending on the action being attempted, though it is only suggested if the chance of success is within reason, however improbable, the equivalent of a one-in-a-million lucky guess or freak occurrence.

Situational Modifiers

Special or unusual circumstances can affect any skill rating for better or worse. Dim light, loud noises, distractions, rain, or a lack of proper tools provide penalties to skill ratings, while exceptional tools or ideal conditions might provide a bonus. Whenever external factors might affect your character's performance of an action, your gamemaster should weigh the circumstances and apply one or more situational modifiers to the base chance.

The difference between difficulty modifiers and situational modifiers is that difficulty modifiers are usually relating to the character and the attempted action, while situational modifiers are very specifically related to the subject of the action, or to external forces or influences.

If several conditions apply to a given action, apply them judiciously. Any situational modifier is applied after a skill is modified due to being *Difficult* or *Easy*. This way, the modifiers are not doubled or halved. However, any modifiers that are 'permanent', such as the bonus to Brawl from the Unarmed Combat power, are figured into the skill rating before it is doubled or halved. These sorts of modifiers are considered integral to the skill and are modified for difficulty along with the rest of the skill rating.

Take care not to get bogged down in the minutiae of determining situational modifiers. Your gamemaster should assess the severity of circumstances, determine the overall modifier, and let you roll as quickly as possible. Situational modifiers are intended to be tools that add drama to tense situations, not strict guidelines or a checklist attempting to simulate absolute realism.



Situational Modifiers Table

Condition	Description	Modifier
Task Complexity	Unfathomably complex with no apparent solution or guidance	-50%
	No clear solvable condition and/or needlessly complex	-20%
	Relatively straightforward, the solution somewhat apparent	+20%
	Simple, with an obvious solution	+50%
Equipment	No equipment when equipment is required	-50%
	Poor or improvised equipment	-20%
	High-quality equipment and superior supplies	+20%
	Advanced or high-tech equipment and supplies	+50%
Environment	Distracting environment, highly unstable ground, pitch black, stormy, etc.	-50%
	Unpleasant or unsanitary conditions, unsteady footing, darkness, bad weather, etc.	-20%
	Favorable conditions, good footing, plenty of space, relative quiet, etc.	+20%
	Pristine or immaculate environment ideally suited for the task at hand	+50%
Familiarity	Completely alien and beyond human experience	-50%
	Strange and using unfamiliar principles	-20%
	Relatively well-known subject matter	+20%
	Routine and completely familiar	+50%
Range	Far beyond the normal range	-50%
	Outside the range of comfort	-20%
	Well within range	+20%
	Perfectly placed and ideally situated for the attempt	+50%
Time	Nowhere near enough time to perform the task	-50%
	Rushed and stressed about it	-20%
	Plenty of time	+20%
	Activity can be done at leisure, with contemplation and deliberation	+50%
Understanding	No common means of interaction with subject	-50%
	Limited methods of communication available	-20%
	Subject is familiar and amenable to interaction	+20%
	Subject well-known, enthusiastic about interaction	+50%

Fate: Saga Points and Power Points

Saga Points

When a character does something amazing, succeeds or fails at a daring Heroic Action, or makes the other people at the table gasp in awe, the SG may award them a Saga point.

Saga Points can be used to adjust any dice roll. You can use them to fix that natural one you rolled, or adjust a low-damage roll. You can spend it to help another player (if they accept the reroll). It can also be used to adjust a foe's roll as well. The player spending the Saga Point can determine which of the two dice rolls is the one that counts.

A player always starts a game session with at least 1 Saga point.

Power Points and their Uses

Sometimes, you and your StoryGuide are not willing to let the results of a roll be the ultimate arbiter of your character's destiny. If your StoryGuide wishes to allow more player agency in outcomes, power points can be used as a resource to affect the results of rolls and the narrative itself. This allows greater control of die results, and increased effectiveness in play.

Following are some suggested uses of power points to manipulate rolls or narrative:

- Spend 5 power points to gain a Saga Point. This can be declared after the initial roll is made, though the results of the second roll are final. Success with this re-roll does not earn an experience check.
- Spend 3 power points to ignore 1 point of damage from a single attack. These damage points are simply ignored; they do not count toward knockback or other effects. Your StoryGuide may ask you to provide an explanation about how the damage was not suffered, such as 'The steel coin in my front pouch deflected the arrow' or some other reason.

Any use of power points for these is handled

normally, so if reduced to 0 power points, your character is exhausted and faints until regaining at least 1 power point.

Time Scales

Time in the game setting is rarely equivalent to time actually spent playing. Sometimes, your StoryGuide may need to summarize the events of many days in a single sentence, such as "It takes you a week to reach Kowal" while at other times, particularly in combat, a few seconds of time can take several minutes or longer to resolve.

In general, the primary scales of time are **narrative** time, a **scene**, the **turn**, and a **combat round**. The **Significant Time Intervals Table** lists common things that can happen in play, with how long each takes.

Narrative Time (variable)

Due to its flexibility this is the most nebulous of the time scales. It is the time your StoryGuide may be narrating or when you and the other players are out-of-character discussing plans and the situation your characters are in. Most game play occurs in narrative scale. Unless there is a specific reason for it, most actual roleplaying takes place in the narrative time scale as well. When you and your StoryGuide are roleplaying conversations, the narrative time scale most closely resembles real time, where a conversation takes as long to have as it takes to play.

If a game session includes lengthy travel, or periods of activity where exact time is not relevant, time is compressed greatly, generally unobserved outside of narration, and days or even weeks can be skipped over in a line of narration. If large amounts of time are being dealt with in this fashion, your StoryGuide should allow your characters to perform any activities that could fit into this timeframe, within reason. If your characters are free to act during these jumps in time, your StoryGuide should ask you to account for your character's activities in that period.

Scene (variable)

This term describes any sequence that takes place in a specific location and time frame. A scene is an encounter or an instance of story time, where the players begin and end an activity. Scenes can be long or quite short, depending on what and how much happens. Essentially, a scene begins when it is important to pay attention to combat or roleplaying (leaving narrative time) and the scene ends when the characters re-enter narrative time.

Part of or an entire scene can be measured in narrative time, game turns, and combat rounds (described below), or any combination of one or more of the three. Most scenes contain narrative time, while some do not necessarily need to contain game turns or combat rounds. Some scenes, however, might be nothing but combat rounds and/or game turns.

Turn (5 minutes)

The first specific non-variable amount of time is the turn. Each turn equals five minutes (25 combat rounds). Turns are used for general movement when there is no conflict or other event that must be handled in detail. It is also a general amount of time for how long certain skills take to perform, particularly non-combat ones, such as a quick repair or properly cleaning and bandaging a wound. *Chapter 3: Skills* discusses how long skill attempts take to complete, though this can vary dramatically by circumstances.

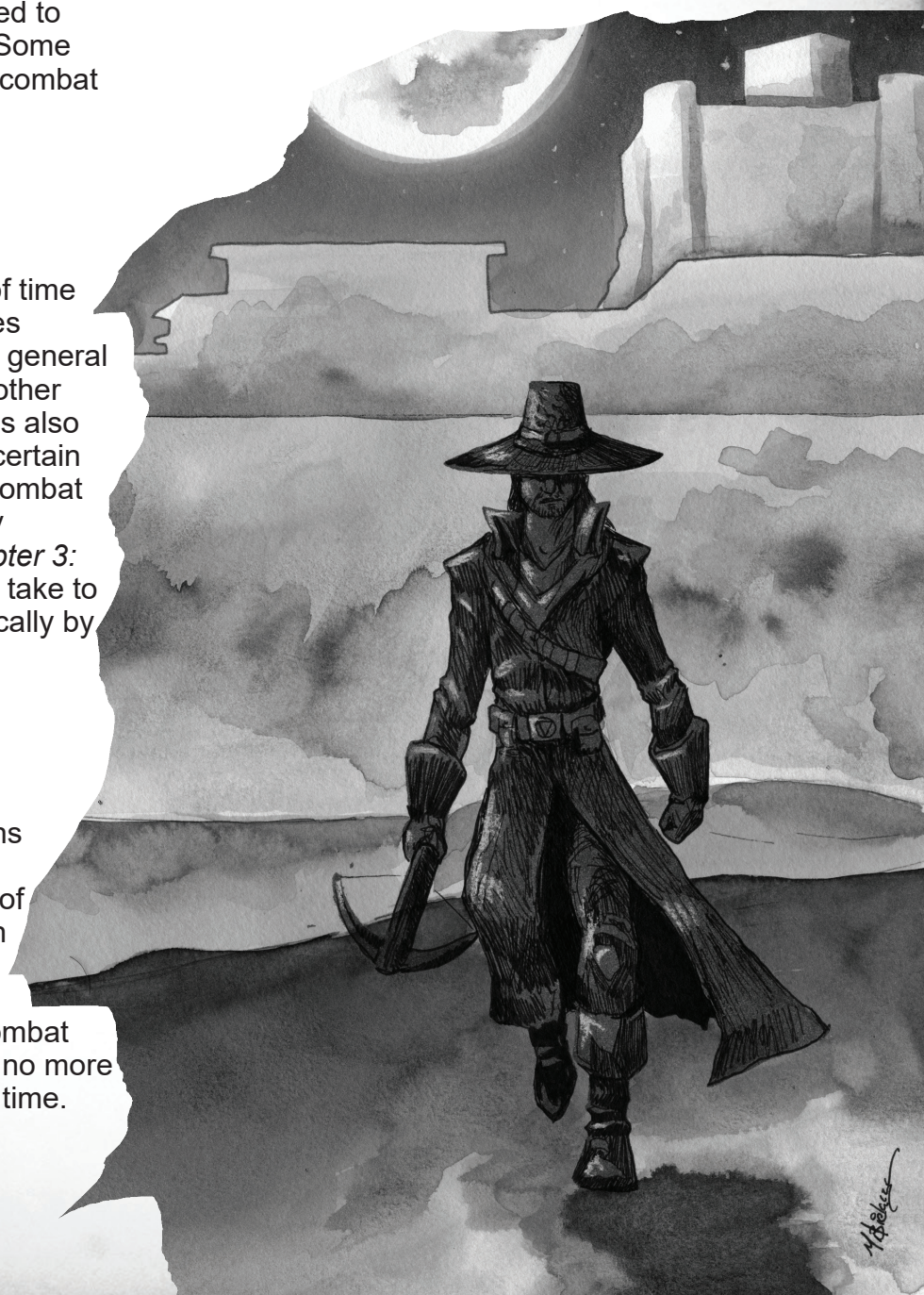
Combat Round (10 seconds)

The combat round defines what happens moment-by-moment in an action sequence (not just combat). It consists of 12 seconds of fast-paced activity. When it's important to keep track of what happens in what order, use combat rounds. These are repeated until the combat or action sequence is over and there is no more need for such detailed consideration of time.

Usually, each character gets one active

(offensive) action and one or more defensive actions in a combat round. If your character does not engage in combat, in one combat round they can move about 30 meters and still be able to watch what is going on nearby, parry incoming blows, and react to emergencies.

See *Chapter 6: Combat* for more detail on what is possible in combat, and **Combat Round Movement** for more information about how fast characters can move in a combat round. Other creatures move faster or slower during a combat round (see *Chapter 11: Creatures*).



Significant Time Intervals Table

Following are useful examples of significant measures of time for things that happen in games:

Activity	Amount of Time
Narrative time	Variable, time spent roleplaying or describing actions
Scene	Variable, can include narrative time, turns, and combat rounds
Game turn (or just 'turn')	Five minutes, or 25 combat rounds
Combat round	Ten seconds
Travel time	Characters can usually travel ten hours of time without significant difficulty, depending on mode of travel, terrain, weather, etc.
Turn	See Game turn, above
Unconsciousness	Usually around one hour, depending on cause
Regenerate 2d4 hit points	Eight hours of rest.
Regenerate 1 power point	One power point per hour of rest, and 1 per two hours awake
Regenerate all power points	One game day (24 hours, or an equivalent)
Training roll, combat skills	Approximately three game weeks
Training roll, non-combat skills	Approximately 12 game weeks or less
Experience rolls	End of the game session

Encumbrance

Encumbrance measures how much weight your character can carry. If your character is unencumbered, they can move faster and lose fatigue points more slowly. If your character is encumbered, they are slowed and lose fatigue points faster. Encumbrance is measured in encumbrance points (ENC). Your character can only easily carry as many points of ENC as they have points in STR and can only maneuver normally for any length of time carrying ENC equal to or less than their average of STR+CON (round up). Some creatures have different ENC limits: beasts of burden might have twice the human capacity, for example.



Time and Movement

Movement Rates by SIZ

Movement is generally rated by the SIZ of a character, but not always. Below is a chart of Average MOV rates based on character or creature size.

Average MOV Rates by SIZ

MOV	3	6	8	10	12	14	16
SIZ	1	2-3	4-6	7-19	20-25	26-30	30-50

It is often important to know precisely how far your character can travel in a game month, a week, a day, an hour, a turn, and most importantly, a combat round. Movement is classified into three categories: **combat round movement**, **local movement (hour)**, and **regional movement (day)**.

- Combat round movement is relatively concrete. It is simply the amount of time your character can move in 10 seconds of game time. Combat round movement rates are described in **Combat Round Movement** and are based on the MOV characteristic.

Combat Round Movement

Characters have a movement rate (MOV) of 10 is equal to 50' of movement per combat round if they are unengaged.

Ten units (MOV 10, 50') represent the maximum sustainable rate of movement for a normal medium bipedal creature. Other creatures have different MOV rates. When distance and rate are important, your StoryGuide can provide a specific measurement, but should try to answer such questions in game terms, such as "It takes you two combat rounds to get there."

Your StoryGuide can also temporarily lower your characters' MOV attribute based on circumstances, such as being overburdened, fatigued, cautious movement, etc.

