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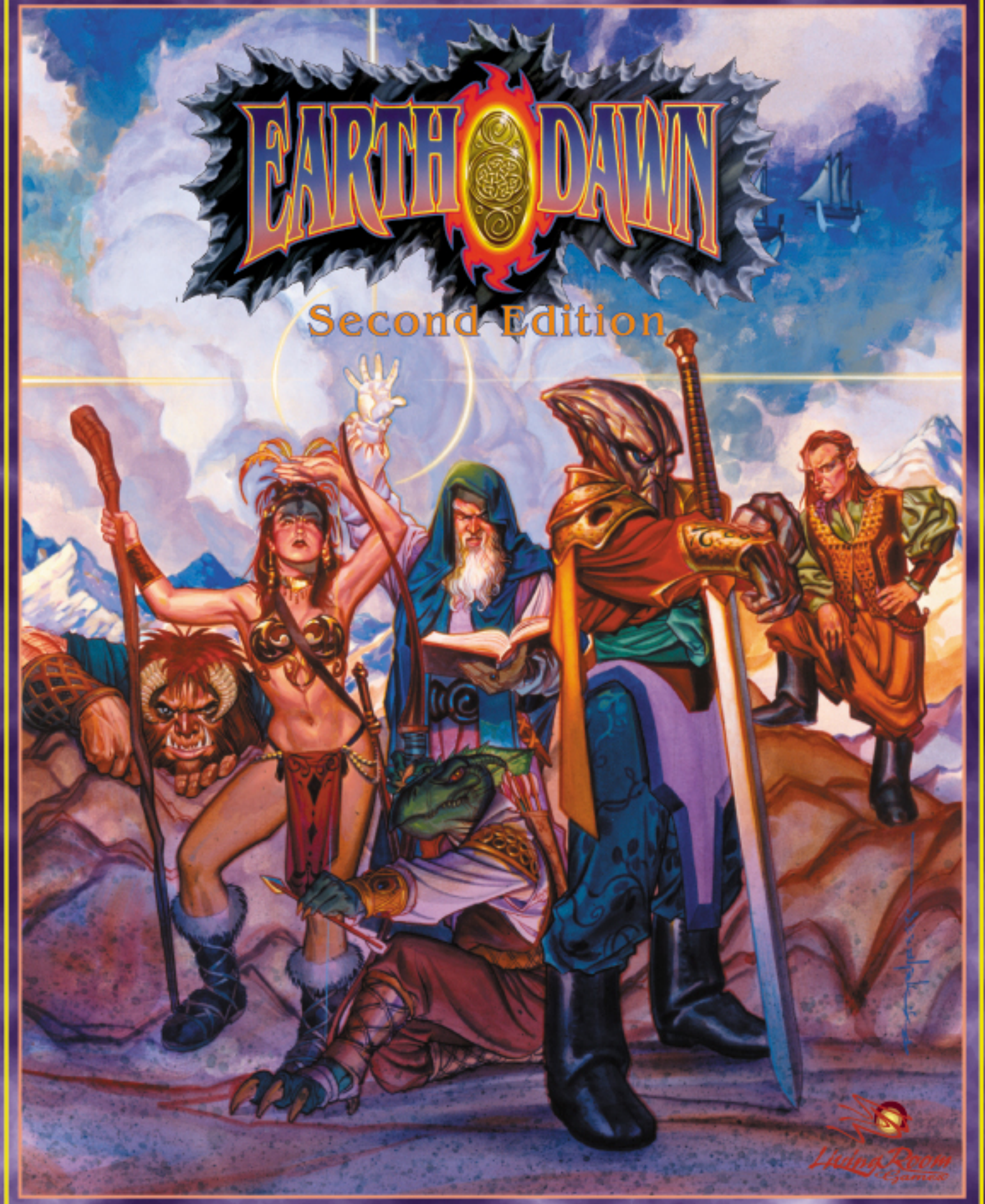
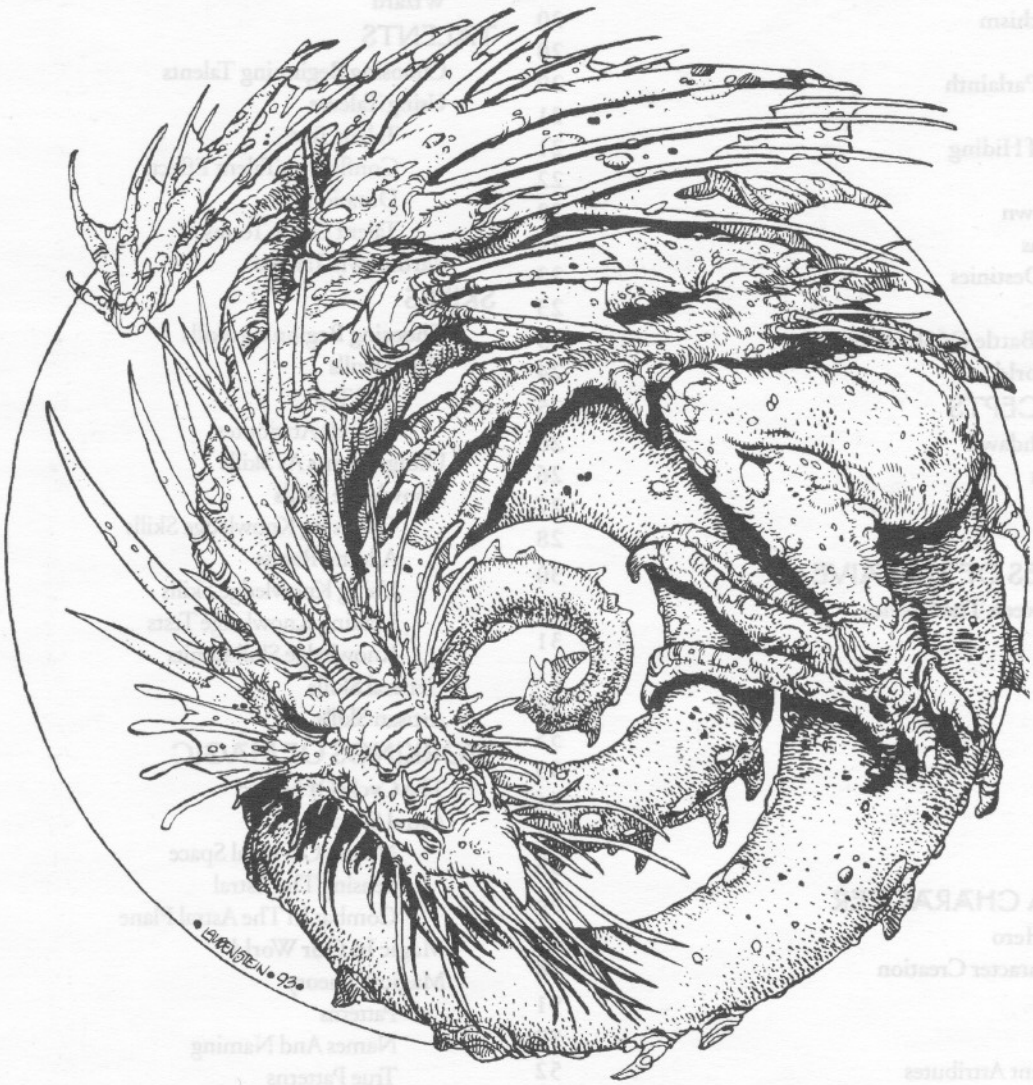


EARTHDAWN®

SECOND EDITION



LIVING ROOM GAMES

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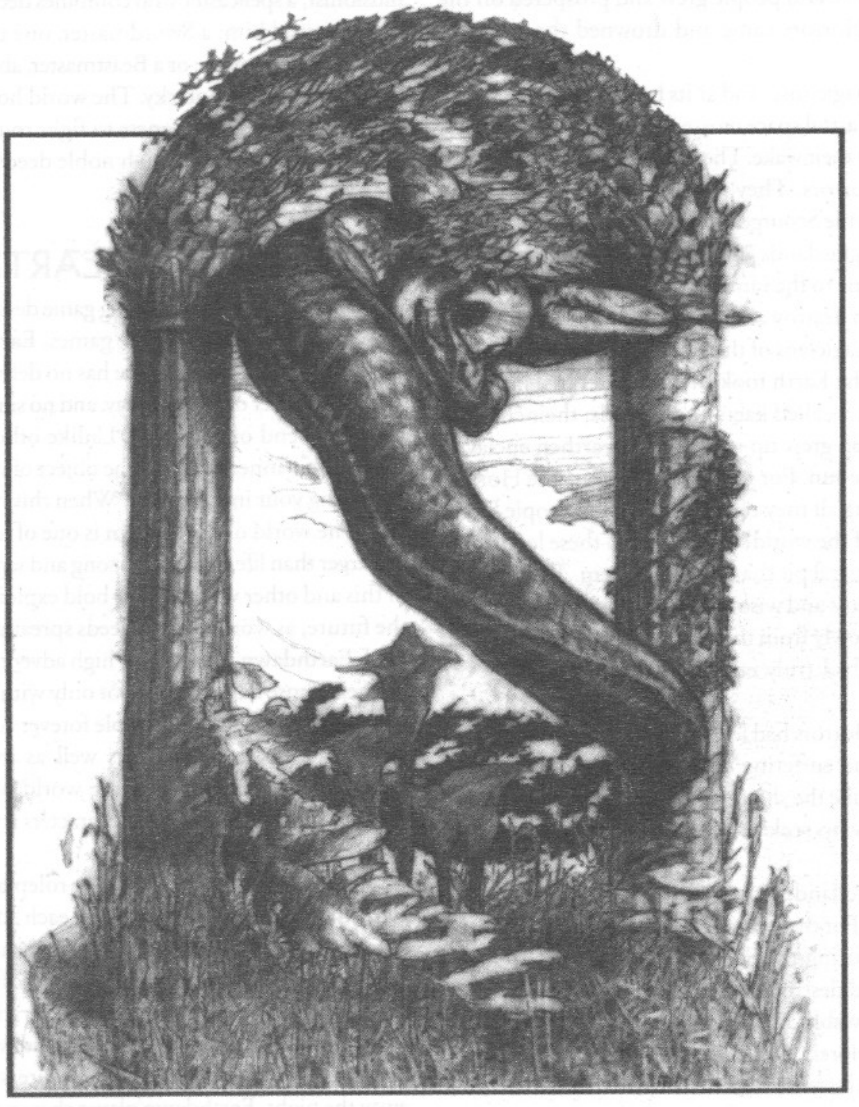
AGE OF LEGEND



The heroes of today are the legends of tomorrow.
—King Varulus III of Throal

We live in an Age of Legend.

After centuries of hiding beneath the earth, humanity has ventured out into the sunlight to reclaim the world. Trolls, dwarfs, elves, orks, and humans live side by side with exotic races: the lizard-like t'skrang, the small, winged windlings, and the earthen obsidimen. Creatures both magical and mundane dwell once more in the forests and jungles. Arcane energies offer power to those willing to learn the ways of magic.

Once, long ago, the land grew lush and green. Thriving forests sheltered plants and animals, and people grew and prospered off the land's bounty. Then the Horrors came and drowned the world in darkness.

The world's flow of magic rose, and at its height, dread creatures from the darkest depths of astral space crossed into our world, leaving suffering and destruction in their wake. The world's inhabitants Named these fell creatures the Horrors. They laid our world to waste in a terrible time now known as the Scourge. The lush forests died. Bustling towns vanished. Beautiful grasslands and majestic mountains became blasted, barren terrain, home to the Horrors' twisted mockery of life.

The Horrors lusted to destroy all life, but they did not succeed. Before their coming, the magicians of the Theran Empire warned the world, and the people of the Earth took shelter under it. They built fantastic underground cities called kaers and citadels; their children and their children's children grew up within these earthen enclaves, never seeing the light of the sun. For four hundred years the Horrors roamed the land, devouring all they touched while the people hid in terror, until the slow ebb of the world's magic forced these loathsome creatures to retreat to the astral pit that spawned them. The Horrors departed before the magicians and wise men had believed they would; the wary people emerged slowly from their kaers, facing the world half in hope that the Scourge had truly ended and half in fear that the Horrors lingered.

Though most of the Horrors had left this world, many remained, inflicting cruel anguish and suffering on other living creatures. As humanity struggles to remake the shattered world, they must combat these remaining Horrors who seek to prolong the destruction and despair of the Scourge.

Now, heroes travel the land, rediscovering its lost legends and exploring its changed face. For the world has changed, almost beyond recognition. Many died during the Scourge; the Horrors breached some kaers and citadels and destroyed their inhabitants. Other kaers remain sealed, from unknowable disaster or simple fear; their contents await discovery by bold explorers. Should they find any folk still living within, these brave adventurers may lead such fear-darkened souls out to live again in the light.

The dwarf kingdom of Throal lies at the center of the province of Barsaive. The dwarfs seek to unite Barsaive's far flung cities and people under one crown and one banner, the better to repel the advances of the Theran Empire that ruled Barsaive before the Scourge. The Therans returned to the province shortly after the Scourge ended, seeking to bend it again to their yoke, but the people of Barsaive rejected the Therans' iron rule and rallied behind the dwarfs of Throal. Even though they were beaten back, the Therans remain the most powerful empire in the world, and may yet strike again. As Barsaive's heroes search for lost treasures and battle fantastic creatures, they must also fight those who plot to rob Barsaive of its newfound freedom and make its people pawns of a new empire.

In the Age of Legend, heroes band together to fight the Horrors and reclaim the wounded world for those born in it. As they explore the altered land, searching for legendary cities and treasures, they become the legends that will light the coming days. As with those who went before them, tales of their deeds will live forever in men's hearts. From many paths, the heroes come to join in common cause. Those who seek honor and glory come from many Disciplines, and battle evil to redeem the world with a multitude of gifts. A band of heroes may include an Illusionist, a spellcaster who combines deception and reality to confuse those around him; a Swordmaster, one trained in the art of fighting with bladed weapons; or a Beastmaster, able to train and command the beasts of the earth and sky. The world holds countless heroes, but all share one trait: a willingness to fight to reclaim the world from that which threatens it. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world will forge its future.

THE WORLD OF EARTHDAWN

Earthdawn is a roleplaying game designed for two to eight players. Like many other roleplaying games, **Earthdawn** has an open-ended style of play. That is, the game has no definitive ending, no preset time limit or number of turns of play, and no single goal that, when achieved, marks the end of the game. Unlike other types of games, however, there is no winner or loser. The object of the game is to have fun while exercising your imagination. When this happens, everybody wins.

The world of **Earthdawn** is one of legend. Its people and places are larger than life, the stuff of song and saga. Heroes fight the monsters of this and other worlds; their bold exploits light a beacon of hope for the future, as word of their deeds spreads across the troubled, fearful land. **Earthdawn** is a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. Those dangers lurk not only within long-forgotten kaers, but also within the minds of people forever corrupted by the Horrors. To rebuild its heart and soul as well as its outward aspect after the devastation of the Scourge, the world needs heroes. The players of **Earthdawn**, by creating their characters and playing the game, provide these heroes.

In contrast to many other roleplaying games, characters in **Earthdawn** do not simply survive each adventure and become a little smarter or a little richer. **Earthdawn** adds another dimension to roleplaying; its characters become heroic figures, accomplishing deeds so impressive that generation after generation will honor their memory in song and story. The world of **Earthdawn** brims over with legends, heart-stirring tales of famous adventurers told by the fireside to while away the night. **Earthdawn** player characters can become the figures in those legends. As they build their characters' legends through play, they create the fireside tales that their descendants will tell about them. Gaining this heroic stature through daring deeds is as important a part of playing **Earthdawn** as any lesser gain in riches or experience.

For those with experience in roleplaying, some of the following explanations will sound familiar. Those readers might want to skip ahead to **Game Concepts**, p. 25, or to **How It Came To Pass**, p. 14, and dive right into the history and background of Earthdawn. The opening short story, **Mark of Judgement**, provides atmosphere and a taste of the language and style of **Earthdawn**. Specific sections following it cover every aspect of the game and how to play it, beginning with **Game Concepts**.

For those who are new to roleplaying, the following text introduces the concept. This introduction will not answer all of your questions, because most roleplaying games are more easily learned from other players than from reading a book. This brief overview will, however, give you the idea behind roleplaying; to learn more, find others who are familiar with roleplaying games and learn by playing. Together, you can explore the world of **Earthdawn** and discover the fun of roleplaying in the Age of Legend.

WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

Everyone has read a book or seen a movie where the protagonist does something so utterly wrong that the reader or viewer wants to shout a warning to the character. But no warning from the audience can keep that character from doing what the plot demands, no matter how much trouble it lands him in. The readers and viewers can't change the character's behavior; we're just along for the ride. A roleplaying game turns this situation on its ear. In a roleplaying game, the players control the actions, or play the roles, of their characters and respond as they wish to the events of the plot. If the player doesn't want his character to go through a door, the character won't. If the player thinks his character can talk him or herself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to their trusty pistol, they can talk away. The plot of a roleplaying game stays flexible, changing because of the decisions the players make for their characters.

In roleplaying, stories (the adventures) evolve much as they do in a movie or book, but within the flexible story line created by the Gamemaster. The story outlines what might happen at certain times in reaction to other events. The story remains an outline, with few concrete events, until the players become involved. When that happens, the adventure becomes a drama as riveting as that great movie you saw last week or that book you stayed up all night to finish.

Though the players all contribute to the story, creating it as they play, the Gamemaster creates the overall outline and controls events. The Gamemaster keeps track of what happens and when, describes events as they occur so that the players (as characters) can react to them, keeps track of other characters in the game (referred to as Gamemaster Characters or Non-player Characters), and uses the game system to resolve the players' attempts to take action. The Gamemaster describes the world as the characters see it, functioning as their eyes, ears, and other senses. Gamemastering takes both skill and practice to master, but the thrill of creating an adventure that engages the other players, tests both their gaming skills and the characters' skills in the game world, and captures the players' imaginations makes the Gamemaster's job worthwhile. Living Room Games and FASA publish game supplements and adventures to aid the Gamemaster, but talented Gamemasters always adapt the game universe to suit their own style.

A roleplaying game offers its players a level of challenge and personal involvement unmatched by any other type of game. Because the players and Gamemaster create the adventures they play, what happens in the course of a roleplaying game is limited only by the players' imaginations.



THE MARK OF JUDGEMENT



Stories have power. They excite children, make lovers swoon, give soldiers courage, and give historians clues to our past. Stories will always show us the paths from the before to the yet to come.

— Vasdenjas, former dragon Loremaster

It's never been wrong before, but surely it must be wrong now. All during my conversation with the Magistrate, the charm did nothing but pulse and squirm anxiously beneath my tunic. The old relic that I had recovered only last summer from a ruined temple deep within the Liaj had saved my life. I recalled how it had alerted me to our Horror-marked guide who intended to lead us into the jungle's tangled depths to be picked off one by one.

It had so intrigued me that I had researched deep into its history and discovered its Name and its creator. Now it was mine and part of me. And now, I had to believe that the last work of Elaer Runespeaker, this shard of my own soul, was lying.

Days pass, and I do nothing. The charm is relentless. Every time the Magistrate approaches, without fail, it screams alarm. Perhaps, I try to convince myself, it is not him. Perhaps it is one of his guards or his advisors — someone who is always near him. But one by one, I eliminate all suspects in private conversations and well-timed diversions. It is the Magistrate. I can almost hear it whispering in my soul. He is marked. One of the three Magistrates of Travar is marked.

I sit alone in my room, tossing back black ale until I can barely think, lost in doubt and unsure what to do next. My brooding is interrupted by a small knock on my chamber door.

"Go away!" I bark.

My request is ignored, and the door creaks open with a great effort and a small winged man flies in and lands on my desk.

"Drinking? Alone? This isn't like you, Raelin."

"Not now, Skit. I am really not in the mood for your games," I scowled.

The windling barely missed a beat. "Of course, I understand. And I do hate to interrupt you in your sulking. But there's just this one thing that's been making me a little curious. You see, I used to know this fellow named Raelin who was a spirited Swordmaster, not a brooding shadow. And I haven't seen him around in a few days and well ...."

"Just spit it out, windling."

"What's the matter?" He asked firmly.

"Nothing. Go away," I retorted.

"You should stick to swinging swords and leave lying to us professionals," quipped the windling. "So, are you going to tell me the truth, or am I going to have to pester it out of you?"

"Skit, in roughly a week, we are going to leave Travar and be travelling together. Then, I am going to get see you every waking hour. 'Til then, is it too much to ask for a little privacy?"

"Right now, yes. Not because I don't value privacy, but because you're hiding something. So, confess. It's Mara. She no longer loves you, yes?" Probed the windling.

"Leave Mara out of this," I spat back.

"Ok, not Mara. Perhaps you have finally realized that no matter how hard you try, humans will never be as handsome as we windlings? Is that it?"

I took a deep drink of ale, emptying the mug, and without warning heaved it at the little man. The windling wasted not a second, taking wing and spiraling quickly out of the missile's path. The mug smashed against the far wall.

"Tut, tut. Temper, temper. Now, why don't you calm down and tell me what's bothering you."

"One day, I will strangle you, Skit."

"Perhaps, but tonight you are too drunk and too sluggish to catch me."

I pulled the charm out from under my tunic. "You remember this amulet?"

"The Horror finder? Of course, I remember ... what has that got to do with anything?"

I stared at the jovial little windling and said simply, "Lord Destri is marked."

Then, suddenly it was no longer fun and games. Suddenly it was serious. The windling landed, and could only manage, "What?"

"The Magistrate is Horror-marked."

"You're sure?" He asked horrified.

"Absolutely."

"Passions preserve us. How long?" Asked Skit.

"I don't know. He's been marked since we got back from our expedition. Who knows when it happened."

"Have you sensed the Horror itself?"

"No, only the Magistrate."

"This is terrible, Raelin. You were his Champion in the Founding! We've got to tell someone!"

"And who would you recommend, my friend?"

"I ... I don't know," said Skit, stammering.

"I know who I'm going to tell. I'm just working up the courage to do it."

Skits eyes widened with understanding. "Raelin, you aren't serious!"

"Lord Destri deserves to be confronted with the truth. Maybe he was marked inadvertently. Maybe I'm wrong. He deserves a chance to explain himself," I said grimly.

"And what if he's in league with the Horrors, eh? What if he attacks you with some sort of dark magic? What then, Raelin?"

"Then, Skit, it's up to you to take the truth to the rest of the Council."

***

The next day, as I approached the Magistrate's chamber, I could barely keep from shaking. I was more powerfully nervous and truly afraid than I had ever been. I had, in my time, faced down a pack of jehuthra without flinching. Now, I would have been glad if they were all that was in the Magistrate's chambers.

I was recognized by the guards and granted a private audience. The Magistrate was busy making the final touches to his outfit for the feast tonight. He straightened his cloak and adjusted his sash full of honorifics in front of a full-length mirror. As I was brought before Lord Destri, I wasted no time on small talk.

"I have an important and private matter to speak to you about, my lord. Perhaps you should send the guards away ...."

"No need. A ward has been cast on this chamber that bars sound from leaving or entering. I prefer state secrets to stay secret. So, what is on your mind, Raelin?" Asked Lord Destri, who still stood in front of the mirror, adjusting his clothes.

I revealed the small pulsing crystal charm from beneath my shirt. "Do you know what this is?"

The Magistrate turned from his mirror and barely glanced at the item. "No, I can't say that I do. Should I?"

"It pulses in the presence of those who have been Horror-marked."

The Magistrate's face lit with understanding. "So, now you think that I am corrupted by a Horror?"

"Yes."

The Magistrate stepped away from his mirror and his fretting with his ornaments. "This is a serious accusation, Raelin. Are you sure you mean this?"

"I do, my lord," I said firmly.

"So, what now?"

I drew my sword. "Now, my lord, neither of us is leaving here until you take the Test."

"A brash move, Raelin, and a dangerous one. I need merely summon my guards, and they will see you with a drawn weapon and quickly overwhelm even a skilled Swordmaster like yourself," the Magistrate said, matter-of-factly.

"Perhaps, my lord."

The Magistrate turned back to his mirror and finished his final touches. "If I was truly a pawn of evil, that would be my best move, wouldn't it, my friend? But Raelin, I am not Horror-marked. I do not know why your little toy has chosen now to sing. But, you are a hero of this city, and your service has been valuable to me. I will humor you and take the Test. And then, once this is over, we will go to the feast tonight together, as friends."

"Perhaps, my lord," I said warily.

The Magistrate walked over to his wardrobe and opened it, drawing out an ornate longsword. Immediately, I tensed, my grip on my own sword tight.

"Relax, Raelin. My artisan skill is one that I learned when I was young and only beginning my training as a Warrior. It is a sword-dance, a martial display of grace and agility."

The sword-dance was an artisan skill that few truly mastered, and I was sure that I watched one such master now. Lord Destri moved with incomparable grace and style, fighting an imaginary foe in a stylized ritual of blade-work. His movements were flawless. His style was impeccable and his technique was masterful. If there was anything in his display that gave even the hint of Horror corruption, I could not see it.

As Lord Destri finished his sword-dance, I was utterly puzzled. Even now, the amulet still screamed alarm. However, the display had been so creative and artful, I could see no trace of Horror-taint in it.

"I ... I was wrong, my lord. Please accept my humble apology," I said, as I bowed to the floor.

"Raelin, no apology is necessary," said the Magistrate reassuringly. I looked up from my bow just in time to see the sword point thrusting at me. It caught me square between the ribs and sank deep into my flesh. I was seized with pain and fell helpless before him.

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Lord Destri pulled his sword from Raelin's chest and watched the young Swordmaster double over. He then raised the blade and lunged again, deep into Raelin's side, and watched as his victim coughed up blood. Again and again, Lord Destri stabbed the helpless Raelin until finally the young adventurer fell dead and cold upon the floor.

"I am sorry, Raelin, but if rumors of your accusation had gotten out, then my bargain with the Horrors might have been revealed at an inconvenient moment. And soon, none of this will matter. They will make me a Passion, my friend."

Lord Destri yanked the amulet from Raelin's neck and inspected it curiously. It still pulsed and squirmed warning of the Magistrate's presence. Lord Destri only smirked at its futile signal. He tossed the small artifact down upon a solid wooden table and with a single stroke of his blade smashed it. And then, it pulsed no more.

"I'm sorry that it had to end this way, Raelin. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a feast to attend. And soon, your corpse will rise, and then, you may serve me once more, my friend."

The Magistrate strode from his private chambers, stopping only to bark orders at his guards that absolutely no one was to enter his quarters in his absence. It was at that one moment of distraction, as Lord Destri made his wishes clear, that a windling Illusionist slipped past them all and entered into the secured chamber.

Skit could only gasp in mute horror as he saw the body of Raelin sprawled across the floor. He wasted not a second in flitting to his fallen friend's side. He produced a small, stoppered vial from his belt pouch. It would have been barely a thimble-full of salve for a human, but for him, it was a large vessel.

The tiny man popped open the vial and poured the contents out onto the body. He then rubbed the clear salve in as best he could. Then, all Skit could do was wait and hope that he had arrived in time.

The effects of the Last-chance Salve were quick, and immediately, Raelin began to glow a gentle blue ....

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I cannot say for sure if I remember anything after Lord Destri killed me. It was dark perhaps. Or maybe there was a light. I simply do not know. But I do recall the moment that the Last-chance Salve began its work.

It was like being hit by a thunderbolt. My eyes jolted open, and my entire body tensed and jerked suddenly alive. I could only see fuzzy and vague images. I leapt to my feet, instinctively grabbing my sword. I held the blade out, threatening the only shape that seemed humanoid.

"Raelin, are you all right?" Asked the shape.

"Skit? Is that you?" I managed to ask. Then, I fell over woozily, and the world began to spin. "Passions above, what happened?"

"You died."

"That explains why I feel like dyre droppings."

"Raelin, we've got to get out of here! The Magistrate's guards are right outside, and we're in no shape to fight them."

The world stabilized a little, and I manage to find my feet once more. My head still throbbed, and I felt sick. "Give me ... just a moment. The Magistrate ... Lord Destri killed me! That's it .... I remember now." The reality of the situation came back to me. "We've got to get out of here!"

Skit only rolled his eyes. "Good idea, chief."

"But how?"

Skit flew over to a door leading to the balcony. "This way."

Past the door was a balcony and about fifty feet below it, the moat that surrounded the Lord Destri's manor. I looked over the edge to the water below.

"No way," I complained. "I've already died once today."

"Hmmm ... this would be a lot easier if you could fly," observed Skit. "Maybe we could make a rope out of bedding or ...."

"Maybe, but the longer we wait here, the greater the chance that Lord Destri will come back."



And so I jumped. It seemed like a good idea on the balcony. By the time I hit the water, I was sure that it was a bad one.

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The feast hall was arranged in great splendor. All of the upper class of Travar were there in their finest. This was an event not to be missed, and at the head of the feast hall sat Lord Destri himself. He presided over the occasion with grace and dignity. The hall was filled with laughter and music and the sounds of celebration.

Suddenly, the party stopped. I dragged myself into the feast hall holding my sword ahead of me and pointing at Lord Destri. I was quite a sight to behold. I was still damp with the moat water, and my tunic still stained with my own blood.

Lord Destri was quick to respond to my presence, barking, "He's trying to kill me! Guards, seize him!"

I screamed only one thing, "The Magistrate is Horror-marked!"

The silent hall was now filled with gasps and whispers. Lord Destri was again quick to respond. "Lies! This man is an assassin! He already tried to kill me once and now he is trying to besmirch my Name! Guards, take him away to await judgement!"

"Hold!" Came an old voice. A mass of living rock nearly nine feet tall stood from the feast table. It was Aramus the Aged, a trusted counsel of the city and an obsidiman of great age. "Hold I say! I am entrusted to remember the law, so hear now what the law says! If anyone shall be accused for bearing the mark, they must answer the charge. You, Raelin, you are not unknown to me! What proof do you have of the Magistrate's mark?"

"Nothing but my word. He destroyed the only proof," I replied stoically.

"I see," said the aged obsidiman. "Then, your lordship, I would request that you display for the assembly here your artisan skill. For it is well known," he announced, "that those corrupted by the Horrors cannot create art untainted by their influence."

"I will gladly take this test to clear my Name from these hateful accusations," said the Magistrate. "And when my Name is cleared, then Raelin will know justice."

Again the Lord Destri performed his sword-dance. It was every bit as poetic and graceful as it had been in his private chambers. After several minutes, he bowed as his performance was met with some applause and a resounding note of approval.

"I see no hint of taint in this art, young Raelin. What do you say to that?" Asked Aramus.

And again, the crowd was silent. The guards edged closer, awaiting the now inevitable command to seize me. Right then, in that one moment, I suddenly understood the truth of what I had just seen.

"You say that there is no hint of Horror-taint on him. And I can see how an Elementalist's eye may miss it. But I am a Swordmaster, and the blade is my life. That is why I can tell you that every blow he showed us in his sword-dance would be a killing strike in combat, but one that would lead to a slow, painful death."

The room grew quiet and grim as the collected assembly realized the truth of my words. It was on that day that Lord Destri, Magistrate of Travar, was removed from their ruling council, and that my Legend spread far from the city, through all of Barsaive.

