

BEYOND EXPERIENCE POINTS...

Alternative Experience Rules for Chivalry & Sorcery 3rd Edition

Version 1.0

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of these rules is to completely remove experience points and the last vestiges of experience levels from the C&S3, bringing the game more in line with modern skill systems. The end result is a simpler, more elegant system with less bookkeeping for both character creation and play.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The general mechanics used here have been inspired by ideas found in RuneQuest, and N. R. Crossby's HarnMaster. Thanks also to Ian Holland for specific suggestions.

SKILL IMPROVEMENT

Skills are improved by a successful Improvement Roll. Success increases the PSF of a skill by +1%. Failure results in no change. An IR is successful if:

$d100 + \{\text{Attribute Bonus}\} - 2 \times \{\text{Difficulty Factor}\} > \text{TSC\%}$, and $\text{CritDie} > \text{DF}$

AWARDING IMPROVEMENT ROLLS

The GM has great discretion in awarding Improvement Rolls during play. Typical activities that earn an IR are using a skill many times usefully, a Critical Success in a stressful situation, or training for 2 weeks under the tutelage of a Master. A generous GM might occasionally award an IR for a Critical Failure in a stressful situation, or suffering at the business end of a greatly more skilled opponent.

An award to a valiant character after a tough sword fight might be an IR for a Slashing Swords skill, and one more IR for any combat skill that she used during the engagement.

The GM should keep in mind that 9 IRs in this system is very roughly comparable to 500 xps in the standard system.

DOWNTIME SKILL IMPROVEMENT

A character performing his normal duties is awarded two Improvement Rolls per month of downtime, one Occupational and one Free.

The Occupational IR is usually restricted to skills the character actually uses in her occupation. In other words, "What do you do for a living?" Note that a character's vocational skills and occupational skills do not necessarily overlap. Initially the occupational skills will generally be background skills or other skills closely related to her specific background. Over time a character's effective occupation may well shift with changing

fortunes.

The GM determines which skill the occupational improvement attempt is made in based on the character's activities through the course of the month. The player is encouraged to offer reasoned suggestions.

The GM should choose skills for Occupational Improvement Rolls that reflect the day to day lives of the characters and the world they live in. A peasant character may end up with an IR in Pig Raising or Field Crops. A journeyman practitioner of the arcane arts could gain an IR for a spellcasting Method skill, or could be busy researching for the Master with an esoteric Lore skill instead. A knight character regularly trains in war craft, so his Occupational IR will usually be in a martial skill. Characters higher up the social scale generally have more flexibility in and influence on what skills will be improved with the Occupational IR.

The Free IR represents time the character finds to hone skills on the side. The player determines which skill for which the Free improvement attempt is made, while GM discretion still applies, of course. Here is where the player has opportunity to improve the character's vocationally oriented skills although his choice is not, in fact, restricted to only those skills.

Naturally, the skills a character may improve will be limited by opportunity, what that character actually spends time doing, for both Occupational and Free IRs. A noble who attends court for a month is much more likely to be able to work on social skills than combat skills.

A few very difficult skills, such as Alertness: Sight and Alertness: Sound are generally not appropriate for improving during downtime. Always keep in mind that training in some skills requires access to certain equipment, libraries, etc. The GM should be somewhat stingy about allowing a downtime IR for the highest DF skills unless training conditions are advantageous.

Consideration should be given to characters who make extra efforts to improve their skills when the opportunity arises. A mage that gains access to

very valuable tomes and spends long hours in studying them should be awarded extra IRs. A knight who trains extra hard with very skilled sparring partners should as well, although the GM might want to make some kind of roll for random injuries.

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

For learning new skills during downtime the GM can still use the rules given in C&S pages 187-188. The following are supplementary rules.

A character using a skill he has not yet learned opens that skill with the normal Unlearned BC% and the Attribute Bonus is halved. Full penalties apply if Attribute Bonus is negative.

The player can improve his character's unlearned skill in basically the same manner as his learned skills, with two differences: (1) a successful IR improves the BC% by +1%, not the PSF, and (2) the GM should be more stringent about awarding an IR the higher the DF of the skill.

When the BC% improves to the standard Skilled BC% for that difficulty of skill (a +10% improvement in most cases), the character has learned basic knowledge in that skill. Until then, the character suffers the usual penalties for using an unlearned skill, including the -2 Crit Die modifier for failed attempts. Skills that normally may not be attempted without basic knowledge are still so restricted under these rules.

The GM should be more strict than normal about awarding IRs to unlearned higher DF skills. A Simple (DF2) skill is easier to teach oneself than a Very Difficult (DF7) skill. A success with an unlearned skill is required before awarding an IR. Tutelage under a Master is skill sufficient to award an IR, however.

NON-STANDARD SKILLS

Improvement Roll mechanics are inherently "percentile skill-based" oriented, so no simple rules will exactly translate all non-standard skills. Presented here is a toolkit; the dirty work is left as an exercise for the reader.

(1) Single successful IR increases skill by +2% or more. (E.g. Languages)

(2) +3% is equivalent to "1 level" (e.g. Conditioning)

(3) Forget the IR; the GM awards each "level" as he sees fit (e.g. Conditioning)

(4) Keep the DF fixed at the standard value for the TSC%, but use the altered DF for the IR modifier.

(5) PMF BC% is zero.

(6) Aspect Bonus treated as additional Attribute Bonus.

CHARACTER CREATION

A character earns starting skills through social background as normal. Mastery and Horoscope slots are spent in the regular manner, a +3% added to the PSF if the character already has basic knowledge as normal. Attribute Bonus contributes to starting PSF as is usual. Skill levels are ignored. All the Vocational and Mastery DF discounts are applied normally

Acquire additional starting skills with default of 30 Difficulty Levels. Expenditure of DLs equal to the DF of a skill buys basic knowledge. Spend 3 DLs to buy basic knowledge in a DF 3 skill, etc.

Once a character has basic knowledge in a skill, it may be further improved by +3% through spending DLs equal to the DF. So the PSF of a DF 4 skill which a character already has basic knowledge can improved by +3% with the expenditure of 4 DLs. Spending a further 4 DLs would improve the PSF an additional +3%.

The DL system is very flexible and open to some abuses. To keep starting characters within reasonable bounds, the player may not spend DLs for any of the following without the GM's explicit permission:

1. Increase the PSF of a Secondary skill beyond that of the highest vocational skill.

2. Increase any skill beyond 70% TSC.

3. Increase a PSF by more than +9%.

The above guidelines are most appropriate for 18-year-old humans. The GM is, of course, welcome to allow the player to ignore these limits if the character concept and background justify it.

For characters that start younger or older than the (human) base age of 18, the following chart is suggested:

d100	Human	Dwarf	Elf	DLs	Cost
01-05	13	14	15	12	+5
06-10	14	16	17	15	+4
11-20	15	18	20	18	+3
21-30	16	21	25	21	+2
31-40	17	26	35	25	+1
41-60	18	27	50	30	0
61-70	19	30	55	36	-1
71-80	20	33	60	42	-2
81-85	21	36	65	48	-3
86-90	22	39	70	55	-4
91-95	23	42	75	62	-5
96-99	24	45	80	70	-6
00	25	48	85	80	-7