Movement Rates Table

General Movement						
MOV	6	8	10	12	14	16
Feet per Move Action	30'	40'	50'	60'	70'	80'
One Hour (Overland)						
Walk (On a flat road)	1.5 mi	2 mi	3 mi	4 mi	5 mi	6 mi
Jog (On a flat road)	3 mi	4 mi	6 mi	8 mi	10 mi	12 mi
Walk (Trail, hilly, or mountainous) 75%	1 mi	1.5 mi	2 mi	3 mi	3.5 mi	4.5 mi
Walk (Difficult terrain: no path, steep, swamp) 50%	0.75 mi	1 mi	1.5 mi	2 mi	2.5 mi	3 mi
One Day (Overland)						
Walk (On a flat road)	12 mi	16 mi	24 mi	32 mi	36 mi	45 mi
Walk (Trail, hilly, or mountainous)	9 mi	12 mi	18 mi	24 mi	30 mi	36 mi
Walk (Difficult terrain: no path, steep, swamp)	6 mi	9 mi	12 mi	18 mi	24 mi	30 mi

Character Improvement

Your character's skills and characteristics can and should improve in play, especially when participating in adventures that take more than a day to resolve. These can be raised through training and research, but the primary means of improvement is through successfully using the skills in hazardous situations.

Skill Improvement

Successful use of a skill indicates that your character might be able to improve their rating in that skill. Note that the term 'skill' is used here but refers to anything rated like a skill other than a characteristic roll. Thus, this method also works for magic spells, passions, and even personality traits.

Whenever your character successfully uses a skill in a dramatic situation such as combat or when something is at stake, place a checkmark in the small box next to that skill on your character sheet. This checkmark is called an **experience check**. If a skill roll was *Easy*, no experience check is allowed. If there is no box next to the skill percentile, then the skill cannot be increased through normal experience. (For skills that cannot be increased through experience, black out the checkbox on the character sheet.)

An experience check for a particular skill is made only once per adventure, no matter how many times the skill is successfully used. Skills used before or after the 'adventuring' time are not eligible for experience checks, nor are skills used to augment another if the primary skill roll fails.

If a skill is used successfully, you almost always get an experience check. Something that later undoes the results does not remove an experience check. Your StoryGuide should almost always allow experience checks whenever skills are successfully used in stressful situations. An attack against a helpless target is not a stressful situation and does not deserve an experience check. Likewise, taking an hour to pick a lock in your workshop is not a stressful situation—but doing the same task in one combat round, as guards approach, is a stressful situation, and deserves a check.

In addition to earning experience checks through successful rolls, your StoryGuide may tell you that your character automatically earned a check in the experience box, usually through significant exposure

to the skill being used successfully.

For example, this might be due to being immersed in a foreign language environment for a prolonged period and 'soaking up' some of the basics, or assisting an expert in that skill, paying close attention to what they say and do.

What Does "After an Adventure" Mean?

Your StoryGuide determines when experience checks are made; this is usually after an adventure or significant pause between events, when your characters have had some downtime. If in doubt, assume it's a week. During a long evening's play the characters may earn several moments where they can see if their skills improve.

In this downtime, you may make an experience roll for each experience check on your character sheet.

Making an Experience Roll

The experience roll is a normal percentile roll. Your character's **experience bonus** (equal to 1/2 INT, rounded up) is added to the die roll when determining whether the experience roll succeeded. If the result of an experience roll is higher than your character's current skill rating, then the experience roll succeeds.

The experience bonus is not added to the actual skill points gained, just to the roll to see if there is improvement.

Increasing Skills by Experience

After a successful experience roll add +1D6 to the skill rating. The result of experience varies—your character may learn much from one incident and little from another, no matter how successfully they performed either time. Based on the level of the campaign, your StoryGuide may increase the experience roll to +1D8 for epic or even +1D10 for superhuman, which creates extremely rapid advancement.

If you do not feel lucky rolling for a skill increase, you can choose to add a default of +3 to the skill rating instead of rolling. This must be announced before

rolling. If the die type for the skill increase is higher than 1D6, increase it to half the dice maximum—for 1D8 it's +4, and for 1D10 it's +5.

Skill Training and Research

Though experience is often the best teacher, it is not the only way to improve skills. Instruction from masters of a skill can also increase your character's ability with a skill or even decrease it. Your character can train to improve a skill by getting instruction in it from another character with a higher rating in the same skill. This other character can belong to another player but is usually a nonplayer character. Each skill takes a different sort of teacher and costs different amounts of time and money to learn. Training to high skill ratings can be a lengthy, costly process.

The second method is research, working alone either with a self-designed course of study, deep immersion in the background of the skill, or a rigorous, self-guided disciplined regimen of exercise and physical training to improve one's ability in a physical skill. The StoryGuide should judge whether the resources are adequate for training oneself, and in some cases may rule that a skill cannot be trained alone, such as some Perception skills.

Skill Training

First, your character should find a trainer, ideally between adventures but potentially as a part of one. Some sort of compensation should be arranged, if appropriate, in money, goods, favors, patronage, or in any other acceptable item or service. The type of teacher can range anywhere from a college professor, a wise master, to an interactive holographic tutor.

Your character must then train for hours equal to their current skill rank with the skill. An average character has 50 hours of time per week available for training, but full-time non-stop study is possible. More than double this amount is grueling, and such extended studying hours are counterproductive or have negative effects on other skills or even physical and mental health.

At the end of the training session, the teacher must attempt a Teach skill roll. If their roll is successful, your character improves the skill rating by +1D6 points. A failure equals no benefit from the instruction, and a fumble is counterproductive, with the teacher causing self-doubt and contradicting your character's

prior learnings, reducing the skill by -1D3.

Your StoryGuide may use a dice type to indicate better or worse training opportunities, or even automatically grant an amount increase based on factors in the setting (skill downloads, psychic implanting, past life memories, etc.).

Mastery of a skill requires actual experience outside of the 'classroom'. No skill can be trained above 75%, no matter how good the instructor. Any increase above this must come through successful use of the skill in challenging situations, such as found during an adventure. The StoryGuide may determine that this is not true in a particular setting, such as with secret scrolls of mastery or implanted skills, but the 75% maximum is the default.

Researching

Any skill that can be increased through training can also be increased through research. Research is best described as either self-help or self-tutoring: delving into ancient tomes, scouring databases; disciplined exercise; holographic instructors; or neurological or neuromuscular implanting. In most settings, some form of research is possible for any trainable skill.

Dedicated research takes as much time as training but does not incur the same cost. You should determine any costs based on the setting and the type of training being undertaken.

Researching a Knowledge skill may require additional rolls for appropriate skills like Language, Literacy, and Research. Your character may even need to make a successful roll in the very skill to be researched, to find relevant resources or to be pointed in the right direction. Unless these skills are performed in challenging or hazardous circumstances, no experience checks are awarded for skill rolls made while researching other skills.

After the required time is spent, make an experience roll as normal. If the roll succeeds, increase the skill by 1D6-2 points, or choose to add 2 to the current skill rating. Unlike training, researching allows your character to improve more than 75% in a skill, though your StoryGuide may require you to get 'out in the field' from time to time to alternate book learning with practical experience.

Increasing Characteristics

Skills are not the only things about your character that can improve. Your character can improve their characteristics through a variety of means: POW can increase through being tested against a higher POW, and STR, CON, DEX, and CHA can increase through training and research. INT and SIZ increase only rarely, and in most settings do not change much, though your StoryGuide may allow for increases based on the campaign's setting or actions taken during (or between) adventures.

Any increases to characteristics cause any associated attributes to increase accordingly, including characteristic rolls, damage modifier, experience bonus, hit points (and total hit points and/or hit points by location), major wounds, fatigue points, power points, etc. as appropriate. Sanity points are not increased, though the temporary sanity threshold is.

Generally, characteristics other than POW can't improve beyond 21.

Talents

A StoryGuide awards the heroes with Talent Points at the end of story arcs or adventures. These points can be used to learn new Talents. One or two Talents points per adventure would be the standard reward in a SagaBorn heroic game.

POW Increases

When your character successfully matches their POW against an opponent with equal or greater POW in an opposed roll (when a roll is 50% or less to succeed), they can check for a POW gain just like a skill gain, putting a check in the checkbox next to POW on the character sheet. At the next downtime, when rolling for other Skill increases, you gain +1 to your POW score.

Mana Increases

If a character has mana, it increases whenever it has been used during a game session. A character gains 2 mana at the end of the night when Experience rolls are made.

Characteristic Increases

Your character can train their characteristics to improve them.

Characteristic Increase through Training

Your character may attempt to train their characteristics, taking an amount of time in hours based on the value of the current characteristic. The exact number is the current value for the characteristic multiplied by $\times 25$. This sort of training is rigorous and requires dedication for the entire period: one cannot break it to go adventuring or spend more than a handful of hours a day dedicated to anything else.

At the end of the training period, add +1 to the current value of that characteristic.

You and your StoryGuide should work together to determine the exact type of training required to gain this increase. Your StoryGuide may allow SIZ to be trained, representing a radical change in diet or exercise to increase or decrease mass (if not height, which is usually unable to be modified without surgery).





Combat

M. B. Jones

6. Combat

Combat is a significant part of many adventures. In combat it is important to know exactly what happens when, who can act at a particular time, and what actions are capable in the amount of time provided. This section addresses the wide variety of actions that occur during a combat round.

As described in **Time Scales**, the combat round measures time in a combat or action situation. A combat round is 12 seconds long, and in it, your character can perform actions and react to other actions in an order usually determined by their DEX characteristic; higher DEX characters act before characters with lower DEX. As with skills, actions in combat are determined by rolling D100 to determine the success or failure of attacks, defenses, and other actions.

Combat Round Phases

DEX Initiative

A simple way to determine who goes first during combat is by listing the combatants in order by DEX descending. For ties, player characters always go first, and if it is player characters tied, the players can decide who goes in which order.

Initiative Rolls (Optional)

At the beginning of combat, all player and nonplayer characters roll a D100 and add it to their DEX to find their initiative. Actions occur in order of initiative. This initiative value (DEX+D100) is maintained throughout the entire combat.

The StoryGuide rolls for each nonplayer character and for convenience can roll 1D100 to represent a group of nonplayer characters, if desired, or even break large groups of nonplayer characters into smaller groups with different initiative rolls. A leader or otherwise exceptional nonplayer character may have their own rolls, to distinguish them from the crowd.

As a note, characters will more likely be able to perform second or third actions in a round using this method, which will make combat rounds somewhat longer.

Magic

A character can use magic during their combat turn. What spells or items can be used is dependant on the casting time of the magic.

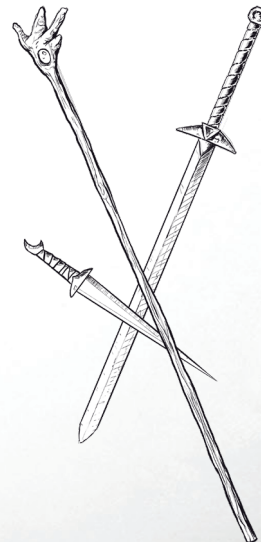
Action

A character in combat is either **engaged** or **unengaged**. An engaged character is within swinging distance of their opponents and is ready to attack or defend when possible. Usually, anyone engaged in combat can act against anyone else in that combat without penalty or requiring any significant movement. An unengaged character is still acting during the combat but performing other actions and outside the range of hand-to-hand combat (or they are in it, but not actively involved).

Actions occur on your character's initiative. Actions can be attacks, parries, dodges, or other actions performed by unengaged characters.

If your character can perform more than one action in a round (some weapons allow for multiple attacks, and combat skill levels in excess of 100% also allow multiple attacks), all actions must be done during your action turn.

Following is a summary of the results of actions within a combat round. Later in this chapter the results for different levels of success (critical and special successes) and different types of attacks will be described in additional detail.



Combat Actions

In SagaBorn, a combat turn may consist of up to 4 actions of these types (in any order, or sometimes simultaneously):

- 1 Move Action
- 1 Standard Action
- 2 Free Actions

Or...

- 1 Full Round Action

Move Action:

- Move
- Heroic Action
- Interact with an object or person (trade items, open an unlocked door, etc.)

Standard Action:

- Attack
- Cast a spell
- Disengage
- Heroic Action
- Interact with an object or person
- Move
- Skill Check
- Stabilize or First Aid

Free Actions:

- Say, shout, or whisper something
- Switch weapons
- Use a Reaction (such as a counterspell)
- Parry
- Dodge
- Other quick actions specified under Talents and Spells

Full Round Action:

- Put out a fire
- Difficult spells and spellcasting abilities
- Use a healing salve

- Move
- Attack
- Noncombat action (open door, unlock chest, disarm trap)
- Engage
- Disengage

At any time during the combat round, your character can:

- Parry or dodge
- Speak

Move

A character can move half their MOV as a Move Action or Standard Action, while still being able to Parry or Dodge. If they use both actions, they will be able to move their full movement in the 10 second round.

Attack

Your character can make an attack against a target on their turn, in addition to moving up to 5 feet (1 MOV). Unless modified otherwise, this attack is performed at the full skill rating.

Noncombat Action

An unengaged character can attempt the use of a skill or power or do some other action not requiring a skill check, such as drawing a weapon or opening a door. Use common sense as to what actions can reasonably be performed in this amount of time and within the degree of movement allowed.

Engage

An unengaged character can move up to 10 feet and make an attack and/or defensive action without penalty, engaging in combat.

Disengage

An engaged character can choose to leave the combat by declaring during the statement phase that they are disengaging. Generally, they do not take any attack actions, but instead are limited only to dodges, parries, and movement actions. If your character is successful in all dodges or parries made during this combat round, they have successfully disengaged from combat and may move their full movement rate away from the battle. If any of these rolls fail, your character is still engaged in combat. Other options are covered in **Disengaging**.

Heroic Action

When a character wants to do something different from a standard attack, such as tackle their opponent, they must succeed at a Heroic Action. A Heroic Action is a player vs. SG contested roll. The highest roll wins. Heroic Actions can also be used for any non-combat actions that would be contested by another creature.

Parry

Anyone armed with a parrying weapon or shield (or using their own body) can block the damage from an

attack. Roll against the relevant combat skill to parry a blow. You do not need to announce this beforehand, and it is done in reaction to a successful attack roll from another combatant.