HOW IT CAME TO PASS



Though we must be thankful for the here and the now, we must always remember what was. Some things must never be allowed to happen again.
— King Varulus of Throal, 1438 TH

[The following is abridged from the opening lecture by the ork Troubadour Storymaster Jallo Redbeard to a new class of dwarf scholar students in the great library of Throal, 1512 TH.]

Regardless of what one believes of the Therans, the story of the lands we now call Barsaive would not be complete unless we started with them. Without the Therans, Barsaive might have ended up as nothing more than the scores of warring tribes and city-states that dotted the land a thousand years ago. Though the Therans brought us oppression, deceit, slavery, and inhumanity, they also gave us culture, politics, commerce, and a glimpse of the power that unity can bring.

What we know of the origins of the Therans comes from their mouths and their writings. It is their tale, their legend, that we recount here. How much is truth, how much is lie, and how much falls between may never be known while the halls of Thera still stand. Despite that, it is a tale worth telling, the story of the creation of an empire.

THE MARTYR SCHOLAR

The saga of Thera begins nearly one century before the founding of the dwarf kingdom of Throal.

The elf Elianar Messias, who will one day be revered or cursed as the Father of Thera and the Martyr Scholar, is an honored follower of the elf Spiritual Path. In addition, Messias is an important advisor to High Queen Failla of the Elven Court at Wyrm Wood, the center of elf culture. Messias has a falling-out with Failla over the desire of the elf nation of Shosara to loosen the cultural shackles that bind it to the Court. Messias believes the elves of Shosara should be allowed to develop their national culture as they see fit. Failla disagrees: the Court is the center of elf culture and all elf nations must emulate her. Failla will allow no exception.

Failla declares Shosara "separated" from the Elven Court, an act of such gravity that it threatens to fracture that nation. Messias adamantly opposes Failla and her Declaration of Separation and is banished for his challenge. Queen Failla casts him from the Court for one hundred years, and orders that he may return after that period only if he "has learned the value of heritage and a quiet tongue." Messias never returns.

As part of his banishment, he is dispatched to a small monastery set in the foothills of what are known today as the Delaris Mountains, in southeastern Barsaive. There, along with a cadre of scholars dedicated to Mynbruje, the Passion of Knowledge, Messias works to recover, translate, and transcribe volumes of books and scrolls recently recovered from a nearby mountain cavern. The scholars believe this cache of knowledge to be thousands upon thousands of years old, dating from early in the time when the magical aura of our world still lay dormant, before it rose to become the vibrant energy of our own time. What little learned men had deciphered of the works prior to Messias' arrival indicated that the documents spoke of an even older time, when the world's aura was as strong as it is now.

Messias focuses on a group of six books barely kept intact by the magic and climate of the cavern where they are stored. The six are a set, matched in size and style, even down to the odd, blood-inscribed rune on each of their covers. Messias can tell just by looking at them that they contain powerful, probably dangerous, information. He also believes them to be a warning, though against what, he does not know. He devotes his life to untangling their secrets. In the end, those secrets eagerly take the life he has offered.

Late one evening, some years later, his fellows discover his body twisted and wracked with his dying agonies. Messias has torn his eyes from his head and then thrust his clenched fists and their bloody contents into the fire raging in the hearth of his quarters. He has also left a brief note nearby. It says:

These are the Books of Harrow.
They are our doom and our salvation.
Learn from them, or we will all perish.

That night, something horrid stalks the corridors of the monastery, and six of Messias' brethren die terribly. The next morning, an elder elven scholar named Kearos Navarim takes the six Books of Harrow, three of his fellow scholars, and ample provisions, and sets out on a long journey to the land of his birth far to the south and west of Barsaive. In that place, in the protection that he knows he can find there, he intends to continue Messias' work and unlock the secrets of the Books of Harrow. He and the others settle on an island in the midst of the great Selestrean Sea and found a place of learning called Nehr'esham, or "Center of the Mind."

This place marks the beginning of Thera, the beginning of the learning that would reveal the Horrors to us, and the beginning of the great war of the mind to save us all.

THE ETERNAL LIBRARY

Word of Nehr'esham and of its Great Project to translate the Books of Harrow spreads quickly throughout the lands of the world. The island soon becomes a gathering point for magicians, Adepts, and scholars of all types and races. Nehr'esham grows rapidly from its humble beginnings into a small city. Though Navarim nominally leads the burgeoning city, he keeps around him a tight circle of scholarly and magical advisors who administer to the city's needs. Navarim himself concentrates on unlocking the secrets of the Books of Harrow.

Realizing that more books like the Books of Harrow must have survived elsewhere, Navarim sends scholars and Adepts out from the island to find these books and bring them back to Nehr'esham. To hold these tomes and scrolls, the city's overseers arrange for the construction of what will become known as the Eternal Library. Magically protected and controlled, it will be a place where these and other ancient works can be kept and studied in safety, for both the works and the reader.

Ironically, as the first stones for the Eternal Library are laid, thousands of miles to the northeast, dwarf miners are taking up permanent residence in the giant mines and caverns that will someday compose Thera's greatest rival; the dwarf kingdom of Throal. The Throal Calendar, by which Barsaive will one day mark its time, counts forward from that day.

THE FIRST HORRORS

As the Eternal Library nears completion, one hundred and fifty years after the founding of Nehr'esham, the first signs of the Horrors begin to appear in the world. In the city of Majallan, in the human-dominated lands of Landis, dark wraith-like spirits stalk the streets, driving men to violence against each other. For a year, in the city of Draoglin, in the ancient dwarf kingdom of Scytha, every dwarf child

shrivels and dies before reaching its first month of life, its essence devoured by something unseen. And across the entire land that will one day be Barsaive, hordes of twisted, insect-like creatures are found nesting in isolated areas. In southern Barsaive, their infestation is so great that sworn enemies find themselves working side by side to destroy the creatures. This time, known as The Burning, is the closest Barsaive comes to unification prior to the arrival of the Therans. Hopes of unity collapse, however, in the face of the tragic famine that grips Barsaive in the following years.

To the aged Navarim and his followers, the dreadful tidings from Majallan, Scytha, and the city-states of southern Barsaive portend the beginning of something terrible. What these awful signs warn of becomes frighteningly clear shortly thereafter. Navarim's brilliant student and assistant, the dwarf Jaron, breaks through to understanding and completes the translation of the first of the six Books of Harrow. This book, Named simply The First Book of Harrow, speaks of terrible days ahead, of the coming of the Horrors, their nearly unstoppable power, and the possible ruination of the world.

The Horrors, the book says, are terrible spirits dwelling in the darkest corners of the netherworlds. When the magical aura of this world reaches a certain strength, the Horrors will be able to build mystical bridges between this world and the twisted realm where they dwell. And then, the Horrors will come. Terrible and powerful, they are beyond reason. They seek only to consume. Some desire anything physical: rocks, trees, it matters not. Others want flesh, blood, and living creatures. The more powerful live on pain, terror, and the dark emotions those experiences arouse in their victims.

The Horrors will come, the book says, and little can be done to stop them.

THERA IS BORN

Word of the First Book of Harrow spreads quickly. The city around Nehr'esham begins to swell just as quickly, until it covers the entire island. It is soon renamed Thera, meaning "foundation." In time, the island becomes a center of trade and commerce as well as the center of learning and thought in the eastern Selestrean Sea.

The growth of Thera does not come without its price, however. Unable to support the enormous tasks of physical labor required to keep up with the swelling population and commerce, the Therans must import workers from other lands. Theran slavery begins with these laborers. The great Theran merchant houses that arrange for the transport of the workers maintain "control" over the workers they import. Financial arrangements must be made with the merchant house for the use of the workers. Soon, "control" of workers becomes commonplace as the powerful and influential arrange to import workers specifically as servants and minor laborers. Within seventy years from the arrival of the first work-ship, "control" becomes ownership, and true slavery is as common on Thera as the ocean breeze.

Within a year of the translation of the First Book, Navarim dispatches copies to all the leaders in all the lands he has ever heard of in an effort to warn them. Few listen.

Meanwhile, work on deciphering the other Books of Harrow continues in the hopes of finding some way to stop or defend against the Horrors. Early on, Navarim establishes the School of Shadows as the center for this effort and charges it to find ways of defeating the Horrors. From that School, groups of Adepts and magicians travel across the known world to confront the burgeoning Horrors and learn what they can from those confrontations.

At the same time, Thera's leading citizens create a more formal organization to govern the island. Navarim, named the Elder of Thera, presides over a body of advisors and administrators known as The Twelve. This body controls and manages the various areas of Thera and her growing influence. In one of their first acts, The Twelve establish a military force to defend Thera against increasing bandit and pirate raids.

The research conducted at the School of Shadows proves to have more uses than at first expected. Theran scholars and magicians discover insights and understandings into the ways and makings of magic that have far-reaching ancillary results. Their research opens up to the Therans the ability to work the powerful elemental magic contained in the True Forms of air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Using that knowledge, the Therans build their stunning cities, none of which could exist without the aid of magic. They also create their airships, vessels of all kinds that fly through the air. Their research also gives them knowledge of magical warding and protection, illusion and healing, the transformation and manipulation of physical objects, and insight into the deepest reaches of the netherworlds. Thera becomes an island, a nation, and eventually an empire built on magic.

THE THERANS AND BARSAIVE

As Thera grows, the land that will someday become Barsaive exists in ignorance. Un-Named, the area is home to independent tribes and isolated city-states. Little trade exists between these powers, the only real contact coming through intermittent attacks on rich Thera by the poorer city-states. Occasional efforts by the Elven Court at Wyrm Wood to bring the area under their control fail. Though rulers of a great empire, the elves of Wyrm Wood do not see enough worth in conquering Barsaive to exert the necessary political and military pressure. Their failure ultimately leaves Barsaive vulnerable to Theran domination.

In the Throal year 212 TH, the Therans finally arrive in Barsaive. They first make contact with the humans of Landis near the city of Vivane and what will someday become Sky Point. From there, Theran representatives and ambassadors travel across Barsaive, making contact and trade alliances with every group they can find. This land, they discover, abounds with the natural and magical elements and materials the Therans covet. The Theran envoys promise a glittering future through trade to Barsaive's city-states and tribes; dazzled by the prospect of Theran riches, the local leaders sign agreements without reading between the lines.

The arrival of the first Theran trading fleet in 216 TH comes as a great surprise to Barsaive's local powers. They had signed treaties and agreements with the Theran envoys, but without any real understanding of the implications. The sight of dozens of Theran airships drifting slowly through the air over their palaces, castles, and tents is a literal and symbolic blow to them. A new power has come to Barsaive now, and it is second to none.

BIRTH OF AN EMPIRE

The Therans enjoy their growing power. The island itself, its central citadel, the Eternal Library, and other great works of architecture and culture are renowned across the world. Thera's position in the heavily traveled Selestrean Sea makes her an ideal port of trade and

commerce. For mystical thought and pure magical power, Thera has no equal. The potency of her magicians and the skill of her Adepts are envied the world over. She needs little else to seal her position in the world. Nevertheless, Fate gives it to her.

Nearly four hundred years after the founding of Nehr'esham, in the Throal year 341 TH, Kearos Navarim dies of old age. His body is sealed in amber and placed in the great plaza of the citadel at the heart of Thera, next to the cenotaph of his friend Elianar Messias. Word spreads quickly that Navarim died while putting the finishing touches on the culmination of the Great Project and the researches of the School of Shadows. The rumors are correct.

Five years after Navarim's death, his successor as Elder of Thera, the human Meach Vara Lingam, announces to the world that though the scholars have found nothing beyond a keen blade and an iron will to defeat the coming Horrors, they have discovered something to protect against them. Lingam unveils to the world Kearos Navarim's crowning and final work, the Rites of Protection and Passage.

RITES OF PROTECTION AND PASSAGE

Despite Lingam's brave words, the Rites of Protection and Passage does not offer any truly effective methods of protecting against the Horrors, but it does present the theoretical means by which that protection can be discovered. In his four-volume work, Navarim concluded that isolation from the Horrors is the only true means of protection against them. Because of their individual power and sheer, overwhelming numbers, direct confrontation with the Horrors would ultimately prove suicidal.

To hide from the Horrors, Navarim proposed to construct great underground fortresses. Dubbed kaers, these dwellings would protect their occupants against the Horrors on the theory that strong enough walls will keep out even the most physically powerful Horror. The natural, solid, earthen walls of the kaer would also provide protection against those Horrors that travel through astral space or by means as yet unknown. However, Navarim warned that an earthen barrier might not be enough to withstand every Horror.

Navarim's book also offered other means of protection. Cities could be shielded under domes woven of True Air. Kaers could be built beneath the sea and protected by True Water, and so on. Navarim believed that the underground kaer would offer the strongest defense, though even it might be breached.

To shore up the kaers' defenses, Navarim offered additional protections to defend against the Horrors on a primal level. Navarim believed that magicians could learn to create wards and runes that would "call" to a Horror through magic. Once the Horror examined the rune, its mind would become caught in the magical web and mathematical maze of the rune's construction. Because a Horror comes from a place deep in the mystical netherworlds, it must always devote some degree of concentration to keeping itself in this world. A rune entrapping its mind would break the Horror's concentration and force the thing either to retreat or lose its grasp in this world and be flung back to the pit from whence it came.

Unfortunately for Thera and her sister lands, only the theory for these runes and wards exists. Navarim believed they could be devised and had charged the School of Shadows with their creation just prior to his death. In the meantime, he recommended that kaers be built wherever possible in preparation for the day when the infestation of Horrors would become so overpowering that they would render the surface of the world all but uninhabitable. This would occur, Navarim believed, in just over eight hundred years.

The School of Shadows continues to work on mastery of the runes, intending to make them available to all once their secrets are unlocked. And unlock them they do, but instead of sharing them, Thera closely guards the secrets of the runes. Soon, she will use them as a bargaining tool to extend the Theran sphere of influence.

The immediate reaction to Navarim's work is mixed. Many dismiss its conclusions outright, while others look upon it with almost religious reverence. Most, though, cannot take seriously a threat eight hundred years in the future. They read Navarim's words and vow to prepare, later.

ORICHALCUM WARS

Thera, however, does not wait. The mighty, magic-rich island needs significant and, perhaps, extravagant protection against the Horrors. To this end, its leaders begin to collect vast quantities of the magical metal orichalcum. The Therans begin striking favorable trade agreements in order to obtain large quantities of the rare material. No one can guess what manner of protection the Therans wish to build that requires so much of that metal, but as long as they pay well for it, no one much cares.

For those who do not know, orichalcum can only occur from the natural mixing of certain other earthen materials that combine in the presence of True Earth. Though not a part of orichalcum, True Earth is always found in the same area as that rare ore. Orichalcum must usually be mined, but occasionally nodes of it are found close enough to the surface of the land to be gathered by hand.

Orichalcum trade with Thera proves profitable for the rest of the world, despite the hue and cry of some deprived local magicians. It is so profitable that shipments become the target of bandits and raiders. Sixty years after Thera has begun its extensive importation of orichalcum, the trolls of the Twilight Peaks, called the crystal raiders, lead their ramshackle airships in a stunning long-distance raid against Shosaran orichalcum stores being prepared for shipment overland to Thera. Other raids quickly follow suit as the crystal raiders hone their skill of raiding by air.

Rather than band together for protection against the raiders, the lords and leaders of various lands take the raid as a signal to start their own plundering. The provinces of Ustrect and Cara Fahd simultaneously attack Landis; Throal is nearly overrun by marauding bands of orks; the Elven Court in Wyrm Wood fights Scythan dwarfs and their human allies in a series of terrible battles. The wars last more than 40 years. Nations switch sides with a shift of the wind, migratory tribes become little more than mercenaries, and nobility plot against and betray their own kin. Only in Shosara and Throal are the rightful rulers not, even temporarily, deposed. For the first 30 years, orichalcum and elemental mining and gathering operations are declared off-limits by unspoken agreement between these two kingdoms; both need the mines, and neither would profit from their destruction.

THE DEATH OF NATIONS

In this story of the three towering giants that are the Theran Empire, the Kingdom of Throal, and the Elven Court, often overlooked

are the fates of those nations that did not survive the ravages of war amongst Name-givers and the corruption of the Horrors. Their Names mark places on our great maps to this day: the ork kingdom of Cara Fahd, located to the south and west of Great Sword Valley; the lowland troll kingdom of Ustrect, located at the northern base of the Twilight Peaks; and the human kingdom of Landis, located south of the Greenheart River, on the western edge of the Death's Sea. Each has vast and glorious histories, and we know now that their ends were part of the beginnings of the Horrors' work upon our land. The Orichalcum Wars rage on, as these kingdoms fight the crystal raiders, and the ships of Throal, but none did they hate more than each other. For much of the forty year long war Cara Fahd squeezes tribute out of Landis, with the human kingdom frequently succeeding in breaking free of the ork yoke. Ustrect wars on both, forging occasional alliances with Landis when such alliance fitted its needs. Finally, with each of their leaders (both military and political) succumbing to the influence of Horror-taint, Cara Fahd and Landis clash in a pyrrhic confrontation. The Queen of Landis, allied with the forces of Ustrect, captures the area around a lava field ripe with True Fire. In retaliation, the ork prince and commander, Cathon Grimeye, unleashes every bound or trapped fire elemental present in the field. No ork survives, the vanguard of the Landis army and its monarch are destroyed, Ustrect is crippled, and the mines are severely damaged. Those few who survive the fight originate the phrase "scorchers" to describe the terrible destructiveness of the orks. Cara Fahd does not survive as a nation into the next generation. Landis stagnates, and Ustrect tries to continue on by allying with Throal. Their actions set the stage for the final, brutal years of the war. None survive the Scourge.

THERAN NAVY AND EMPIRE

As long as the flow of orichalcum and other magical elements remains steady, the Therans care little about the war. As the Orichalcum Wars rage on, more and more Theran mining vessels sail over Barsaive. These barges rarely touch down, instead mining and gathering True Air from the clouds around the highest mountain peaks. Using new techniques known only to them, the Theran miners are very successful. That success makes them targets.

The crystal raiders, having set off the Orichalcum Wars, sit back and watch them rage. Because the furious fighting has halted nearly all mining in the area, they make only the occasional supply raid. The Theran air barges, however, offer them a target they cannot resist.

The raiders strike quickly and often, plundering and looting the air barges. Thera warns that they will not tolerate further interference with the air mining operations. The Therans begin protecting the air barges with warships, military airships. At first these ships are vedettes, air barges expanded and armored for war. The raiders thumb their noses at the Theran war vessels; they continue attacking the convoys, using their faster, more maneuverable drakkar airships to escape back to the Twilight Peaks with their booty.

The Therans then begin protecting the mining convoys with kilas, sail-less, massive, floating stone citadels built specifically for war. Despite mounting losses, the raiders step up their attacks. The final straw for the Therans comes after they lose a massive fleet of air barges, vedettes, and kilas to the raiders. Sixty days later, the Therans reveal their true power.

As morning comes, the clan-moots of the crystal raiders awaken to the sounds of alarm across the Twilight Peaks. Drifting across the great plain to the southeast of the mountains, not far from Vivane, is the largest airship anyone has ever conceived of, let alone seen. Devoid of a true ship's hull and sail, the vessel *Victory* is a massive shard of rock the size of a small city, propelled by raw magic in defiance of the laws of nature. The Therans call this terrible machine of war a behemoth.



The crystal raiders are astounded by the sight, but swarm to their airships and move to attack. The Theran airship commander dispatches a messenger spirit to the raiders, telling them to surrender or be obliterated. Proud and defiant, the raiders destroy the spirit.

Moving to attack, the raiders encounter a thunderous rain of weapons fire from the Theran ship. Siege engines, mounted onto the ship's stone hull and guided by magic, catapult giant arrows of metal and wood at the attackers. Bolts of mystic energy lash from the airship as well, as Theran mages focus their powers against the raiders. The raiders scatter under the onslaught, straight into the waiting guns of kilas hidden in the clouds overhead.

The battle continues for hours until the Theran behemoth finally reaches the edge of the Twilight Peaks. Then, it turns its terrible destructive power away from the remaining raider airships and directs it against their homes. The siege engines pound the moot-homes, magics tear into the raider families who attempt to defend the surface buildings and caverns, and elementals unleashed from the Theran ship ravage what little defense remains.

Stunned at the massacre they are witnessing, the raiders surrender. They are taken prisoner aboard the floating city-ship, to be brought back to Thera as slaves in chains. The Theran forces burn their airships, though they do not bother to destroy the few remaining survivors in the Twilight Peaks. With what will become known as the Battle of Sky Point, the Therans prove they are a power to be reckoned with. No

longer content to simply conduct trade and commerce subject to the whims of local lords, the Therans use Sky Point to show the world what awaits those foolish enough to interfere with Theran desires and aims.

One hundred days later, in the four hundredth and forty-third year of Throal, the then-human Elder of Thera, Thom Edro, proclaims the Theran Empire. Thera declares the lands of Barsaive a Theran province, promising all those who swear loyalty to her protection from the ravages of the Orichalcum Wars, as well as first rights to new enchantments to defend against the Horrors. To enforce their power, the new Empire places a permanent Theran military presence at Sky Point and founds the provincial capital of Parlainth in the northwest corner of the land. Dozens of smaller city-states and kingdoms quickly submit to Thera. More powerful kingdoms submit more slowly, but visits from the Theran Navy prove persuasive.

A leading citizen of Thera, the human Kern Fallo, is named the first Overlord of Barsaive. Though Thera controls the province, Fallo sees the practical value of local administration and calls upon the dwarfs of nearby Throal to assist him. Throal, unwillingly allied to Thera out of need for the Theran enchantments against the Horrors, agrees.

Through this administration, Throal mediates between the Therans and Barsaive. The dwarfs provide a buffer between the governments of Barsaive and their Theran overlords, defusing much of the tension between them. Also through this administration, Throal spreads and promotes the dwarf tongue as the trading language of Barsaive. For the first time in its history, citizens of various Barsaive regions can communicate with relative ease.

JARON AND THE SPHINX

When Thom Edro establishes the Theran Empire, he installs himself as its First Governor. Many know it is only a matter of time before Edro secures the backing to proclaim himself Emperor.

Other grumblings surface as well, rumors that Edro is using unnatural magics to extend his life and those of loyal human and ork followers. Of course dwarf Adepts had long ago developed life-extending magics for themselves ... but this is different.

Magic had extended the life of the dwarf scholar-magician Jaron as well, though it left him less energetic than previously. He fears that Edro is turning Thera into a mockery of the teachings of Elianar Messias. Each time Jaron voices his objections, another of his followers vanishes. He realizes that despite his deciphering of the First Book of Harrow, the expanding Theran Empire no longer considers him an asset.

The night after the disappearance of Jaron's closest apprentice, a great working begins in the open park across the harbor from Thera's central citadel. Three Great Form earth elementals tear rock, stone, and True Earth up from the very foundations of the island and begin to sculpt them under Jaron's watchful eye. Theran imperial guardsmen and magicians rush to the area, but a powerful shield surrounding the park holds them back. They gape in wonder as a giant stone sphinx takes form. Its head is sculpted turning downward and seemingly asleep. As the sphinx is completed just before daybreak, Jaron turns to address the masses gathered in the park. He speaks to them of the teachings of the Martyr Scholar and the dreams of Kearos Navarim. He also speaks of the dangers of power and the dark path he fears Thera is beginning to walk. He has constructed the sphinx, he tells them, to watch over Thera and her governors. It will remain in the park as the guardian of the beliefs of the past and an eternal reminder to the future. As Jaron falls silent, the shield protecting the park dissolves. The three earth elementals gather Jaron within themselves and together the four merge with the sphinx. The crowds rush forward, and the sphinx slowly opens its stone eyes, which blaze from within with a blue-white light. The sphinx lifts its head to stare out across the main harbor directly at the central citadel and the heart of Thera. From that moment on, it remains in that position.

Theran magicians examine the sphinx's construction, but its magical weavings baffle them. None can penetrate it enough to even glimpse the sphinx's True Pattern, much less learn enough to gain power over it. Because they cannot predict what may happen, they fear trying to manipulate or unmake it.

To this day, the great sphinx sits staring out over the harbor of Thera as a reminder to all who come and to all who rule there. The leader of Thera remains the First Governor. None has dared call himself Emperor.

THERA AND THE DRAGONS

Thera's domination of the cultures of the Selestrean basin and neighboring areas is not total. Kingdoms and peoples continue to search for their own solutions to the problem of the Horrors because success means greater independence from Thera's increasingly oppressive rule. They sponsor eager scholars and brave adventurers to seek out dragons, for the creatures are known to have survived the last Scourge (as the invasion of the Horrors has come to be known) remarkably intact. However, many dragons have no desire to share their secrets, greatly reducing the population of eager scholars. Some dragons, through bribery or entreaty, share the method of creating the dragon lair, which scholars believe protected them. A rare few actually contact kingdoms on their own, offering to help for their own dragon reasons.

The leaders of Thera see the dragon actions as a challenge to their power and position. Proposed responses spark fierce debate; Edro has no desire to antagonize the dragons at a time when Thera should be using all its power to prepare for the coming Scourge. But the factions that profit most from the trade in magical elements mount effective pressure. The Theran Navy organizes strikes against three powerful and influential great dragons. The first two succeed in killing the target dragons and destroying their lairs, though the action costs the Therans one of their mighty stone behemoths for the first time. The third strike, against the great dragon Icewing, fails. The Therans find only his lair, largely empty of anything of value and power.

Theran ambassadors pass firmly worded communiques through discreet channels; they refuse to tolerate dragon interference in Theran domestic policy. The dragons appear to retreat; Theran merchants and guild Adepts do a booming business as new orders for Theran protective enchantments flood in.

Then, one sunset, sailors and dock merchants spot a dragon atop the head of the sphinx. As the Therans hesitate between staring and fleeing, the dragon flies off. The next morning twelve citizens are found dead. Two are provisioners to the navy, one an earth-element smith, one a clerk to the treasurer, two guild Adepts, one a moneylender, and five are principal contractors for protective enchantments. Each of the twelve had agitated for, or profited from, the action against the dragons. Over the next two weeks, the dragons strike twice more. Two dozen more leading Therans die. Theran diplomatic channels convey a second message: Therans are to leave dragons strictly alone. No further

Theran raids will be planned or executed. The dragons apparently take the Therans' message to heart and cease to disclose what they know of the Horrors and the coming Scourge.

RACE TO THE SHELTERS

As the Scourge draws nearer, the kingdoms and cultures of the world prepare for the mass invasion of the Horrors. Some build small underground villages with protective wards woven from the roots of the plants above. The dwarfs of Throal hollow out most of an entire mountain, the largest in the kingdom, to build their kaer. Other cities become fantastic citadels, with handwritten runic phrases carefully inscribed on every bit of masonry in the city. With each new report of a Horror, work becomes more frantic, ever more urgent. Fear and panic result in such a heavy spread of rumors that it becomes difficult to sort out the truth. Contact between cities, and between kingdoms, becomes erratic. Some cities become so fearful that they isolate themselves years before the actual Scourge begins.

Throughout this time, the most reliable communications come from, or through, Thera. The Theran Empire literally holds together the fabric of civilization until most of their client states are prepared.

Thera's demands for slaves greatly increase during this period. Life is cheap, so the demands are met. Rulers sometimes sell an entire town into slavery in order to obtain the Runes of Warding to protect two or three other towns. Throal and Landis balk at the increased demand for slaves and work furiously to pay Thera's dear price with raw elements.

THE ELVEN SCHISM

Some nations reject Thera outright. Queen Alachia of Wyrm Wood, High Queen of the Elves, despises the Therans for their use of slavery and for their political opposition to her rule. She commands that no elven nation, and no elf, follow the Theran ways of protection. She presents an alternative in which elf Elementalists will use wood magics to weave the living plants of a forest into a kaer. The Horrors, she believes, will be unable to pass through living wood.

Elven scholars outside Wyrm Wood, and it is said even some within, are aghast at the proposal. They believe that though the Theran method is not foolproof, it would provide more effective protection against the Horrors. These magicians and scholars doubt that any wooden kaer could possibly withstand the savage physical punishment the Horrors would inflict upon it.

Alachia, however, stands resolute. She vows that any elf who follows the Theran way will be forever separated from all of elven culture. This threat, far from cowing the other elven nations, shatters the great cultural elven empire Alachia commanded, presumably forever.

Word comes first from the elves of the faraway Northern Kingdoms. As the elves most distant from the Court at Wyrm Wood, they feel the least amount of true loyalty to its ways. Though little is known of those Northern Kingdoms in Barsaive, their rejection of Alachia represents a severe blow to her power. Before she can react, Alachia receives word from other elven nations and city-states that they refuse to follow her. They wish the Court well, but they will not follow Alachia to what they believe to be certain death.

Queen Alachia, in the end, does not formally declare these nations separate. Their refusal has bereft the Elven Court of much of its power, making any such declaration an empty gesture. Instead Alachia chooses to wait until after the Scourge when her continued existence can prove her wisdom. At her command, the elves of Wyrm Wood begin the construction of the wooden kaer that will be their downfall.

THE SCOURGE

Scholars now place the beginning of the Scourge in the one thousand and eighth year of the Throal Calendar. The Therans count that date as the year TE 565. Both use the same indicator for the beginning of the Scourge: the sealing up of Thera. As a center and focus of magical power, Thera is beset by the Horrors earlier and with greater severity than the rest of the world. Thera's last words to her subject nations are wishes of luck and safety, and an affirmation of her power. Then, the great Dome of True Air and Fire that surrounds the island ignites and seals Thera off from the world.

Though some other groups had previously sealed themselves off, the rest of the world sees the sealing of Thera as the last great sign that the Scourge is beginning. Horrors appear with increasing frequency and are becoming more than a match for local militia, constabulary, and brave adventurers.

Within twenty years of the sealing of Thera, the rising tide of Horrors cuts off virtually all communication between kingdoms. Even astral space becomes too polluted to access, and magicians the world over learn the true benefits of the spell matrices devised by the Therans. Mindless herds of destructive Horrors roam the land, consuming every scrap of life they can find. Other, more intelligent Horrors probe existing defenses, and batter their way through weaker ones. Still others infiltrate society and slip with the people into their kaers. They wait and reveal themselves, violently or subtly, after the kaer has been sealed.

THROAL AND PARLAINTH

In Barsaive, the great powers of Throal and Parlainth, the Theran provincial capital, brace themselves against the Horrors and remain open and accessible for as long as they can. Both provide shelter for refugees until the last possible moment. Throal's kaer, though of Theran design, includes additional mystical dwarf craftsmanship. Parlainth intends to use a radical method of isolation; its magicians will cast a great spell to shift Parlainth from this world to another in the netherworlds, one out of reach of the Horrors. To further keep the city safe, part of the spell will reach out across Barsaive and wipe the memory of Parlainth from the mind of every living person. With no memory of Parlainth, no one will betray either its existence or its disappearance to the Horrors. (The tale of Parlainth holds both great deeds and great tragedy, and is best fully told elsewhere) Ironically, at the last minute, the Theran Overlord of Barsaive loses faith in the plan that he sponsored and flees to Throal with his staff. Parlainth seals itself off, disappears, and leaves the memory of Barsaive for nearly four hundred years. Supposedly safe in Throal, the Theran Overlord and many of his staff are killed when a portion of the Throal kaer collapses only a few months after Throal has sealed itself up.

In the years just before the Scourge, the dwarfs of Throal do not remain idle. Years of administering Barsaive under Theran domination have taught them much. They know that during the projected time of the Scourge, six hundred years, much of society and culture will wither within the kaers. The Theran plan prepared for every aspect of physical survival; they provided for magical plant nurturing, air and waste

recirculation, and breeding cycles. However, the Therans had neglected the less tangible things.

To this end, the dwarfs created The Book of Tomorrow. In this book, they set down the history of Barsaive and Thera, the great tales of the day and others past. They wrote out the dwarf language in its entirety so that children in the kaers could learn to speak, read, and write a common tongue. The book told them how to rebuild their homes and lands once the Horrors had gone. The book told them how to use arts and crafts as a continuing sign that they were free from the influence of a Horror, for the dwarfs had learned that a person Horror-tainted could not create things of art and beauty. And most important, it told the dwarfs how to tell when the dark days of the Scourge were over.

Finally, in the year 1050 TH, Throal sealed itself off and prepared for the worst. Throal's leaders were virtually certain that some Horrors had entered the kaer with the refugees and knew that they would soon reveal themselves. Though the story has been lost to the mists of time, the strength of the dwarfs enabled them to discover and defeat one Horror before it could ravage the kaer. The time of the Scourge brought suffering and hardship, but the people of Throal endured through their physical strength and will to survive.

During that time, other things change in Throal as well. The dwarfs as a people, and their friends inside with them, look forward to the future. Discussions begin about what the world will be like after the Scourge. In the court of King Varulus II, dwarf common sense links with imagination to provide a new vision of the world.

Philosophers, soldiers, priests, scholars, craftsmen, and nobles argue for years until a rough consensus emerges. For the first time, the rights of an individual are argued and defined. The dwarfs write down these rights and the logic that bred them in the Council Compact of 1270 TH. This document will serve as a guide to forming the new dwarf society and that of their neighbors in the years after the Scourge. In broad terms, it defines individual rights, property rights, and the role of law. For example, the section on individual rights contains the following passage:

> *We have shown that rights to property are a necessary good for an orderly society. What of the issue of slavery, the ownership of another person?*
>
> *Persons can certainly be considered property. But who owns a person? Our common sense dictates that the spirit born into the body owns the body. That spirit contains its movement, its thoughts, its actions. The spirit makes active use of the body it owns. Our language supports this view — an evil spirit who inhabits and controls a body is said to have "possessed" the body; this possession is seen as unnatural. The evil spirit has stolen the body from its rightful owner.*
>
> *Slavery removes the control of an individual's body from its natural spirit to the slaveowner. This transfer is made without compensation to the spirit, the true owner of the body. Involuntary servitude also steals the body. It is a crime.*

The Council Compact is a rigorously thought-out statement of principles. Its goal is to develop a fair, orderly society to aid the conduct of commerce. The Compact embodies common sense and can serve as a shared belief among all people. During the time in the kaer, the Compact circulates among dwarf nobles, who accept it without reservation. Those who believe in the Compact decide that the world following the Scourge will be different from the one that had existed before, and very different from the one the Therans expect.

BLOOD WOOD

In 1262 TH, the wooden kaer of the Elven Court begins to fail. The loss of protection is slow, but inexorable. Panic strikes within the kaer as the elves desperately seek alternative means of protection. They haven't enough time to construct underground kaers, nor do they have sufficient reserves of Elemental Air or Earth. Desperation and depression set in as the Horrors begin to break through. The elves create roving militia squads to respond quickly to breaks in the kaer barriers, as Elementalists strive to repair the existing breaks and shore up other weakening sections.

Then the elves of the Wood make a startling and ultimately terrifying discovery. Of those Horrors that break through, those most intelligent, most devious, and most difficult to destroy all but ignore elves who are already mad or in extreme, constant pain. The advisors to Queen Alachia are quick to realize that these Horrors need to inflict madness and pain themselves in order to feed. Existing madness and pain are not enough for them. A horrible seed begins to grow in the heart of the Wyrm Wood, a plan for protection so terrible that its implementation will be as heinous as anything the Horrors themselves can inflict.

Finally, with the Horrors on the verge of complete penetration of the elven kaer, the elves enact their desperate plan. Elementalists perform a twisted blood ritual that forces a physical change upon the surviving elves of Wyrm Wood. Thorns begin to grow out of their skin, ripping and tearing, leaving them in constant, excruciating, overpowering pain. The initial Ritual of the Thorns kills many of the elves in Wyrm Wood, but those who survive learn to live with the pain and even draw upon it for strength. For the Horrors, nothing they want remains in Wyrm Wood. Some of the more bestial Horrors continue to attack and attempt to break through, but the more diabolical ones who feed on pain and suffering leave to find their nurture elsewhere. The elves of what has become the Blood Wood have found a way to survive, but at a terrible price.

THE TIME OF HIDING

Centuries pass as the people within the kaers and citadels huddle in fear and gradually learn to cope, all the while longing for the touch of sunlight and the taste of clean air. The inhabitants of many kaers will not live to see the sun again. Horrors batter or guile their way into more kaers than anyone even in their darkest thoughts believed possible. Whole cities are lost to the Horrors, entire societies and civilizations gone forever.

In Barsaive, the greatest loss may be the city of Parlainth, though none would remember her grandeur until many years after the end of the Scourge. We now know that sometime during the Scourge, Horrors somehow entered Parlainth. All anyone knows for certain comes from the tale of J'role, the Honorable Thief, and his companions. By the time they found the magical Longing Ring, learned its secrets, and used it to return forgotten Parlainth to this world, all of the city's inhabitants were dead or gone. Searchers found few bodies; unknown Horrors had left the city desolate. In the years following the Scourge, Parlainth became a center of adventure and danger as brave souls from

all over Barsaive went there to find her lost treasures and unlock her dark secrets. But even after the Scourge, terrible things still walk the streets of Parlainth and hide in her darkest corners, and most of her secrets remain hidden to this day.

Those kaers that hold copies of the Throal Book of Tomorrow know the magic ritual that will tell them when they may safely re-enter the world. Those lacking this ritual must guess and hope. The magic itself is basic: a simple ball of True Earth is enchanted and placed over a dish of True Water. The magics of the ritual keep the ball suspended over the water. As the strength of the world's magical aura wanes, and the Horrors are forced to retreat, the ball of True Earth descends until it finally touches the True Water, and the two mix and neutralize each other.

All across Barsaive, the people in the kaers watch the ball descend. Slowly, ever so slowly, it drops toward the water. Finally, in the fourteen hundred and fifteenth year of the Throal Calendar the ball stops falling, hanging an inch above the water. Shocked scholars and magicians watch in wonder and dread. It is too soon, by hundreds of years, for the Scourge to have abated. And why had the ball stopped? No one knew the answer then, and no one knows to this day. We only know that, for some reason, on that day, the mystical aura of our world stabilized and has remained constant from that point forward.

A few years pass and the people in the kaers begin to believe that the ball will not descend any further. The doors of the kaers begin to open into a bright, sunlit world ravaged by the Horrors. Most, though not all, of the Horrors are gone.



THE RETURN

Throal begins the first, tentative return to the outside world just prior to the cessation of the ball's drop. Throal scholars and magicians believe that the strength of the world's magical aura may have dropped enough that most of the more powerful Horrors have already begun to flee. They doubt the accuracy of the Theran calculations of the Scourge's length, believing the Therans to have erred conservatively so that they might enter the new world first and dominate it.

In 1409 TH, the first scouting party sent outside Throal is destroyed within hours. Each year after that Throal sends out another scouting party, none of whom, at first, return. In 1412 TH, the scouting party led by the female troll Vaare Longfang returns alive and intact. She reports that the Horrors are still present, but they are fewer and less active. Throal's leaders decide to launch a greater expedition to learn the extent of the Horrors' ravaging. They outfit an airship, give it magical protection and an elite crew, and offer Vaare Longfang command.

THE EARTHDAWN

In 1416 TH, just after the world's aura has apparently stabilized, the expedition sets sail in the refitted airship, christened the *Earthdawn*. Its mission lasts almost a year. The battle-scarred *Earthdawn* returns to Throal with an exhausted but exhilarated crew. Vaare has charted most of Barsaive and found it predominately free of the Horrors. Those that remain have retreated into pockets of higher magic where they find it easier to exist. Few live in the open. A jubilant Throal prepares to emerge into the world.

In 1418 TH, Vaare again takes command of the *Earthdawn*, to begin contacting the nations of Barsaive and inform them that the worst is over. The mission proceeds slowly, for the people of the kaers and citadels assume the troll and her crew are some trick of the Horrors. After one year, only two kaers of the twenty-one visited have opened their doors. King Varulus III alters Vaare's mission, and orders her to take the *Earthdawn* to the largest kingdoms first.

The ship sails for Landis, but never arrives. Last seen at the Cliff City of the t'skrang House Syrtis on the Serpent River, it is assumed that Horrors attacked and destroyed the vessel with all hands on board. For decades afterward, stories abound of sightings of the haunted hulk of the Earthdawn sailing through parts of Barsaive, vanishing from sight shortly after being spotted.

THROAL OPENS

Despite this loss, King Varulus III orders the doors of Throal opened in the summer of 1420 TH. Patrols and magical surveillance remain high, to guard against unknown Horrors. No one leaves Throal for nearly sixteen months. Varulus then issues a proclamation granting land to those who farm, mine, forest, or otherwise make productive use of it. A trickle of brave souls turns into a flood of opportunists. Despite setbacks and encounters with some remaining Horrors, the resettlement of the Throal Mountains begins.

Over the next few years, merchants organize expeditions to reestablish trade routes with nearby communities. They find some kaers whose people refuse to open their doors; at those places, they leave a small tent camp to wait patiently for the kaer to open. The traders find other kaers and citadels whose defenses have been breached;

they mark these as dangerous and to be avoided. Many others open their doors; the merchants give them copies of the Council Compact and ask them to join the new world that Throal envisions. As the merchants make more and more contacts, they expand their efforts deeper into Barsaive and into the areas held exclusively by humans, trolls, t'skrang, orks, and other races.

They move quickly, for they know that the Therans will return to Barsaive as soon as they can.

CONFLICT OF DESTINIES

Thera herself does not move as quickly as feared. Little word comes to Barsaive concerning the condition of the island or its immediate resources, but Thera's unexpected absence leads many to believe that Thera did not escape the Scourge as unbruised as her leaders had hoped. The first Theran vessels do not arrive in Barsaive until 1449 TH, fifty years after Thera is believed to have opened herself to the new world.

The Theran emissaries meet with little welcome. The time of the Scourge and the few years immediately after have given the people of Barsaive the opportunity to live free of the Theran yoke, and they like the taste of freedom. The Theran emissaries, unprepared for anything but respect and cooperation, threaten Barsaive with violence. In answer, local Barsaivians burn the three Theran vedettes anchored at Sky Point and put their crews to the sword.

Theran First Governor Nikodus names Fallan Pavelis as the new Overlord of Barsaive. He orders Pavelis to re-establish Theran supremacy in Barsaive, for the Therans believe that the land is still their province.

Pavelis chooses the strong hand over the soft voice. Theran vedettes conduct slaving runs over isolated villages. Shipborne troops attack coastal cities and seize "forgotten tribute." Ork mercenaries in Theran pay conduct bandit raids against kingdoms that resist Thera. Human tribal leaders are assassinated and replaced with more amenable rulers.

Besieged, the people of Barsaive turn to Throal for help. The dwarf kingdom has all but promised rebellion with the Council Compact; surely the dwarfs will counter the Therans and end the Empire's domination.

In Throal, though all believe that the Therans must be stopped, the dwarfs realize bitterly how little they can do on their own. Throal has not the strength to defeat a combined force of Theran air and ground forces, nor does any other single power in Barsaive. Together, though, the combined will and might of all the peoples of Barsaive may prevail.

King Varulus III sends messengers and emissaries to the rulers of Barsaive. Together, his message says, Barsaive must either stand free or else fall into oppression and slavery. Though his words stir the hearts of many, the sight of Theran airships attacking and raiding at will stills their actions.

An act by the Therans themselves finally turns the tide. The First Governor has learned of the Council Compact, receiving a copy from Pavelis. Enraged by its contents, Nikodus sends a damning message to his Overlord of Barsaive. The message tells Pavelis that the dwarf logic of commerce and ownership outlined in the Compact makes it clear that every man, woman, and child in Barsaive owes their survival from the Horrors to Thera and the First Governor, personally. This blood debt makes all the people of Barsaive the personal slaves of the First Governor, and his to do with as he wishes. He instructs Pavelis to begin the systematic destruction of all Barsaive cities not vital to elemental trade or gathering. The first target will be Throal.

As the First Governor shifts troops to Barsaive, and Pavelis gathers them into the largest Theran armada ever assembled, Barsaive loyalists within the Overlord's palace in Sky Point obtain a copy of the message. They duplicate it and distribute it across Barsaive. The message raises anger strong enough to banish fear; the peoples of Barsaive no longer question that they must and will fight.

His army assembled, Pavelis moves on Throal. Though the dwarf kingdom is unprepared to fight the kind of war Thera brings to them, the rest of Barsaive is not. Goaded by such heroes as the human J'role and the t'skrang Westhrall, Barsaive comes to the aid of Throal. Sky Raiders duplicate their ancestors' successes of the Orichalcum Wars and attack Theran ships. T'skrang riverboats run blockades and intercept supplies. Ork cavalry and elven bowmen assault supply convoys and base camps and then vanish into the night. Windling thieves infiltrate Theran command ships and camps and learn valuable information, leaving behind nasty magical surprises.

Harassed and battered continuously from all sides, Pavelis takes a desperate gamble to settle the issue before Nikodus' patience runs out. He masses his forces for a frontal assault on Throal, but the hit-and-run fighters of Barsaive cut down half the armada and destroy its supplies. Facing disaster, the armada breaks, and the Therans withdraw to Sky Point.

WAR

Barsaive, after initially repelling the Theran advances, returns to bickering and infighting for the next sixty years. The Therans retreat to lick their wounds and plan a greater strategy. Finally sensing the opening they are looking for, the Therans land the behemoth *Triumph* near Lake Ban, effectively disrupting commerce over all of Barsaive. At the same time, King Varulus III is assassinated and Prince Neden ascends to the throne. Only after launching an assault against the Theran city-ship does Neden learn that his father was killed by an assassin from the ruling family of Iopos, the Denairastas. Although the assault on the *Triumph* is a military disaster for Throal, Neden rallies the peoples of Barsaive for a massive, all-out war effort. Neden's force, made up of the Army and Navy of Throal, troops from the elf-queen's court, dozens and dozens of ships from the crystal raider tribes, volunteers from all over Barsaive, and several dragons, assault and capture the *Triumph*. Pressing on from this victory, Neden's army joins with the forces of the newly reborn ork nation of Cara Fahd and commences an all-out attack on the fortress of Sky Point.

THE SECOND BATTLE OF SKY POINT

Although the Theran forces are overextended, trying to hold together pieces of their crumbling empire, Sky Point is a massive fortress with dozens of other ships on hand and the nearby Theran city of Vivane to support it. In an effort to cut off this additional support, the great dragons of Barsaive enact a ritual to isolate the city of Vivane from the fortress. Although their ritual accomplishes this, the huge amount of magical energy attracts the attention of a massive, cloud-like Horror which attempts to envelop the city. The ritual sealing Vivane off prevents the Horror from attacking the city, but in the course of the battle,

Theran mages break through the spell, inadvertently bringing the Horror down on their own citizens. The battle at Sky Point itself is devastating. Weapons never before seen in Barsaive are brought to bear by the Therans. Magical attacks tear into the advancing army of orks, killing hundreds in a single pass. Barsaivian airships are knocked out of the sky like they are so many buzzing insects. In the midst of all of this, a battered galleon appears through the clouds. It is the first confirmed sighting of the *Earthdawn* in almost a century. As the Barsaivian troops rally to this sight, the great dragon Vasdenjas is killed defending the ship. Realizing that this has bought them a critical reprieve, Captain Chorak Bonecracker of the living crystal ship *Thera's Bane* sets a ramming course, and the ship collides with a base pillar supporting Sky Point. Several allied captains, flying captured Theran ships, follow his example. Sky Point, the glorious symbol of Theran dominion in Barsaive, topples, destroyed. With the Therans routed and nearly half of his original army dead, King Neden returns to Throal.

THE NEW WORLD

The world after the Scourge is truly new, in ways the sages and scholars did not conceive. Our world's magical aura does not diminish as all our learning tells us it should, but remains strong. We see this as proof of our survival; the world goes on holding a steady course into the future.

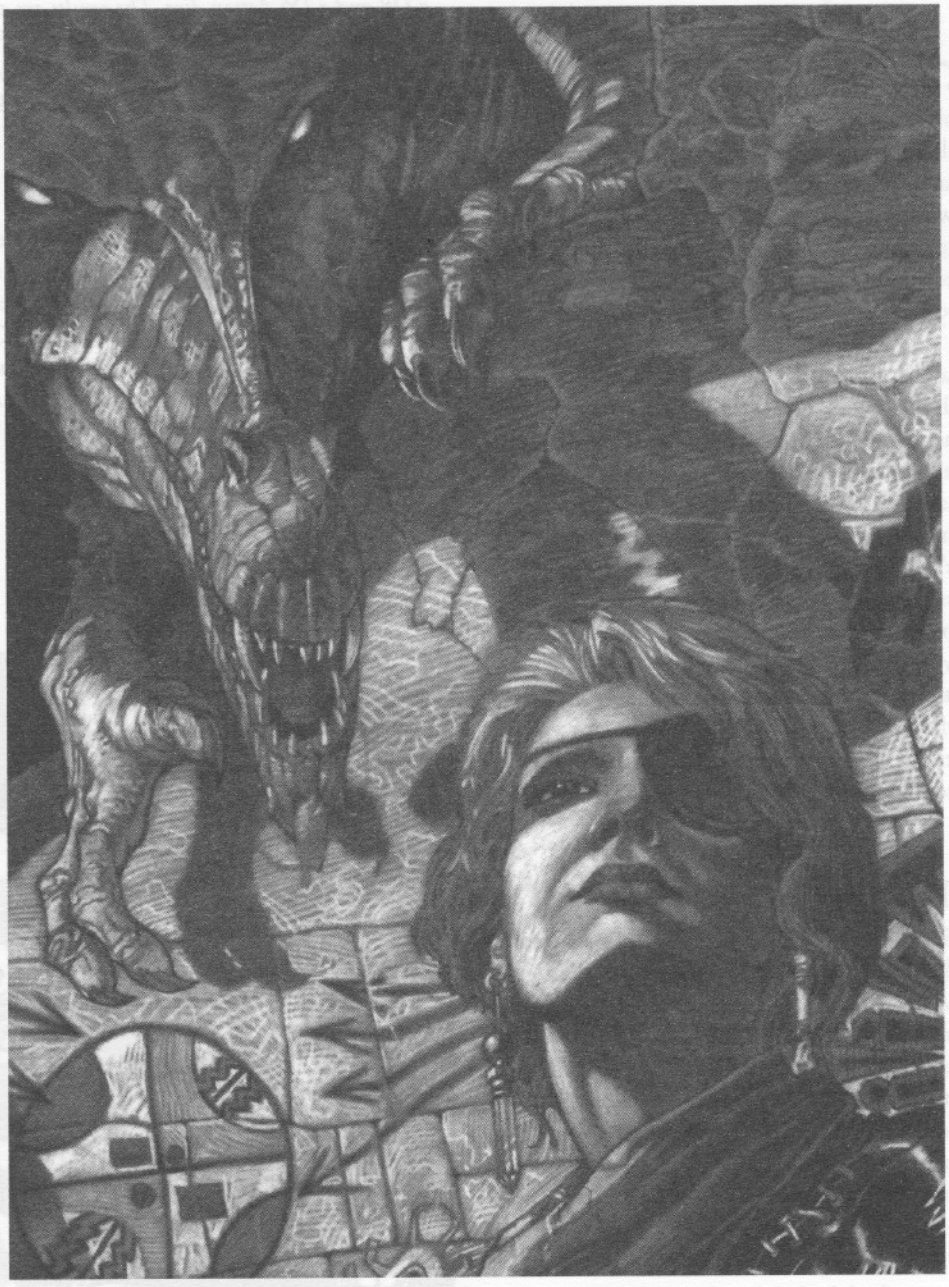
The realms of Throal and Thera struggle to survive. In the south of Barsaive, the crystal raiders build airships for future raids on the lowlands. Ork scorchers roam the land mounted on their fierce chargers, finding danger and adventure where they can. Many heed the call to rebuild their once-great nation. The elves of Blood Wood have survived the Horrors in their own way, a dark way that has riven their community. Windlings thrive in the places where nature borders civilization. T'skrang live along the great Serpent River, trading, and pirating. Obsidimen roam Barsaive, durable, earthbound beings in demand anywhere that conflict or danger threaten. Nations arise. New alliances form. Old wounds heal.

And danger lies just off the trade roads, along with the lure of the treasure amassed and hidden away by now-forgotten people. The Horrors have receded, but they still hold fast in the darker parts of the world. Some wait within conquered citadels, curled upon the sprawling wealth of the vanquished. Others roam the world, their magic weakened but still powerful enough to wreak havoc in their paths. The Therans are gone from our land, and for the first time since the Scourge began, we are truly free to chose our own destinies.

In this fifteen hundred and twelfth year since the founding of Throal, the world looks vastly different from the one those founders saw when they looked south across the plain. Only the brave dare explore this world. Only the heroes can carve the future from ruins of the past.



GAME CONCEPTS



The magic of the world follows rules. Understand them and use them, as others will surely use them against you.
— Cors Blackork, Mage of the Crystal Raiders

This section explains the key concepts and terms used in **Earthdawn**. Some are terms common to most roleplaying games, others are unique to **Earthdawn**. Whether you are an experienced gamer or new to roleplaying, once you understand how these concepts operate in **Earthdawn**, the rest of the rules will fall easily into place.

The explanations provided here also appear in other appropriate sections. The first time a term appears in this section, it is set in bold type.

PLAYING EARTHDAWN

Earthdawn is a roleplaying game that provides all the excitement of an adventure story. Roleplaying games require one or more players and a gamemaster. The players control the main characters of the story, the protagonists of a plot whose outcome is uncertain. The gamemaster directs the action of the story and controls the bad guys, the props, the setting, and everything else the players may encounter. The game is not a contest between the good guys (the players) and the bad guys (the gamemaster), however.

The gamemaster may control all the bad guys, but he or she is actually in sympathy with the heroes. Players and gamemaster must work together to build and experience a tense, exciting adventure.

Characters represent the players in the game of **Earthdawn**. As a player, you control a character. Everything you know about your character will be noted on the **Character Record Sheet**. This is where you record your character's abilities, possessions, physical appearance, and other facts about him or her. During the course of the game, the gamemaster will describe to you events or situations; using your Character Record Sheet as a guide, you tell the gamemaster what your character would do in a given situation. The gamemaster will probably ask you to roll some dice, and the resulting numbers will represent your character's attempted action. The gamemaster uses the rules of the game to interpret the dice rolls and the outcome of your character's action.

MAKING TESTS

Earthdawn is filled with adventure, danger, and risk, and characters usually end up in the middle of it all. You determine what your character does in a situation and how well he does it by **making tests**: rolling dice and comparing the result to a specific number. Can your character cast the spell? Does your character convince King Varulus that he had nothing to do with the theft of the Blood Phoenix? Does the troll at the bar dislike your character's face? Can your character knock down the troll who has just insulted him, then dodge the axe-swings of the troll's buddies without spilling his drink?

ROLLING DICE

Earthdawn uses six types of polyhedral dice: four-sided (D4), six-sided (D6), eight-sided (D8), ten-sided (D10), twelve-sided (D12), and twenty-sided (D20). When rolling a ten-sided die (D10), read a "0" result as a 10. When rolling a twenty-sided die, read a "0" result as a 20. When you roll dice to resolve your character's actions, the dice are called **Action dice**. If you roll more than one die for an action, add the dice rolls together to get a single total. Rolling Action dice is called making a test.

Bonus Dice

When you roll the highest possible number on an Action die, you immediately get to roll another die of the same type. Add the result of this **Bonus die** roll to the result of the dice rolled to make the test. If you roll the maximum on a Bonus die, you get to roll another Bonus die.

A player rolling for Poorht, a windling Thief character, rolls a D8 and a D6 Action dice. The results are an 8 and a 6, the highest numbers possible on the respective dice. He gets two Bonus die rolls. On his D8 Bonus die he rolls a 2, and then a 6 on the D6 Bonus die. He rolls another D6 for a 3. This incredible roll totals 8 + 6 + 2 + 6 + 3 = 25.

DIFFICULTY NUMBERS

The rules and the gamemaster determine the **Difficulty Number** for every action. The Difficulty Number represents how easy or hard it is for each character to accomplish any given task, based on the character's experience, abilities, and personal qualities (see **Characters**, p. 28). If your Action dice roll is equal to or greater than this number, your character succeeds at the action he is taking. If the Action dice roll is less than the Difficulty Number, your character fails to accomplish his action.



The Rule of One

If all the Action dice rolled to make a test show a result of one (1), then the character automatically fails to accomplish the action, even if the total result is greater than the Difficulty Number.

TEST RESULTS

The tests made in **Earthdawn** are interpreted or used in one of four ways.

In most cases, the player simply rolls his or her Action dice. If the result is greater than or equal to the Difficulty Number, the test succeeds.

Sometimes both the player and the gamemaster need to know more than simply whether an action succeeded or failed. The quality of the result, or **success level**, can be important. Characters can achieve one of six success levels: a Poor Failure, a Failure, a Average Success, a Good Success, an Excellent Success, and an Extraordinary Success. Success levels of Average through Extraordinary measure how well your character succeeded at an action. A Failure is merely not succeeding. A Poor Failure level, on the other hand, represents failure bad enough to occasionally have unpleasant side effects. Average success just meets or exceeds the Difficulty Number. A somewhat better die roll yields a Good success, and a result close to double the Difficulty Number means Excellent success. To achieve Extraordinary success requires an even better roll.

Leandra swings her sword at a charging Theran guardsman. The Difficulty Number to hit the guardsman is 10. Leandra's player rolls a 21 on the Action dice. The gamemaster tells the player that 21 is an Excellent result. Leandra hits the guardsman with a blow that punches right through the guardsman's armor, doing quite a bit of damage to the unfortunate Theran.

Sometimes the die roll result of a test simply represents a value and is not compared to a Difficulty Number. The most common examples are Recovery Tests, in which the die roll result equals the amount of damage healed, and Damage Tests, which determine the amount of damage inflicted on a target.

In some cases, particularly when a character is using talents, skills, and magic, the player will be instructed to roll dice rather than make a test to determine the effect of successfully using a talent, skill, spell, and so on. For example, the most common use of the **Effect dice** (the dice rolled to determine the effect of a spell) is to generate a number. This number then represents another value, for example, the duration of the spell, the amount of damage the target takes, a creature's Attribute Values, the Difficulty Number for tests made by opponents, and so on. When a character needs to generate such a number, the spell description instructs the player to "roll the Effect dice."

STEPS

Earthdawn measures nearly all character abilities in **steps**. The **step number** is a number derived from a character's Attribute Value that determines what Action dice a player rolls to attempt an action, cast a spell, and so on. Action dice are ordered on a scale, from lowest to highest. Each level of this scale is called a step. The step number is the base number that players modify when their characters use armor, talents, weapons, social skills, or in any other way interact with the environment and other characters during the game.

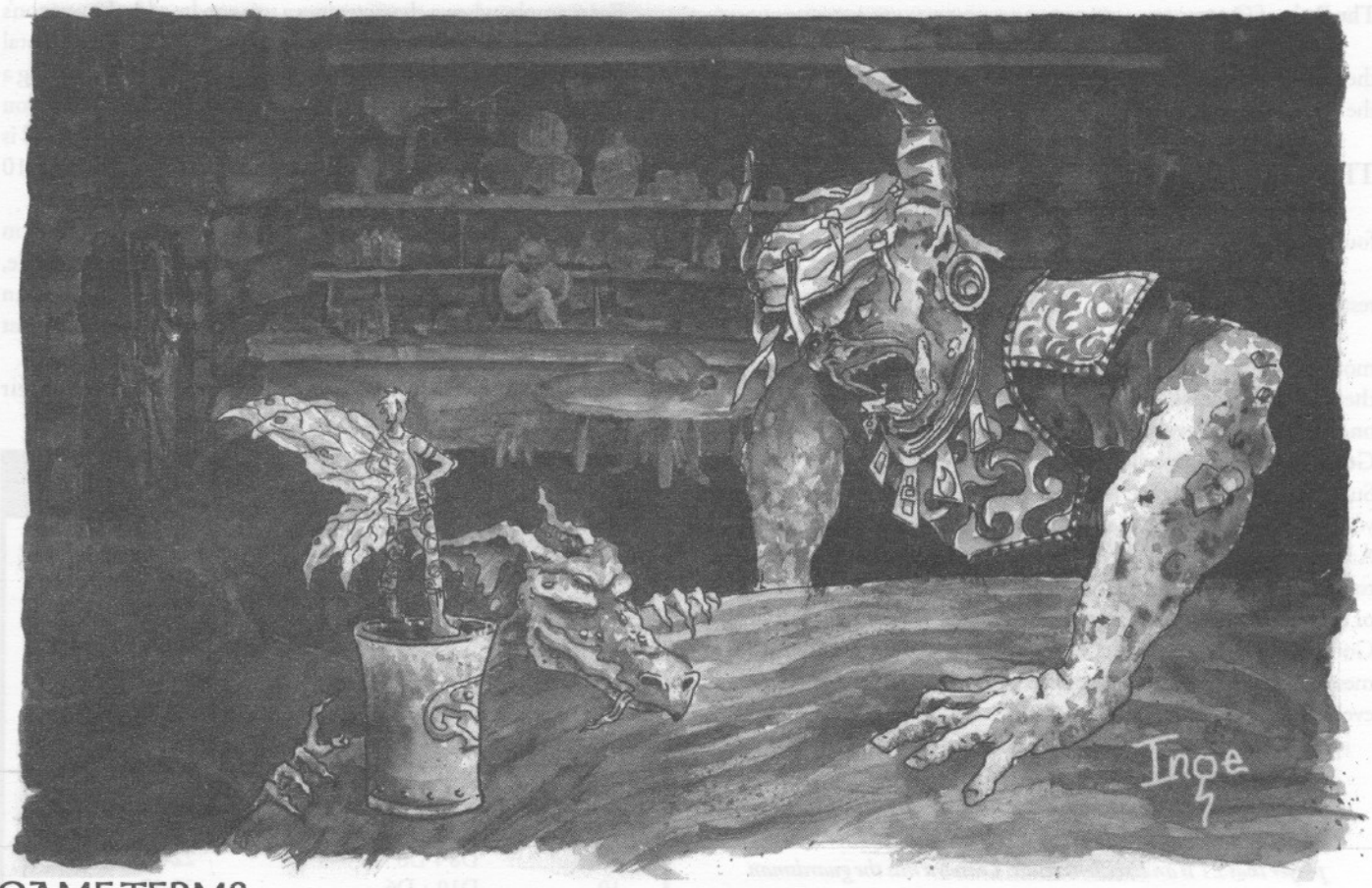
For example, when a character uses a weapon he adds the weapon's Damage step to his Strength Attribute step to determine the total Action dice he rolls for damage when using the weapon. Increasing a step also increases the Action die. Adding one step to Step 4 puts you at Step 5; Step 5 is a D8. You may also have to subtract steps. Step 8 is 2D6. Subtracting two steps moves you to Step 6; which is a D10 Action die.