A successful parry usually deflects all damage from the incoming attack (unless you are parrying with your own body as a form of Martial Arts), reducing successful attacks to misses or reducing the severity of special or critical attacks accordingly. Shield armor points and hit points (AP/HP) are used only when dealing with damage done directly to the shield itself, as in an attack to try and destroy a shield or parrying weapon; when resisting damage vs shield armor points on the resistance table when parrying a crushing blow, or when 2 or 4 hit points of damage are done to the parrying weapon or shield on the **Attack and Defense Matrix**.

Each successive parry attempt after the **first is modified by -30% to the skill rating**, cumulative. If the chance to parry an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot attempt to parry. Under most circumstances, your character can only parry missile weapons with a shield, at the shield's base chance (see **Shields and Missile Fire**). If attempting to parry a thrown weapon with a hand weapon, the chance of parrying must be a special success (1/5 the normal skill rating).

The StoryGuide may rule that a particular attack cannot be parried, such as from a vastly larger attacker (double or more the defender's SIZ, for example) or when the attacker is using an area or sweep attack.

For example, a character with SIZ 15 cannot parry an attack from a brontosaurus of SIZ 72. Instead, the attack must be Dodged or otherwise evaded.

Dodge

Some weapons and attacks cannot be parried and must instead be dodged. Dodges can be attempted against all melee attacks or thrown weapons. As with parries, dodges do not need to be announced prior to the attack roll but are attempted in reaction to a successful attack roll from another character (see Dodge). Each successive dodge attempt after the **first is at a -30% modifier to the skill rating**, cumulative. If the chance to dodge an attack falls below 1%, your character cannot attempt to Dodge.

Fight Defensively

Your character forfeits their ability to attack during a combat round to get one extra Dodge attempt in place of that attack or attacks. This Dodge does not incur

the subsequent cumulative -30% penalty for further Dodge or parry attempts (see **Fighting Defensively**).

Speak

Speech is a free action, and normal conversation or shouted commands do not limit your character's actions in any significant manner. However, if your character is speaking for some time, or a conversation between two characters is ensuing amid the action, your StoryGuide may ask you to keep conversations brief during combat rounds or action sequences.

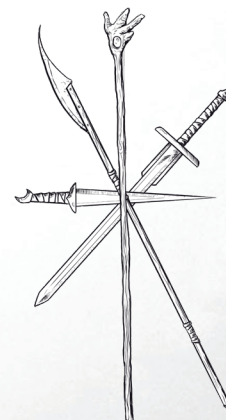
Parries and Dodges

Parries and dodges cannot be combined in a round unless your character is in a completely defensive state. In this case, the -30% modifiers for successive defensive actions include both parries and dodges. Resolution

To make an attack, parry, or dodge, roll percentile dice and compare the result to your character's skill with the weapon or shield being used. Attacks may provoke a dodge or parry, rolled in the same fashion. The success or failure of these rolls is compared to the **Attack and Defense Matrix** to see the result of the combined actions of the attacker and defender.

Basic Combat Summary

Attack Roll	Parry or Dodge Roll	Result
Success	Success	Attacker's blow is deflected or dodged.
Success	Fails	Defender is hit and may lose hit points.
Fails	No roll required	Defender maintains guard, does not need to roll.
Fumbles	No roll required	As per attacker's miss above, plus attacker rolls on fumble table.



Attack and Defense Critical/Special Matrix

Attack Roll	Parry Roll	Dodge Roll	Result
Critical	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges damage, no other result.
Critical	Special	Special	Attack partially deflected or dodged and achieves a success. Attacker strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Critical	Success	Success	Attack marginally deflected and achieves a special success. Attack does full damage** plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 4 points of damage.*
Critical	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage** plus normal damage modifier (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value is bypassed.
Critical	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a critical success. Attack does full damage** plus normal damage modifier (or attacker may choose a special success instead). Defender's armor value does not apply. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Special	Critical	Critical	Defender parries or dodges attack; no other result. If attack is parried, attacking weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Special	Special	Special	Defender parries or dodges attack, no other result.
Special	Success	Success	Attack partially parried or dodged and achieves a normal success. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Parrying weapon or shield takes 2 points of damage.*
Special	Failure	Failure	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage** plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Special	Fumble	Fumble	Attack achieves a special success. Attack does full damage** plus normal damage modifier and appropriate special result. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Success	Critical	Critical	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 2 points of damage.*
Success	Special	Special	Defender blocks or dodges damage; no other result. If parried in melee combat, attacker's weapon takes 1 point of damage.*
Success	Success	Success	Defender blocks or dodges damage, no other result.
Success	Failure	Failure	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage.
Success	Fumble	Fumble	Attack strikes defender and rolls damage normally. Defender's armor value subtracted from damage. Defender rolls on the appropriate fumble table.
Failure	—	—	No damage; no effect.
Fumble	—	—	Attack misses completely and attacker rolls on the appropriate fumble table. Defender unharmed.

* If the parrying weapon or shield is destroyed during the parry attempt, roll the attacking weapon's normal damage and subtract the points of damage used in destroying the parrying weapon or shield. The remaining damage penetrates the parry attempt to damage the defender (armor still protects). If the attacking weapon is destroyed during a successful attack, damage is still inflicted on the defender and the weapon is broken at that moment.

** This is the damage which that type of attack would normally do. This is not the same as 'maximum damage'. For a greatsword, full damage is 2D8 on a normal success, 2D8 bleeding damage on a special success, and on a critical success it does 16 damage ignoring armor. Damage modifier, in all cases, is rolled separately and added afterwards.

Levels of Success and Failure

As with skills, in combat it is often essential to know not only whether an attack or parry succeeded or failed, but also how well it succeeded or how badly it failed.

Critical Success

The best possible roll! As a default, a D100 result equal to 1 is a critical hit. A critical attack means that the weapon does the maximum possible damage for the weapon used (6 for 1D6, 9 for 1D8+1, etc.), plus the normal rolled damage modifier. Unless countered with a critical parry, a critical attack result always ignores armor, even if that armor is all-encompassing. A critical parry can damage the attacking weapon.

For example, if your character has a weapon skill rating of 60%, they achieve a critical success on a roll of 01–03. When this is rolled, your character simply takes the maximum damage the weapon can inflict, rolls the damage modifier as normal, and ignores any armor the target may be wearing, whether natural or powered. If the critical success is with a shortsword that does 1D6+1 damage, and your character's damage modifier is 1D4, the critical damage is 7+1D4 (6+1=7), ignoring the target's armor. If the weapon is a pistol that does 1D10 damage, the damage is 10 and ignores the target's armor.

Your StoryGuides can allow your character to inflict a special success (below) upon a target in place of a critical success, if desired.

Special Success

An exceptional roll. A D100 result equal to 1/10 of your character's skill rating. Often, a special attack means that the weapon does normal damage in addition to a special result based on the weapon's type.

For example, a bludgeoning weapon, like a club, has a knockback/down effect.

A special parry can do damage to an attacking weapon.

For example, with Piercing 60%, your character achieves a special success on a roll of 1-6. This does normal damage (1D8, for example), but in the case of a rapier, also does impaling damage.

Success

A good roll. This is a D100 result equal to or less than your character's skill rating but higher than the result needed for a special or critical success. Attacks are successful if not parried or dodged, and damage is rolled normally, with no damage done to either attacking or parrying weapon.

For example, with a skill of Firearm 60%, your character achieves a normal success on a roll of 13–

60. For a firearm that deals 1D8 points of damage, the normal damage is rolled.

Failure

A poor roll. A D100 result greater than your character's skill rating but less than the highest 1/20 of chance of failure (see Fumble, below). Failing a combat roll means that the attempt failed, but your character can try again later in the same or a following combat round.

For example, with a Piercing skill of 60%, your character fails on a roll of 61–99. No damage is rolled, and your target does not need to attempt to dodge or parry the attack.

Fumble

A disastrous roll! A result of 100 on a roll is a fumble. Often, a fumble indicates a dramatic mishap of some sort, and often forces a roll on the relevant fumble table. See the **Melee Weapon Attacks**, **Melee Weapon Parries**, **Missile Weapon Attacks**, and **Natural Attacks and Parries Fumbles Tables**.

Special Successes and Damage

Different types of weapons do different types of damage upon special successes. There are five types of special damage: bleeding, crushing, entangling, impaling, and knockdown.

- **Bleeding:** A wound resulting in a deep tissue cut into arteries or major organs. Weapons with a sharp edge inflict bleeding damage.
- **Crushing:** A wound involving a blunt trauma to the victim, often breaking bones and stunning the target. Clubs, unarmed strikes, and other blunt weapons can cause crushing damage.
- **Entangling:** Pinning or otherwise ensnaring the target's limbs or body. Flexible weapons, nets, ropes, and those with short, jagged points inflict entangling attacks.
- **Impaling:** A deep wound piercing vital organs or passing entirely through the body of the target. Firearms, arrows, and other pointed weapons inflict impaling damage.
- **Knockback:** A wound that unbalances and possibly sends the target sprawling backwards. Some forms of unarmed attacks and shield attacks cause knockback.

These five types of damage are described in the sections below.

Bleeding

Inflicts 1 point of damage per round until treated.

A special success with a slashing weapon inflicts

bleeding damage on the target, who now has a vein or major artery severed and is rapidly losing blood. This does 1 additional hit point damage on the characters turn each round after the round in which the wound is inflicted. Armor protects against the initial attack, but not against the effects of bleeding.

While in combat, the target may try to staunch the bleeding once per round, essentially putting an empty hand over the wound and applying pressure. At the end of each round, the target can try a Stamina roll to determine if the bleeding stops. If successful, the wound is held closed, and the target will not suffer any more bleeding damage. While doing so, any attacks, parries, or physical actions they attempt are *Difficult*. Attempting to dodge cancels the attempt to stop the bleeding. If unsuccessful, the bleeding continues, and if the target dodges or does any strenuous activity, the bleeding begins again.

The most reliable way to stop bleeding damage is to make a successful First Aid roll on the injury. Success means that the bleeding stops and will not begin anew. Failure for this First Aid roll means that the bleeding continues until the target receives successful medical attention (in the form of a power or another skill like Medicine) or dies from blood loss when they reach 0 hit points.

If the bleeding is stopped for five combat rounds, it stops entirely on its own.

Crushing

Doubles damage modifier and stuns for 1d3 rounds.

A special success with a crushing weapon—a club, staff, mace, or a particularly lucky unarmed strike—inflicts crushing damage upon the target. This is a particularly powerful blow, often causing massive bruising or even broken bones, frequently stunning.

A crushing special success doubles the damage modifier normally applied to the attack. If the attacker has a negative damage modifier, this becomes no damage modifier, and if there is no damage modifier, it becomes +1D4. The weapon's damage is rolled normally, but the damage modifier is increased.

A target suffering a crushing special success must also make a successful Stamina roll or be stunned for 1D3 rounds. Being stunned is a dizzying, disorienting experience, as stars dance in the target's eyes and their head swims from the pain of the sudden blow. A stunned target cannot attack while stunned and can only attempt to dodge or parry an attack if they make a successful Idea roll for each attempt. Furthermore, all attacks against the target are *Easy*. The stunned target can attempt to flee, but to do so requires a successful Idea roll to discern an escape path and a successful Agility roll to get out of danger.

If the target successfully parries against a crushing

special success attack, they risk their weapon or shield breaking. The attacker rolls damage and the increased damage modifier, and compares the damage rolled to the parrying item's current hit points on the resistance table. The active value is the damage inflicted, and the passive value is the item's normal hit points. If the active roll is successful, the parrying item takes all the damage from the blow, and any remaining damage is inflicted on the parrying target. The target may subtract armor protection from the damage done by the crushing blow but cannot further dodge or parry this attack—it automatically hits and the remainder of the damage is inflicted on the target. If the target takes damage, they are subject to the rules for stunning (above).

If the passive roll of the parrying item's hit points is successful, it takes the normal attack damage directly to its hit points. If the parrying item takes more damage than it has hit points, it is destroyed by the attack—broken or shattered, whichever is appropriate—but the blow does not continue to strike the target.

If specific hit locations are being used and the parrying item was a shield, this further damage is automatically applied to the arm the target wore their shield upon, allowing for armor protection, if applicable. If the parrying item was a weapon, the further damage is applied to a random hit location, rolled by the StoryGuide. As above, armor protection is still proof against the continued strike.

Entangling

Slows movement and sometimes prevents attacks.

A special success with an entangling weapon—whip, net, chain, rope, etc.—entangles the target. A successful entangle prevents the target's movement for the rest of the combat round and into the next combat round. This gives the attacker time to close with the target or otherwise subdue them.

This may prevent attacks by the target. Based on the nature of the entangling attack, the StoryGuide may allow an entangled target a Luck roll to determine if they are able to attack.

For example, a whip wrapped around one arm might allow the other arm and leg free attacks, while a lasso might immobilize both arms.

On the round following a successful entangle attack, the target can attempt an Acrobatics roll to free themselves or make a STR vs. STR Heroic Action to attempt to pull the entangling weapon from the attacker's hands. Alternatively, if the entangled target can, they may attempt an attack on the entangling weapon itself, cutting through it, if they have a cutting weapon equipped.

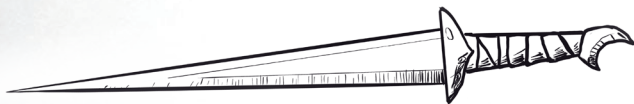
Impaling

Doubles the weapon damage.

A special success with a pointed or thrusting weapon inflicts impaling damage upon the target, piercing deeply within flesh and potentially striking internal organs. An impale doubles the dice and modifier for the weapon's normal rolled damage.

For example, a short sword normally does 1D6+1 points of damage, while an impale with the same weapon does twice that, or 2D6+2 points of damage.

Only the weapon's damage is doubled. If the attacker has a damage modifier, the damage modifier is not doubled, but is instead rolled normally and added to the damage.



Knockback

Knocked back 5' and may end up prone.

A special success with an attack has knocked back the target. The target must also make a successful Agility roll or fall prone (see **Prone**).

Fighting Defensively

If your character forgoes all attacks in a round to fight defensively, they can substitute one free Dodge attempt for their attack and can continue to make dodge or parry attempts.

Normally, each subsequent Dodge or parry attempt is at a cumulative -30% modifier, while fighting defensively, your character can substitute a Dodge skill attempt for an attack without incurring the -30% penalty. If they have already made Dodge attempts and parries and are at a negative modifier, the modifier does not increase. Essentially, it is a free Dodge attempt that does not incur a penalty on the next dodge or parry attempt.

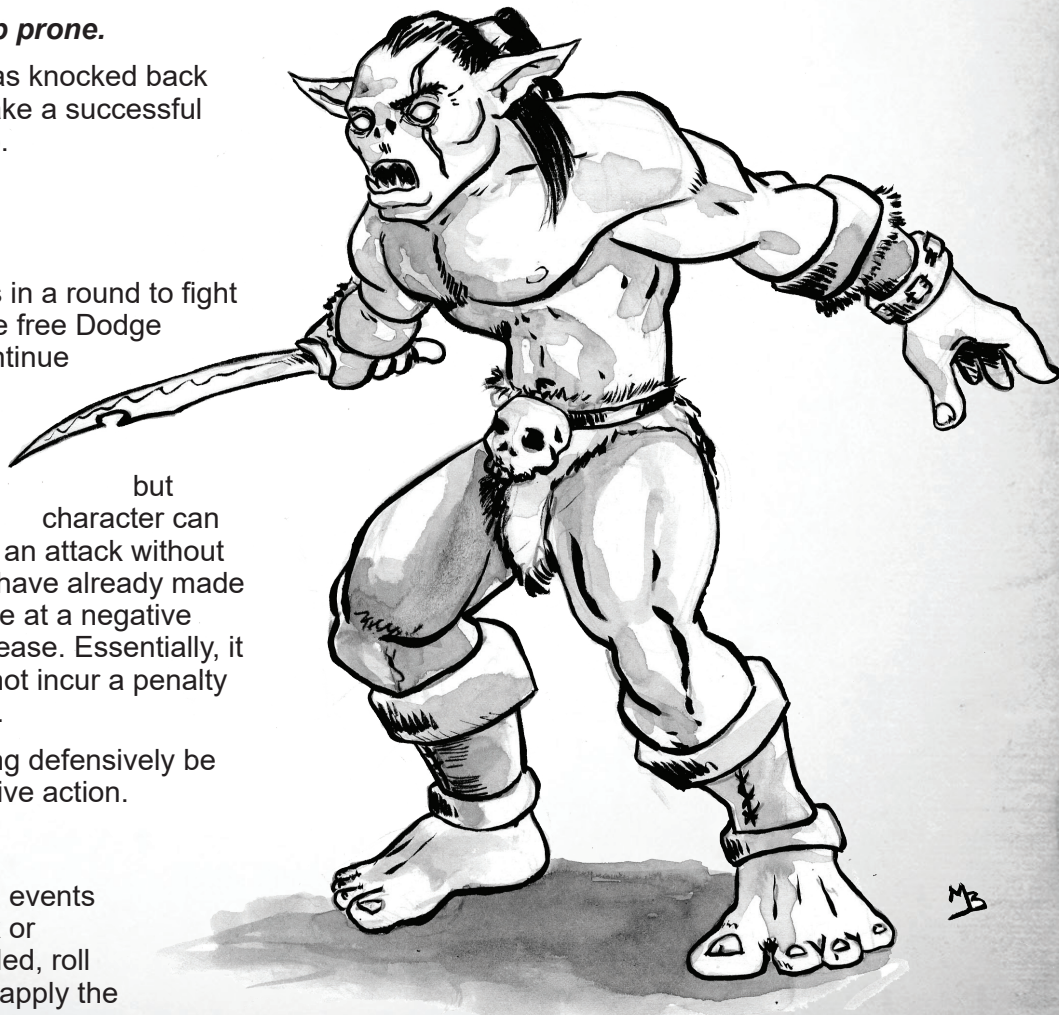
Under no circumstances can fighting defensively be combined with any attack or offensive action.

Fumbles in Combat

Fumbles in combat are unfortunate events or mishaps, attributable to bad luck or inexperience. When a fumble is rolled, roll D100 on the appropriate table and apply the

result. The StoryGuide rolls for nonplayer characters. If the result of the roll is inappropriate, the StoryGuide should adapt it to something that makes sense, or reroll.

There are four fumble tables; use the most appropriate one to the action. Though the **Natural Weapon Attack and Parries Table** is intended to guide the actions of intelligent humanoids; with discretion it can also be useful for natural animals such as bears, wolves, etc. Again, the StoryGuide is encouraged to adapt or reroll unlikely results.



Melee Weapon Attack Fumbles Table

D100	Result
01-40	Nothing bad happens.
41-50	Lose the next combat round.
51-52	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds.
53-60	Fall prone.
61-70	Drop the weapon being used.
71-80	Throw weapon 2D10 feet away.
81-90	Lose 1D10 points of weapon's hit points.
90-92	Vision obscured, modify all appropriate skills by -30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
93-95	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 41-50 if no ally nearby.
96-97	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 51-60 if no ally nearby.
98-99	Hit nearest ally for critical damage or use result 61-65 if no ally nearby.
00	Epic Fail; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Missile Weapon Attack Fumbles Table

D100	Result
01-40	Nothing bad happens.
41-50	Lose the next combat round.
51-52	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds.
53-60	Fall prone.
61-70	Drop weapon; which slides or bounces 1D10 feet away.
71-80	Throw weapon 2D10 feet away.
81-90	Lose 1D6 points of weapon's hit points.
90-92	Vision obscured, modify all appropriate skills by -30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
93-95	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 41-50 if no ally nearby.
96-97	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 51-52 if no ally nearby.
98-99	Hit nearest ally for critical damage or use result 61-70 if no ally nearby.
00	Epic Fail; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Melee Weapon Parry Fumbles Table

D100	Result
1-40	Nothing bad happens.
41-50	Knocked prone.
51-60	Drop weapon being used.
61-70	Weapon or shield knocked 2D10 feet away.
71-80	Lose 1D10 points of weapon or shield's hit points.
81-90	Wide open; foe automatically hits with normal hit.
91-96	Wide open; foe automatically hits with special hit.
97-99	Wide open; foe automatically hits with critical hit.
00	Epic Fail; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Natural Weapon Attack and Parry Fumbles Table

D100	Result
01-40	Nothing bad happens.
41-50	Lose the next combat round.
51-52	Lose the next 1D3 combat rounds.
53-60	Fall prone.
61-70	Fall prone and twist ankle; modify MOV by -1 MOV for 1D10 full turns (and all combat turns within them).
71-80	Miss and strain something; lose 1 hit point.
81-90	Miss and strain something; lose 4 hit points.
90-92	Vision obscured, modify all appropriate skills by -30% for 1D3 combat rounds.
93-95	Hit nearest ally for normal damage or use result 41-50 if no ally nearby.
96-97	Hit nearest ally for special damage or use result 51-60 if no ally nearby.
98-99	Hit nearest ally for critical damage or use result 61-65 if no ally nearby.
00	Epic Fail; roll twice more on this table (cumulative if this result is rolled again).

Armor

Armor is traditionally a form of clothing thick and tough enough to protect from attack. Historically, it was made from leather, bone, wood, and metal appropriate to the period. If an attack is not parried or dodged, armor is all that stands between your character and injury.

Armor's most important aspect is its **armor value (AV)**. The higher the armor value, the better it protects the wearer. The armor value is subtracted from damage inflicted by a successful attack. The subject of the attack has the remaining damage removed from their hit points. If the result after armor value is subtracted is 0 or a negative number, no damage is taken.

Some types of armor can be layered over one another for greater effectiveness. Where shields are also used, a successful shield parry may not be enough to stop a blow, and damage from the attack can potentially pass through the armor value of the shield and to its wielder. In these cases, armor values for both shield and armor are subtracted before the parrying character takes damage.

Disadvantages of Armor

Despite all the advantages, there are negative aspects to wearing armor. The following are the most significant, though the StoryGuide may wish to emphasize some more than others, de-emphasize some of these aspects, or even introduce new conditions based on the setting:

- **Skill Penalties:** Armor can inhibit certain skills, particularly the Agility roll, or other Physical skill group skills such as Climb, Jump, Stealth, and Swim. Additionally, wearing a helmet may limit certain Perception skills. Some armor descriptions in *Chapter 8: Equipment* include negative modifiers to these skills. Weapon skills are unaffected by wearing armor, as armor is crafted specifically to be used in combat.
- **Physical Discomfort:** Armor is heavy, uncomfortable, and inflexible, or at least more-so than normal clothing, and the weight of armor can fatigue and/or encumber its wearer. Fatigue and encumbrance cover clumsiness or any weariness from wearing armor. In desert or other hot environments, armor may be even more uncomfortable..

- **Social Issues:** Many types of armor are difficult to conceal and can be interpreted as hostile in many societies or cultures. Some Communication skills may become *Difficult* based on the situation, as it is often difficult to persuade or manipulate someone when giving the appearance of being ready for violence. Other Communication skills may become *Easy* for the same reason. These situations should be judged by the StoryGuide.

- **Access:** Two other practical aspects limit the use of armor in a game setting: the availability of armor, and whether it fits. Availability should be judged by the StoryGuide and based on the setting.

Chapter 8: Equipment covers all the specific advantages and disadvantages of armor and provides examples of many armor types, ranging from rawhide tunics to personal force fields. Additionally, several powers can modify your character's armor value. These are discussed in *Chapter 4: Powers*.

Armor and SIZ

Finally, not all armor is usable by everyone. Armor is usually rated by the SIZ it was crafted for, with the most comfortable armor being the most formfitting. Loose and ill-fitting armor is just as awkward to wear as armor that is too tight. Each armor type has a 'Fits SIZ' rating, expressed as a \pm that determines the range of character SIZ above and below a particular suit of armor's default SIZ. It is assumed that a character possesses or purchases armor suitable to their own SIZ, if given the choice. If your character's SIZ is outside the range of the armor's SIZ range, the armor cannot be worn.

Generally, the higher the armor value, the less likely it is to fit a character of another SIZ. If your character has an extreme SIZ one way or another (below 8 or above 16), they may be unable to wear much 'off the rack' armor (if it exists) and be forced to pay more for bespoke armor or seek alternative sources for defensive equipment.

Shields

The easiest way to think of a shield is that it is a weapon whose primary purpose is to move between your character and an attacker. Shields do not cover the entire body but are both lighter than body armor and much cheaper and easier to

manage. Shields do not generally lose hit points when struck by normal blows, and they are not very easy to knock free from a defender's grasp. Usually, only powerful blows (special successes or better) will damage a shield, and the only way to lose one is through a fumble.

Different types of shields are described in *Chapter 8: Equipment*. Unlike weapon types, all shields use the same Shield skill, and the same skill rating applies to any shield used. Your character parries melee attacks with their shield just as they would a hand weapon.

Your character can also use a shield to attack an opponent. The chance is the same as your character's Shield skill rating, as shield training usually incorporates offensive use as well as defensive. Shields generally use the knockback as their special success, though some types of shields are spiked and can use the impaling special successes.

Damage & Healing

Hit points measure the amount of injury your character can take and survive. When your character loses hit points through injury, this is called **damage**. You start with hit points based on your CON and SIZ characteristics, and these are reduced by the amount of damage you take. Wounds or other injuries, poisons, disease, and other forms of attack may cost your character hit points in damage. You keep track of wounds on your character sheet.

Poison and disease are special sorts of injury; they may attack randomly, and their effects may be delayed. Some cost hit points, while others target characteristic points or have other effects. The First Aid and Medicine skills can lessen or heal minor wounds and injuries. Various powers and gear can also restore hit points to characters.

Healing Naturally

Most living creatures heal naturally, given enough time and a relatively stress-free environment. Your character will normally heal 2d4 hit points per 8 hours of in game rest. Your character will keep healing during rest until all their hit points have been restored.

The First Aid or Medicine skills or other remedies can speed recovery. A successful First Aid roll immediately restores 1D4 hit points per wound or

injury. The Medicine skill may be used to offset the effects of major wounds (described earlier) and can be used to restore hit points lost through means other than injuries. A wide variety of healing kits and other means (such as healing powers) can be utilized to aid in the healing process.



Marketplace

This chapter covers everything outside of your character: items that they can own and interact with, such as money, weapons, armor, equipment, vehicles, and the environment itself, mundane or exceptional. Here also are rules for special types of gear and how to handle equipment in play.

Equipment

The coins of Atheles are gold pieces (gp), silver pieces (sp), and copper pieces (cp). The exchange rates are 10sp=1gp, and 10cp=1sp. The most common coin is the gold drac, a very small golden coin with a dragon's head on it.

Each player gets 1d4 x 10 + 20 gp at character creation.