The step number corresponding to an Action dice combination equals the average roll for that combination of Action dice. For example, the average roll of a D10 is 6 (Step 6 uses a D10). D8 + D6 results in an average roll of 9 (Step 9 is D8 + D6). This average takes into account the chances of rolling Bonus dice (see **Bonus Dice**, above).

The **Step/Action Dice Table** lists step numbers, their corresponding Action dice, and their Attribute equivalents.

STEP/ACTION DICE TABLE

Step Number	Action Dice	Attribute Equivalent
1	D4 - 2	–
2	D4 - 1	1-3
3	D4	4-6
4	D6	7-9
5	D8	10-12
6	D10	13-15
7	D12	16-18
8	2D6	19-21
9	D8 + D6	22-24
10	D10 + D6	25-27
11	D10 + D8	28-30
12	2D10	31-33
13	D12 + D10	34-36
14	D20 + D4	37-39
15	D20 + D6	40-42
16	D20 + D8	43-45
17	D20 + D10	46-48
18	D20 + D12	49-51
19	D20 + 2D6	52-54
20	D20 + D8 + D6	55-57
21	D20 + D10 + D6	58-60
22	D20 + D10 + D8	61-63
23	D20 + 2D10	64-66
24	D20 + D12 + D10	67-69
25	D20 + D10 + D8 + D4	70-72
26	D20 + D10 + D8 + D6	73-75
27	D20 + D10 + 2D8	76-78
28	D20 + 2D10 + D8	79-81
29	D20 + D12 + D10 + D8	82-84
30	D20 + D10 + D8 + 2D6	85-87
31	D20 + D10 + 2D8 + D6	88-90
32	D20 + 2D10 + D8 + D6	91-93
33	D20 + 2D10 + 2D8	94-96
34	D20 + 3D10 + D8	97-99
35	D20 + D12 + 2D10 + D8	100-102
36	2D20 + D10 + D8 + D4	103-105
37	2D20 + D10 + D8 + D6	106-108
38	2D20 + D10 + 2D8	109-111
39	2D20 + 2D10 + D8	112-114
40	2d20 + D12 + D10 + D8	115-117



GAME TERMS

The following summary of game terms should help you get started playing **Earthdawn**. Complete definitions and examples appear in the body of the rules.

ROUND

A round is a timekeeping unit used to keep the action of the adventure flowing. A round represents the time required to take most actions, and equals 10 seconds of game time. A round of action during combat is referred to as a Combat Round.

CHARACTERS

Archetypes are pre-generated characters. The ones included in this book provide a sampling of the races and character types from **Earthdawn**. Choosing an archetype for your character is the quickest way to get into the game, because an archetype can be used immediately.

Attributes measure a character's natural abilities, what he or she can accomplish without training or magic. **Talents**, **skills**, and **spells** provide other capabilities. Attributes, talents, skills, and spells all appear on the Character Record Sheet. All of them are measured in step numbers.

The **Damage** section of your Character Record Sheet tracks any damage your character takes. When the **Current Damage** equals or exceeds your character's **Unconsciousness Rating**, your character falls unconscious. When the Current Damage exceeds your character's **Death Rating**, he or she dies. The **Wound Threshold** represents the amount of damage that it takes to wound your character. That amount of damage must be done in a single attack to cause a Wound. Wounds heal more slowly than normal damage. You roll **Recovery dice** to recover from damage; Recovery dice reduce the amount of your character's Current Damage. A character's Recovery dice are equal to his or her Toughness dice. Each use of Recovery dice is called a **Recovery Test**. Your character may make only a small number of Recovery Tests per day.

DISCIPLINES

The world of **Earthdawn** is filled with magic. The most talented characters, including yours, are initiated in the use of magic. Such characters are called **Adepts**. Some Adepts train to cast spells, some train to use swords or other weapons, others train to work with animals. The form of magical training chosen by your character is his or her **Discipline**. This training focuses the magical energies of your character into special abilities called **Talents**. Each Discipline offers unique talents. Most Adepts spend the majority of their lives in a single Discipline, however, some seek a wider variety of talents by choosing to follow an additional Discipline.

Talents are character abilities powered by magic. Magic makes the abilities easier to learn, and eventually more powerful than similar non-magical abilities, called **Skills**. Talents and skills are rated in **Ranks**. Rank is the measure of proficiency in a talent or skill. Talent and skill ranks are added to an Attribute's step number to determine the ability (talent or skill) step number.

Sheri's character Me'gana has a Dexterity of 16, or Step 7. Me'gana also has Rank 3 in the Melee Weapons talent. This gives

Me'gana a Melee Weapons talent step number of 10. When rolling Action dice to determine the result of using a melee weapon, Sheri rolls D10 + D6 (Step 10).

Circles

All **Earthdawn** characters can be rated according to their knowledge and experience. These ratings are called **Circles**. All Adept characters begin the game at First Circle. As your character gains experience, he can increase his Circle. As your character reaches each new Circle, he or she gains new talents and abilities.

MAGIC

Characters of some Disciplines possess the ability to cast **spells**. Known as **magicians** or **spellcasters**, these characters can learn a **pattern** for a spell, then reduce that pattern to its minimum complexity. They can store that Spell Pattern in a **Spell Matrix**, and draw astral energy through the pattern to form the spell. The same pattern may be used over and over, and as long as the magician holds the Spell Pattern in a Spell Matrix, he or she may cast the spell.

Many spells have patterns too large to compress into a Spell Matrix. Magicians must weave part of these patterns during the casting. The portion of the spell a magician weaves is called a **thread**. The magician draws energy through the pattern to weave the thread, which expands the pattern. Once the pattern contains all the necessary threads, the magician can then cast the spell.

Blood Magic

Characters in **Earthdawn** have access to a special type of magic known as **Blood Magic**. Blood magic requires the character to sacrifice a small amount of his or her own blood in order to power the magic. Because this magic is powered by self-sacrifice, it is sometimes known as life magic. Blood magic is very powerful, and often endures as long as a year and a day. Characters use blood magic to increase the power and potential for success when using abilities and talents. Blood magic also allows characters to use certain powerful charms and to seal oaths. However, blood magic is inherently dangerous (see **Workings of Magic**, p. 144).

Karma and Legend Points

The high level of magic running through the world of **Earthdawn** allows Adepts to use raw magical energy, called **Karma**, to enhance their talents. Characters can spend **Karma Points** to enhance the possibility of success for certain actions. The rules define the actions for which Karma Points can be used.

The gamemaster awards **Legend Points** after each gaming session. Your character uses Legend Points earned through successful adventuring to purchase Karma Points. You also use Legend Points to increase your character's Circle and the ranks of his or her talents and abilities. Your character gains Legend Points based on how well he or she performed during the gaming session, but based also on how well you, as a player, roleplayed your character.

THE HORRORS

For hundreds of years, the world of **Earthdawn** suffered under a reign of terror perpetrated by beings known collectively as the **Horrors**. Though the world always had magic, the level of ambient magic gradually increased, and so did the activity of the Horrors. Magic eventually reached a level that allowed the Horrors to routinely breach the extra-dimensional barriers between their world and the world of **Earthdawn**. The time during which the Horrors freely roamed the world, causing terror and destruction, is known by many names, the most common being **the Scourge**.

During the Scourge, cities and nations fell to the Horrors' power. Some individuals and communities embraced dark magics to defend themselves, becoming little better than that which they feared. Now the Scourge is over. Many Horrors remain, but their power is diminished enough that civilization has begun to rebuild. Most people still tremble inside the walls they built to protect themselves and their families, afraid to venture out into the strange, changed world. The few brave enough to face it are the heroes of **Earthdawn**.

NAMES

The **Names** of people, places, and things affect how they interact with the universe. The universe gave certain races the ability to Name themselves and others, allowing them to better interact with magic and the life forces of the universe. All major races of Barsaive are Name-givers.

In the world of **Earthdawn**, a character's Name becomes more than a simple label; a Name represents that person's very being. This holds true for the Names of specific places, items, and creatures. Even the Horrors bear names, for they also interact with the universe. See the **Workings of Magic** section for more information regarding Names and Name-givers.

THE PASSIONS

The **Passions** represent the spiritual beliefs of the people of Barsaive. The Passions are the physical embodiment of the life forces of the universe, the living manifestations of emotion. Each of the twelve Passions in the pantheon embody a number of emotions that lie at the source of everything the Name-giver races do and believe. **Questors** embrace the ideals of a particular Passion, representing their patron Passion in both word and deed. Questors serve to bridge the gap between their patron and the denizens of the world.



MAJOR RACES OF BARSAIVE



Many of my people say that the other races are too big, take up too much space, and use up too much air. Theirs is a shortsighted view; they fail to see the irony. After all, how boring the world would be if there was no one to make fun of!

— Seethian, windling

Many different species and races of sentient beings populate the world of **Earthdawn**. This section describes the most numerous races in the region of Barsaive. They vary in size and shape, color and culture, and together bring the game world to life. These races are all Name-givers.

Your character will belong to one of the major races of Barsaive. In this fantasy world, the word "race" means the same as and replaces "species." Besides the human race there are elves, trolls, and even more exotic races such as the obsidimen and the t'skrang. The descriptions in this section provide basic information about each of the races populating the world of **Earthdawn**.

These descriptions contain broad generalizations. Though we may say that orks are slow-thinking but quick-tempered, you may choose to play your character differently, creating an ork who is quick-thinking and/or slow-tempered. Players are always free to customize their characters. When roleplaying, remember that other races, particularly Gamemaster characters, may treat your character as though he or she is merely a stereotyped version of the description given here. You may even be able to take advantage of their misconceptions.

KINSHIP BETWEEN THE SPECIES

The elves possess fragmentary records claiming that dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, and trolls are profoundly similar members of a single, as-yet-unnamed species. Most scholars no longer accept this opinion as valid. Theran scholars, especially those in the school of Darok Thanalea, believe that the current high level of magic increases the differences between the races.

DWARF

Old King Varulus was a wise ruler. Young Varulus seems a bit hasty in his policies. We need to trade with all in Barsaive, that much is true. But just because I trade with the t'skrang doesn't mean I want one of their damned lizard tongues in my cask of ale.

—Counselor Holliz of Throal

Dwarfs are of stocky build, with an average height of 4 feet and weight of 120 pounds. Their skin tone ranges from pinkish white to dark ebony. Some reports seem to indicate possible other skin colorations, but these variations are more likely the result of ritual tattoos begun during the time dwarf groups began to seal themselves off from the Horrors. Dwarf hair grows quickly and in abundance, particularly the hair on their heads. Dwarfs are broad-chested, tough, and strong for their size, though slow runners, as their legs are disproportionately short for even their squat bodies. Dwarf ears usually come to a gentle point on the tip, though less pronounced than elven ears. Dwarfs reach physical maturity sometime after ten years of life, whose span will average 100 years. Some individuals have recorded life spans of 150 years or more.

Dwarfs organize themselves into families, tribes, and nations. Though their social instincts comfortably embrace the idea of kingdoms and nations, a dwarf's first loyalty is to family and tribe. A gift for large-scale organization and unshakable loyalties come naturally to dwarfs, as they are aggressive, quick to latch onto a single solution, and quite stubborn. Even other dwarfs admit that members of their race often seem curt and lacking in social graces.



One thing that sets dwarfs apart from other Name-giving races is their predisposition to making things with their hands. Dwarfs are very skilled craftsmen, and most often are taught from a very young age in the home, helping his family build necessary things for life. So as a child, their perspective is that everything in the world is something constructed, and as a result, they often question how something was built. Also, one of the most treasured items dwarfs have in their possession are their tools, which are often their first Pattern Items. Most often their tools are handed down to the next generation so that tradition and history are not lost to them; most every tool has a story that is a life lesson to be learned. It is a rarity for dwarfs to possess any item made by another race, as they believe it to be inferior to their craftsmanship. Some races are insulted by this arrogance.

Dwarfs prefer to live underground or as close to the earth as possible. While not adverse to travel and life above ground, they often develop a "home sickness" for subterranean life. Dwarfs generally refuse to ride animals, as their build makes the act ungainly. They also dislike travelling over open water, out of sight of land.

ELF

Our great Queen's bright, terrible beauty shines like a beacon. Her whole court reflects that beauty, and reflects the choices made by the elves of Blood Wood. I think we must soon choose again, this time for ourselves. I think we should choose a different path.

— Elf Elementalist Furnithann, in a letter to his friend, the Nethermancer Mestoph

Elves grow to an average height of 6 feet, 3 inches and weigh an average of 150 pounds. Elven facial features appear completely symmetrical, often flawless, and many of the other races of Barsaive find elves attractive. Elven skin color varies wildly by tribe and region, but the most common are pure white, pink, tan, brown, and midnight black. Elves with skin of a pale green or iridescent, pearly color called *cetharel* exist, but remain rare. Elves produce sparse body hair, but grow luxuriant facial and head hair, often in uncommon colors. In addition to white, blond, brown, and black, naturally occurring violet, blue, and even metallic colors have been seen. Elves have elongated, sharply pointed ears and move with unmatched grace, but the slight





build that makes that gracefulness possible also makes them vulnerable to injury. They have long legs for their height. Elves reach physical maturity in their twenties, and enjoy a natural life span of 300 years. Some records show individuals living up to 400 years. Legends speak of some elves rumored to live even longer.

Elves give their primary loyalty to their family, rather than their tribe or nation, and consider blood ties the most binding relationships of their lives. Elves prefer to establish and live in small communities, and elven cities generally consist of a loose confederation of villages grouped into neighborhoods. Elves may also live in human or dwarf settlements, but rarely feel anything more than a congenial friendship for the other races of such a settlement.

Elves prefer living in wilderness areas. They construct dwellings and other structures from living plants, integrating their community with the surrounding natural world. They find underground settings uncomfortable, and may experience a kind of claustrophobia in human or dwarf settlements if unable to visit a wilderness area two or three times a year.

Elves see all life as a journey of discovery, change, growth, and ascendancy. Throughout his life, the elf treads a metaphysical pathway represented by the Wheel of Life. The Wheel contains five paths, each corresponding to different stage of life. As an elf ages, his journey along the Wheel leads him until he reaches the Wheel's heart. At this still center of being, he prepares for ascension into the metaplanes, to the mystical place known as the Citadel of the Shining Ones.

Each Path represents ever-greater spiritual maturity. Though a few elves disagree, most accept the following five paths: the Path of Warriors, the Path of Scholars, the Path of Travelers, the Path of Sages, and the Path of Lords. Each Path has certain regalia and rituals associated with it that mark its followers.

HUMAN

Thera and the Kingdom of Throal. Those are the giants straddling this land. Our best strategy is to keep to ourselves, choose only if we must, and then choose Throal. Dwarf condescension is easier to shrug off than Theran shackles.

— Adviser Kaj Ther of Landis

Humans average 5 feet, 7 inches in height and weigh an average of 150 pounds. They produce less body hair than most races, but more than elves. Skin tone ranges from ebony to tan and pinkish-white. Their ears are small and rounded. Humans reach physical maturity in their teens and live a natural life span of 75 years, although individuals have been known to live 100 years or longer.

Humans feel a natural loyalty to their families. Inclined to form social groups, humans easily transfer this loyalty to tribes, cities, or kingdoms, though they do not adapt to large-scale society as well as dwarfs. This reluctance to pledge allegiance to a government does not prevent them from quickly adapting dwarf advances into their own cultures.

Humans prefer to live in roofed dwellings, clustered with others of their kind. They have adopted the dwarf invention of the city, though many human cities spring up in too haphazard a fashion for dwarf tastes. Most humans find elven communities unsettling.

Of all the world's Name-givers, only humans can learn talents and skills widely disparate from their chosen Disciplines. The longer-lived elves and dwarfs, and other Name-givers, by contrast, can only learn certain kinds of magical and non-magical skills. Some scholars explain this so-called Law of Versatility by theorizing that the other Name-giver races are finely tuned, but limited, extensions of humanity. Magical energy heightens the particular attributes of a Name-giver race, but also limits the number of inborn abilities they possess.

OBSIDIMAN

Listen to the rocks of the earth. Those around you want to hurry, for they listen to the waters of their blood and the fire of their hearts. You are hewn from living rock. Listen to the rocks of the earth. The call of those around you is the call of the volcano. The fire of other hearts burns hot enough to melt your world around you. Listen to the rocks of the earth.

— Saying from "The Liferock," Dwarf translation

Obsidimen are tall, reaching an average height of 7 feet, 3 inches. Seen from a distance they seem squat, because their massive average weight of 900 pounds offsets their height. Their craggy skin and

bodily tissue incorporate the properties of stone, and their most common coloration is black or gray. Their blood is blue-gray. The skin of a few obsidimen, usually those of high-ranking families, shows veins of semiprecious stone such as tourmaline. Obsidimen are mostly hairless and have internal ears completely covered by a thin layer of skin. Obsidimen mature physically by the end of their first century of life. Natural life span has yet to be determined, because as they age, obsidimen spend more time attached to their Liferock, the largest source of stone within four hours' walk of their birthplace. They may remain attached to the Liferock for decades, showing no signs of being aware of their surroundings, then emerge again in a time of crisis. In one indication of obsidimen life-span, dwarf records show that individual obsidimen have traveled and lived away from their Liferock for at least 500 years after reaching maturity.

Obsidimen feel loyalty to their Liferock and all others formed from it. These loyalties loosely resemble human or ork loyalties to a tribe. Obsidimen do not form villages or cities, though they do erect ceremonial structures on or near their Liferock. Obsidimen prefer to live outdoors, exposed to the sky. Obsidimen can live underground for short periods, but those who spend too many months in a dwarf city without traveling outside to the open sky fall into a hibernation-like state. Once carried outdoors again, the obsidiman will awaken in two to five days.

Every obsidimen in all the world can tell you (if he chooses) the Name and the place of his Liferock and the Names of all obsidimen who have ever sprung from it. Obsidimen can no more disregard their Liferock than a dwarf might disregard his parents, or an elf his ancestral lineage. The Liferock brings them into the world, shapes what they are, and allows their race to endure. Like the other Name-givers, obsidimen are reluctant to speak too freely of a thing as close to their hearts as is their Liferock; for this reason, many of the other races do not know what a Liferock is. Another curiosity of obsidimen is their lack of gender. Most obsidimen dress and act like males of other races; however, there are some who have chosen to adopt female identity. In general, obsidimen find the other races' preoccupation with gender amusing nonsense.



ORK

Dwarfs pay well, but I don't like their attitude. Of course, I don't like most Name-giver's attitudes.

—Kraeg Yelloweye, ork Cavalryman in service to the Kingdom of Throal

Orks have powerful builds, averaging 6 feet, 3 inches in height and 225 pounds in weight. Large lower canines protrude over their upper lip and their body hair has a coarse texture, almost always colored black or gray. Some orks appear nearly hairless, and head hair usually grows in sparsely but with the thickness of fine wire. Common skin colors include olive green, beige, pinkish-white, tan, and ebony. Their ears are pointed, and about a quarter of the population show elongated ears. Natural life span for an ork averages 40 years, though some live 60 years or more. Orks reach their physical maturity in their early teens.

Orks recognize only a loose concept of family, giving greatest loyalty to their tribe. Social organization within the tribe varies considerably, as orks often adopt social structures of the other races with whom they interact. Isolated tribes usually contain only two authority figures, however, the warchief and the shaman. Most ork tribes live as nomads and willingly inhabit any kind of dwelling. They live in tents when with their own tribes.

The ork's reputation for violence grows from his passionate nature. You may say that your heart is full of love, or full of spite. When you say this, you are speaking poetry. When an ork says it, he means it. If you arouse an ork to desire or fury, they feel it in their heart as intensely as other races would feel a fever in their head or poison in their gut. Orks call this sensation ***gahad***. If an ork's *gahad* is awakened, expect them to act on their emotions. They can try to resist the *gahad*, but resisting sets their brain to boil and curdles their stomach. This is not a simple metaphor – it hurts when an ork resists his *gahad*. Orks believe that such resistance shortens life – an able-bodied ork who suddenly drops dead at forty is said to have swallowed his *gahad* one time too many.



TROLL

Take no back talk from anyone, not even an obsidiman. Stand for your word and make them stand for theirs. I generally make an exception for windlings. They fly like blazes, and their tongues move just as fast. Open confrontation just encourages them. It is best to wait until they sleep, then pop their puny heads off.

— Larus Baldurion, Crystal raider captain, making his traditional speech to a new crew

The average troll height is 8 feet, 6 inches and average weight is 500 pounds or more. Skin colors range from olive to mahogany-brown. Troll skin has a rough texture, increased by the ridges, spines, or plating resulting from deposits of *trolthelia*, a substance similar to the material in rhinoceros horn. Body hair is sparse except on the chest, and head hair grows considerably thicker and longer than human hair. Lower canines protrude from the mouths of a slight majority of trolls. The nose is broader than the human nose. Trolls exhibit fierce, aggressive personalities. The average natural life span is 50 years, though some trolls have lived into their seventies. Trolls reach physical maturity in their early teens.

Trolls are fiercely loyal to their family or clan. Multiple clans can organize through the ritual of the trollmoot, gatherings of several clans whose leaders swear the loyalty of their clans to one another, but such unified action remains rare. Troll clans often war among themselves when other enemies are lacking. Trolls prefer to live in caves, ice caverns, or other natural geographic features. They find dwarf or elven settlements more comfortable than human or ork communities, and have been known to camp around obsidimen connected to a Liferock. Trolls find the serenity of the obsidimen calming and deeply moving. Their regard for the obsidimen mountains often prompts trolls to choose those sites for trollmoots.

Most other races recognize that trolls are governed by honor, but do not understand the many things that honor means to a troll. For a troll to explain the distinctions between the various meanings of their honor is like a bird trying to explain what it is to be a bird. Paradoxically, only a troll could even attempt to explain their view of honor, because only a troll understands it.



What a troll calls "honor" actually encompasses two ideas: honor and pride. Troll honor combines recognition of abilities with a sense of dignity and personal worth. Their honor tells them who they are and what they can accomplish. Without it, trolls believe they have nothing by which to know themselves and nothing to give to the world; they are Nameless and useless, and might as well die. The troll language has no single word for his concept of honor. Instead, they use three words: *katorr*, *kat'ral*, and *katera*, the meaning of all of which are simultaneously related and separate.

Katorr translates most closely as personal honor, the pride an individual troll feels in himself. *Kat'ral* refers to the honor of a troll clan, and *katera* might best be translated as racial honor. These three kinds of honor are intertwined like the strands of a rope, woven so closely together that they blend into a single thing. Yet, all the strands remain separate. The intricacies of the links between *katorr*, *kat'ral*, and *katera* are central to the life of a troll.

Troll legend tells us that many hundreds of years ago, long before the Scourge and even the Orichalcum Wars, most trolls married in the same way as other Name-givers. A man and a women mated, raised children, and passed their family name and lineage in this way from generations to generations.

But with the advent of the Orichalcum Wars, many troll clans and families saw their ancient Names die out. All too often, the father and son(s) of a single family would be slain in the same battle, forever ending many noble bloodlines. In an attempt to ensure that a family might endure throughout years of warfare, two and sometimes three families within a single clan began joining together into a single family, increasing both their number and the likelihood that some scions of that family would survive and carry on. These joinings came to be called "line marriages." Because far more men than women died in battle, the women took charge of the line marriages. All the wives together chose new members of the family as needed, adding both husbands and wives.

Within several years, the practice of line marriages spread throughout most of the troll clans and moots in Barsaive. Even after the Orichalcum Wars ended, the tradition of the line marriage continued; current members of the families involved had never known any other way, and the marriages had preserved family lineage that otherwise would have died out. Over the centuries, the tradition of line marriages has become an important part of troll society and culture.

T'SKRANG

The name of our people? Well, my Theran friend, there are many stories that tell that tale. For the true one, you must listen very carefully to the sound inside your helmet. What? Oh, that's just my tail. Listen carefully, for the truth will soon be revealed.

— From the transcript of the trial of the t'skrang pirate Theormaz

T'skrang are reptilian beings with a flair for the dramatic. They average 5 feet, 9 inches tall, and their tails add another 6 feet of length. T'skrang weigh an average of 200 pounds, of which nearly 40 is the tail. T'skrang skin color ranges from verdant green to green-yellow or green-blue, with aqua-blue and even sunset-red variants. T'skrang have cauliflower-shaped ears set into the sides of their heads. The t'skrang mature physically by the age of 10, and often live 80 or more years.



The t'skrang talent for tale-telling casts doubt on their claims of a 181-year-old t'skrang, particularly because careful dwarf observations place the oldest known t'skrang at a mere 115. T'skrang scholars blame this variance on faulty dwarf calculations, which of course the dwarfs vigorously deny.

T'skrang give primary loyalty to their families, though like humans, they can transfer this loyalty to tribes and nations. Some individuals pledge their loyalty to other races' societies, but pirate federations are the closest thing to a nation the t'skrang have built for themselves. Females lead t'skrang society, which is matriarchal in most aspects. T'skrang prefer to live in roofed dwellings along bodies of water, and submerge portions of their homes. T'skrang love to swim and immerse themselves in water, becoming sulky and irritable if unable to do so at least once a week.

T'skrang consider members of the other Name-giver races rather dull and boring. In turn, most other Name-giver races consider t'skrang overly flamboyant and somewhat frivolous. All races agree that each holds a unique and necessary place in the society of Barsaive, and so agree to disagree.

Each t'skrang takes pride in the heritage and bloodline of his or her *niall*, or foundation. The foundation is a large communal family consisting of thirty to sixty kin, from infants to ancients, all living under a single roof. Lineage is traced through the maternal line. When a woman takes a husband, the male leaves his foundation to join the *niall* of his mate. Sometimes, allied *nialls* will band together in what is known as a "crew covenant," combining their numbers to operate a riverboat or fleet of riverboats.

The largest political units among the t'skrang are the *aropagoi*, or Great Houses. Just as a crew covenant consist of several cooperating foundations, so each *aropagoi* consist of numerous villages and crew covenants. Each Great House coordinates trade operations to the benefit of the crews and villages that compose it. The main purpose of the *aropagoi* are profit and trade advantage. Political ambition, especially as understood in Throalic and Theran terms of military alliance and land control, has no place among the t'skrang *aropagoi*. Each of the *aropagoi* controls a section of the Serpent River and regulates trade and passage in that territory. The *aropagoi* do not control the entire length of the Serpent; some villages do not belong to an *aropagoi*, but most see the advantage of that system.

WINDLING

"Wheeeeeeeeeee!"

— Poorht, windling Thief, as he fled for his life after stealing the dagger of Captain Larus Baldurion, troll crystal raider

Windlings are small, winged creatures. They average 18 inches in height and weigh an average of 13 pounds. They fly using two double-wings, similar to a dragonfly's, made of a tough, iridescent membrane. A windling's wings and hair, and sometimes even skin color, matches the brightest-colored elements of the environment in which it lives: icy white in a snowcap, the yellow and orange of meadow flowers, the glazed blue of the ceramic roof-tiles of the city of Vewbane. This coloration only changes after a windling has lived in the same place for two or three months. Then, in the space of three nights, the windling's skin changes to match its current surroundings. Windlings grow very little body hair, though their head hair can be luxurious. Their ears come to a sharper point even than elven ears. Windlings mature physically over 30 years, reaching a natural life span of 170 years. Their appearance does not age during this time.

Windling society can best be described as haphazard. Windlings often speak of a class of nobles who rule them. Though they will obey a direct order from a noble, the social hierarchy stops there. Windlings acting on orders from their queen cannot wield authority over other windlings by virtue of these orders, but may persuade other windlings to seek out the queen to determine for themselves that the orders are legitimate. Windlings are happiest when living outdoors, taking shelter under or inside whatever nature can provide and windling magic make comfortable. Windlings can tolerate cities, but consider them a colossal waste of time and effort. There are more males windlings than female windlings, though there is not a good explanation for this oddity. Because of this, if more than one male wishes to wed a female, the clan holds a contest they call a *sleerah*. Once every contestant has completed the competition, the female selects her husband from among the males, or may choose none at all!



CREATING A CHARACTER



Our streets are filled with ruffians of every description. Some are worse than others, and grow to truly fearsome power. To those we give medals, in hopes that calling them heroes will make it so.

—King Varulus the Younger

A character in **Earthdawn** is similar to a character in a novel or a movie. The character is part of a story; it interacts with other characters, villains, and monsters, and makes decisions that affect how the story turns out. The important difference between a character in a novel and your **Earthdawn** character is that you, the player, decide how your character views life, how he conducts himself around other people, what he is particularly good at; and you control his actions. Every **Earthdawn** character has certain basic Attributes, talents, and skills, but you give that character personality, flair, and realism. Without a unique personality, your character remains a mere collection of game statistics.

The personality you choose can make your character a hero of the legends of **Earthdawn**. Every player character possesses a specific outlook, set of talents, and a connection to the magic of the world that makes him an above-average, often outstanding, member of his race and of the people who live in the world of **Earthdawn**. Player characters have an instinct for adventure, and the courage and personal integrity to follow that instinct. By behaving in extraordinary fashion, player characters become the heroes others admire, trust, and depend on. They become the legends that will head the renaissance of their world.

BUILDING A HERO

You know what roleplaying in **Earthdawn** involves. You have a feel for the history of the world and its races. Now it is time to create your own hero and find your character's place in this world. By defining the limits and potentials of a character, players can become a part of the legends of **Earthdawn**.

To create an **Earthdawn** character, you follow a series of ten steps. Each step is briefly described immediately below to demonstrate the general flow and process of creating a character, and then described in detail further on. For the most satisfactory results when creating a character, players and gamemasters should familiarize themselves with all the rules in this chapter and in the **Disciplines**, **Talents**, and **Skills** chapters. Many decisions that must be made to create a character are affected by other decisions. For example, your choice of race affects your choice of Discipline, your choice of Discipline affects the talents available to your character, and so on. It's best to have all the facts going in, rather than being disappointed by the results of making ill-informed choices.

To begin, read through the condensed version of the steps and the chapters mentioned above, then move on to the expanded explanations of each step. As soon as you've generated a few characters, you'll probably only need to refer to the condensed procedure and a few of the following tables to create exactly the character you want to play.

1. Choose A Discipline

To choose which Discipline your character will follow, see the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 51, which includes a list of Disciplines and full descriptions for each. Your character's Discipline will determine his race, special abilities, talents, and way of viewing and interacting with the world. Take particular care in choosing a Discipline, so that you have the other options available to you for your character that you most want.

2. Choose A Race

To choose a race, review the **Major Races of Barsaive** chapter, beginning on page 30. If you have familiarized yourself with the recommended chapters before creating your character, you will have already taken the race you want your character to be into consideration when you chose his or her Discipline. Many of the races have certain special abilities and modifiers (see the **Racial Abilities Table**, p. 45). If one or more of these seems important to the type of character you want to play, now is the time to alter your choice accordingly.

3. Generate Attributes

Earthdawn provides two methods for generating character Attributes. One method allows the player to purchase Attributes for his character (see **Purchase Method**); the other generates Attribute Values randomly. The purchasing system gives the players more control over what kind of character they create and provides better balance within the game, but the random dice-roll system has the potential to create more powerful and varied characters. The gamemaster decides which system the players will use to generate character Attributes.

While you are determining your character's Attributes, consult the **Racial Modifiers Table**, p. 41, and modify your character's Attributes accordingly. Then consult the **Step/Action Dice Table** on p. 41 and record the step and Action dice for each Attribute on the Character Record Sheet.

4. Determine Characteristics

Certain characteristics determine how characters function within the game, such as Defense Ratings, Armor Ratings, Death and Unconsciousness Ratings, and so on. These characteristics are determined wholly or in part by the character's Attribute values. Characteristic ratings appear in the **Attribute Table**, p. 42.

5. Record Racial Abilities

Each of the races has special abilities. Note these on the Character Record Sheet.

6. Assign Talent Ranks

Assign ranks to the talents listed for your character's Discipline. Remember, the Discipline you choose determines which talents your character can learn (see **Disciplines**). Refer to your character's Discipline description again at this point. You have 8 Rank Points to distribute among your character's talents. For each point you assign to a specific talent, the character gains one rank in that talent. You cannot allocate more than 3 Rank Points to any one talent.

If your character is a spellcaster, select his starting spells at this time. To acquire spells, spellcasters begin with a number of "purchasing points" equal to their Willpower step. Circle 1 spells cost 1 point, and Circle 2 spells cost 2 points. First Circle characters cannot acquire spells higher than Circle 2.

7. Assign Skill Ranks

Select areas of knowledge for your character. You have 2 Rank Points to assign to Knowledge Skills. This gives your character two Knowledge Skills at Rank 1 or one at Rank 2.

Select an Artisan Skill (see **Skills**), giving it a Rank of 1.

Your character also speaks his or her racial language and the Dwarf tongue. Assign a Rank of 1 to the Read/Write Languages Skill for the Dwarf language, and a Rank 2 to Speak Languages Skill for the two languages your character can speak.

Finally, you receive a number of skill points equal to your character's Charisma step. These skill points can be spent on any skill, with the restriction that no skill can be given more than Rank of 1. These are the skills that your character has picked up in his or her life.

8. Equip Your Character

Each character starts his adventuring life with 120 silver pieces. Turn to the **Goods and Services** chapter (p. 193), and buy your character some gear. He probably won't be able to afford much equipment at the beginning, but browsing is allowed in Throal. Go ahead.

9. Flesh Out Your Character

Choose a few personality traits and answer some basic questions about your character to find out what he or she is really like. Make some fundamental philosophical and lifestyle choices.

10. Play The Game

Have fun, enjoy yourself, eat lots of pizza.

DETAILED CHARACTER CREATION

This section provides in-depth explanations of the character creation rules, and also points out the considerations to keep in mind when making certain choices for your character. While taking you step by step through the actual character creation process outlined above, this section also describes how each aspect of your character is used in the game.

In an effort to make this book as immediately useful as possible, we repeat certain rules and concepts so that you can find them easily each time you need them.

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

As you create your character, fill in the appropriate spaces on a Character Record Sheet. A blank copy is provided at the end of the book. Make as many copies of the Character Record Sheet as you need.

In addition to the blank Character Record Sheet and a pen or pencil, you'll need another sheet of paper or two and four 6-sided dice (hereafter referred to as D6).

1. CHOOSE A DISCIPLINE

The first step in creating an **Earthdawn** character is to choose that character's Discipline. This is the most important decision you will make about your character, for a Discipline is much more than a character's profession; it is a way of life. A character's Discipline also determines how he interacts with magic and how he can use magical energies to empower his talents. A Discipline colors the character's view of the world, gives him special abilities and restrictions, and defines much of what he is. In some cases, the Discipline you are interested in for a character may even require him to be of a certain race.

See the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 51, for full descriptions of the Disciplines available. Choose one, and write the name on the Discipline line near the top of your Character Record Sheet. Note any racial restrictions for your chosen Discipline on a separate sheet of paper. Certain races cannot follow some Disciplines; if you want to play a character of a particular race, choose a Discipline with that race in mind.

DISCIPLINES	
Air Sailor	Sky Raider
Archer	Swordmaster
Beastmaster	Thief
Cavalryman	Troubadour
Elementalist	Warrior
Illusionist	Weaponsmith
Nethermancer	Wizard
Scout	

Directly below the Discipline line on the Character Record Sheet is a notation for **Circle**. **Earthdawn** measures proficiency and expertise in a given Discipline in Circles: the higher the Circle a character reaches, the more proficient (and more powerful) that character becomes. Every player character begins at First Circle. Some day, if things go the character's way, he or she may reach Tenth Circle (or even higher!). We wish you luck. Write a 1 on the line after Circle.

Jill is very excited about creating her very own hero in Earthdawn. She bases her first decision on a personal preference; being a great animal-lover herself, she makes her character an animal-lover too, and chooses the Beastmaster Discipline. Because Jill also wants her character to be a race other than human, she checks the Beastmaster description to find out what racial restrictions apply. Jill discovers that as a Beastmaster, her character cannot be an obsidiman or a t'skrang. This leaves her with several other non-human choices for race. While she's looking at the Beastmaster description, Jill also notes that Toughness and Charisma are important Attributes for her character's Discipline.

2. CHOOSE A RACE

Once you select a Discipline, the next step is to choose your character's race. The races populating the world of **Earthdawn** are described in the **Major Races of Barsaive** chapter, p. 30. Keep in mind that racial restrictions prevent certain races from choosing some Disciplines. For example, if you chose the Sky Raider Discipline, your character cannot be an obsidiman. Write your race choice on the Race line at the top of the Character Record Sheet.

A few races also have Attribute requirements (see the **Racial Abilities Table**). These requirements are most often minimum values that certain Attributes must meet in order for a character to be of that race. For example, in order for a character to be a troll, he must have Strength and Toughness Attribute Values of at least 11. Note these minimums on your separate sheet of paper, because this becomes important in the next step, **Generate Attributes**.

Amused by the possibilities she sees in playing a character that flies, Jill chooses the windling race for her character. She has now made two decisions about her character, and will be playing a windling Beastmaster. Jill consults the ***Racial Abilities Table*** *and makes a note to remind herself that a windling has a maximum Strength Value of 11.*

3. GENERATE ATTRIBUTES (PURCHASING METHOD)

Each character in **Earthdawn** possesses six Attributes that define the character's natural, unlearned physical and mental abilities. These Attributes - Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, and Charisma - are of more or less importance to different Disciplines. For example, a Thief needs a high Dexterity Value, which makes him faster, more coordinated, and better at performing sleight-of-hand tricks and other tasks requiring extraordinary small-motor control, in order to follow his Discipline faithfully.

Players can generate Attributes for their character using two methods. The first uses a purchasing system to buy Attribute Values from a pool of points. We recommend that players use this system to create their characters. Because each player has the same number of Purchase Points available to buy the same Attributes, this system creates more balanced characters across Disciplines and races. Each player chooses how he will take advantage of identical opportunities. The purchasing system also gives players more control over their chosen character by allowing them to guarantee that their character has the required minimum or maximum Attribute Value for a particular race.

Using this system, each player receives 66 points with which to purchase his character's Attributes. The cost for each Attribute Value appears below. No character may begin the game with a starting Attribute Value lower than 2 or higher than 18. Remember that certain races have minimum or maximum Attribute Value requirements. These minimums or maximums apply to the attribute before racial modifiers are applied. Consult the **Racial Abilities Table**, p. 45, for that information, or refer to your notes from step two, **Choose a Race**, above.

Generating Attributes with the purchasing method requires a certain amount of strategy. For example, by choosing a very low value for one attribute, you gain additional Purchase Points that can be applied to other Attributes. As the table shows, assigning a value of 2 to one Attribute actually gives you 3 extra Purchase Points to assign to other Attributes. Choosing a value of 3 will gain you 2 points, and choosing a value of 4 gains you 1 point. Attribute Values higher than 5 must be paid for at the point cost given in the table.

Racial modifiers may also affect the value you assign to your character's Attributes. Note the racial modifiers for your character's race as you assign Attribute Values. For example, a troll character receives a Strength modifier of +4, which allows a player to assign a lower value to the Strength Attribute and still end up with a satisfactory character, while freeing up purchase points for other Attributes. Trolls also suffer a Perception modifier of -1. A player might decide to use the extra points to purchase an extra Attribute Value or two to offset that modifier.

Write the unmodified Attribute Values in light pencil on your Character Record Sheet, or list them on a separate sheet of paper.

ATTRIBUTE COST TABLE

Attribute Value	Purchase Points
2	+3
3	+2
4	+1
5	0
6	1
7	2
8	3
9	4
10	5
11	6
12	8
13	10
14	13
15	16
16	19
17	21
18	23

The gamemaster of Jill's group has asked the players to generate their characters using the Purchasing Point system. Jill sees that a windling has a maximum Strength of 11 and that Toughness and Charisma are important Beastmaster Attributes. Jill decides to give her windling Beastmaster high Strength, Toughness, and Charisma Values.

Her gamemaster reminds the group to check the ***Racial Modifier Table****, p. 41, to see how those modifiers will affect the Attribute Values. Jill sees that a windling modifies Charisma by +2, Strength by -4, and Toughness by -3, and so she assigns a value of 17 to Charisma, 11 to Strength, and 18 to Toughness. This gives her windling modified Attribute Values of 19, 7, and 15, respectively. Consulting the* ***Attribute Cost Table****, above, Jill calculates that she has now spent 50 of her available 66 Purchase Points.*

Jill now decides that she wants her windling to be moderately observant, so she assigns an average Attribute Value, a 10, to Perception. This Attribute costs 5 points. The windling Racial Modifier adds 1 to Perception, for a final Attribute Value of 11.

Jill decides to make her character's remaining two Attributes slightly above average. She assigns Dexterity an Attribute Value of 10, modified for race by +1, for an 11. This costs 5 Purchase Points, for a total of 60. With her remaining 6 Purchase Points, Jill gives her windling a Willpower of 11. This character is susceptible to most suggestions, but nobody fools this windling all the time!

3. GENERATE ATTRIBUTES (RANDOM METHOD)

The second method of generating Attributes uses a random system that often creates more unpredictable characters with less evenly balanced Attributes (from a group standpoint), but that can result in more

powerful characters. The random generation system has two main advantages. It is quicker, and the player can actually end up with higher Attribute Values than are possible in the purchasing system. For example, by using random dice rolls, a player could conceivably have an Attribute Value of 15 for all six Attributes. The **Attribute Cost Table** on this page shows that a character could not purchase Attributes at that same level with the allowed Purchase Points. The random generation system's biggest disadvantage, as illustrated in the example below, is that a player creating a character this way has far less control over what values he or she can assign to Attributes, and the character may emerge somewhat unbalanced.

Players randomly generate Attribute Values by rolling 6-sided dice. **These dice rolls are not Action dice, so you do not gain a Bonus dice roll on a result of 6.** Roll 4D6, discarding the lowest die roll result. Add the three remaining dice rolls to get a result from 3 to 18. Repeat this process a total of six times and note the results on your separate sheet of paper.

When you have generated six Attribute Values, assign them in any order to the six Attributes of Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Willpower, and Charisma. Check the racial minimums or maximums for your character's race. If one of your character's Attributes requires a racial minimum, you must assign it one of the randomly generated Attribute Values equal to or higher than the required racial minimum. If you did not randomly generate a number equal to or exceeding the racial minimum, use the generated number closest to the racial minimum and adjust it to equal the minimum. For example, if you wanted to play an obsidiman character and generated no numbers equal to or exceeding 15 (the racial minimum for Strength), you would assign the closest number to 15 to the Strength Attribute as a 15.

For curiosity's sake, Jill's gamemaster asks the group to generate Attributes using the random generation system. The gamemaster wants to see how this will affect the characters the group wants to create. Jill rolls a 15, 5, 14, 14, 17, and 9.

Because she is creating a windling, Jill's character has a maximum Strength of 11. Because her character's unmodified Strength Value cannot exceed 11, Jill decides to assign the 9 to Strength. She then modifies that value by -4 for race, giving her windling a Strength Attribute of 5. Again looking at her notes for the Beastmaster, Jill next decides to assign the 15 to Charisma and adds the racial modifier of +2, for a Charisma Value of 17. She assigns the 17 to Toughness and subtracts the racial modifier of -3 for a Toughness Attribute Value of 14. Though the important Beastmaster Attributes came out all right, Jill thinks the rest of these numbers make the character very lopsided.

Determined to create a character as similar to the first as she can, Jill assigns a 14 to her windling's Perception, modified for race by +1. This leaves a 14 and a 5 for the remaining two Attributes. Jill decides to go for as many physical advantages as possible and assigns the remaining 14 to Dexterity. Modified for race by +1, the windling has a Dexterity Attribute Value of 15.

This leaves the windling with a Willpower Attribute Value of 5, dangerously low in a world of magic.

Meanwhile, Bob, one of Jill's fellow gamers, is crowing about the stellar results of his dice rolls. With nothing lower than a 15, his character is assured to be one of the most powerful before the game has even started.

Write the Attribute Values in light pencil on a character sheet, or record them on a separate paper. Consult the **Racial Modifiers Table** and **Modify Your Character for Race** to determine what racial modifiers you must apply to the Attribute Values.

The following descriptions of each Attribute also list the various Disciplines for which that Attribute is important. When assigning numbers to Attributes, you will want to favor the Attributes especially related to your character's Discipline.

Dexterity

Dexterity measures your character's agility, speed, and hand-eye coordination. Dexterity affects the character's foot speed, and determines his or her basic ability to engage in and avoid physical attack.

Important For: Air Sailor, Archer, Scout, Sky Raider, Swordmaster, Thief, Troubadour, Warrior

Strength

Strength measures a character's muscle power. It determines the base damage done by a physical attack and how much a character can lift and carry.

Important For: Air Sailor, Cavalryman, Sky Raider, Warrior

Toughness

Toughness measures a character's endurance and general health. It gauges a character's ability to absorb damage and still keep going, as well as his natural ability to heal himself. A character's Toughness determines his Death Rating, Wound Threshold, Unconsciousness Rating, and the number of Recovery Tests he can make per day. Use the character's Toughness dice as his Recovery dice.

Important For: Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Sky Raider, Warrior



RACIAL MODIFIERS TABLE

Race	Dexterity	Strength	Toughness	Perception	Willpower	Charisma
Dwarf	+0	+2	+3	+0	+0	-1
Elf	+2	+0	-2	+1	+1	+1
Human	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0	+0
Obsidiman	-2	+6	+4	-1	+0	-1
Ork	-1	+3	+1	+0	-1	-1
Troll	+0	+4	+2	-1	+1	+0
T'skrang	+1	+0	+1	+0	+0	+1
Windling	+1	-4	-3	+1	+0	+2

Perception

Perception measures a character's mental quickness, alertness, and ability to notice things. Perception is important to the casting of magical spells, as well as for avoiding the effects of spells.

Important For: Archer, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Scout, Thief, Troubadour, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Willpower

Willpower measures a character's concentration, sense of self, and force of will. It helps characters resist illusion magic and potentially damaging spells. Willpower also increases the effectiveness of spellcasting.

Important For: Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Warrior, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Charisma

Charisma measures a character's persuasiveness, social savvy, and ability to create a positive impression on others. The Charisma Attribute determines a character's success or failure at using charm, persuasion, or any number of other social skills.

Important For: Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Swordmaster, Troubadour

3A. MODIFY YOUR CHARACTER FOR RACE

After you purchase or randomly generate your character's Attributes, apply the racial modifiers given in the **Racial Modifiers Table**. The resulting modified Attribute Values represent the character's starting Attribute Values. Record them in the parentheses immediately to the right of the Attributes list in the Attributes section of the Character Record Sheet.

3B. RECORD STEP NUMBERS AND ACTION DICE

After modifying your character's Attributes for race, use the following table to determine your character's Attribute Step Numbers and Action dice (see **Game Concepts**, p. 27). For each Attribute, record the Step Number and Action dice on the character record sheet.

Jill's gamemaster decides to stick with the Purchasing Point system of generating Attributes, and so Jill writes down the following Attribute Values: Dexterity 10, Strength 11, Toughness 18, Perception 10, Willpower 11, and Charisma 17. Checking



STEP/ACTION DICE TABLE

Attribute Value	Step Number	Action Dice
1	2	1D4-1
2	2	1D4-1
3	2	1D4-1
4	3	1D4
5	3	1D4
6	3	1D4
7	4	1D6
8	4	1D6
9	4	1D6
10	5	1D8
11	5	1D8
12	5	1D8
13	6	1D10
14	6	1D10
15	6	1D10
16	7	1D12
17	7	1D12
18	7	1D12
19	8	2D6
20	8	2D6
21	8	2D6
22	9	1D8 + 1D6
23	9	1D8 + 1D6
24	9	1D8 + 1D6
25	10	1D10 + 1D6
26	10	1D10 + 1D6
27	10	1D10 + 1D6
28	11	1D10 + 1D8
29	11	1D10 + 1D8
30	11	1D10 + 1D8

ATTRIBUTE TABLE

Attribute Value	Physical (Dex)/ Spell (Per)/ Social (Cha) Defense Rating	Movement Full/Combat (yrds/round) (Dex)	Carrying Capacity/ Lifting (lbs) (Str)	Death Rating (Tou)	Wound Threshold (Tou)	Uncon. Rating (Tou)	Recovery Tests per day (Tou)	Mystic Armor (Wil)
1	2	25/13	10/20	19	3	10	1/2 days	0
2	3	28/14	15/30	20	4	11	1/2 days	0
3	3	30/15	20/40	22	4	13	1	0
4	4	32/16	25/50	23	5	14	1	0
5	4	35/18	30/65	24	5	15	1	0
6	4	38/19	35/75	26	6	17	1	0
7	5	40/20	40/85	27	6	18	1	0
8	5	43/22	50/100	28	7	19	2	0
9	6	48/24	60/115	30	7	21	2	0
10	6	50/25	70/135	31	8	22	2	0
11	7	54/27	80/160	32	8	24	2	1
12	7	57/29	90/185	34	9	26	2	1
13	7	60/30	105/210	35	9	27	2	1
14	8	65/33	125/250	36	10	28	3	2
15	8	70/35	145/290	38	10	29	3	2
16	9	75/38	165/310	39	11	31	3	2
17	9	80/40	200/400	40	11	32	3	3
18	10	85/43	230/460	42	12	34	3	3
19	10	90/45	270/540	43	12	35	3	3
20	10	100/50	315/630	44	13	36	4	4
21	11	110/55	360/735	46	13	39	4	4
22	11	120/60	430/860	47	13	40	4	4
23	12	130/65	500/1,000	48	14	41	4	5
24	12	140/70	580/1,160	50	14	43	4	5
25	13	150/75	675/1,350	51	15	44	4	5
26	13	160/80	790/1,580	52	15	45	5	6
27	13	170/85	920/1,840	54	15	47	5	6
28	14	180/90	1,075/2,150	55	16	48	5	6
29	14	200/100	1,200/2,500	56	16	49	5	7
30	15	220/110	1,450/2,900	58	17	51	5	7

*the **Racial Modifiers Table**, she adjusts those values and writes the final Attribute Values in the appropriate place on the Character Record Sheet: Dexterity 11, Strength 7, Toughness 15, Perception 11, Willpower 11, and Charisma 19. Jill now consults the **Step/Action Dice Table** and fills in the appropriate spaces. The Attributes section of her Character Record Sheet now looks like this:*

Attribute	*Value*	*Step*	*Action Dice*
Dexterity	*11*	*5*	*1D8*
Strength	*7*	*4*	*1D6*
Toughness	*15*	*6*	*1D10*
Perception	*11*	*5*	*1D8*
Willpower	*11*	*5*	*1D8*
Charisma	*19*	*8*	*2D6*

4. DETERMINE CHARACTERISTICS

The character's Attributes also determine his or her characteristics, the abilities that allow the character to accomplish things in the game. These values determine how well a character defends against various kinds of attacks, how much damage he can take before falling unconscious or dying, and so on. Consult the **Attribute Table** , p. above, to find the value of each characteristic.

Armor

The Physical Armor Rating represents physical armor the character wears (or has due to his thick skin). It helps defend against physical attacks by immediately modifying the amount of physical damage a character takes from an attack (see **Combat** , p. 220). The Physical Armor Rating combines the protection provided worn physical armor (or skin) and any protection and combat advantages of worn shields. The Physical Armor Rating is based on your race (only a benefit if you're an obsidiman) and the physical armor you purchase for your character. See **Goods and Services**, p. 199.

Mystic Armor helps protect the character from magical attacks, such as spells, by immediately reducing the spell's damage. For example, 4 points of Mystic Armor reduce the damage from spells by 4 points.

Certain equipment, such as crystal armor or shields, also modifies the Mystic Armor Rating (See **Goods and Services**, p. 200). A character's Willpower Attribute determines his Mystic Armor Rating.

Record your character's Mystic Armor Rating in the appropriate space in the Characteristics box on the Character Record Sheet. You may decide instead to simply note this rating on your separate sheet until after you purchase equipment for your character, because the equipment may modify the Mystic Armor Rating. Record your character's Physical Armor Rating on the Character Record Sheet after you purchase armor and equipment for your character.

Damage

The damage characteristics determine how much damage a character can take before being knocked unconscious, taking a serious wound, or dying. The damage characteristics also determine how quickly a character heals. All of the damage characteristics are based off of the character's Toughness Attribute.

The **Death Rating** represents the number of Damage Points required to kill the character. When the damage taken exceeds the character's Death Rating, the character dies (see **Character Death**, p. 221, in the **Combat** chapter).

Any single attack that inflicts a number of points of damage equal to or exceeding the character's Wound Threshold gives that character a Wound. Wounds heal much more slowly than normal damage, and reduce a character's ability to perform actions and otherwise interact with his or her surroundings (see **Wounds**, p. 228, in the **Combat** chapter).

The **Unconsciousness Rating** represents the amount of cumulative damage that it takes to knock the character unconscious. When the character takes damage equal to or exceeding his Unconsciousness Rating, he falls unconscious. Because this number is lower than the character's Death Rating, a character often falls unconscious without dying (see **Unconsciousness**, p. 220, in the **Combat** chapter).

Recovery Tests allow a character to heal damage received in the course of an adventure. The Recovery Tests column on the **Attribute Table** indicates the number of Recovery Tests a character may make in a day. Characters with high Toughness Attribute Values instinctively use the magic of the earth to heal themselves far faster than biologically possible (see **Effects of Injury**, p. 228, in the **Combat** chapter).

The **Recovery dice** number indicates what Action dice the character rolls to make a Recovery Test. The result of the dice roll is the number of Damage Points regained, or the amount of damage healed. A character's Recovery dice equal the Action dice for that character's Toughness step (see the **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 41).

Some races receive special modifiers for damage and recovery. Consult the **Racial Abilities Table**.

Record the character's damage characteristics in the Damage spaces on the Character Record Sheet.

Defense

The Physical Defense Rating represents a character's ability to dodge a physical blow. Based on the character's Dexterity Attribute, the Physical Defense Rating serves as the Difficulty Number an attacker must overcome when making a Physical Attack Test against the character. For example, an attack against a character with a Physical Defense 6 is successful if the attacker rolls a 6 or higher on an Attack Test (see **Combat**, p. 219).

The Spell Defense Rating represents a character's innate ability to avoid a spell. Based on the Perception Attribute, the target's Spell Defense is the Difficulty Number an attacker must overcome when making a Spellcasting Test against that target (see **Spellcasting**, p. 150, in the **Spell Magic** chapter).

The Social Defense Rating, based on the Charisma Attribute, represents a character's chance to know when he is being lied to or manipulated by other characters. In this sense, a lie is an intentional deception, as opposed to a falsehood told through ignorance. The dwarf to whom your character is talking may believe he is the best poleball player in Throal, even if he's not. Social Defense would not help your character detect that the dwarf's statement is false (see **Interaction Tests**, p. 332, in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**).

Some races receive special modifiers to their Physical Defense. Consult the **Racial Abilities Table**.

Record the Physical Defense, Spell Defense, and Social Defense Ratings in their appropriate spaces in the Characteristics box on the Character Record Sheet.

Initiative

A character's Initiative determines when in the Combat Round that character can act (see **Initiative**, p. 217, in the **Combat** chapter). The Initiative step is equal to the character's Dexterity step. The character must apply an encumbrance modifier if he or she is wearing encumbering armor and/or shields (see **Initiative Penalties**, p. 199, in the **Goods and Services** chapter). The Initiative dice are based on the character's Dexterity step minus the modifier for any encumbrance.



KARMA TABLE

Race	Karma Action Dice	Legend Point Cost per Karma	Starting Karma Points	Maximum Karma Points
Dwarf	D6	10	5	25
Elf	D6	10	5	25
Human	D8	6	10	40
Obsidiman	D4	10	5	20
Ork	D8	7	10	40
Troll	D4	10	5	20
T'skrang	D6	8	5	25
Windling	D10	5	15	60

Record the character's Dexterity step in the Characteristics box on the Character Record Sheet. Record any appropriate modifiers on the Armor Modifiers line. Calculate the character's modified Initiative step, then record the corresponding Action dice in the Initiative Dice circle.

Karma

Each of the races acquires and uses Karma differently. The **Karma Table** lists all the relevant information regarding Karma for each race. Record your character's Karma information on your Character Record Sheet in the Karma section.

Karma Action Die indicates which type of dice characters of each race use for Karma.

Legend Point Cost per Point of Karma is the number of Legend Points it costs the character to buy a point of Karma (see **Building Your Legend**, p. 246).

Starting Karma provides the number of Karma Points characters of each race receive when created.

Maximum Karma Points refers to the maximum number of Karma Points characters of each race can have at any one time.

Movement

Within the Combat Round, characters can move a number of yards equal to their Full or Combat Movement Rates (based on Dexterity), both measured in yards per Combat Round. The Full Movement Rate indicates the number of yards your character can run in a turn if not attempting to take any other actions simultaneously. The Combat Movement Rate is the number of yards a character can move in a turn while attacking, casting a spell, or performing another action (see **Movement** in the **Combat** chapter, p. 217, and the **Attribute Table**, p. 42).

Some races receive special movement adjustments. Consult the **Racial Movement Table**, below, for these modifiers. Record the character's Combat Movement and Full Movement Rate in the appropriate spaces in the Characteristics box on the Character Record Sheet.

RACIAL MOVEMENT TABLE

Race	Movement Modifier
Dwarf	Movement as Dexterity -2*
Elf	Movement as Dexterity + 1
Human	Movement as Dexterity
Obsidiman	Movement as Dexterity -3*
Ork	Movement as Dexterity + 1
Troll	Movement as Dexterity + 2
T'skrang	Movement as Dexterity
Windling	Land Movement as Dexterity -8*, Air Movement as Dexterity + 2

*Dwarfs, Obsidimen, and Windlings have a minimum Land Movement as Dexterity 3

Strength

A character's Strength limits his ability to carry or lift weight. Carrying Capacity is the number of pounds a character may carry without suffering a penalty to Dexterity for carrying too much weight (see **Encumbrance**, p. 237, in **Adventuring in Earthdawn**). Lifting Limit is the maximum number of pounds a character can lift from the ground. He cannot lift this weight and move at the same time.

Record the character's Carrying Capacity and Lifting Limit in the appropriate places in the Characteristics box on the Character Record Sheet.

Starting at the beginning of the characteristic list, Jill notes the purpose and use for Physical Armor, but skips filling in that rating until she has a chance to decide what armor, if any, her character will wear. Based on the Willpower Attribute Value of 11, the windling has a Mystic Armor Rating of 1.

The damage characteristic gives Jill the information she is most interested in: how much damage her character can withstand before dying. Jill checks the ***Attribute Table.*** *Based on a Toughness Attribute Value of 15, the windling has a Death Rating of 38, a Wound Threshold of 10, an Unconsciousness Rating of 29, and can make 3 Recovery Tests each day using 1D10.*

Based on the Dexterity Attribute, the windling has a Physical Defense of 7, modified by +2 for race, for a Physical Defense Rating of 9. Based on the Perception Attribute, the character has a Spell Defense Rating of 7. Based on the Charisma Attribute, the windling has a Social Defense Rating of 10. Jill's character will use an Initiative dice of 1D8. Unless the windling uses a talent or weapon that increases its Initiative step, Jill's character will probably act relatively late in the Combat Round.

The windling uses 1D10 Karma dice and begins the game with 15 Karma Points. Because she looked at the ***Talent*** *and* ***Discipline*** *chapters before generating her character, Jill knows that these high numbers give her character a definite advantage*

in combat and other types of actions. She decides that her character will have a reputation for taking the most effective action.

To determine her character's movement rates, Jill goes back to the ***Attribute Table,*** *modifying the values there for the windling's race. Using the base Dexterity Attribute Value of 11, Jill subtracts 8 for race, for a modified Dexterity of 3. This gives the winding a Full Movement of 30 yards per round and a Combat Movement of 15 yards per round, but only if the character is on the ground. Right away Jill sees the reason for the windling's wings: she adds 2 to the base Dexterity Attribute when the character is flying, for a modified Dexterity of 13. Now the windling can fly 60 yards per round when "running," and 30 yards per round in combat.*

Finally, Jill reads the ***Attribute Table*** *and sees that the Strength Attribute Value of 7 allows the windling to carry only 40 pounds and lift up to 85 pounds.*

5. RECORD RACIAL ABILITIES

Your character may have abilities specific to his or her race, such as a special type of vision or a unique attack capability. These abilities appear in the **Racial Abilities Table** below, followed by detailed explanations of each in alphabetical order. Record these racial abilities and other race modifications on the Character Record Sheet.

RACIAL ABILITIES TABLE

Race	Abilities
Dwarf	Heat Sight (to 250 yards)
Elf	Low-Light Vision
Human	Versatility Talent
Obsidiman	Increased Wound Threshold of +3, Minimum Strength Value of 15, Natural Armor (add 3 to Physical Armor Rating)
Ork	Low-Light Vision
Troll	Heat Sight, Minimum Strength Value of 11, Minimum Toughness Value of 11
T'skrang	Tail Attack
Windling	Astral-Sensitive Sight, Flight, Increased Physical Defense of +2, Maximum Strength Value of 11

Astral-Sensitive Sight

The character can sense changes in astral space. Astral-sensitive sight is an act of magical Perception, translating sensory information into visual cues. The character does not use his or her physical eyes for astral-sensitive sight; a blind windling could still "see" astrally. Sensing in this way requires a little effort. A character gets a bonus action to use astral-sensitive sight by making a Perception Test (see **Making Tests**, p. 26, in the **Game Concepts** chapter). The character "sees" the astral imprint of every object within his field of vision, to a range of 10 yards, with a Spell Defense less than or equal to the Perception Test result. If the player makes a Perception Test with a result of the minimum possible for his character, the character suffers Strain. The Strain causes 1 point of damage. The character continues to see the astral imprint of other characters and objects as long as they stay within range. If the character looks somewhere else, or if additional characters and objects enter into astral-sight range, the character must make a new Perception Test to see the new astral imprints.