Goods	Cost	Weight
Adventurer's clothing	1 gp	2 lbs
Animal glue	5 sp	1/5 lb
Astrolab	100 gp	6 lbs
Backpack (empty)	2 gp	2 lbs
Backpack, masterwork	40 gp	4 lbs
Bedroll	1 sp	5 lbs
Blanket, winter	5 sp	3 lbs
Belt pouch	1 gp	1/5 lb
Bottle	2 gp	1 lb
Caltrops	5 sp	1 lb
Candle	1 cp	—
Case, map or scroll	1 gp	1/2 lb
Cauldron	1 gp	5 lbs
Chain (10')	30 gp	2 lbs
Chalk	1 cp	—
Chest, small	2 gp	25 lbs
Chest, large	10 gp	100 lbs
Cloak	2 gp	2 lbs
Cloak, leather	10 gp	5 lbs
Creature Compendium	25 gp	2 lbs
Crowbar	2 gp	5 lbs
Fishing kit	5 sp	3 lbs
Flint and steel	1 gp	—
Grappling hook	1 gp	4 lbs
Hammer	5 sp	2 lbs
Hammock	1 sp	3 lbs
Ink and quill	8 gp	—
Iron spike	5 cp	1 lb

Journal	10 gp	1 lb
Ladder	1 gp	20 lbs
Lamp	5 sp	1 lb
Lantern	1 gp	1 lb
Lantern, bullseye	12 gp	3 lbs
Lantern, hooded	7 gp	2 lbs
Lock (very simple)	20 gp	1 lb
Lock (average)	40 gp	1 lb
Lock (good)	80 gp	1 lb
Lock (exceptional)	150 gp	1 lb
Lock Box 10"x6"x4"	15 gp	1 lb
Magnifying glass	100 gp	—
Manacles	15 gp	2 lbs
Map, local	15 gp	--
Map, world	35 gp	--
Mirror, small steel	10 gp	1/2 lb
Mug	2 cp	1 lb
Oil (1 pint)	5 sp	1 lb
Paper	4 sp	—
Piton	1 sp	1/2 lb
Pot	8 sp	4 lbs
Rations, trail (per day)	5 sp	1 lb
Rope, hemp (50')	1 gp	10 lbs
Rope, silk (50')	10 gp	5 lbs
Sack (empty)	1 sp	1/2 lb ¹
Salt (1lb)	5 gp	1 lb
Saw	4 cp	2 lbs
Sewing needle	5 sp	—
Signet ring	5 gp	—
Shovel	2 gp	8 lbs
Soap (per lb)	5 sp	1 lb
Sledge	1 gp	10 lbs
Spyglass	100 gp	1 lb
Tent, small	10 gp	20 lbs
Tent, medium	15 gp	30 lbs
Tent, large	30 gp	40 lbs
Tent, pavilion	100 gp	50 lbs
Tent, leather (upgrade)	+20% base tent cost	+20% base tent weight
Torch	1 cp	1 lbs
Twine (50 ft)	1 cp	1/2 lb
Waterskin	1 gp	4 lbs
Whetstone	2 cp	1 lb

Equipment Descriptions

Adventurer's clothing: Simple clothing for those who travel.

Animal glue: Glue made from natural substances. It can be used to hold things in place.

Astrolab: An instrument used for navigating the sea. When used during seafaring, it gives +1 Expertise to any Skill checks involving navigation.

Backpack, masterwork: A well crafted backpack that allows the user to carry an extra 20 lbs. without affecting encumbrance.

Caltrops: When dispersed on a surface, caltrops do 1d4 damage to anything that moves over them. Caltrops have a DC20 to be seen with an Awareness check.

Candle: A lit candle lights 10 ft. x 10 ft. space.

Cloak, leather: Leather cloaks are often used where acid rain falls. These cloaks prevent the damaging rain from harming the wearer.

Creature Compendium: A book written by monster hunters Etahn and Delgon. Owners of the book gain +2 to Knowledge checks about creatures and monsters.

Crowbar: A crowbar gives an adventurer a +2 bonus to Str checks when prying open objects.

Fishing kit: When near water, a fishing kit gives a +1 bonus to Survival checks when gathering food.

Grappling hook: A grappling hook is attached to the end of a rope and used for climbing. A ranged attack vs. AC or DC is often used to determine the outcome of grappling hook use.

Ladder: A ladder gives a +10 Expertise bonus to climbing.

Lamp: A metal and glass lamp, filled with oil, illuminates a 30 ft x 30 ft area. Lamps are fragile and are meant to be stationery in a room. For travel, a lantern is recommended.

Lantern: A metal light source which uses oil as its fuel. It is easily carried and illuminates a 30 ft. x 30 ft. area.

Lantern, bullseye: A lantern with internal steel mirrors which focus the light into a beam. A bullseye lantern lights a 50 ft. cone from the bearer.

Lantern, hooded: A lantern with metal sliding plates that allow the light to be hidden at will.

Lock: A device used to fasten a door, lid, etc. closed.

Lock Quality	Open: Fine Manipulation	Break: Athletics	HP
Very simple	Easy	Easy	10
Average	Standard	Standard	20
Good	Difficult	Difficult	30

Magnifying glass: A magnifying glass gives a +1 bonus to Awareness checks while searching any area for small details.

Manacles: Iron or steel cuffs for fastening hands or feet. Manacles require a lock.

Map: A map gives a +1 Expertise bonus to any Skill checks involving geography, landmarks, or navigating the area in which the map illustrates.

Piton: A metal spike to aid in climbing. A piton allows the player to climb without risk of damage from falling. On average, one piton must be used every 10 ft.

Rations, trail: Enough food for one person for one day. Often includes hardtack bread, jerked meat, and dried fruits or vegetables.

Rope: A rope gives a +4 Expertise bonus to climbing as long as it is securely attached.

Spyglass: A spyglass gives a +1 Expertise bonus to any Skill check used to spot or search the distance.

Tent: A tent gives shelter to those who reside in it.

Tent, Leather: A leather tent is heavier but resists damage from the strange weather of Atheles.

Torch: A torch burns for 1 hour and illuminates a 20' radius.

Goods or Services	Cost	Weight	Goods or Services	Cost	Weight
Inn Food and Drink			Inn Food and Drink		
Ale; gallon	2 sp	8 lb	Good	5 sp	N/A
Ale; pint	4 cp	1 lb	Common	3 sp	N/A
Bread, per loaf	2 cp	½ lb	Poor	1 sp	N/A
Cheese, hunk of	1 sp	½ lb	Meat, chunk of	3 sp	½ lb
Inn stay (per day)			Wine		
Good	2 gp	N/A	Common (pitcher)	2 sp	6 lbs
Common	4 sp	N/A	Fine (bottle)	10 gp	1½ lb
Poor	1 sp	N/A	Mead (bottle)	1 gp	1 lb
Pipe leaf			Liquor		
Varga Leaf (Pipe)	1 gp	1 lb	Liquor, shot	2 sp	1 oz.
Tabac Leaf	5 sp	1 lb	Liquor (bottle)	3 gp	3 lbs
			Liquor (cask)	25 gp	75 lbs

Tools, Traps, and Kits

Tools, and Kits		
Climber's kit	80 gp	5 lbs
Climber's kit (masterwork)	320 gp	5 lbs
Cooking kit	3 gp	16 lbs
Healer's kit	50 gp	1 lb
Healer's kit (masterwork)	100 gp	1 lb
Musical instrument	5 gp	Varies 1-8 lb
Musical instrument (masterwork)	100 gp	Varies 1-8 lb
Thieves' tools	30 gp	1 lb
Thieves' tools (masterwork)	100 gp	2 lbs
Tinker's kit	100 gp	3 lbs

Climber's kit: A climber's kit gives a +2 bonus to all Athletics checks involving climbing or rappelling. A masterwork kit gives +4.

Healer's kit: A healer's kit is a leather pouch containing bandages, splints, and other tools. As a Standard Action, you can expend 1 use of the kit to stabilize a being with 0 Hit Points or less. This gives a disabled character a +10 bonus to their next Stabilizing roll. If the roll is successful, it allows the healed character to immediately become mobile, as stated in the Disabled and Stabilizing rules.

A masterwork kit has 10 uses and gives a +20 bonus to their Stabilizing roll.

Musical instrument: A musical instrument is a

near-must for a bard, but can be purchased by any adventurer looking to entertain themselves and their companions. They give no bonuses unless the SG deems otherwise.

Thieves' tools Thieves' tools allow a character with the right Skills to Disable Traps and Pick Locks.

Masterwork thieves' tools provide a +1 bonus to Disable Traps and Pick Locks.

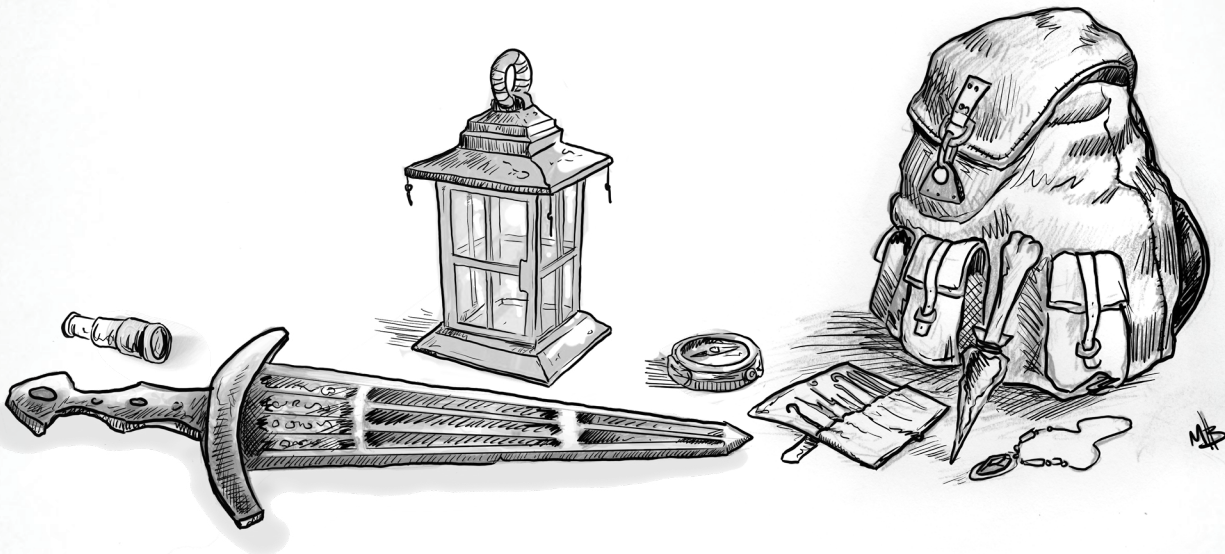
Tinker's kit: Allows a person to create and set traps

Traps

The numbers below can apply to any of the wide variety of traps that are possible.

Basic Trap Stats

CV	Average Damage	Attack	Base Skill Difficulty (Spot, Fine Manip.)	Base Cost
CV1	1d6	25%	Easy	25 gp
CV2	2d6	50%	Standard	50 gp
CV3	3d6	65%	Standard	100 gp
CV4	4d6	80%	Difficult	200 gp



Armory

Weapons

Each weapon has the following attributes:

- **Name:** The common name for the weapon.
- **Skill:** The skill used to wield it.
- **Base:** The base chance to use the weapon.
- **Dmg:** The damage done by the weapon. A '+dm' indicates damage modifier, and +1/2dm is half the damage modifier (round up).
- **Special:** What type of special success does the weapon do?
- **Weight:** The weapon's SIZ and Encumbrance value.
- **Reach/Range:** The basic range of the

weapon. At its basic range, the skill is unmodified. At medium range (double the basic range), the skill use becomes *Difficult*, and at long range (four times basic range) it becomes 1/5 the normal skill rating (equal to the chance of a special).

- **HP:** The weapon's hit points.
- **Cost:** What is the weapon's average cost in an appropriate setting?
- **STR/DEX:** What are the minimum STR and DEX required to use the weapon?

Type of weapons: P for piercing, S for slashing, B for bludgeoning, and 2H for two-handed.

Weapon	Skill	Base %	Damage	Special	Weight	Cost	HP	Reach/Range	STR/DEX
<i>Light Weapons</i>									
Dagger	P	15	1d4	Impaling	1 lb	2 gp	15	5'/20'	4/4
Stiletto	P	15	1d4	Impaling	1 lb	4 gp	15	5'/0	4/4
<i>Medium Weapons</i>									
Blackjack	B	15	2d6*	Bleeding	2 lbs	1 gp	10	5'/0	7/7
Broadsword	S	15	1d8	Bleeding	4 lbs	12 gp	20	5'/0	9/7
Club	B	15	1d6	Crushing	4 lbs	5 sp	10	5'/0	9/7
Handaxe	S	15	1d6	Bleeding	3 lbs	6 gp	10	5'/0	9/7
Mace	B	15	1d6	Crushing	5 lbs	9 gp	20	5'/0	7/7
Quarterstaff	B / 2H	15	1d6	Crushing	4 lbs	-	20	5'/0	7/9
Rapier	P	15	1d6	Impaling	2 lbs	20 gp	15	5'/0	7/13
Scimitar	S	15	1d6	Crushing	4 lbs	15 gp	19	5'/0	8/8
Short spear	P	15	1d6	Impaling	3 lbs	1 gp	15	10'/40'	9/9
Short sword	P	15	1d6	Impaling	2 lbs	10 gp	20	5'/0	5/5
Wrist razors	P / S	15	1d6	Bleeding or Impaling	2 lbs	12 gp	15	5'/0	7/7
Whip	S	15	1d4	Entangle	2 lbs	2 gp	4	10'/0	9/10
<i>Large Weapons</i>									
Battleaxe	S	15	1d8	Bleeding	6 lbs	10 gp	15	5'/0	9/9
Bastard sword	S / 1H / 2H	15	1d8	Bleeding	6 lbs	35 gp	20	5'/0	13 or 9/9
Dworven waraxe	S / 2H	15	2d8	Bleeding	12 lbs	50 gp	20	5'/0	12/9
Longsword	S	15	1d8	Bleeding	4 lbs	15 gp	15	5'/0	7/9
Falchion	S / 2H	15	1d8	Bleeding	8 lbs	20 gp	20	5'/0	7/11
Morningstar	B / P	15	1d8	Crushing or Impaling	6 lbs	8 gp	12	5'/0	11/7
Long Spear	P / 2H	15	1d8	Impaling	9 lbs	5 gp	18	10'/0	11/7
Trident	P	15	1d8	Impaling	4 lbs	15 gp	18	10'/0	9/7
Warhammer	B	15	1d8	Crushing	5 lbs	12 gp	20	5'/0	11/9
Greataxe	S / 2H	15	2d8	Bleeding	12 lbs	20 gp	20	5'/0	11/9
Great sword	S / 2H	15	2d8	Bleeding	8 lbs	25 gp	18	5'/0	14/13
Halberd	P / S / 2H	15	3d6	Bleeding or Impaling	12 lbs	10 gp	25	10'/0	13/9
Sword staff	S / 2H	15	2d6	Bleeding	7 lbs	20 gp	20	10'/0	10/7
Whip, iron chain	S	15	1d6	Entangle	3 lbs	15 gp	20	10'/0	11/12
<i>Ranged Weapons</i>									
Weapon	Skill	Base%	Damage	Special	Weight	Cost	HP	Range / Max Range (-10)	STR/DEX
Bolas	R	15	1d3	Entangle	2 lbs	5 gp	5	30' / 50'	7/7
Sling	R	15	1d4		0 lb	2 sp	5	50' / 100'	7/7
Crossbow, hand	R	15	1d6	Impaling	2 lbs	100 gp	10	30' / 120'	9/7
Crossbow	R	15	2d4	Impaling	8 lbs	45 gp	14	100' / 300'	11/7
Shortbow	R	15	1d6	Impaling	2 lbs	30 gp	10	65' / 300'	9/7
Longbow	R	15	1d8	Impaling	3 lbs	75 gp	10	110' / 400'	11/9
Net	R	10	—	Entangle	2 lbs	15 gp		15'/25'	

* Non-lethal damage only.