Flight

Windlings fly at a movement rate based on their Dexterity Attribute Value plus 2. For example, a windling with a Dexterity of 13 uses a flying movement rate based on a Dexterity of 15. While windlings can fly, they do not use it as their primary method of movement. Windlings tire quickly when flying and so usually limit their flight to approximately 20 minutes. At 20 minutes, the character may suffer Strain from flying. For each minute after 20 that the character continues to fly, he must make a Toughness test against a Difficulty Number of 7. If he fails the test, the character takes 1 point of Strain damage. Each period of 5 minutes beyond the initial 20 also adds 2 to the Difficulty Number of the Toughness Test.

A windling must rest for the same number of minutes that he has spent flying in order to resume flying without Strain. For example, if a windling character flies for 15 minutes, he must rest for 15 minutes before flying again to avoid Strain damage. Windling characters cannot carry more than up to half their normal Carrying Capacity while flying. A character who tries to carry more than this amount while flying is considered Encumbered (see **Encumbrance** in **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 237). In addition to reducing his Dexterity, reduce the Encumbered windling's Toughness Attribute in the same way.

Though windlings' wings are very durable, when they get wet the wings become heavy and fragile, and severely limit the windling's ability to fly. In game terms, this lowers the windling's Physical Defense by 2, and the player must make a Strength Test against a Difficulty Number of 13 to determine if the character can fly at all. If the windling is able to fly with wet wings, for each period of 5 minutes that he flies, he must make a Toughness test against a Difficulty Number of 9. If he fails the test, the windling takes 2 points of Strain damage. These rules only apply if the windling's wings become soaked with water, as would happen if he fell into a river or stream. Fortunately, windling wings dry very quickly, usually within 10 minutes.

Heat Sight

A character with heat sight can see heat sources. Temperature differences translate into colors; for example, slight differences in temperature register as a dull red. As the temperature difference between an object or person and the background increases, the temperature differences register in spectrum order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. Extreme temperature differences register as white. Heat sight has a range of 250 yards.

The same object reflects a different color/heat intensity against different background temperatures. A human lying in a summer meadow might appear as a slightly brighter spot of red in a crimson field. If standing in a snowdrift, the same person would appear as a brighter, more visible yellow-orange.

Increased Physical Defense

Small size increases the Physical Defense of windlings by 2.

Increased Wound Threshold

Increase the Wound Threshold of obsidimen by 3 to represent their inherent resistance to damage.

Low-Light Vision

Low-light vision allows a character to see at much lower light levels than humans. For a character with low-light vision, a single torch easily illuminates a 100-by-100-foot meeting hall. Starlight provides plenty of light on a clear night, and even on a night shrouded by thick cloud cover the character can see as well as a human sees at dusk. Characters with low-light vision are no more susceptible to flash-blindness than humans.

Maximum Strength

Their size limits windlings to a maximum (unmodified) Strength Attribute of 11. This means all windlings have a maximum Strength Attribute Value, modified for race, of 7.

Minimum Strength

Obsidimen and trolls have minimum Strength Attribute Values. Obsidimen must have an (unmodified) Strength Attribute Value of at least 15. Trolls must have an (unmodified) Strength Attribute Value of at least 11. Both races gain Strength modifiers based on race.

Minimum Toughness

Trolls have a minimum (unmodified) Toughness Attribute of 11. To be a troll, a character must have an initial Toughness Attribute Value of at least 11. Trolls gain a Toughness modifier based on race.

Natural Armor

Obsidimen have very tough skin that serves as natural armor. The Physical Armor Rating of obsidiman skin is 3. Obsidimen can also wear other types of living, thread, and blood magic armor (see **Goods and Services**, p. 199) that add to the obsidiman's natural Armor Rating.

Tail Attack

The t'skrang can attack opponents using their tails. The character uses either his Unarmed Combat talent (or skill) or his Dexterity step to make the Attack Test for using his tail. Make a Damage Test using the character's Strength step plus 3 steps. For example, a t'skrang character with Strength Step 5 has Damage Step 8 for a tail attack.

Versatility

Humans have a special racial talent called Versatility. This talent allows them to learn talents from Disciplines other than their own. Only humans may have the Versatility talent. All human characters have the Versatility talent available at First Circle. Human characters who start out with no ranks in Versatility have it at Rank 0, and may purchase ranks for it later. This is an exception to the rules in the **Assign Talent Ranks** section, below.

*Jill checks the **Racial Abilities Table** and sees that she has already accounted for two of the windling's race-based abilities, Maximum Strength and Increased Physical Defense. She writes the remaining two abilities, Astral-Sensitive Sight and Flight, on the Racial Abilities line at the top of her Character Record Sheet. She is glad that she decided to give her character an above-average Perception Attribute Value—it will come in handy for the Perception-based Astral-Sensitive Sight ability.*



6. ASSIGN TALENT RANKS

Characters in the world of **Earthdawn** possess a number of magical abilities called talents. The talents available to your character are listed with the Discipline you chose for him or her. Talents are rated by rank. The higher the rank, the more skill your character has in that talent. Talent ranks add steps to the step number of one of your character's Attributes to generate the step number of the talent. For example, a character with a Dexterity Attribute Value of 13 has a Dexterity Step of 6. If that character also has 2 ranks in the Melee Weapons talent, he uses Step 8 when performing an action with that talent (Step 6 + 2 steps). The **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 41, shows that the player rolls 2D6 Action dice when the character uses the Melee Weapons talent. The **Talents** chapter, p. 84, describes all the talents and which Attribute relates to each.

Players have a total of 8 Rank Points to assign to the talents with which their characters will begin the game. Each point assigned to a talent gives a character one rank in that talent. You may assign 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to a talent for a maximum starting Rank of 3. You may only choose talents listed under the First Circle of your character's Discipline. Record the talents you choose on the Character Record Sheet, adding the specific information for each talent provided in the **Talents** chapter. Do not record a Rank 0 talent on your character sheet; no such thing exists. If your character has no ranks in a talent, he does not have that talent.

As mentioned above, the only time the rule against Rank 0 talents does not apply is with human characters. Humans automatically possess

Versatility at Rank 0. If you assign additional ranks to your human character's Versatility talent during character generation, you may acquire First Circle talents for your character from any of the Disciplines. You may choose a number of talents from other Disciplines equal to your character's Versatility Rank. Talents gained through Versatility at character creation have a maximum Rank of 3. These talents must be gained using the initial 8 Rank Points each player has available to assign talents to his or her character.

As you will discover by reading the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 246, a character who uses Versatility to learn many talents from other Disciplines will advance through the Circles of his Discipline very slowly. Players with human characters should take this into consideration when choosing their character's talents.

Spellcasters

Four of the Disciplines allow characters to be spellcasters. In order to cast spells, magician characters need the Spellcasting, Thread Weaving, and Spell Matrix talents. See the **Talents** chapter, p. 86, for descriptions of these talents. Note that the Spell Matrix talent often appears twice in the list of available talents in the Discipline description: characters can have multiple Spell Matrices active at one time. Each matrix requires a separate Spell Matrix talent that must be acquired individually and assigned Rank Points individually. The rank of a Spell Matrix defines the maximum Circle spell which that matrix can hold. For more information on spell matrices, spellcasting, and spells, see the chapters on **Workings of Magic**, p. 131, and **Spell Magic**, p. 145.

Characters capable of casting spells must also choose their starting spells at this time. Spellcasting characters may acquire spells using a number of Rank Points equal to their Willpower step. For example, a character with a Willpower Step of 4 has 4 Rank Points to acquire spells. A character with a Willpower Step of 7 has 7 Rank Points to acquire spells. You may only choose from those spells listed for your character's Discipline in the **Spell Magic** chapter. When selecting your character's starting spells, you may only choose from Circle 1 and Circle 2 spells. Circle 1 spells cost 1 point to acquire and Circle 2 spells cost 2 points to acquire. Note that because the character is only First Circle, he can only cast Circle 1 spells. The character may know Circle 2 spells or have them in his grimoire, but he cannot easily cast them (See **Casting From a Grimoire**, p. 151).

Spell descriptions appear in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 153.

Jill feels as if her windling Beastmaster is finally beginning to take shape. She looks at the Beastmaster Discipline description and sees that a First Circle Beastmaster can have six talents. Because she wants her character to be well rounded, Jill gives her windling all six. She assigns 1 Rank Point each to Animal Bond, Dominate Beast, Karma Ritual, and Unarmed Combat. She assigns 2 Rank Points to Claw Shape and Tracking, for a total of 8 Rank Points. By giving her character Rank 2 Claw Shape and Tracking, Jill gives the windling an offensive advantage and makes better use of a valuable talent. Rank 1 in the Karma Ritual talent allows her to make her Karma ritual every day.

In order to fill in the information for using the talents on the Character Record Sheet, Jill reviews the introduction to the ***Talents*** *chapter and the descriptions of each of the talents she chose for her character.*

7. ASSIGN SKILL RANKS

Your character has lived in the world of **Earthdawn** all his life. He should know more about the world than you do as a player, and so starting characters receive two ranks of Knowledge Skills. These represent areas of study with which your character is familiar. Choose one or two Knowledge Skills for your character from the list in the **Skills** chapter, p. 116, or consult with your gamemaster to choose others. If you choose two, each is Rank 1. If you choose only one, assign it Rank 2. Ranks in Knowledge Skills add to your character's Perception step to determine the skill step number. In addition, all characters begin the game with a Rank 1 Artisan Skill; the ability to speak two languages, Dwarf and their racial language; and the ability to read and write Dwarf.

Characters also begin the game with a number of Free Skill Points equal to their Charisma step. This represents the skills that the character has picked up due to apprenticeships, where a character's Charisma was instrumental to convincing a master to take them as a student. These points may be spent on any skill the character wishes, except those already chosen as their Knowledge Skills or Artisan Skill. Each point raises a skill Rank by one. A character may use free skill points to raise a Knowledge Skill, Artisan Skill, or Active Skill to a maximum of 1, or a Language Skill to a maximum of 3. If you generated your character's Attributes using the purchasing system, any Purchase Points left over from purchasing your character's Attributes can be converted into a maximum of 3 additional Rank 1 skills on a one-to-one ratio.

Artisan Skills

As the influence of the Horrors grew, the people of Barsaive learned that those corrupted by the Horrors could not maintain the level of discipline needed to perform precise, detailed work. Because artisans and craftsmen were among those capable of such a level of discipline, some people began to learn and practice art and craft skills in order to demonstrate that they had not been corrupted by the Horrors. Though performing these artisan skills did not actually protect against the Horrors, it did provide clear, visible proof of those who were corrupted and those who were not. Most people pursued fine arts, but many began to practice performing arts as well, including acting, singing, dancing, and storytelling.

This practice spread throughout Barsaive and much of the Theran Empire. By the time the Horrors reached their full influence and the kaers and citadels began to close, nearly all the people of Barsaive had learned an art or craft. Adepts, whose extensive use of magic made them extremely powerful (and therefore threatening), took special care to become proficient at and to constantly practice an art.

Characters in **Earthdawn** begin the game with one rank in one Artisan Skill of their choice. Each of the Disciplines available lists a number of Artisan Skills common to Adepts of that Discipline. For example, many magicians learn the art of robe embroidery as part of their Adept training. They decorate their robes by embroidering intricate sigils and designs, finishing one pattern, carefully picking out the stitches of an existing design, and beginning a new pattern in its place, in a cycle that continues throughout the magician's life.

Choose one of the Artisan Skills from the list provided in your character's Discipline or work with your gamemaster to create one of your own, and assign it a Rank of 1. See the **Skills** chapter, p. 130, for more information.

Language Skills

Characters begin the game with speaking knowledge of two languages. Every character speaks the language of his race, and some may also speak one of several dialects branching from the main language. Characters start out with the Speak Languages skill at Rank 2.

Because Dwarf is the universal language of Barsaive, all characters speak that tongue. Dwarf characters speak Dwarf and the language of another race of your choice. For game purposes, assume that characters speak the "root language" of their race, rather than one of the dialects. The racial languages of Barsaive are Dwarf, Elf (*Sperethiel*), Human, Obsidiman, Ork, Troll, T'skrang, and Windling. Characters also begin the game with the Read/Write Languages Skill at Rank 1, the ability to read and write Dwarf.

Players who want to give their characters additional ranks in these skill may apply their available Free Skill Points or Knowledge skill ranks (see above) to Speak or Read/Write Languages to a maximum of Rank 3. For example, rather than choosing one or two Knowledge Skills from the **Skills** chapter, a player may simply assign both available Knowledge Skill ranks to Read/Write Languages, giving that skill a Rank of 3. Thus, the character could read and write three languages, one of which must be Dwarf.

This is getting tougher. Now Jill gets to use her imagination to decide her windling's interests. Easy one first - as a windling, Jill's character speaks Dwarf and Windling, and she decides to leave the character's Read/Write Languages Skill at the initial Rank of 1. Jill gives the windling the Artisan Skill of Storytelling. The windling can amuse others, make a point, encourage confidences, and pass the time using this skill. Her character's ability to spin a cohesive tale and illustrate it dramatically with gestures also serves to prove that the windling remains untouched by the Horrors.

Jill wants her character to have two Rank 1 Knowledge Skills. She chooses Obsidiman Lore and Creature Lore, the first because you never know when you might need to find one, and the second as a natural extension of the windling's Discipline.

Now, as Jill's character has a Charisma step of 8, Jill has 8 Free Skill Points to spend anywhere she chooses. At this point, Jill decides that her character will be from the wilds of Barsaive. With this in mind, Jill spends a point each on Hunting, Navigation, and Wilderness Survival. With five points left, she decides to expand on her windling's storytelling skills and places a point each in Engaging Banter, Conversation, and Flirting. Finally, with her last two points, Jill decides that her windling will have a liberal definition of ownership, and spends a point each on Picking Pockets and Fast Hands.

8. EQUIP YOUR CHARACTER

Your character needs equipment to adventure across Barsaive. Using the 120 silver pieces each character receives, purchase equipment for your character from the lists in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 211. Only two restrictions apply to purchasing equipment. First, your character must be able to pay the entire cost of the item(s) with his or her starting money. You cannot purchase equipment on credit, nor can you borrow money from other characters to make your purchases. Second, the gamemaster must approve the equipment. As long as the gamemaster okays your choices, you can buy any equipment you like.

Armor

If you purchase armor and a shield for your character, fill in the Physical Armor Rating in the Characteristics box of the Character Record Sheet. Some types of armor and shields also modify your character's Mystic Armor Rating and Initiative; be sure to check the equipment description and adjust the entries if necessary. Unless they are obsidimen, characters without armor or a shield have a Physical Armor Rating of 0.

*Jill browses through the **Goods and Services** chapter to see what type of equipment and supplies are available in Barsaive for 120 silver pieces. She decides to outfit her windling with fairly standard equipment and clothing; animals are rarely impressed by signs of wealth.*

The windling Beastmaster wears soft boots, leather gloves, a tunic, a woolen cloak and cap, cloth armor, and carries a spare tunic. So far Jill has spent 12 silver pieces. The windling also carries two weeks' worth of trail rations and an "adventurer's kit" of traveling necessities (backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack).

Keeping her character's Discipline in mind, Jill chooses weapons: a windling bow and 20 arrows for defending against larger creatures, a blowgun and 20 needles for stealthy attacks and to humanely sedate injured animals for healing, and a windling net for capturing prey and predators. Jill has now spent a total of 96 silver pieces.

The windling will also carry two sheets of parchment, a bottle of ink, and a whistle; Jill's character will punctuate its stories in appropriate places with a little light music. Jill has now spent a total of 109 silver pieces, and decides the windling will carry the remaining 11.

Before going on to the next step, Jill records a Physical Armor Rating of 2 on the Character Record Sheet to reflect the protection of her character's cloth armor.

9. FLESH OUT YOUR CHARACTER

Now you know how your character fits into the game, but what kind of person is he or she? The following suggestions will help you flesh out your character and create a unique individual.

Personality

An individual's personality defines how that person interacts with the world. Is he stubborn? Cynical? Cunning? Spiteful? Trustworthy? Larcenous? Altruistic? Characters run by both players and gamemasters can be defined the same way.

The easiest way to define your character's personality is to assign him or her a number of personality traits. Personality traits are simply labels for the way a character acts and interacts with the world. It's not a bad idea to pick one or two personality traits that really define your character, and keep them in mind while you're playing.

Personality And Discipline

Your character's Discipline can be an important element in his personality. As mentioned above and in the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 51, choosing a character's Discipline is one of the most important decisions that a player makes. A character's Discipline provides a framework through which the character sees the world. An Archer might interpret a particular event in a completely different way than a Nethermancer or a Swordmaster. The **Disciplines** chapter provides guidelines for how characters of each Discipline interact with the world. One way to further strengthen the effect of your Discipline on your character is to select personality traits that fit with his Discipline. That is, the traits are more a representation of the character's Discipline than of his or her personality.

Many of the Discipline descriptions use personality traits to create the "feel" of the Discipline. For example, the Discipline description describes Cavalrymen as "Fierce mounted warriors". Many people consider Nethermancers eerie and Sky Raiders proud. These simple examples demonstrate how personality traits can help define characters of a given Discipline. Using these examples as a guide, select one or two traits that define your character's behavior as an Adept of his Discipline. For example, Archers are known to be perceptive individuals who stress accuracy both in their combat styles and in their lives. If your character is an Archer, you might choose Attentive and Deliberate as his personality traits. Roleplaying these traits allows you to express your Archer's desire for accuracy in all aspects of his life.

Character History

Once you establish your character's personality, decide what made him or her that way. An easy way to do that is by answering the sorts of questions authors and readers might ask about a character in a story.

You may decide this information is not all that important. That is certainly acceptable. However, the more of these questions you answer, the better handle you will have on your character. Besides, this gives you a chance to answer these questions in ways you never would, or could, in real life.

What is your character's sex?

Whether your character is male or female can make a difference. T'skrang females hold most of the political power in their communities. In dwarf, human, ork, and elf lands, power is usually distributed fairly evenly between men and women. Trolls perpetuate a male-dominated society. Obsidimen and windlings tend to think most gender roles are pretty silly.

How large (or small) is your character?

Are you of average size for your race? Stout? Tall? Skinny? Could anybody but another obsidiman tell a skinny obsidiman when he saw one?

What color is your characters hair, eyes, and skin?

The "norms" appear in the **Major Races of Barsaive** chapter, but the standard should not limit your choices. Personal appearance and style is finally beginning to be accepted again. During the Scourge, conformity was important. If everyone acted and dressed in a similar way, then people could be reasonably sure that the guy with the flame-red eyes wasn't just making a fashion statement. Life is better now; personal freedom and freedom of expression are on the rise. Of course, some guys with flame-red eyes are still not doing it just to match the rubies on their dagger handles.

What color is your character's hair? How does he or she wear it? What color are your character's eyes? Skin? Does he or she have any markings or decorative tattoos?

What is your character's general appearance?

What would be someone's first impression of your character? Does the character dress stylishly or conservatively? Does the character follow the dwarf modes of fashion now popular in Barsaive or reject them for something different? Is your character attractive? Intimidating? Approachable? Does your character slouch, walk gracefully, or march as if always on patrol?

Where was your character born?

Your character's race can be the determining factor of where he or she was born. Troll clans tend to live in mountain ranges, while elves come from forests and jungles. T'skrang are native to the Serpent River area. Most dwarfs come from the kingdom of Throal. Humans and orks grow up nearly everywhere, as do obsidimen.

Is your elf from a village or town near Blood Wood, or from a forest in the southern part of Barsaive? Is your troll a Sky Raider from the Twilight Peaks or from one of the other mountain ranges? Does your character even remember where he was born? Some ork scorcher tribes roam all over the land, never staying in one place for more than two or three months. Which area of forest does your windling come from? Take a look at the map of Barsaive and the Barsaive chapter for specific ideas.

How old is your character?

The Scourge ended over one hundred years ago, though somewhat sooner in a few areas. Are you young enough that the Scourge seems like ancient history? Are you old enough to remember living in a sealed kaer or citadel?

Does your character have a family?

What is your character's family like? Does he have any siblings? Are his mother and father still alive? What do they think of their child's lifestyle? What about the rest of the family? Are they poor, middle-income, wealthy? Are they pillars of the community, or are they working to knock those pillars down?

Has your character begun his own family?

If not, does he or she want to start one? Does the rest of your character's family want him to settle down and start one?

What are your character's spiritual beliefs?

Take a look at the **Passions** chapter, p. 260. It describes the Passions that most citizens of Barsaive worship. Your character could be an atheist, but in the world of Barsaive, where the Passions walk the earth, such an attitude would seem mighty weird. Does your character worship any of the Passions? Does your character lean more toward one Passion than the others? Are there one or more Passions your character wants nothing to do with?

What is your character's moral code?

Under what conditions will your character kill? Steal? Lie? Does he or she adhere to a personal code of ethics about violence? Sex? The Horrors? Would your character ever make a deal with a Horror? Even if he was certain he could get away with it?

What special qualities does your character possess?

Can your character put a deal together that even dwarfs would envy? Does he or she have a knack for spotting unusual jewelry? Does your character see the quest through, no matter what it takes? Does he get along with members of other races?

What is it your character simply cannot do?

Does gold run through your character's fingers? Does your character find it impossible to pass up a chance to get that really interesting magic item? Does your character freeze during the first moments of a romantic encounter? Does your character panic under stress? Does your character speak his mind at all the wrong times?

What does your character love?

Throal? Living in the Caucavik Mountains? The smell of ginger tea? Ale and good tavern talk? The bustle of a busy market? Finding just the right way to finish off a spell? A clever comment? Another person?

What does your character hate?

The Therans? Those stuck-up dwarfs? Nethermancers who do icky things to animals? Gate guards who ask personal questions? Kings who think they can order you around? Slow service? Assassins who just haven't got the sense to leave you alone? Game designers who ask lots of questions?

What is your character's name?

Your character's Name is very important. In the world of Earthdawn, the Names of people, places, and things have meaning and power. If your character often stares at others with a stern, cold look, he might be named Icestare or Shivereyes. Was your character born with the same name he uses now? Is his current name a nickname? If so, who gave it to him?

Rewards And Price Of Roleplaying

Roleplaying your character according to the personality and background you've developed for him will gain him additional Legend Points at the end of a story. How many your character earns depends on the story told, the circumstances, and how well he acted and reacted. Acting in a manner that is too much out of character can draw warnings and even penalties from your gamemaster.

See **Building Your Legend** for more information.

Jill names her windling Beastmaster Geeble, and decides that she is female.

Born near the Liaj Jungle, Geeble spent most of her formative years in that area with her family and other members of a small windling community. Because a dragon is said to lair in the Liaj, many people speculate about the windling's relationship to that powerful creature.

The only thing unusual about Geeble is her name. Her physical appearance is absolutely average for her race and age, which is 40. People rarely give her a second glance, but as soon as she commands their attention, they wonder how they managed to miss noticing this incredibly charismatic individual.

People who encounter Geeble out of her natural setting - any undeveloped area of Barsaive - consider her a rather flighty, nervous creature. Communities of any size have that effect on the windling. Anyone meeting her even a day's walk away from a settlement meets an entirely different person. When surrounded by nature rather than buildings, Geeble's natural, innocent curiosity about everything around her rises to the surface. The tenets of her Discipline shine through every aspect of her life, usually prompting others by example to show a deep respect to all animals. She also sees the whimsical side of her Discipline, and often uses her talents to amuse and amaze children by establishing a rapport with their pets.

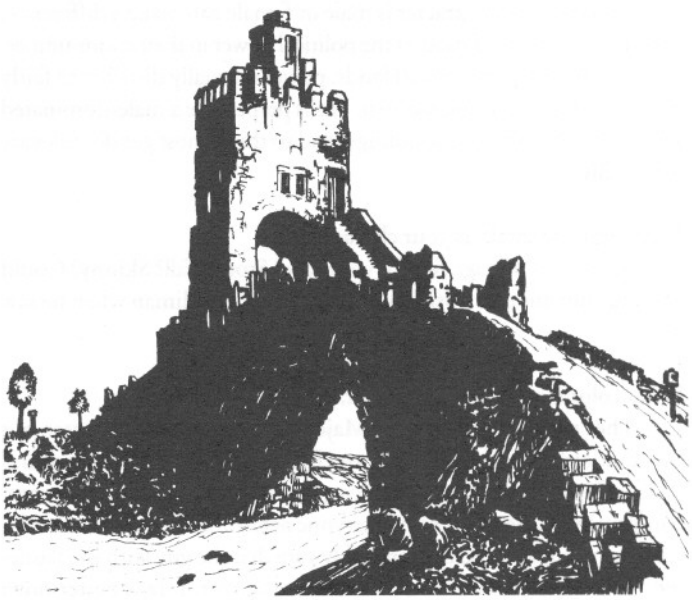
Only her closest companions realize that Geeble is a very sensitive person. Though easily hurt by disparaging, careless remarks, unreasoning prejudice, and people's genuine lack of concern for their fellow beings, Geeble hides all the small hurts she feels. Only mistreatment of animals through ignorance or deliberate cruelty can provoke her to physical retaliation, and she never fails to somehow punish those responsible.

Geeble manages her finances very badly through a combination of her dislike of cities and her innate belief that nature will provide. She always allows others to handle her supply needs, and good-naturedly assumes that she often gets cheated to some degree. She loves her lifestyle too well to change her philosophy about money.

10. PLAY THE GAME

Congratulations! You've completed your character. Finish filling out your Character Record Sheet.

Your character stands ready to become a hero of the world of Earthdawn.



DISCIPLINES



My Discipline is more than simply my vocation, it is what I am.
All that I am is because of my chosen Discipline.
It guides me through my life on this world.
—Jerreck, elf Wizard of Lowilla



All characters in **Earthdawn** are Adepts, people able to use magic to power special abilities called talents. In order to become an Adept, a character must choose a Discipline. In one sense, your character's Discipline is his profession, but a Discipline involves much more than that. Your character's Discipline provides a metaphor for how he or she sees the world. For example, a Troubadour sees the world as a grand stage on which he can perform, while a Warrior sees the world as a vast battlefield on which he can fight for the causes he supports.

This section lists and describes the available Disciplines. Each Discipline is divided into Circles, which indicate the character's experience. Your character begins the game at First Circle, advancing to each consecutive Circle as he or she gains experience, measured in Legend Points (see **Building Your Legend**). These rules do not reflect it, but characters will be able to advance well beyond Eighth Circle. Each Circle description includes a list of talents your character may learn at that level of experience (see **Talents**, for a description of all the talents). Each Circle also lists any other abilities or options your character gains at that Circle.

An archetype, a sample character that players can use as a character in the game rather than creating their own, follows the description of each Discipline. These archetypes were created using the random method of generating Attributes (see **Creating A Character**).

The races shown for each of the archetypes are only used as examples. When creating your own character, you can choose from any of the races allowed to your character's Discipline. These archetypes can also be used by the gamemaster as opponents and villains (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**).

GAME TERMS

Information in the following categories describes each Discipline and how to use it in the game.

IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTES

Players with characters of this Discipline should emphasize these Attributes when creating their characters. Important Attributes include those on which many of a Discipline's talents are based.

RACIAL RESTRICTION

Certain races cannot choose certain Disciplines. Racial Restrictions indicate those restrictions. For example, the Racial Restriction listed under the Archer description is obsidiman. In other words, an obsidiman cannot be an Archer.

KARMA RITUAL

Each Discipline includes a typical ritual that allows characters of that Discipline to gain Karma Points. A character must spend a certain number of Legend Points to gain the Karma Point(s), then perform the ritual to receive the points. The player does not need to make any tests to perform the Karma ritual; he or she always succeeds. Each ritual takes 30 minutes to perform. Your character may only perform his Karma ritual once per day to gain Karma Points.

Each Discipline's Karma ritual is a unique talent that allows a character to purchase additional Karma, which he or she can spend to increase the chances of success for specific actions. The rank of a character's Karma Ritual equals the maximum number of Karma Points that he or she can purchase per ritual. If, for example, your character has the Karma Ritual talent at Rank 3, he or she can purchase up to 3 Karma Points by performing one ritual.

Typical Karma rituals associated with each Discipline appear above the Circle descriptions of each Discipline. We encourage players to create unique Karma rituals for their characters.

RECOMMENDED ARTISAN SKILLS

Each Discipline also lists a number of Artisan Skills common to that Discipline. Some Disciplines encourage a variety of Artisan Skills, but there are no absolute requirements between any Discipline and any Artisan Skill.

TALENTS

Each Discipline also lists the talents available to your character as he advances from one Circle to the next. In order to advance to the next Circle, an Adept must have gained sufficient Rank in certain talents. See **Building Your Legend**, p. 247, for details.

Discipline Talent Use

Some Disciplines emphasize the importance of particular talents and mold a greater portion of their magic around these talents. These talents are called Discipline talents. When your character uses a Discipline talent, you may spend 1 Karma Point to increase the chance of succeeding at the required test. You must roll the Karma dice at the same time you roll the dice for the Talent Test. The notation (D) indicates Discipline talents.

Kricklen the Swordmaster is using the Melee Weapons talent during his effort to make a stylistically perfect attack against his opponent. The Melee Weapons talent is a Discipline talent for Swordmasters. That means Kricklen may spend 1 Karma Point to increase his chance of making a successful Attack Test.

CHARACTERISTICS BONUSES

As your character advances in Circles, he or she gains bonuses to some characteristics automatically. Descriptions of these bonuses appear under each Circle.

Initiative bonuses increase your character's Initiative step by the number listed. This increase is permanent as long as the character remains at the appropriate Circle or higher (see **Combat**, p. 217).

Karma bonuses allow your character to spend Karma Points on the types of actions listed for the ability. If the ability description lists a specific Attribute, the player may spend Karma Points for the character only when making tests using the Attribute only, not when making a test for talents or skills based on the Attribute.

Physical Defense bonuses increase your character's Physical Defense by the number listed. This increase is permanent as long as the character remains at the appropriate Circle or higher.

Recovery Test bonuses give your character an additional number of Recovery Tests per day. The number of tests gained appears in the Circle description. This increase is permanent as long as the character remains at the appropriate Circle or higher.

Social Defense bonuses increase your character's Social Defense by the number listed. This increase is permanent as long as the character remains at the appropriate Circle or higher.

Spell Defense bonuses increase your character's Spell Defense by the number listed. This increase is permanent as long as the character remains at the appropriate Circle or higher.



AIR SAILOR



Air Sailors are fighters who use magic to enhance their techniques of piloting the airships that fly the skies of Barsaive. Used to operating as part of a crew, Air Sailors adapt very well to other types of groups. They are the most common crewman on the airships of the civilized nations and trading companies of Barsaive and Thera.

Important Attributes: Dexterity and Strength

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To begin her Karma ritual, an Air Sailor must sit alone under the open sky in silent meditation for several minutes, picturing in her mind's eye her ship sailing through the clouds at the start of a long journey. The Air Sailor envisions a journey that she hopes one day to make, for 30 minutes imagining scenes of this journey, including the risks and perils, and how her training and skill might help make the journey a safe one. The ritual is complete when the imagined journey ends.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Embroidery (sails), Runic Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Acrobatic Strike
- Air Sailing (D)
- Avoid Blow (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Melee Weapons (D)
- Unarmed Combat

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (6/5)
- Great Leap (D)
- Maneuver (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Throwing Weapons
- Wind Catcher (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Air Sailor may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

- Missile Weapons
- Thread Weaving (Air Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Air Sailor's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Air Dance (D)
- Parry

SIXTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Air Sailor's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Second Weapon (D)
- Taunt

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Air Sailor may spend a Karma Point to increase the damage of any attack made with a melee weapon.