Ammunition				
Ammo	Weight	Cost	Type	Special
Arrows or bolts (20)	2 lbs	1 gp	P	
Bullets, sling (10)	3 lbs	1 sp	B	
Silver arrow or bolt (10)	3 lbs	5 gp	P	
Cold iron arrows or bolts (10)	5 lbs	2 gp	P	
Barbed cold iron arrows or bolts (10)	6 lbs	7 gp	P	+1d4 to remove
Aradan steel arrows or bolts (10)	1 lb	10 gp	P	
Amarnium arrows or bolts (10)	1/2 lb	20 gp	P	
Tritium arrows or bolts (10)	2 lbs	60 gp	P	
Alchemist fire arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	10 gp	P	+1d6 + fire
Acid arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	6 gp	P	+1d4 acid (2 rounds)
Blackrock arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	10 gp	P	+1d8 (unstable see Blackrock)
Healing salve arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	30 gp	P	Heals target 1d4+2
Oil arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	1 gp	P	Makes Object Flammable
Snare arrow or bolt	1/2 lb	10 gp	P	Slows target by 1/2

Weapon Descriptions

The following are all weapons from the melee and missile weapon tables, organized alphabetically.

Axe, Battle: A one-handed axe used primarily in combat. It may have one blade or two.

Axe, Great: A large, two-handed axe that either may be single or double-bladed.

Blackjack: A small sewn leather sack full of something heavy like lead shot, used to knock someone out when attacking from behind. Also called a sap or cosh.

Bola: Two or three hard balls attached together by a length of cord or chain. This weapon is thrown to entangle and bring down a foe, with damage a secondary concern.

Boomerang: A flat, angle-shaped stick made to be thrown in a curving path. It was traditionally used by aboriginal hunters to stun or kill small animals.

Bow, Composite: A bow made of materials that make it both rigid and flexible. Historical versions are made of wood and horn, and modern varieties are made with graphite and ultralight metals.

Bow, Long: A bow made either from one piece of wood (such as the famous English longbow), or in the same fashion as a composite bow.

Club, Heavy: A long heavy piece of wood or metal.

Crossbow: This crossbow can be cocked by hand, mostly used for hunting or stealth, rather than on the

battlefield.

Once the magazine is exhausted, the repeating crossbow takes at least six combat rounds to reload.

Dagger: A short-bladed weapon, usually less than 40 centimeters long, sharp on one or both edges.

Dart: Short, weighted points suitable for throwing, either feathered or plain. They are often used to deliver poison.

Flail: A flail head mounted on the end of a short chain connected to a haft about a meter long, or longer.

Flail, Morningstar: A medieval weapon with a handle, a length of chain, and a spiked ball at the end. Some do not have spikes and are simply weighted or studded balls at the end of the chains.

Halberd: An broad axe head on a two-meter shaft. Commonly used by medieval city guardsmen or against mounted foes.

Hammer, Sledge: A heavy tool used by construction workers and demolition crews, used two-handed.

Hammer, War: Designed like a hammer, this weapon often has a spike rather than a flat head, ideal for punching through armor.

Knife: A tool suitable for eating, cutting, defense, or impromptu assassination. Like a dagger, though lighter and less durable.

Lance: A long spear used one-handed on horseback. While mounted, the attacker uses the mount's damage modifier in place of their own. Lances can

also be used on foot as a two-handed spear, with its normal damage modifier.

Mace, Heavy: A haft with a heavy weight for the head, spiked, flanged, studded, or plain.

Mace, Light: A haft with a light weight used to bash and crush.

Maul, War: A long-handled two-headed hammer used two-handed.

Net: A loose mesh of woven cord used to catch animals or larger targets. While smaller nets are used for small game, the net described here is large enough for use against humans.

Rapier: A slender-bladed one-handed sword, primarily used for thrusting. Though each is unique, this also describes the epee and foil, two other fencing swords.

Saber: A single-edged, curved sword, used most commonly by mounted cavalry and in fencing.

Scimitar: A single-edged, slightly curved, heavy-bladed sword.

Sling: A leather thong with a cup or recess to hold a rock or sling stone, whirled and thrown with incredible force at the target.

Spear, Short: A length of wood roughly 1.5 meters long, with a metal- or flint- bladed head or a fire-hardened point. Short spears can be used one- or two-handed, or thrown.

Staff, Quarter: A long wooden staff often used as a walking staff, useful for defense and attacking.

Sword, Bastard: A straight, single- or double-edged sword, over a meter long, with a long hilt wielded one- or two-handed.

Sword, Broad: A straight, single- or double-edged sword around a meter long, used one-handed. Some have basket hilts.

Sword, Great: A straight, double-edged sword almost two meters long, used two-handed, often against pike formations.

Sword, Long: A straight, single- or double-edged sword, sometimes with a basket hilt, used one-handed. Lighter and slenderer than a broadsword.

Sword, Short: A single or double-edged sword, usually a half-meter long.

Trident: A three-tined spear, like a fork, with curving side-prongs. Tridents usually have barbed points to hook into their target's flesh.

Whip: A coiled and woven leather rope with a handle

at one end, used to lash an opponent or catch and immobilize a limb (see **Entangling**).



Armor

At a basic level, armor is hardened clothing. Depending on the setting, armor is made of leather, metal, plastic, or some combination of these materials, and it is worn to have something protective between oneself and a source of harm. Armor is heavier than normal clothing and frequently uncomfortable and awkward to wear. If your character is a warrior, they are likely to be more comfortable in armor than the average person, though wearing armor is rarely more comfortable than not wearing armor.

Armor described in this section is categorized loosely chronologically, for reference. In most cases, armor from an earlier period is available to people from later periods, so your StoryGuide may choose where armor availability stops and allow your character access to prior types.

Each type of armor has the following attributes:

- Name: The common name.
- AV: The armor value, the amount the armor protects.
- Cost: The average cost to purchase.
- Skill Modifier: A modifier to certain skills or skill categories while the armor is worn, also applied to any appropriate skill.
- Fits SIZ: The variance the armor's default SIZ can accommodate from its default SIZ, expressed as a positive or negative value.
- Weight: How much it weighs.

Unlike weapons and shields, armor generally does not suffer damage, unless by environmental factors. Armor is designed for defense; it can take a lot of pounding. Armor value is never reduced through damage in combat—instead, any change to armor value must come from some exceptional event.

Armor	AV bonus	Cost	Skill Modifier	Fits SIZ	Weight
<i>Light Armor</i>					
Clothing, Heavy	1	5 gp	None	+3	10 lbs
Hide	1	4 gp	None	+3	12 lbs
Leather, Soft	1	10 gp	None	+2	15 lbs
Leather, Hard	2	15 gp	-10% to Physical	+1	15 lbs
Studded leather	4	25 gp	-15% to Physical	+1	20 lbs
Chain shirt	5	100 gp	-15% to Physical	+1	25 lbs
<i>Medium Armor</i>					
Ring mail	5	60 gp	-15% to Physical	+1	30 lbs
Scale mail	6	50 gp	-15% to Physical	+1	35 lbs
Chainmail	7	150 gp	-20% to Physical	-2	40 lbs
Breastplate	7	200 gp	-15% to Physical	-1	30 lbs
<i>Heavy Armor</i>					
Splint mail	6	200 gp	-15% to Physical	+1	45 lbs
Half-plate	7	600 gp	-20% to Physical	-1	50 lbs
Full plate	8	1,500 gp	-25% to Physical	-1	60 lbs

Shields

A shield is a defensive item carried in one hand. It may be made from different materials that provide different practical benefits, e.g., steel can not catch fire, and wood does not rust.

Buckler: A small shield strapped to the arm to provide some extra armor without impeding the use of that arm. You may still fire two-handed ranged weapons, swing two-handed swords, and fight with dual weapons.

Mid-size shield: These give you 1-3 AV bonuses.

Tower shield: A very large shield that gives an additional bonus if you spend a Standard Action to set it. Once a tower shield is set, it gives the defender a concealment bonus.

Shields								
Shield	Skill	Base%	AV	HP	Special	Cost	Weight	STR/DEX
Buckler	Shield	15	1	15	Knockback	1 gp	2 lbs	5/7
Shield, light wooden	Shield	15	2	18	Knockback	3 gp	5 lbs	8/8
Shield, light steel	Shield	15	2	20	Knockback	12 gp	6 lbs	9/9
Shield, heavy wooden	Shield	15	3	20	Knockback	7 gp	10 lbs	10/8
Shield, heavy steel	Shield	15	3	22	Knockback	25 gp	15 lbs	11/9
Shield, spiked	Shield	15	3	20	Impaling	30 gp	15 lbs	9/9
Shield, tower	Shield	15	4	26	Knockback	50 gp	45 lbs	12/8

Siege Weapons*

Weapon	Range	Damage	Space / Tonnage	HP	Can be turret mounted	Rate of Fire per full round	Quick Reload DC	# Personnel Min/Max	Price
Light ballista	240'	2d6	10x5 / 1/4	15		1/2	13	1/2	400 gp
Medium ballista	160'	3d6	10x10 / 2	20		1/3	27	2/3	600 gp
Heavy ballista	80'	4d6	15x15 / 3	35	X	1/4	57	4/5	800 gp
Light catapult	100'-200'	3d6	10x5 / 1	20		1/5	13	1/2	500 gp
Medium catapult	100'-200'	4d6	10x10 / 2	30		1/6	32	3/4	700 gp
Heavy catapult	100'-200'	5d6	15x15 / 3	40	X	1/8	72	5/5	1000 gp
Turret	Small		15x15 / 1						1000 gp
Turret	Med		20x20 / 1						2000 gp

*Siege weapons bypass AV

Alchemical Substances and Poisons:

Alchemical Substances			
Item	Cost	Weight	Effects
Acid	10 gp	1 lb	
Alchemist's Fire	20 gp	1 lb	
Antitoxin	50 gp	—	
Black Rock	40 gp	1 oz	
Healing Salve	30 gp	1 lb	Heals target 1d4+2
Smokestick	25 gp	1/2 lb	
Totem Bag (1 use)	45 gp	1.2 lb	
Universal Solvent	25 gp	—	

Acid: Corrosive acid deals 1d6 damage per round of exposure. In the case of total immersion (such as being pushed into a vat of acid) deals 10d6 points of damage per round. You can throw a flask of acid as a splash weapon. Treat this as a ranged touch attack. A direct hit deals full 1d6 damage for 1d6 rounds, and every creature within 5 ft. of the point where the acid hits take 1 point of acid damage from the splash for 1 round. *Range: 10 ft.*

Alchemist's Fire: You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this as a ranged Touch Attack. A direct hit deals full 1d6 damage for 1d6 rounds, and every creature within 5 ft. of the point where the flask hits take 1 point of fire damage from the splash for 1 round. *Range: 10 ft.*

If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking additional damage. A DC 12 Reflex save extinguishes the flames. Rolling on the ground provides a +2 bonus on the save. Submerging in water or magically extinguishing the flames prevents further damage.

Antitoxin: Drink to gain a +5 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saving throws against poison for 1 hour.

Black Rock: Highly volatile. Black rock deals 1d8 damage per ounce. Anytime a skill check or attack roll is used in conjunction with black rock or a device that uses black rock, rolling a natural 1 means the black rock explodes, damaging the user.

Healing Salve: When healing salve is applied over a wound, it greatly accelerates the healing process. Heal 1d4+2. Takes one Standard Action to apply.

Smokestick: This alchemically treated wooden stick can instantly create thick, opaque smoke when ignited. The smoke fills a 10 ft. cube. Treat the effect as a Fog Cloud spell, except that a moderate or stronger wind dissipates the smoke in 1 round. The stick is consumed after 1 round, and the smoke dissipates naturally over 3 minutes.

Totem Bag: Contains herbs and ingredients that grant +2 to saves versus magic when imbibed. Lasts 3 minutes.

Universal Solvent: This substance has the unique property of being able to dissolve most glues. Universal solvent can be used to free 1 person from anything sticky, including giant spider webs or spells.

Vehicles	
Saddle	15 gp
Animal armor/barding	Same as character armor
Cart	15 gp
Wagon, covered	25 gp
Wagon, elaborate	35 gp
Wagon, caravan	400 gp
Wagon, giant caravan	1,000 gp
Ships	
Rowboat	50 gp
Cog	3,000 gp
Longship	10,000 gp
Galleon	30,000 gp
Warship	65,000 gp

Mounts, Pets, and Vehicles

Name	Speed	Str	HP	Combat	Can Enter Dungeons*	Cost
Ank	20 ft	+4	37	Bite 50%melee (1d8+4)	Yes	300 gp
Dog, guard	40 ft	+1	6	45% (1d4+1)	Yes	25 gp
Donkey	30 ft	+0	11	45%(1d2)	Yes	8 gp
Horse, heavy	50 ft	+3	19	(2)45% (1d6+3)	No	200 gp
Horse, light	60 ft	+2	15	(2) 45% (1d6+2)	No	75 gp
Orillot	30 ft	+10	85	Gore 65% (2d6+10) or slam +65% (2d8+10)	No	1,000 gp
Pony	40 ft	+1	13	+2 (1d4)	No	30 gp
Sarap	60 ft	+9	38	2 talons 45% (2d6+9) and bite 45% (1d8+9)	No	600 gp
Thundrom	50 ft	+5	19	Bite 45% (1d6 + 5) and slam +0 (1d8 + 2)	No	350 gp
Warhorse, heavy	40 ft	+4	30	2 hooves 45%(1d6+4)	No	400 gp
Warhorse, light	50 ft	+3	24	2 hooves 45% (1d6+3)	No	150 gp

*This describes the general inclinations of the creature, but it is up to the SG and party to decide based on the circumstances.