Talents

- Momentum Attack
- Speak Language

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Air Sailor's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

- Gliding Stride (D)
- Resist Taunt

WINDLING AIR SAILOR

Attributes
- Dex: (17) 7/1D12
- Str: (7) 4/1D6
- Tou: (11) 5/1D8
- Per: (14) 6/1D10
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (14) 6/1D10

Talents
- Acrobatic Strike (2): 9/1D8+1D6
- Air Sailing (1): 7/1D12
- Avoid Blow (1): 8/2D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (2): 9/1D8+1D6
- Unarmed combat (1): 8/2D6

Skills
- Artisan/Woodcarving (1): 7/1D12
- Climbing (1): 8/2D6
- Disarm/Broadsword (1): 8/2D6
- Flirting (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Airships (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Barsaive Geography (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Windling Lore (1): 7/1D12
- Navigation (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Windling
- Tactics (1): 7/1D12
- Trading/Equipment (1): 7/1D12

Movement
- Full: 48
- Combat: 24

Fly
- Full: 90
- Combat: 45

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D10
- Points: 15

Combat
- Physical Defense: 11
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 8
- Armor: 5
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 32
- Wound Threshold: 8
- Unconsciousness Rating: 24
- Recovery Dice: 1D8
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Buckler
- Hardened Leather Armor
- Leather Gloves
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- Windling Broadsword
- Windling Dagger
- Windling Short Sword
- Woodcarving tools
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 10 Silver pieces
- 12 Copper pieces

Note: The windling Air Sailor possesses the racial ability of Astral Sensitive Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense of +2. The last ability is reflected in the statistics above.

Role Playing Tips:

Most Air Sailor's believe their Discipline requires them to somehow better themselves and others. It's this concern for the greater good of Barsaive, or at least the people around them, that, in their view, separates them from the Sky Raider. Air Sailors see themselves as more refined, craftier, smarter, and serving a higher purpose than their piratical peers.

Many Air Sailors have elaborate long-term plans: to own their own ship, to control a fleet, and so on. These plans tend to become the driving goal of the Air Sailor, and they seek to find a way through adherence to their duties and obligations to realize these goals.

All Air Sailors adhere to an unspoken code of conduct. No Air Sailor disparages another Air Sailor in public, though they may criticize other Air Sailors as much as they like when talking among themselves, or on deck. An Air Sailor is expected to behave in a manner beyond reproach from outsiders. Air Sailors have a strong sense of obligation to their shipmates, whether current or former. They generally tend to wait for companions, like during shore leave at a bar, and no Air Sailor crew willingly leaves behind their dead, unless the survival of the ship demands it. Part of this camaraderie is a general feeling of obligation towards any other sailor who needs aid on a mission or personal quest.

Air Sailors prefer cunning to brute force to win the day. They prefer to out think their opponents, not just overpower them. Praises such as sly, cunning, or shrewd are high complements coming from an Air Sailor.

ARCHER



An Archer learns the art of the missile weapon. This Discipline stresses accuracy, and, to a lesser extent, speed. Most Archers show great perceptive powers, often noticing things that others miss. Archers may use both bows and crossbows, as they choose.

Important Attributes: Dexterity and Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: An Archer spends the first several minutes of the ritual oiling and stringing his bow. The Archer then meditates with the bow in front of him and all of his arrows fanned out beside him on the ground. At the end of the ritual, the Archer fires three arrows at a target, forming a rough triangle no more than a foot wide, then fires a fourth arrow into the center of the triangle. The ritual is complete as soon as the arrow strikes its target.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Arrow Fletching, Rune Carving, Sculpture

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow
- Direction Arrow (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Missile Weapons (D)
- Mystic Aim (D)
- True Shot

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (6/5)
- Sprint
- Throwing Weapons (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Flame Arrow (D)
- Wound Balance

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Archer may use a Karma Point for actions using Dexterity only.

Talents

- Anticipate Blow
- Thread Weaving (Arrow Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Archer's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- First Impression
- Stopping Aim (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Archer may use a Karma Point to increase the damage of any missile attack.

Talents

- Bank Shot (D)
- Speak Language

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the Archer's Initiative dice by one step.

Talents

- Call Arrow (D)
- Second Shot (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Archer's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Eagle Eye (D)
- Impressive Shot (D)

HUMAN ARCHER

Attributes
Dex: (16) 7/1D12
Str: (13) 6/1D10
Tou: (12) 5/1D8
Per: (14) 6/1D10
Wil: (11) 5/1D8
Chr: (13) 6/1D10

Talents
Avoid Blow (1): 8/2D6
Direction Arrow (1): 7/1D12
Karma Ritual (1)
Missile Weapons (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
Mystic Aim (1): 7/1D12
True Shot (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
Versatility (0)

Skills
Artisan/Body Painting (1): 7/1D12
Climbing (1): 8/2D6
Fishing (1): 7/1D12
Hiding (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Barsaive History (1): 7/1D12
Knowledge/Legends and Heroes (1): 7/1D12
Melee Weapons/Clubs (1): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (1)
  Dwarf
Silent Walk (1): 8/2D6
Speak Language (2)
  Dwarf
  Troll
Wilderness Survival (1): 7/1D12

Movement
Full: 75
Combat: 38

Initiative
Dice: 1D12

Karma
Dice: 1D8
Points: 10

Combat
Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
Death Rating: 34
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 26
Recovery Dice: 1D8
Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
Adventurer's kit
Club
Dagger
5 Fishhooks
Leather Armor
Longbow
Quiver w/ 20 arrows
Painting tools
Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
1 week worth of trail rations
2 Silver pieces
3 Copper pieces

Notes: The human Archer possesses the racial ability of Versatility.

Role Playing Tips:

An Adept of the Archer Discipline has learned the art of seeing; they can divide the world into missiles and targets and forge a mystical connection between an arrow or bolt, the target, and the space between them. A character might take this basic outline to extremes, believing that the target-and-missile analogy applies to every situation. Or, they might be a no-nonsense type who doesn't let the mystical talk get in the way of picking off enemies. The character's vision is also influenced by the circumstances of their life before they became an Adept. An Archer raised in an ork cavalry, for example, will likely espouse a fiercer, more aggressive view point than that described by a an Archer raised in a peaceful seaside village.

BEASTMASTER



Beastmasters have a skill for working with animals. Many Beastmasters feel uncomfortable in large cities or towns, and prefer to live in the wild, far away from other people. Beastmaster talents often resemble animal powers. Talents of this Discipline can influence aquatic creatures, flying creatures, burrowing creatures, and surface dwellers. They work against enchanted creatures, such as the pegasus, as well as they do against an ordinary house cat. Many do not work against people or other intelligent life. Most Beastmaster powers do not affect the undead, demonic creatures, elementals, or creatures that are constructs of the Horrors.

Important Attributes: Charisma and Toughness

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, T'skrang

Karma Ritual: The Beastmaster walks off a large circle, at least 20 yards in diameter, around the spot on which she last slept. The Beastmaster sits in the center of the circle and makes a silent, meditative call to the animals of the area. At the end of the ritual, at least one local animal approaches (but does not enter) the circle. The Beastmaster motions for one animal to enter the circle. The ritual is completed as soon as the animal enters the circle. If the Beastmaster performs this ritual in an area devoid of animals, this lack of response reduces the Karma available to the Beastmaster through this ritual, to 2 less Karma Points than he or she would otherwise be allowed.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Sculpture, Wood Carving

Note: A Beastmaster begins the game with a gamemaster approved mount or mundane animal.

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Animal Bond (D)
- Claw Shape (D)
- Dominate Beast (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Tracking
- Unarmed Combat

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Animal Training (D)
- Creature Analysis (D)
- Durability (7/6)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Borrow Sense (D)
- Cat's Paw

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Beastmaster may spend a Karma Point on a Recovery Test, or on a talent that substitutes for a Recovery Test.

Talents

- Frighten Animal Servants (D)
- Thread Weaving (Beast Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Beastmaster's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Heal Animal Servant (D)
- Incite Stampede (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Beastmaster may spend a Karma Point on any action using Strength only.

Talents

- Endure Cold
- Lizard Leap (D)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Recovery Test: The Beastmaster gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents

- Claw Frenzy (D)
- Sense Poison (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Beastmaster may spend a Karma Point on any action using Willpower only.

Talents

- Lion Heart (D)
- Poison Resistance (D)

TROLL BEASTMASTER

Attributes
- Dex: (13) 6/1D10
- Str: (17) 7/1D12
- Tou: (18) 7/1D12
- Per: (10) 5/1D8
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (14) 6/1D10

Talents
- Animal Bond (2): 8/2D6
- Claw Shape (1): 11/1D10 + 1D8
- Dominate Beast (1): 7/1D12
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Tracking (1): 6/1D10
- Unarmed Combat (2): 8/2D6

Skills
- Artisan/Music (1): 7/1D12
- Avoid Blow/Unarmed (1): 7/1D12
- Battle Shout (1): 7/1D12
- Climbing (1): 7/1D12
- Hunting (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Animal Habitats (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Creature Lore (1): 6/1D10
- Navigation (1): 6/1D10
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Troll
- Wilderness Survival (1): 6/1D10

Movement
- Full: 70
- Combat: 35

Initiative
- Dice: 1D8

Karma
- Dice: 1D4
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 7
- Spell Defense: 6
- Social Defense: 8
- Armor: 6
- Mystic Armor: 2

Damage
- Death Rating: 42
- Wound Threshold: 12
- Unconsciousness Rating: 34
- Recovery Dice: 1D12
- Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Buckler
- 2 Daggers
- Flute
- Hand Axe
- Hide Armor
- Traveler's Garb
- Whip
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 8 Silver pieces
- 4 Copper pieces

Notes: The troll Beastmaster possesses the racial ability of Heat Sight, and a Animal Bonded Wolf.

Role Playing Tips:

Beastmasters run quite a gamut of personalities, from those who view animals with sentimental affection to those who see them as enigmas to be deciphered. Beastmasters also express varying views as the superiority or inferiority of Name-givers versus beasts. They need to strike a balance between their appreciation for animals and their own status as a Name-giver, lest they lose their connection to either world.

A lot can be determined about a Beastmaster by the way they behave towards their animal companions when they are not seeking adventure. The animals that they choose to work with, how they spend their time with them, what they learn from them and in turn what they teach them can reveal a much about the nature of the Beastmaster character.

The Beastmaster must never be deceitful to their animal companions -- Name-givers, on the other hand, are a personal choice.

CAVALRYMAN



Cavalrymen are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form an empathic bond with them. A Cavalryman often respects their mount more than other people, except other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for the characters' mounts.

Important Attributes: Strength, Toughness, and Charisma

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To perform her Karma ritual, a Cavalryman plants a target in the ground, then rides her mount to a distance of several minutes away. When she reaches the proper distance, the Cavalryman blindfolds herself, and directs her mount to return to the target. Using only her almost psychic connection with her mount and whatever empathic talents she possesses, the Cavalryman urges her mount to charge the target as soon as she closes to about 100 yards. Still blindfolded, the Cavalryman strikes the target to end the ritual.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Wood Carving

Note: A Cavalryman begins the game with a gamemaster approved mount.

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Animal Bond
- Avoid Blow
- Charge (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Melee Weapons (D)
- Trick Riding (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Blood Share (D)
- Durability (7/6)
- Empathic Command (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Missile Weapons
- Spirit Mount (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Cavalryman may spend a Karma Point on any action taken by his mount, except Damage Tests.

Talents

- Sure Mount (D)
- Thread Weaving (Rider Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Cavalryman's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Resist Taunt
- Wheeling Attack (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Cavalryman may spend a Karma Point on a Recovery Test.

Talents

- Dominate Beast
- Durability (Mount)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Cavalryman's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Lasting Impression
- Wheeling Defense

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Cavalryman's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

- Fearsome Charge (D)
- Mount Attack (D)

HUMAN CAVALRYMAN

Attributes
- Dex: (13) 6/1D10
- Str: (16) 7/1D12
- Tou: (14) 6/1D10
- Per: (13) 6/1D10
- Wil: (11) 5/1D8
- Chr: (12) 5/1D8

Talents
- Animal Bond (1): 6/1D10
- Avoid Blow (1): 7/1D12
- Charge (1): 8/2D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
- Trick Riding (2): 8/2D6
- Versatility (0)

Skills
- Animal Handling (1): 6/1D10
- Artisan/Runic Carving (1): 6/1D10
- First Impression (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Ancient Weapons (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Ork Lore (1): 6/1D10
- Navigation (1): 6/1D10
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Human
- Tactics (1): 6/1D10
- Wilderness Survival (1): 6/1D10

Movement
- Full: 60
- Combat: 30

Initiative
- Dice: 1D8

Karma
- Dice: 1D8
- Points: 10

Combat
- Physical Defense: 7
- Spell Defense: 7
- Social Defense: 7
- Armor: 7
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 36
- Wound Threshold: 10
- Unconsciousness Rating: 28
- Recovery Dice: 1D10
- Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Carving Tools
- 2 Daggers
- Padded Leather Armor
- Rider's Shield
- Spiked Mace
- Traveler's Garb
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 5 Silver pieces
- 4 Copper pieces

Notes: The human Cavalryman possesses the racial ability of Versatility, and an Animal Bonded Riding Horse.

Role Playing Tips:

Cavalrymen are a restless lot, driven by the need to move and act. Cavalrymen rarely walk when they can gallop; they prefer to charge into every situation, facing foes head on, and taking life by the throat. While Cavalrymen prefer directness and zeal in most situations, they do not needlessly waste their lives, or the lives of their steeds, and can appreciate cunning and caution. Patience is rarely their strongest virtue, however.

A Cavalryman's bond with their mount is central to their life, affecting them mentally, emotionally, and physically. Because their mount is more important to the Cavalryman than any other being, it can cause the Cavalryman to have a certain emotional distance from other Name-givers. This often is the reason that other Name-givers see the Cavalrymen as rude, or brusque. The Cavalryman who seems shy and taciturn away from their mount often startles their companions by making a dramatic personality change when working with their riding beast.

ELEMENTALIST



An Elementalist is a spellcaster who learns about and gains power over the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Elementalist talents focus on both the physical elements and the spirits that they embody.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform a Karma ritual, the Elementalist draws a triangle on the ground. Sitting in the triangle, the Elementalist boils a pot of water, singing to the fire to encourage its heat. The Elementalist extinguishes the fire, then adds earth to the pot. When the mud cools, the Elementalist covers her face with it like war paint, then sings to the wind, calling a small breeze. As the wind dries the mud, much of the mud cracks and blows away, leaving behind a series of intricate, swirling patterns. The ritual is complete as soon as the design is done.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Embroidery, Stone Carving, Sculpting

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Karma Ritual
Read and Write Magic (D)
Spellcasting (D)
Spell Matrix (Elemental Matrix)
Spell Matrix (Elemental Matrix)
Thread Weaving (Elementalism) (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Durability (4/3)
Fire Heal (D)
Spell Matrix (Elemental Matrix)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Elemental Tongues (D)
Wind Catcher (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Elementalist's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Elemental Hold (D)
Spell Matrix (Elemental Matrix)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Elementalist may spend a Karma Point on any action using Perception only.

Talents

Cold Purify (D)
Willforce

SIXTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Elementalist's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Temperature (D)
Unshakable Earth (D)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Elementalist may spend a Karma Point for any action using Charisma only.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Elemental Matrix)
Reshape Object (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Elementalist's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Elemental Matrix)
Safe Path

ELF ELEMENTALIST

Attributes
- Dex: (14) 6/1D10
- Str: (11) 5/1D8
- Tou: (11) 5/1D8
- Per: (15) 6/1D10
- Wil: (17) 7/1D12
- Chr: (14) 6/1D10

Talents
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Read and Write Magic (1): 7/1D12
- Spellcasting (2): 8/2D6
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Thread Weaving (2): 8/2D6

Skills
- Artisan/Needlepoint (1): 7/1D12
- Climbing (1): 7/1D12
- Craftsman/Jewelry: 7/1D12
- Detect Trap (1): 7/1D12
- Etiquette (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Horrors (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Magic Lore (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Research (1): 7/1D12
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Elf

Movement
- Full: 70
- Combat: 35

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D6
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 8
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 8
- Armor: 3
- Mystic Armor: 3

Damage
- Death Rating: 32
- Wound Threshold: 8
- Unconsciousness Rating: 24
- Recovery Dice: 1D8
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Booster Potion
- 2 Daggers
- Embroidered Robe
- Grimoire
- Leather Armor
- Needlepoint Kit
- Spear
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 5 Silver pieces
- 4 Copper pieces

Spells
- Earthblend
- Earth Darts
- Flameweapon
- Plant Talk
- Purify Water
- Resist Cold
- Resist Fire

Notes: The elf Elementalist possesses the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Role Playing Tips:

An Elementalist's most important function is to form a living bridge between the "real" world and the realm of elemental spirits that most Name-givers never see. The Elementalist must connect with the denizens of both worlds, while simultaneously maintaining enough emotional and intellectual distance to keep impartial watch over the real world's elemental balance. This difficult balancing act sometimes causes the Elementalist to behave in ways others find odd, and they always seem to be slightly distracted – or perhaps entranced. Also, because Elementalists tend to see their Discipline as a way of getting at essential truths, very few of them care to spend time and effort on unnecessary words or flowery phrasing. They often speak and act with a frankness and openness that other people may find blunt, rude, or refreshingly honest.

Elementalists who specialize in one particular element tend to have personality quirks similar to those of the elemental spirits they favor. Of all Elementalists, specialists are most likely to behave in ways other Name-givers find inexplicable.

ILLUSIONIST



Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. Some Illusionist spells have real effects, however, because Illusionists learned long ago that if everything they did was an illusion, people caught on. Now they balance real magic, illusions, and sheer trickery or sleight of hand.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: An Illusionist does not use the same Karma ritual every time. Instead, her ritual simply requires her to incorporate certain elements every time: a lot of flashy, showy spells; tricks or snappy patter; and an assistant. The Illusionist must do her best to convince the assistant that the ritual is deadly serious and must conform to a precise formula. The ritual is complete at the end of half an hour.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Embroidery, Sketching, Painting, Crystal Sculpture

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Karma Ritual
Read and Write Magic (D)
Spellcasting (D)
Spell Matrix (Illusion Matrix)
Spell Matrix (Illusion Matrix)
Thread Weaving (Illusionism) (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Disguise Self (D)
Durability (4/3)
Spell Matrix (Illusion Matrix)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Dead Fall (D)
Speak Language

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Illusionist may spend a Karma point on any action using Perception only.

Talents

False Sight (D)
Spell Matrix (Illusion Matrix)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Illusionist's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Glamour (D)
Willforce

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Illusionist's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Illusion Matrix)
Fast Hand

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Illusionist may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

Engaging Banter
Enhanced Matrix (Illusion Matrix)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Illusionist's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Mind Wave (D)
True Sight (D)

T'SKRANG ILLUSIONIST

Attributes
Dex: (14) 6/1D10
Str: (12) 5/1D8
Tou: (14) 6/1D10
Per: (16) 7/1D12
Wil: (14) 6/1D10
Chr: (12) 5/1D8

Talents
Karma Ritual (1)
Read and Write Magic (1): 8/2D6
Spellcasting (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
Spell Matrix (1)
Spell Matrix (1)
Thread Weaving (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6

Skills
Acting (1): 6/1D10
Artisan/Poetry (1): 6/1D10
Bribery (1): 6/1D10
Climbing (1): 7/1D12
Conversation (1): 6/1D10
Knowledge/Alchemy and Potions (1): 8/2D6
Knowledge/Magic Lore (1): 8/2D6
Read and Write Language (1)
Dwarf
Speak Language (2)
Dwarf
T'skrang
Unarmed Combat/Striking (1): 7/1D12

Movement
Full: 65
Combat: 33

Initiative
Dice: 1D10

Karma
Dice: 1D6
Points: 5

Combat
Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2

Damage
Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Recovery Dice: 1D10
Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
Adventurer's kit
Booster Potion
Dagger
Embroidered Robe
Grimoire
Leather Armor
10-foot rope
Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
1 week worth of trail rations
1 Silver piece
2 Copper pieces

Spells
Assuring Touch
Best Face
Displace Image
Light
Rope Guide
Unseen Voices

Notes: The t'skrang Illusionist possesses the racial ability of Tail Attack (Damage = Str step + 3 steps).

Role Playing Tips:

For an Illusionist, nothing is taken for granted. An Illusionist's talents allow them to alter reality to suit their whims, and they assume that other powers existing in the world do the same. An Illusionist is therefor far less likely than others to take things at face value, and enjoys investigating oddities in order to understand. Every Illusionist understands there is a line between reality and illusion, and understands that sometimes what is seen is what is.

Illusionists tend to be entertainers at heart, as well. Delighting crowds with their talents and spells is often a favorite pastime of Illusionists, and they will often perform without prompting. They tend to regard their entertainment as filling two vital roles – providing amusement to lighten Barsaive's dark hours, and giving the common folk a badly needed lesson in how to perceive the truth. They believe that their illusions demonstrate how to seek the truth by proving how easily the senses can be befuddled. The person who cannot conceive of any truth aside from those things they can directly perceive gives many Illusionists a reason for teaching; the Illusionist tricks such individuals specifically to teach them that reality is not always what it seems.

NETHERMANCER



Nethermancers are spellcasters who specialize in the magic of the netherworlds. Their magic focuses on other planes, and they can access the spirits and creatures that inhabit those planes. Most people consider Nethermancers to be a little "off" in an eerie sort of way, and many followers of this Discipline are unlikely to win many popularity contests.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: Windling

Karma Ritual: Nethermantic Karma rituals are quiet affairs in which the Nethermancer drinks tea with a spirit servant or another other-worldly creature and talks of life beyond this world. The ritual ends as the Nethermancer drains the last drop from his second cup of tea.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Embroidery, Scrimshaw, Musical Instrument

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Karma Ritual
Read and Write Magic (D)
Spellcasting (D)
Spell Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Spell Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Thread Weaving (Nethermancy) (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Astral Sight (D)
Durability (4/3)
Frighten

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Spell Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Taunt

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Nethermancer may spend a Karma Point on any action using Perception only.

Talents

Spell Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Willforce

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Nethermancer's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Animal Possession
Spirit Hold (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Nethermancer's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Spirit Talk (D)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the Nethermancer's Initiative dice by 1 step.

Talents

Lifesight (D)
Spirit Dodge (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Nethermancer's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Nether Matrix)
Orbiting Spy (D)

DWARF NETHERMANCER

Attributes
- Dex: (13) 6/1D10
- Str: (13) 6/1D10
- Tou: (16) 7/1D12
- Per: (14) 6/1D10
- Wil: (16) 7/1D12
- Chr: (11) 5/1D8

Talents
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Read and Write Magic (1): 7/1D12
- Spellcasting (2): 8/2D6
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Thread Weaving (2): 8/2D6

Skills
- Artisan/Bone Carving (1): 6/1D10
- Climbing (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Magic Lore (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Scourge History (1): 7/1D12
- Physician (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Elf
- Research (1): 7/1D12
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Elf

Movement
- Full: 54
- Combat: 27

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D6
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 7
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 7
- Armor: 3
- Mystic Armor: 2

Damage
- Death Rating: 34
- Wound Threshold: 11
- Unconsciousness Rating: 31
- Recovery Dice: 1D12
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Booster Potion
- Carving Tools
- Dagger
- Embroidered Robe
- Grimoire
- Leather Armor
- Short Bow
- Quiver with 20 Short Bow Arrows
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 4 Silver pieces
- 9 Copper pieces

Spells
- Bone Dance
- Chilling Circle
- Command Nightflyer
- Detect Undead
- Experience Death
- Spirit Grip
- Undead Struggle

Notes: The dwarf Nethermancer possesses the racial ability of Heat Sight.

Role Playing Tips:

Because of the Nethermancer's fearsome reputation as one who meddles in matters related to Horrors and the undead, many who choose this path already consider themselves outcasts or otherwise alienated from their society. The events in life that lead them to this path vary greatly, but most Nethermancers share a background of fear or pain. Through their Discipline, they have found a way to overcome and master it, or seek their vengeance.

Most Nethermancers return the disdain that most Name-givers hold for them. Most couch their contempt in a sardonic, mocking sense of humor, and tend to laugh at things most would consider tragic. Nethermancers have little compassion for behavior they consider foolish, and save their sharpest scorn for those who fear their abilities and knowledge.

Most Nethermancers are masters of moral relativism, holding to few absolute rules of behavior. They spend considerable time examining their own souls, but rarely feel self-doubt. Nethermancers know that knowledge itself is neither good nor evil; it can only be put to good or evil uses. Because of their view that death is a change of state, rather than a permanent end, they give less weight to the possible deaths of Name-givers than others do. For this reason, they are often viewed as callous, cruel, or just evil.

SCOUT



Scouts fill a unique roll in adventuring groups in Barsaive. They represent a mix of the Warrior and Thief Disciplines, and often serve as both. They learn abilities similar to thieves, but they work well with companions. Scouts often accept employment as travel guides in many large cities, working for individuals as well as trading companies.

Important Attributes: Dexterity and Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Karma Ritual: To begin his Karma ritual, a Scout allows his companions to lead him, blindfolded, deep into the forest, about one-half hour's walk. The Scout then meditates for 10 to 15 minutes as he visualizes the route back to where he began. When he walks back and finds his starting point, the ritual is completed.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Runic Carving, Wood Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow (D)
- Climbing (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Melee Weapons
- Silent Walk (D)
- Tracking (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (6/5)
- Maneuver
- Speak Language

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Astral Sight (D)
- Sprint

FOURTH CIRCLE

Enhanced Senses: For the cost of 2 Strain Points, the Scout can enhance one of his natural senses, adding 2 steps to his Perception when making Perception Tests based on the enhanced sense.

Talents

- Missile Weapons
- Thread Weaving (Scout Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Scout may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents:

- Lock Pick
- Trap Initiative (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Scout's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Borrow Sense
- Great Leap

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Scout's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Detect Trap (D)
- Endure Cold

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Initiative: Increase the Scout's Initiative dice by 1 step.

Talents

- Gliding Stride
- Safe Path (D)

ELF SCOUT

Attributes
- Dex: (16) 7/1D12
- Str: (13) 6/1D10
- Tou: (11) 5/1D8
- Per: (17) 7/1D12
- Wil: (12) 5/1D8
- Chr: (13) 6/1D10

Talents
- Avoid Blow (1): 8/2D6
- Climbing (1): 8/2D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
- Silent Walk (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Tracking (1): 9/1D8 + 1D6

Skills
- Artisan/Wood Carving (1): 7/1D12
- Engaging Banter (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Botany (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Wild Animals (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Creature Lore (1): 8/2D6
- Lip Reading (1): 8/2D6
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Elf
- Surprise Strike/Broadsword (1): 8/2D6
- Wilderness Survival (1): 8/2D6

Movement
- Full: 80
- Combat: 40

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D6
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 9
- Spell Defense: 9
- Social Defense: 7
- Armor: 5
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 32
- Wound Threshold: 8
- Unconsciousness Rating: 24
- Recovery Dice: 1D8
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Broadsword, Windling
- Carving Tools
- Dagger
- Hardened Leather Armor
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 1 Gold piece
- 5 Silver pieces
- 2 Copper pieces

Notes: The elf Scout possesses the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Role Playing Tips:

Scouts are a curious lot, always interested in discovering what lies beyond the next hill. They enjoy using their talents to blend in with the world around them. The simple precept "tread lightly" governs most of their actions; the Scout who can achieve their goals with the least disruption to the world is truly living in accordance with their Discipline.

Justly proud of their abilities, most Scouts cannot help but notice the way others tend to, as they put it, "blunder blindly through the world." In many cases, this observation, along with their precept of "treading lightly," prevents Scouts from becoming lone wolves; keeping the others from blundering through the world as blindly as they seem to is within their calling, and their duty.

While Scouts are talented fighters, most avoid combat if they can. The saying, "Violence is the last resort of the incompetent," finds a place in many a Scout's personal vision. Many Scouts join merchant caravans or adventuring parties specifically seeking the chance to lead their charges through danger while avoiding direct conflict.

SKY RAIDER



Sky Raiders form a potent force in Barsaive. Their airships raid all over the province, most frequently targeting Therans or their allies. Sky Raiders are proud, and show great loyalty to other Sky Raiders, unless that raider belongs to an enemy clan or moot.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness

Racial Restrictions: Elf, Obsidiman, Windling

Karma Ritual: To perform her Karma ritual, the Sky Raider spends several minutes in silent meditation beneath the open sky. The Sky Raider then begins to strike her shield with a weapon, slowly at first, perhaps two beats a minute. The striking accelerates until the Sky Raider is beating the shield at a furious rate. The drumming continues for 30 minutes. The ritual ends as soon as the sound from the last drumbeat dies away.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Bone Carving, Rune Carving, Wood Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Air Sailing (D)
Avoid Blow
Battle Shout
Fireblood (D)
Karma Ritual
Melee Weapons (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Durability (8/6)
Great Leap (D)
Shield Charge (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Unarmed Combat
Wind Catcher (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Sky Raider may spend a Karma Point on any action using Strength only.

Talents

Thread Weaving (Sky Weaving) (D)
Missile Weapons

FIFTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Sky Raider's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Swift Kick
Battle Bellow

SIXTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Sky Raider's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Steely Stare (D)
Throwing Weapons

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Sky Raider may spend a Karma Point to increase the damage of any attack made with a melee weapon.

Talents

Momentum Attack (D)
Speak Language

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Sky Raider's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Crushing Blow (D)
Resist Taunt

ORK SKY RAIDER

Attributes
Dex: (13) 6/1D10
Str: (19) 8/2D6
Tou: (14) 6/1D10
Per: (12) 5/1D8
Wil: (11) 5/1D8
Chr: (11) 5/1D8

Talents
Air Sailing (1): 6/1D10
Avoid Blow (1): 7/1D12
Battle Shout (2): 7/1D12
Fire Blood (1): 7/1D12
Karma Ritual (1)
Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6

Skills
Artisan/Runic Carving (1): 6/1D10
Climbing (1): 7/1D12
Craftsman/Woodworker (1): 7/1D12
Disarm/Broadsword (1): 7/1D12
Knowledge/Barsaive Military History (1): 6/1D10
Knowledge/Airships (1): 6/1D10
Navigation (1): 6/1D10
Read and Write Language (1)
  Dwarf
Speak Language (2)
  Dwarf
  Ork
Tactics (1): 6/1D10

Movement
Full: 65
Combat: 33

Initiative
Dice: 1D8

Karma
Dice: 1D8
Points: 10

Combat
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Recovery Dice: 1D10
Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
Adventurer's kit
Broadsword
Dagger
Footman's Shield
Padded Leather Armor
Sling, Great
Traveler's Garb
1 week worth of trail rations
16 Silver pieces
2 Copper pieces

Notes: The ork Sky Raider possesses the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Role Playing Tips:

Responsibility and honor, both personal and clan, represent a Sky Raider's primary motivation. Most often, the two are intertwined; a Sky Raider behaves honorably by taking complete and final responsibility for their own life and destiny. No Sky Raider willingly does anything that might tarnish their personal vision of their own honor (though they rarely care whether others view their actions as honorable or dishonorable). Once a Sky Raider gives their oath on any matter, they will not break it.