Selling Items

Items commonly sell for 1/2 their listed price.

Mastercraft Items

Mastercraft items are created with superior materials and craftsmanship. The cost for a mastercraft item is **4x the listed cost**.

Mastercraft tools grant a +5% bonus to any roll using the item.

A mastercraft weapon has double Hit Points.

Mastercraft armor negates 5% of any negative Skill Modifier based on armor type.

Items crafted with special materials tritium, Aradan steel, amarnium, and elfwood may only be mastercraft items and the crafting price includes mastercraft crafting cost. Cold iron and silvered weapons can be of normal quality or mastercraft.

Metals

Precious metals

Gold and silver are the standard currency in most states and kingdoms of Atheles, but there are some other metals of note.

Iron, steel, and cold iron

Iron and steel are common in Atheles and are used to ward against magic. Steel causes damage to magic users and magic creatures (details below). Cold Iron is forged specifically to ward against magic and fey creatures.

Magic and metal:

If casting magic, iron or steel causes these effects:

Iron: On skin, 1d4 damage per mana. In skin, 1d8

damage per mana. On body but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc.), slight irritation.

Steel: On skin, 1d3 damage per mana. In skin, 1d6 damage per mana. On body but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc.), no effect.

Species Allergies:

Elves and Feral Elflings:

Steel: On skin, 1d2 damage per hour. In skin, 1d4 per hour. On body, but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc.), no effect.

Cold iron: On skin, 1d3 damage per hour. In skin, 1d6 per hour. On body, but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc.), discomfort.

Elfling and Faun:

Steel: No effect, but some discomfort if handled with bare skin.

Cold iron: On skin, 1d2 damage per hour. In skin, 1d4 per hour. On body, but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc), no effect.

Cold Iron

Cold iron is a raw, unworked metal and is much more difficult to craft into weapons than steel. Steel can trap or harm magical creatures and fey, but cold iron can be forged into weapons and armor specifically to fight magic. Cold iron weapons must be crafted by skilled smiths and forged with the intent to harm creatures of magic. Cold iron armor will protect against the spells of mages, while cold iron shackles can stop even a powerful wizard from using magic.

If casting magic, cold iron causes these effects:

Cold Iron: On skin, caster takes 1d6+3 damage per mana. In skin, 2d6+6 per mana. On body, but covered (wrapped, leather bound, etc), 1d4 per mana.

Bonuses: Medium or heavy armor made from cold iron provides +2 to AC vs ranged magic attacks. Cold iron weapons bypass damage reduction on certain creatures (like Navirites and other fey). Cold iron ammunition causes 2d6+6 extra damage per spell mana to a spellcasting mage.

Price for cold iron items

Type of Cold Iron Item	Item Cost Modifier
All	x2

Aradan Steel

The means to make this metal were lost long ago, with the fall of the Aradani Kingdom. But rare weapons and artifacts survive from those times. Many items of Aradan steel were made to battle the forces of the Warlock King, and to this day hold power against forces of evil.

Aradan steel is recognizable with its dull blue-gray color, and some swear it glows in the presence of true evil. Aradan Steel is also effective against creatures summoned from the Navirim.

* Unlike regular steel, a spellcaster may touch or carry Aradan steel during magic use without taking damage. Normal armor restrictions do apply.

** Aradan steel artifacts are rare, and since the means to create it have been lost, no new items of Aradan steel may be crafted.

Bonuses*: Aradan steel items weigh half that of their steel counterparts. Does not affect spellcasting. Weapons and ammunition do +1d4 additional damage to all Navirites. +2d4 additional damage to reavers, ghuls, and other creatures created during the Aradan War. Aradan steel armor makes you immune to possession.

*All Aradan steel items are considered mastercraft and include mastercraft bonuses.

Type of Aradan steel item	Item worth modifier
Ammunition	+10 gp
Light armor	+500 gp
Medium armor	+2,000 gp
Heavy armor	+4,500 gp
Shield	+500 gp
Other items	+250 gp/lb

Amarnium

This is a very rare metal created from a silver-like ore. It is light but strong, and after being forged, is nearly impossible to destroy. It takes a master smith to make even the most basic items with this metal, and very few can forge it into weapons and armor. Elves and dwarves, having learned smithing long ago from the gods, are more adept with this metal. It is a satin silver color, but can be polished to a super high gloss.

Amarnium does not affect any races with metal allergies.

Bonuses*: Amarnium items weigh half that of their steel counterparts. Amarnium does not affect spellcasting or Fey. A spellcaster may touch or carry amarnium without taking damage during magic use.

*All amarnium items are considered mastercraft and include mastercraft bonuses.

Type of amarnium item	Item cost modifier
Ammunition	+20 gp
Light armor	+1,000 gp
Medium armor	+4,000 gp
Heavy armor	+9,000 gp
Shield	+1,000 gp
Other items	+500 gp/lb

Tritium

This is a strong metal which has come into more common use in the Fourth Age. It is moderately rare and expensive, but is not as rare as amarnium. It takes a master blacksmith to work with this metal. Its color is a lustrous silver, and it resists corrosion and damage. It does not interfere with magic in the same way as steel.

Bonuses*: Tritium armor negates critical hits. Tritium shields are unbreakable. Tritium weapons and ammunition cause critical hits, as normal, to wearers of tritium armor. If a mage wears tritium armor and casts a spell, they only take 1 damage per mana.

*All tritium items are considered mastercraft and include mastercraft bonuses.

Type of tritium item	Item cost modifier
Ammunition	+60 gp
Light armor	+5,000 gp
Medium armor	+10,000 gp
Heavy armor	+15,000 gp
Weapon	+3,000 gp
Shield	+2,000 gp

Silver

Metal weapons can be infused with silver by master smiths. This allows the weapon to strike supernatural creatures and ignore specific damage reduction.

Cost: add 100 gp to the cost of a silvered weapon.

Special Materials

Elfwood

Elfwood is a special wood material crafted by the elves which is as strong as steel but does not hurt those of Fey blood or interfere with magic.

Elves make weapons, tools, and armors out of elfwood. It is a great material for bladed and piercing weapons, but is less ideal for bludgeoning weapons.

Elfwood cannot be fashioned into chainmail. Scalemail, banded, breastplates, and plate armor can be made of elfwood.

Bonuses*: Stats are identical to mastercraft steel. Weighs half of steel. +1 to max Dex bonus. Unlike steel, a spellcaster may touch or carry Elfwood during magic use without taking damage. Normal armor restrictions do apply.

*All elfwood items count as mastercraft and include mastercraft bonuses.

Negatives: Flammable.

Cost: Elfwood is common to elves, but most elves will not offer it to outsiders. Due to this, Elfwood items sell for 8x outside of elven communities. Elves in good standing with their community can get elfwood for 2x the cost of standard metal items.

Legacy Items

Certain items gain power as the adventurer gains levels. These items are part of the adventurer's story. A Legacy item may be the famed sword the hero is never seen without; the rogue's lucky lockpicks; the rope their mother gave them that reminds them of home.

Each player should work with their SG to choose a Legacy item for their character at level 1 as a part of their backstory, which will grow in strength as they grow in skill. If a player does not choose a Legacy item at level 1, they can choose any time along their journey that they see fit.

More about Legacy items can be found in the Gaining Levels chapter.

Magic Items

Magic is rare in Atheles. Magical items are even rarer. Legacy items, growing in power, as they do, fill the role magic items might fill in other games. Players should not, therefore, discover magical weapons and relics in a chest at the bottom of every dungeon.

If magical items are found, they should have limitations, drawbacks, curses, or only a few charges.

Repairing Equipment

If an item has been damaged in the course of play, your StoryGuide should determine if it can be repaired, based on common sense and the nature of the damage dealt. In most cases, a relevant Repair or Craft skill roll may be used like the First Aid skill, restoring damaged hit points or SIZ points as per the guidelines for that skill. In the case of complex equipment, your StoryGuide may require a Knowledge roll to find a resource for replacement components, or even require an *Easy* skill roll based on the repair skill being used to locate the necessary parts. If these components are expensive, your StoryGuide may require a Renown roll to legitimately obtain required replacements.

Repairing equipment costs half-again the items's normal cost. This may be adjusted based on circumstances, such as your character's relationship with the craftsman, the availability of materials needed for repairs, and the nature of the damage. Equipment that has been wholly destroyed can be repaired at the full cost of the item.



RENOWN

Renown is a measure of a character's reputation in the world. Great acts or deeds add to a character's Renown, becoming part of the character's Saga. Depending on the deed, the renown gained could be viewed as fame or infamy, and the exact repercussions or bonuses may depend on those the hero is interacting with. Regardless of type, characters with high renown are respected by those they encounter. They may be able to command higher prices for their services or be granted special privileges. In addition, certain skill checks may be more successful than those of lesser-known characters.

Renown	Standing within the World
1	People you have met remember you.
2-3	In your social circles, people discuss your deeds.
4-5	Locals have heard stories about you.
6-7	People familiar with you tell stories about you.
8-9	Your stories have started to filter throughout the lands surrounding your adventures.
10-11	Bard and minstrels carry news of you throughout the lands.
11-12	Songs are written about you.
13-15	You carry sway over the masses.
16-19	Kings and Queens fear your power.
20+	You are legend.

USING RENOWN

When dealing with non-player characters, a character may use their Renown to add to Persuasion skills. You may add 1/2 your Renown (rounded up) to any Persuasion skill check. The SG will decide if the Renown gives a bonus or a negative to the roll based on what the character's past deeds were.

Example

Deed

Pherilyn fought the Tinyfoot goblins, evicting them from their cavernous lair. +1 Renown

Renown as Fame

When shopping in the nearby town, his deeds have

made the roads safer, so he uses his Renown as a bonus in Persuasion checks and may even receive a discount on goods.

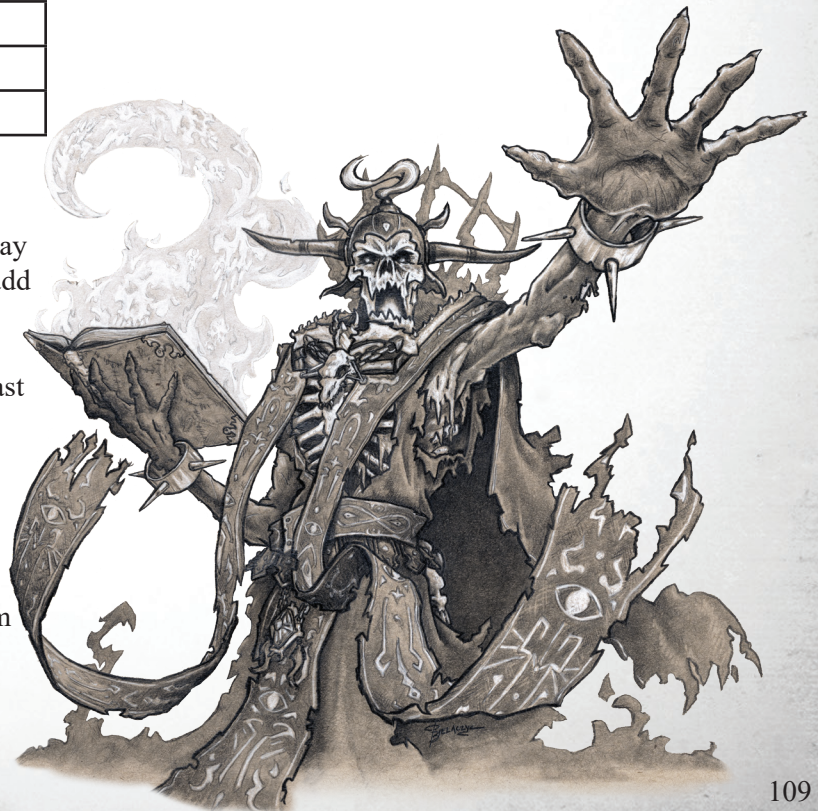
Renown as Infamy

Years later, Pherilyn encounters the goblins again, and their chief Ma One-Toe remembers Pherilyn. His Renown would count as a disadvantage with any interactions with the goblin tribe.

Recognizing Renown

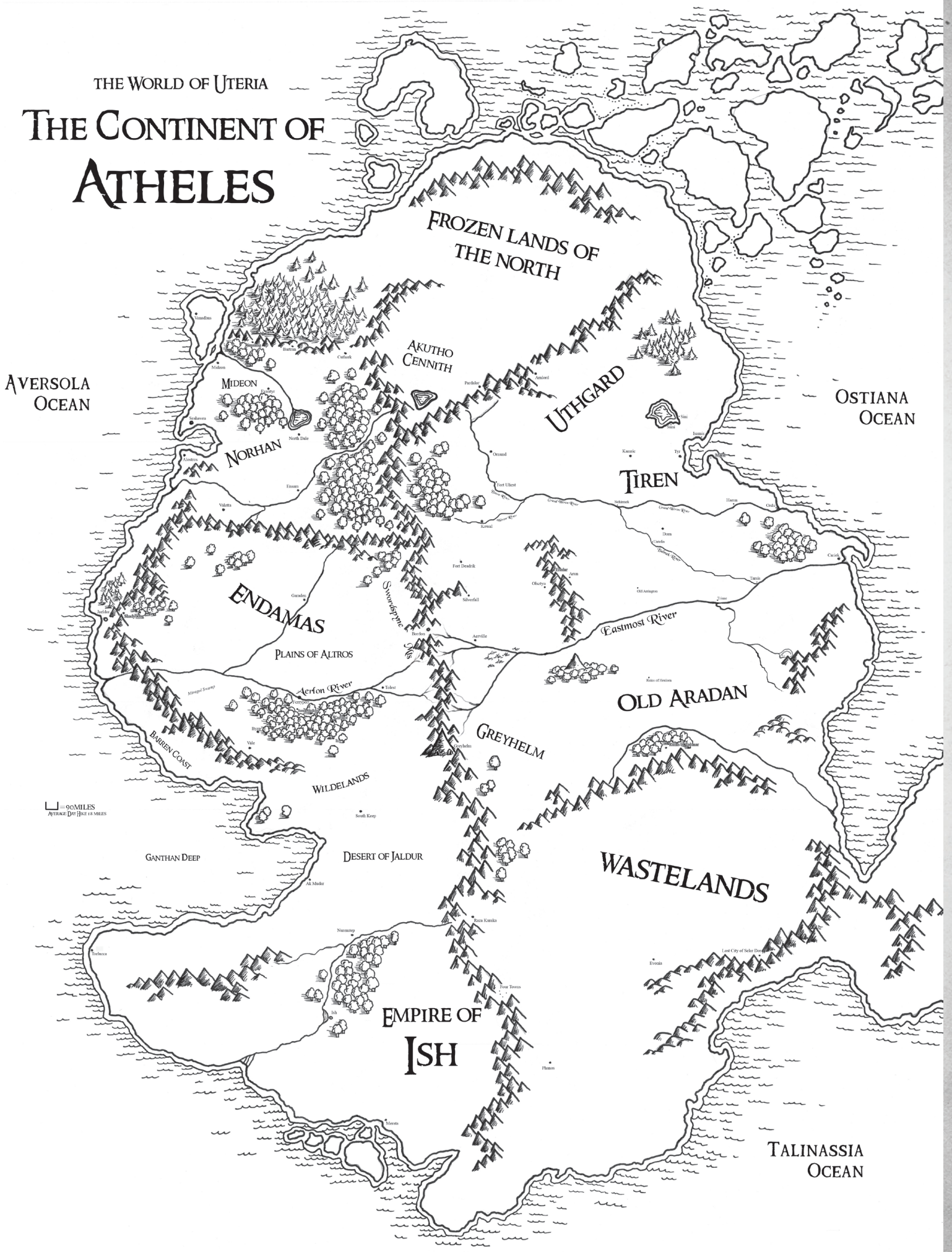
To find out if the character's renown proceeds them, roll a d20. If the result is their Renown or lower, they and their deeds are known to those who made the check.

The character may wish to hide their identity or deeds. Or they may try and exaggerate tales about themselves to seem more important. How Renown is used can vary widely but should come down to a decision between the player and the SG, and should make the game more fun for the players.



THE WORLD OF UTERIA

THE CONTINENT OF ATHELES



FROZEN LANDS OF THE NORTH

AVERSOLA OCEAN

OSTIANA OCEAN

MIDEON

AKUTHO CENNITH

UTHGARD

NORHAN

TIREN

ENDAMAS

PLAINS OF ALTIROS

OLD ARADAN

GREYHELM

WILDELANDS

WASTELANDS

GANTHAN DEEP

DESERT OF JALDUR

EMPIRE OF ISH

TALINASSIA OCEAN

50 MILES
80 KILOMETERS

LEGEND

▲ MOUNTAINS
— RIVERS
■ FORESTS

Into the World

Excerpts from "The Guide to Uteria; A View of a Strange, Dark World." by Aledyn Wayfarer, Druid

UTERIA

Uteria is a world that has been ravaged by the dark and irresponsible use of magic. Vast swaths of land have been left desolate by the Great War, while others have been plagued with disease, famine, and mutations. Some lands have been less affected by the destruction, but none have escaped unscathed.

Magic had disappeared from Uteria for hundreds of years and was therefore viewed as a myth by ordinary folk. It has only recently begun to return in the last few decades. When encountered, magic is usually met with fear, awe, and suspicion.

Uteria is impoverished by centuries of plague and misfortune, so most people do not own a sword or a bow. They are farmers and merchants, and for most, their supplies run thin. They do not have gold to toss around, instead relying on small amounts of silver to buy meals or pay for seeds. Those who venture into the wilds in search of ruins and treasure often find death before they discover riches.

The world of Uteria has many continents, peoples, and stories, but this story takes place on the continent of Atheles.

ATHELES

Atheles is a continent in the world of Uteria. Filled with diverse people, plants, and animals, a single book is not enough to describe it. The name Atheles is taken from the old elven word Ath'eles which means imperfect. The lands are commonly divided into regions, referred to as the Northlands, Westlands, Eastlands, and Southlands. This simplicity is due to the turbulent years that have scarred the lands and peoples. Since the Great War and the Disappearance, the land has fallen to darkness. Plagues, war, and lack of resources dwindled the people of the world into a shadow of their former selves. The last 30 years have seen significant changes to the continent. Nations and peoples have banded together to rebuild the world. Modeled on the ancient cultures of the Age of Kingdoms, the new world was starting to find a new balance. That was until the Dark Return happened.

THE DARK RETURN

From the personal journal of Aledyn:

The Dark Return is the name given to the return of magic and creatures thought lost since the Great War. The supposed first instance of the Return was in the year 5677, in the small town of Raven's Rift, somewhere out west. It's an easy date to remember; it was the same year I was born. My mother never let me forget the odd little child I was. She always cursed me and said I must have been born from a fey. If I was, I wish a little more of their magic had worn off on me. But anyway, that's the first time magic was found to be back in the lands, in the infamous cycle known as my birth year. Now the wizards in Ish say their magic never left, and strange things have always wandered out of the Wastes, but it was 5677 when a young woman cast a spell in the town center of Raven's Rift and started the whole thing.

For years after that, more and more people demonstrated an ability with what most haughty scholars called "the Arts." Even with strange new creatures spreading across the lands, many in the world remained happy, if not a little wary. News of the magic spread like wildfire, but there was no time to celebrate as soon after the shadows seemed to come alive and demons started crawling out of every cave and burrow. After that, travel and news dried up like the last gulp of ale on a hot day.

This phenomenon became known as the "Dark Return" in 5683, about the time I was starting to find I could light fires by saying funny words or heal small animals with the right amount of humming and herbs. I knew it was not good to have the ability to do these things, so I hid it. Like most children do with the toad they grabbed, I boxed it up and slid it into the recesses under my bed. The reason it was called the Dark Return is because it is when the whole Never seemed to burst open. The first ghuls poured forth from the Wastes. They were twisted creatures, bent on killing all that was found in their path. And then the giants

came down from the mountains and stole whole herds of beasts to feed their ravenous appetites. After them all manner of beasts and foul monsters slithered out of every forest and field, and the people grew terrified. Of course, out of all of them, the greatest monsters were us. Once we started to find the power in magic, lines were drawn, the banners of war were hoisted, and we went about killing each other to see who could put their flag in more places. While the soldiers and sorcerers fought in battlefields, the commoners had to deal with all manner of dark beasts making their already tough lives even more desperate. Luckily the Return Wars didn't last long, as there wasn't much to fight for, and people adjusted to the new world of magic, demons, and fear.

THREE REALITIES

There are three known universes in which sentient creatures reside.

Uteria

The world we reside in, this planet surrounded by unknown space and stars. The elves talk of travel among the stars and that there are other worlds, but this seems little more than myth as any way to travel these distances has long been lost. Uteria is often referred to in scholarly texts as the "Prime Plane of Existence." Two main continents fill this world, Atheles and Tuya.

The In-Between

The In-Between is a nebulous plane that exists between all known universes. It is a limbo filled with microcosms of different varying environments. It is everywhere and nowhere. The In-Between overlaps both Uteria and the Navirim. During the Disappearance, many of the more magical species of Uteria found themselves trapped in this limbo, living in this foggy desolate land.

Navirim

The Navirim is a dreamlike universe whose very physics are different from the world we know. It is bound to the Universe by some strange force, and many scholars believe that collides with our own plane of existence. Monstrous and ancient horrors cross the boundary from the Navirim to our realm. These demons, as many call them, have thrown our world into turmoil. As the boundaries between our two realities draw closer, what new catastrophes could our world face?

Navirites

The denizens from the Navirim are categorized as Navirites, but they include an enormous variety of different types of creatures and beings. While they are all so varied,

each has been touched by the magical domain of the Navirim and carries certain traits.

MAGIC

Magic has only begun to return in the past 30 years. The magic that is known is either ancient and being relearned or new and untested. Magic is distrusted in most places and its newfound power is used by many to gain influence and dominion over people and lands.

A Nightmare Returned

Magic is what destroyed the world hundreds of years ago, and its return is viewed by many as a portent for a future cataclysm. In many parts of Atheles, the use of magic is not only shunned but also punished, sometimes even with death.

Magic Brings Power

Some places such as Eredar, the tower of wizards, are moving at a fast pace to relearn and use magic for the benefit of the world. In other places, like Uthgard, it is utilized by the government and religious powers to solidify their hold over their kingdom.

Old Artifacts Are Sought After

Artifacts from ancient days are wanted and collected by many of those in power. A popular, but dangerous, way to gain wealth and renown is hunting and recovering ancient magic items and texts.



StoryGuide's Codex

RUNNING THE STORY

Many great books, podcasts, and videos are already out there helping you become a great Gamemaster (GM), so this section will focus on helping you create, run, and enjoy SagaBorn and Dark Return games. In SagaBorn, we call the GM the StoryGuide (SG). The following are suggestions and optional rules, but they can be used to set the foundational guidelines for your games.

THE STORYGUIDE MOTTO FOR SAGABORN:

The StoryGuide is a fan of the player. The StoryGuide should make rulings in favor of the players during ties, rules interpretations, and cinematic flair.
Running in the World of the Dark Return

Atheles has long suffered under the shadow of many catastrophes, and its cultures and people reflect that. They have long been afraid of what might come in the next cycle or what lurks out in the dark, empty woods between settlements. You should convey this to your players as they begin their adventure. Those who brave the wilds have just as often disappeared and then returned.

In addition, the past 30 years have seen the Dark Return of magic and monsters. Seven hundred years ago, the Disappearance occurred, leaving Atheles barren of arcane and mystical forces, artifacts, and creatures. Species bound with magic just vanished. Slowly, they have begun to creep back into the world, returning from the misty limbo between the worlds, throwing Atheles into chaos and turmoil. The actions of the player-heroes, the SagaBorn, will define and characterize this world and its stories.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The world of Uteria is fraught with crises and conflicts, any of which is a dire threat to the peoples of the lands.

Invasion From the Navirim

Eldritch horrors and bloodthirsty demons find their way into the world from the Navirim. Stopping their invasion might be a fool's errand, but you are among the few who stand against the onslaught nonetheless.

The Return of Magic

The return of magic has brought peril and uncertainty to

some and power to others. Will a hero who employs magic be hunted by the powerful or pious for their arcane usage? Will the local people suffer under the new yoke of an all-powerful sorcerer-queen/king?

The Uthgard Empire

A rising new star in the north, a new King has begun amassing power for the old Kingdom of Uthgard. His armies defeated the invading giants from the tundra, and he has now turned his attention to the lands in the South that once swore fealty to his throne.

Rebellion in Kowal

The city of Kowal has recently sworn allegiance to the Uthgard Kingdom. A catastrophe ended the old power structures, but a new one, emboldened by the Ministry of the Arts and the Uthgard Royal Army, has brought an iron fist down on the city. The Duke enjoys the wealth of the metalwork factories relighting their fires. Still, whispers of rebellion skitter along the avenues and alleys of the grey city.

Demons From the Never

As magic has returned, so have the fae and elves. But that is not all: demons and other Navirites have made their way from beyond the veil and invaded Atheles. The dark places of the world now have new inhabitants.

Storms and Disaster

The Dark Return has brought massive storms to the continent. Acid rain that burns the skin or storms whose green lightning turns vast swaths of land to waste pummels the land relentlessly. The ecological fallout from these storms is enormous, and scholars have no idea how to combat them.

Basic Creature Stats

Easy Creature / NPC

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
8	8	8	8	8	8

Move: 10
HP: 8
Damage Modifier: 0
Armor: 0
Attack: 1d4
Attack 2:
Skills: 25%

Average Creature / NPC

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
10	10	10	10	10	10

Move: 10
HP: 10
Damage Modifier: 0
Armor: 2
Attack: 1d6+1
Attack 2: 1d6+1
Skills: 50%

Challenging Creature / NPC

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
12	12	12	12	12	12

Move: 10
HP: 12
Damage Modifier: 0
Armor: 4
Attack: 1d8+1
Attack 2: d8+1
Skills: 60%

Hard Creature / NPC

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
15	15	15	15	15	15

Move: 10
HP: 15
Damage Modifier: 1d4
Armor: 4
Attack: 1d10+1
Attack 2: 1d10+1
Skills: 75%

Creature Compendium

Goblin, Arnach

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
8	6	5	6	8	9

Move: 8

HP: 11

Damage Modifier: -1d4

Armor: 1

Attack: Short Spear 35% 1d6 -1d4;

Attack: Shortbow 40% 1d6

Skills: Climb 65%, Hide 45%, Spot 35%, Stealth 45%,
Ride 45%, Dodge 45%, 25% (All others)

Treasure:

Hide Armor, Rough Shortbow, Rough Short Spear

Spider Sac Arrows

Goblins can use special arrows that replace the standard arrowhead with a large spider sac. Upon a successful ranged attack, these arrows deal 1 point of damage and unleash a swarm of spiderlings upon the target. Brushing off the spiders requires a *Standard Action* to completely remove the spiderlings and sac. Doing so disperses the swarm.

If a character attempts to perform any action prior to wiping off the spiders, the task becomes *difficult*. The spider swarm deals an automatic 1 point of damage to any creature whose space it occupies at the end of their move, with no attack roll needed.



Hulking Horror

STR	CON	SIZ	INT	POW	DEX
18	15	20	15	15	15

Move: 12

HP: 35

Damage Modifier: +1d6

Armor: 4

Attack: Pummel 75% 1d10+1;

Attack 2: Bite 70% 1d8+1

Skills: Athletics 75%, Grapple 75%, Listen 60%, Jump
75%, Throw 75%, Survival 70%, 55% (All others)

Mandible Grapple

Hulking horrors can grapple with their large mandibles as well as their hands, enabling them to make two Heroic Actions in a round to grapple two different opponents or the same opponent twice. Grapples made at a 10-foot reach are always possible with the mandibles.



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