Because a Sky Raider sees honor and individual responsibility as two sides of the same coin, they rarely show compassion for the troubles of others, unless those others are clearly striving against their misfortune with all of their strength. Those who blame their lot in life on fate or circumstance rather than taking personal responsibility for their condition are dishonorable by definition and unworthy of sympathy or aid.

Some Sky Raiders view Adepts of other Disciplines with scorn, because in their opinion, they have chosen to follow a "lesser" path. Other Sky Raiders offer Adepts of other Disciplines an indulgent understanding; they may have not made the best choice, but in taking responsibility for their own path, they have at least demonstrated a basic understanding of honor.

SWORDMASTER



Swordmasters learn the value of well-handled weapons and a quick tongue, training to demonstrate sharp accuracy and flash in a fight. Despite the Name of their Discipline, Swordmasters are proficient in many weapons. Swords are just the accepted norm.

Important Attributes: Dexterity and Charisma

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Swordmaster fences against imaginary opponents. He fights the first few duels as silent, simple exercises. In the final duel of the ritual, the Swordmaster provides sound effects, acrobatic moves, and even swashbuckling dialogue. The ritual is completed when the last foe falls.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Acting, Sculpture, Weapon Rune Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Maneuver (D)
- Melee Weapons (D)
- Taunt
- Wound Balance

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (7/6)
- Parry (D)
- Speak Language

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Heartening Laugh
- Throwing Weapons

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Swordmaster may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

- Riposte (D)
- Thread Weaving (Blade Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Swordmaster may spend a Karma Point to increase the damage of any attack made with a sword.

Talents

- Second Weapon (D)
- Winning Smile

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Swordmaster's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

- Disarm (D)
- Trap Initiative

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Swordmaster's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Resist Taunt
- Second Attack (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Swordmaster may spend a Karma Point on any action using Willpower only.

Talents

- Engaging Banter
- Graceful Exit (D)

TROLL SWORDMASTER

Attributes
- Dex: (16) 7/1D12
- Str: (16) 7/1D12
- Tou: (13) 6/1D10
- Per: (12) 5/1D8
- Wil: (14) 6/1D10
- Chr: (14) 6/1D10

Talents
- Avoid Blow (1): 8/2D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Maneuver (1): 8/2D6
- Melee Weapons (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Taunt (2): 8/2D6
- Wound Balance (1): 7/1D12

Skills
- Acrobatics (1): 8/2D6
- Artisan/Dancing (1): 7/1D12
- Climbing (1): 8/2D6
- First Impression (1): 7/1D12
- Flirting (1): 7/1D12
- Great Leap (1): 11/1D10 + 1D8
- Knowledge/Ancient Weapons (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Troll Lore (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Troll
- Streetwise/Bartertown (1): 7/1D12

Movement
- Full: 80
- Combat: 40

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D4
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 9
- Spell Defense: 7
- Social Defense: 8
- Armor: 6
- Mystic Armor: 2

Damage
- Death Rating: 35
- Wound Threshold: 9
- Unconsciousness Rating: 27
- Recovery Dice: 1D10
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Broadsword
- Buckler
- Dagger
- Hardened Leather Armor
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 10 Silver pieces
- 2 Copper pieces

Notes: The troll Swordmaster possesses the racial ability of Heat Sight.

Role Playing Tips:

In many ways, Swordmasters resemble the glamorous swashbucklers of song and story. Unlike a Warrior, a Swordmaster does not focus on defeating the enemy (though they would certainly prefer to win); instead, the act of fighting is the way in which they embody their Discipline. The Swordmaster need not risk their life foolishly, but must attempt to fight any battle with panache. Swordmasters often deliberately prolong battles in order to make them more exciting and beautiful – battle is an art, and the Swordmaster practices it with joy.

A Swordmaster is extraordinarily comfortable with their body and mind, and is almost never content to sit quietly in the background. Clever catch phrases, witty insults, and humorous asides are as natural to a Swordmaster as the elegant embellishments on the art of swordplay. Spirit is as much a part of the Swordmaster's armament as their sword is.

THIEF



Thieves learn early to be self-reliant and how to steal. They draw power from their self-confidence and the knowledge that they must depend only on themselves. The abundance of rumors governing Thief guilds means such groups do, in fact, exist, but the proof or disproof of their reality remains a secret.

Important Attributes: Dexterity and Perception

Racial Restrictions: Obsidiman, Troll

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, a Thief must sit by himself in a darkened area and concentrate on the knowledge that he is alone in the world and must rely first and foremost only on himself. With this firmly established in his heart and mind, the Thief uses one of the following talents: Silent Walk, Lock Pick, or Pick Pockets. The ritual ends as soon as the Thief successfully uses the talent.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Acting, Poetry, Sculpture

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Climbing
- Karma Ritual
- Lock Pick (D)
- Melee Weapons
- Pick Pockets (D)
- Silent Walk (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (5/4)
- Surprise Strike (D)
- Throwing Weapons (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow (D)
- Trap Initiative (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Thieves Tongue: For 1 point of Strain, a Thief may speak for one minute in Thieves Tongue. While Thieves Tongue makes perfect sense to other thieves, it sounds like lilting gibberish to anyone else. An eavesdropper may try to decode the speech by making a Perception Test against the Spell Defense of the Thief using Thieves Tongue. An Excellent success or better means the eavesdropper understands what is being said in Thieves Tongue.

Talents

- Detect Trap
- Thread Weaving (Thief Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Thief's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Disarm Trap (D)
- Missile Weapons

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Thief's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

- Disguise Self
- Wound Balance

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Thief may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

- Conceal Weapon (D)
- Streetwise (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Thief's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Detect Weapon
- Lightning Throw

DWARF THIEF

Attributes
- Dex: (16) 7/1D12
- Str: (13) 6/1D10
- Tou: (15) 6/1D10
- Per: (14) 6/1D10
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (12) 5/1D8

Talents
- Climbing (1): 8/2D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Lock Pick (1): 8/2D6
- Melee Weapons (1): 8/2D6
- Pick Pockets (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Silent Walk (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6

Skills
- Acrobatics (1): 8/2D6
- Artisan/Crystal Sculpting (1): 6/1D10
- Bribery (1): 6/1D10
- Fence (1): 6/1D10
- Forgery (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Gem Appraising (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Barsaive Laws (1): 6/1D10
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Sprint (1): 8/2D6
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Ork

Movement
- Full: 75
- Combat: 38

Initiative
- Dice: 1D12

Karma
- Dice: 1D6
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 9
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 7
- Armor: 3
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 38
- Wound Threshold: 10
- Unconsciousness Rating: 29
- Recovery Dice: 1D10
- Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Booster Potion
- Dagger
- Leather Armor
- Leather Gloves
- Sap
- Short Sword
- Thief's picks and tools
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 4 Silver pieces
- 2 Copper pieces

Notes: The dwarf Thief possesses the racial ability of Heat Sight.

Role Playing Tips:

To a Thief, ownership is all a matter of perspective – if you don't have it, you don't own it. Many view their Discipline as heroic. They remember that the first heroes of the Name-giver races were Thieves who taught the Passions a lesson in compassion. As tricksters and rogues, they work easily in groups of other Disciplines, and with other people. They rely on their own abilities before depending on others, but are willing to cooperate and help others when they can.

The solitary Thief, by contrast, cares little for mythology or metaphor. They see the world in personal terms, as both the mark and the enemy. In order to prosper, the solitary Thief rejects even the appearance of dependence on others and draws strength and solace from themselves. When working in groups, they demand their fair share of the earnings, and often more. Their attitude tends to make them difficult to travel with.

TROUBADOUR



Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. They represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see. They also serve to keep the communities across Barsaive in communication with each other.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception, and Charisma

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform a Karma ritual, Troubadours must perform a ballad or skit before an audience of at least two. The Troubadour can juggle, joke, tell tall tales, or sing serious legends. The Troubadour must finish the performance with a story, ending the story with the phrase, "There it ends, for such is the truth of the thing." This completes the ritual.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Juggling, Sculpture, Storytelling

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Disguise Self
Emotion Song (D)
First Impression (D)
Karma Ritual
Melee Weapons
Mimic Voice (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Durability (6/5)
Item History
Speak Language (D)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Empathic Sense (D)
Read and Write Language (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Troubadour may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

Taunt (D)
Thread Weaving (Story Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Troubadour may spend a Karma Point on another character's social action. The Troubadour must speak on behalf of the other character or somehow justify spending the Karma Point to support the other character by doing something that requires and action.

Talents

Engaging Banter (D)
Throwing Weapons

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Troubadour's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Haggle
Resist Taunt (D)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

The Kiss: For the cost of 1 Strain, the Troubadour can deliver a most passionate kiss to a member of the preferred sex. The kiss adds 3 steps to any persuasion or other interaction talent he uses on the target. This effect lasts for 5 minutes.

Talents

Encore
Incite Mob (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Troubadour's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

Graceful Exit
Hypnotize

OBSIDIMAN TROUBADOUR

Attributes
- Dex: (11) 5/1D8
- Str: (22) 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Tou: (17) 7/1D12
- Per: (13) 6/1D10
- Wil: (11) 5/1D8
- Chr: (11) 5/1D8

Talents
- Disguise Self (2): 6/1D10
- Emotion Song (2): 7/1D12
- First Impression (1): 6/1D10
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (1): 6/1D10
- Mimic Voice (2): 7/1D12

Skills
- Artisan/Music (1): 6/1D10
- Conversation (1): 6/1D10
- Detect Trap (1): 7/1D12
- Etiquette (1): 6/1D10
- Evidence Analysis (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Barsaive History (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Legends and Heroes (1): 7/1D12
- Physician (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Obsidiman

Movement
- Full: 43
- Combat: 22

Initiative
- Dice: 1D4

Karma
- Dice: 1D4
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 7
- Spell Defense: 7
- Social Defense: 7
- Armor: 8
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 40
- Wound Threshold: 14
- Unconsciousness Rating: 32
- Recovery Dice: 1D12
- Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Battle Axe
- Body Shield
- Traveler's Garb
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- Lute
- 2 Silver pieces

Notes: The obsidiman Troubadour possesses the racial abilities of Increased Wound Threshold of +3, Natural Armor of +3. These abilities are reflected in the statistics above.

Role Playing Tips:

A Troubadour feels an irresistible responsibility to entertain, and to act as a conservator of history, as well. Therefore, no Troubadour worthy of the name will turn aside a chance to perform. Troubadours love being the center of attention; their performances delight the audience, stroke their ego (which is often quite healthy), and let them feel the exhilarating flow of magic when they weave a song or tale.

At heart, every Troubadour holds an insatiable curiosity about the world, and an intense desire to share what they have learned with those around them. Only under rare circumstances would a Troubadour miss a chance to learn a new tale, song, or epic. Upon arriving in a new town, a Troubadour will usually immediately seek out the tales and songs native to the area. Troubadours particularly like to tell tales no one has heard before, and often seek out travelers or adventurers to learn stories of their exploits.

Troubadours recognize their own significant role in the spreading of legends and take great pride in it. As they travel across Barsaive, Troubadours carry with them the knowledge of different peoples and places. By spreading such knowledge far afield, they weave the scattered peoples of Barsaive together into a single, unified tapestry. Because of their desire to understand all aspects of a story, Troubadours tend to naturally find themselves in the role of mediator and diplomat.

WARRIOR



Warriors are fighters trained to use magic to enhance their techniques. They often join other Warriors in groups called orders, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, a Warrior sits cross-legged, holding a weapon above his knees. After a few minutes of meditation, he levitates as if using the Air Dance talent. The ritual use of this talent does not cause Strain. The Warrior then performs a series of four exercises called the Earth Defense, the Water Defense, the Fire Attack, and the Air Attack. The ritual ends as soon as the Warrior completes the final move of the Air Attack.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Sculpture, Weapon Rune Carving, Wood Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Acrobatic Strike
- Air Dance
- Karma Ritual
- Melee Weapon (D)
- Unarmed Combat (D)
- Wood Skin (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Anticipate Blow (D)
- Durability (9/7)
- Throwing Weapons

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow (D)
- Tiger Spring

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Warrior may spend a Karma Point on any action using Willpower only.

Talents

- Down Strike (D)
- Thread Weaving (War Weaving) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Warrior's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Gliding Stride (D)
- Swift Kick

SIXTH CIRCLE

Recovery Test: The Warrior gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents

- Life Check (D)
- Missile Weapons

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Physical Defense: Increase the Warrior's Physical Defense by 1.

Talents

- Earth Skin
- Second Attack

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Warrior's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Cobra Strike (D)
- Spirit Strike (D)

WINDLING WARRIOR

Attributes
- Dex: (17) 7/1D12
- Str: (7) 4/1D6
- Tou: (11) 5/1D8
- Per: (14) 6/1D10
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (14) 6/1D10

Talents
- Acrobatic Strike (1): 8/2D6
- Air Dance (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Unarmed Combat (1): 8/2D6
- Wood Skin (1): 6/1D10

Skills
- Artisan/Dancing (1): 7/1D12
- Conversation (1): 7/1D12
- Detect Weapon (1): 7/1D12
- First Impression (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Ancient Weapons (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Military History (1): 7/1D12
- Parry/Broadsword (1): 8/2D6
- Second Weapon/Short Sword (1): 8/2D6
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Speak Language
  - Dwarf
  - Windling
- Tactics (1): 7/1D12

Movement
- Full: 48
- Combat: 24
- Flight: 90/45

Initiative
- Dice: 1D10

Karma
- Dice: 1D10
- Points: 15

Combat
- Physical Defense: 11
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 8
- Armor: 5
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 32
- Wound Threshold: 8
- Unconsciousness Rating: 24
- Recovery Dice: 1D8
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Hardened Leather Armor
- Traveler's Garb with extra shirt, breeches
- Windling Broadsword
- Windling Short Sword
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 2 Silver pieces

Notes: The windling Warrior possesses the racial abilities of Astral Sight, Flight, and Improved Physical Defense (+2). The last ability is reflected in the statistics above.

Role Playing Tips:

A Warrior tends to be honest, taciturn, and occasionally impatient. They speak plainly and openly, and expect others to do the same. They admire doers and tend to regard those that talk too much with suspicion. They believe in trying to find the simplest, most straightforward manner to accomplish a task. Though and expert of war, the way of the true Warrior does not involve a love of combat. Instead, it is a job that needs to be done, and they take pride in doing it well with minds unclouded by rage or hatred.

A Warrior values loyalty, to both comrades and employers. A Warrior's sense of honor means that they are willing to die to defend those that they have chosen to give their loyalty to. No true Warrior will stupidly sacrifice themselves to avenge a slight or insult done to those that they protect, but they will remember it.

WEAPONSMITH



A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a very critical eye. Weaponsmiths borrow a bit from elemental magic, and a bit from wizardry as well. Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons, as well as everyday tools. Nearly every community in Barsaive values Weaponsmiths.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Weaponsmith beats a thin strip of metal in a hot fire or forge. From this he fashions the metal into a blade, arrowhead, or spear tip, but tempers the metal too soon, making it brittle. He then shatters the defective piece. The ritual ends the instant the piece breaks.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Runic Carving (Weapon, Armor), Wood Carving

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

- Avoid Blow
- Forge Blade (D)
- Item History (D)
- Karma Ritual
- Melee Weapons
- Steel Thought

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

- Durability (6/5)
- Haggle (D)
- Read and Write Language

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

- Abate Curse (D)
- Detect Weapon

FOURTH CIRCLE

Evaluate Weapon: The Weaponsmith makes a Forge Blade Test against the Spell Defense of the weapon. A successful test reveals the approximate worth of the weapon and how well it is made.

Talents

- Speak Language
- Thread Weaving (Thread Smithing) (D)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Weaponsmith's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

- Temper Self (D)
- Warp Missile (D)

SIXTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Weaponsmith's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

- Conceal Weapon
- Forge Armor (D)

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Weaponsmith may spend a Karma Point on any action using Dexterity only.

Talents

- Spot Armor Flaw (D)
- Temper Other (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Recovery Test: The Weaponsmith gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents

- Improve Blade (D)
- Metal Ward

T'SKRANG WEAPONSMITH

Attributes
- Dex: (14) 6/1D10
- Str: (11) 5/1D8
- Tou: (13) 6/1D10
- Per: (14) 6/1D10
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (17) 7/1D12

Talents
- Avoid Blow (1): 7/1D12
- Forge Blade (2): 8/2D6
- Item History (1): 7/1D12
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Melee Weapons (2): 8/2D6
- Steel Thought (1): 7/1D12

Skills
- Artisan/Stone Carving (1): 8/2D6
- Climbing (1): 7/1D12
- Conversation (1): 8/2D6
- Etiquette (1): 8/2D6
- Evidence Analysis (1): 7/1D12
- Flirting (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Barsaive History (1): 7/1D12
- Knowledge/Legends and Heros (1): 7/1D12
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Seduction (1): 8/2D6
- Speak Language
  - Dwarf
  - T'skrang
- Throwing Weapons/Knives and Daggars (1): 7/1D12

Movement
- Full: 65
- Combat: 33

Initiative
- Dice: 1D8

Karma
- Dice: 1D6
- Points: 5

Combat
- Physical Defense: 8
- Spell Defense: 8
- Social Defense: 9
- Armor: 4
- Mystic Armor: 3

Damage
- Death Rating: 35
- Wound Threshold: 9
- Unconsciousness Rating: 27
- Recovery Dice: 1D10
- Recovery Tests per Day: 2

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Ferndask Shield
- Knife
- Leather Armor
- Short Sword
- Stone Carving Tools
- 2 Throwing Daggers
- Wealthy traveller's garb
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- 6 Copper pieces

Notes: The t'skrang Weaponsmith has the racial ability of Tail Attack (Damage = Str step + 3 steps).

Role Playing Tips:

Weaponsmiths are completely committed to everything they do, no matter what it may be. Even the talents of the Discipline show their determination to improve themselves, better understand the world and the people in it, and accomplish the task set before them. Weaponsmiths do not acknowledge failure. If they say the will do something, they will do it however they can. If they cannot accomplish the task one way, they will try another, and another, and another, until they succeed. A Weaponsmith will request aid if they feel they need it; they will do everything within their power to carry out their intentions.

"The word of a Weaponsmith" is proverbial in Barsaive, because a Weaponsmith's word is so rarely broken. Weaponsmiths often make their promises in Forges, and such promises are as important to the Weaponsmith as a blood promise would be to anyone else in Barsaive. Though a Weaponsmith suffers no loss of health and does not earn unhealing Wounds should they break their oath (as with a blood promise), any Weaponsmith who betrays their oath risks being turned out of their Forge until he proves himself worthy again.

WIZARD



Wizards are spellcasters well trained in the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as "book magicians," but very few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his or her face.

Important Attributes: Perception and Willpower

Racial Restrictions: None

Karma Ritual: To perform a Karma ritual, the Wizard draws a circle at least two yards in diameter, then inscribes a triangle within the circle. Making any corrections necessary for accuracy in drawing the circle, the Wizard then draws another circle inside the triangle. Then a triangle within that circle, and so on. Soon the Wizard will be forced to create figures smaller than hand and stylus can possibly draw. He must use the power of magic to continue to draw, even when the results become too small to be seen with the naked eye. The sequence ends with a triangle; the ritual is complete once the final triangle is drawn.

Recommended Artisan Skills: Calligraphy, Musical Instrument, Robe Embroidery

FIRST CIRCLE

Talents

Karma Ritual
Read and Write Magic (D)
Spellcasting (D)
Spell Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)
Spell Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)
Thread Weaving (Wizardry) (D)

SECOND CIRCLE

Talents

Durability (4/3)
Evidence Analysis (D)
Spell Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)

THIRD CIRCLE

Talents

Book Memory (D)
Read and Write Language (D)

FOURTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Wizard may spend a Karma Point on any action using Charisma only.

Talents

Arcane Mutterings (D)
Spell Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)

FIFTH CIRCLE

Spell Defense: Increase the Wizard's Spell Defense by 1.

Talents

Astral Sight (D)
Willforce

SIXTH CIRCLE

Social Defense: Increase the Wizard's Social Defense by 1.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)
Speak Language

SEVENTH CIRCLE

Karma: The Wizard may spend a Karma Point on actions using Willforce and Willpower only.

Talents

Hold Thread (D)
Item History (D)

EIGHTH CIRCLE

Recovery Test: The Wizard gains an additional Recovery Test per day.

Talents

Enhanced Matrix (Wizardry Matrix)
Resist Taunt

ORK WIZARD

Attributes
- Dex: (11) 5/1D8
- Str: (16) 7/1D12
- Tou: (14) 6/1D10
- Per: (16) 7/1D12
- Wil: (13) 6/1D10
- Chr: (10) 5/1D8

Talents
- Karma Ritual (1)
- Read and Write Magic (1): 8/2D6
- Spellcasting (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Spell Matrix (1)
- Thread Weaving (2): 9/1D8 + 1D6

Skills
- Artisan/Embroidery (1): 6/1D10
- Climbing (1): 6/1D10
- Knowledge/Barsaive History (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Creature Lore (1): 8/2D6
- Knowledge/Magic Lore (1): 8/2D6
- Melee Weapons/Staffs (1): 6/1D10
- Read and Write Language (1)
  - Dwarf
- Research (1): 8/2D6
- Speak Language (2)
  - Dwarf
  - Ork
- Streetwise/Throal (1): 6/1D10

Movement
- Full: 57
- Combat: 29

Initiative
- Dice: 1D8

Karma
- Dice: 1D8
- Points: 10

Combat
- Physical Defense: 7
- Spell Defense: 9
- Social Defense: 6
- Armor: 3
- Mystic Armor: 1

Damage
- Death Rating: 36
- Wound Threshold: 10
- Unconsciousness Rating: 28
- Recovery Dice: 1D10
- Recovery Tests per Day: 3

Equipment
- Adventurer's kit
- Booster potion
- 2 Daggers
- Embroidered Robe
- Grimoire
- Knife
- Leather Armor
- Quarterstaff
- Sling
- Traveler's Garb
- 1 week worth of trail rations
- Embroidery kit
- 14 Silver pieces
- 8 Copper pieces

Spells
- Astral Sense
- Crushing Will
- Dispel Magic
- Ignite
- Iron Hand
- Mind Dagger

Notes: The ork Wizard has the racial ability of Low-Light Vision.

Role Playing Tips:

Wizards are as varied as their magics. Some trust the written word over oral tradition, and feel insecure without a couple of books in their backpacks. They tend to be wordy, pompous, and love quoting inscrutable occult classics. They take the concepts of idea and symbol literally, and memorize large chunks of books central to that tradition. They value thought and reflection over all other things, and believe that superior intellect will always win in the end. Humbleness is a rare virtue amongst this school of Wizard.

Other Wizards believe more in the teaching of experience. Idea and symbol are still central to their way of thinking, but they put more faith into their own experience than in that of old texts. They learn to work magic by deciding what each idea and symbol means to them personally, and tend to think and act with less arrogance than other Wizards; many have a wry sense of humor, and feel humbled in the face of the wonders of the world. They can be quick to dismiss the benefits of book learning, and proverbs and other bits of folk wisdom tend to pepper their conversations.

TALENTS



What is it that makes me such a great performer? Well you might say that it's practice, or luck, or even magic. In fact it is all those, and more.

— Millat, elf Troubadour

Much of how your character relates to his world is determined by his Discipline, and through his Discipline, by his talents. Talents are capabilities powered by an Adept's ability to tap into astral space and draw magical energy into the physical world; how he uses those energies makes him unique in his Discipline and helps him live according to that Discipline. Though the talents your character may learn are limited by his Discipline, how effectively and creatively he uses those talents is limited only by your imagination.

The way a character uses his talents draws from every aspect of the game system: spell magic, combat, making tests for actions, and so on. The brief explanations of the various elements of using talents given here are referenced to the complete explanations provided elsewhere in this book. Because of the magical nature of talents, learning and improving talents is much easier than learning and improving mundane skills (see **Skills**, p. 118).

The **Disciplines** chapter listed the talents available to Adepts of each Discipline. This chapter describes those talents.

CHOOSING BEGINNING TALENTS

Once a player chooses his character's Discipline, he chooses talents from those available in that Discipline and assigns a rank to each one. When creating a character, each player has 8 Rank Points to assign to his or her character's talents. He may assign 1, 2, or 3 Rank Points to the talents available to his First Circle character. This number becomes the talent's Rank. If an Archer player decides to assign 2 Rank Points to his character's Missile Weapons talent, his Archer uses that talent at Rank 2.

Each talent is based on an Attribute, which appears in the game information for each talent. To use a talent, the character adds the talent rank steps to the step of an Attribute. For example, a character with a Dexterity Value of 13 uses a Dexterity step of 6. By assigning 2 Rank Points to his Missile Weapons talent, the Archer now uses Step 8 (Dexterity step 6 + 2 Rank steps) when using the Missile Weapons talent. The **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 27, shows that the Archer's player rolls 2D6 when the character uses the Missile Weapons talent.

Do not record a talent on your Character Record Sheet to which you can assign no Rank Points. Your character does not have that talent (See **Versatility**, p. 112, for an exception to this rule).

USING TALENTS

Nearly every time your character uses a talent, he makes a test to determine if and how successfully he used it (see **Rolling Dice** and **Making Tests** in **Game Concepts**, p. 26). This test often replaces an Attack Test (see **Combat**, p. 218). The step number he uses for the test is determined by one of your character's Attribute steps and the talent rank. The Difficulty Number for the test – the number the character's dice roll must equal or exceed – is usually the target's Spell or Physical Defense Rating. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual talent descriptions.

TALENT TEST

To make a Talent Test (also referred to by the name of the talent, i.e., Melee Weapons Test), the character rolls the Action dice indicated by the talent step number against a Difficulty Number (see **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 27). For the test to succeed, the dice roll result must be equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number. If the dice roll result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a substantial margin, the character using the talent may have achieved an advantageous success level, which would increase or change the effect of the character's talent use (see **Test Results** in **Game Concepts**, p. 27).

Related Tests

Many talents are used for combat. The effects of these talents may cause damage to a target. After successfully using such a talent, the character makes a Damage Test to determine how many points of damage his attack caused to the target (see **Make Damage Test** in **Combat**, p. 220). To make a Damage Test, the character rolls the Action dice for the Damage step number of the weapon used in the attack (per the item's description in the **Goods and Services** chapter). The dice roll result is the number of Damage Points the attack inflicts on the target.

The effects of non-combat talents appear in the individual talent descriptions. For example, some talents allow a character to resist the effect of a social interaction (see **Interaction Tests** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 332). A successful test allows the character to resist the effect of his opponent's social interaction, such as intimidation, persuasion, or taunts. The Resist Taunt talent provides a good example of this type of test.

Some talents require characters to add an extra boost of magical energy to the talent use. This extra energy comes from the character's Karma, and represents a way for characters to siphon off a smaller amount of magical energy than that required to weave a thread (see **Workings of Magic**, p. 137). This extra boost also makes it more likely that the Talent Test will be successful. To use Karma for a talent, roll the character's Karma dice at the same time you roll the dice for the Talent Test.

The individual talent descriptions in this chapter give rules for using each talent.

CONFLICTING TALENT EFFECTS

Some talents, by the nature of their effects, can not be used against the same opponent at the same time. Unless otherwise specified in the talent descriptions, if multiple talents from the following list are used on the same character, all except the talent with the highest effect test will be negated.

Arcane Mutterings
Battle Bellow
Battle Shout
Engaging Banter
Fearsome Charge
Frighten
Mind Wave
Steely Stare
Stopping Aim
Taunt

DURATION

The effects of certain talents have a stated duration. A talent's exact duration is usually determined by multiplying the talent rank by an increment of time (rounds, minutes, hours, and so on). This is usually shown as "The effect of Engaging Banter lasts a number of

rounds equal to the character's Engaging Banter rank," or "a number of rounds equal to the Engaging Banter talent."

A round is a timekeeping unit used to keep the action of the adventure flowing. A round represents the time required to take an action, and equals 10 seconds of game time. A round of action during combat is referred to as a Combat Round.

In most cases, knocking the character who is using the talent unconscious also ends the effect of the talent.

TALENT GAME TERMS

The talent descriptions that follow describe how to use each talent and the effect of a successful Talent Test. The text describes the effects of the talent, and boldface entries above each description summarize important game information about each talent. The game information provided falls into the following categories.

Step Number

The Talent Step Number is a number usually determined by adding a number of steps equal to the character's talent rank to an Attribute step. The resulting step number indicates the Action dice the player rolls to make the Talent Test. For example, the Spellcasting step number equals the character's Spellcasting talent rank plus his Perception step. A character with a Perception Value of 13 (Step 6) and Spellcasting Rank 3 would have a Spellcasting step of 9. The **Step/Action Dice Table** shows that Step 9 is D8 + D6 Action dice.

Certain talents add bonus steps to this basic step number. For example, the Claw Shape talent adds steps equal to the talent rank + 3 steps to the Strength step. This is listed as "**Step Number:** Strength + Rank + 3."

Action

Some talents count as the single action available during combat (see **Actions** in **Combat**, p. 218). This is noted by the word "Yes" on the Action line for these talents. Those talents which do not count as an action are so noted by the word "No" on the Action line. A "Yes" on the Action line may also indicate that a character can perform no other action while using this talent (See the talent description to determine this distinction). Note that not all talents requiring an action can be performed during a single Combat Round; some talents require several minutes or more to perform.

The notation "NA" appears on the Action line of some talents. This notation indicates that these talents are always in use, for example, Durability and Spell Matrices (see talent descriptions). A character automatically benefits from talents with this notation; he or she has constant access to the applicable effects without performing an action to use the talent.

Finally, the notation "Sustained" appears on the Action line of some talents. This indicates that these talents take a long time to perform. A character may not perform other actions while using sustained action talents, but they may voluntarily choose to stop performing the talent at any time. If the character does not spend the necessary time to complete a sustained action, they will need to start over at the beginning.

Requires Karma

The Requires Karma line tells you whether or not your character must spend Karma for this talent to work (see the description of Karma above and in **Game Concepts**, p. 29). If the talent requires Karma, your character must spend at least 1 Karma Point to attempt to use the talent. If your character does not have a Karma Point available, he or she may sacrifice a Recovery Test (see **Recovering from Damage** in **Combat**, p. 228) to generate the necessary magical energy. Talents that require Karma rarely cause Strain (see below); the extra energy of the Karma powers the talent. Unless the talent description says otherwise, roll the Karma dice at the same time you roll the dice for the Talent Test.

Unless the talent description states otherwise, your character can spend only 1 Karma Point to use a talent.

If a talent requires Karma and is a Discipline talent for your Discipline, see p. 53, your character may choose whether or not to spend the Karma Point.

Strain

Some talents need an extra boost of magical energy to work. Of these, some talents take this energy in the form of Karma Points, as described above. Talents that cause Strain drain small doses of your character's life energy for their power. Strain is the number of Damage Points your character takes each time he or she uses the talent. A character may take Strain damage multiple times for a single talent in a single round.

Your character always takes full, unmodified damage from Strain. Armor and other defensive measures do not protect against Strain damage.

If a talent causes Strain and is a Discipline talent for your character's Discipline (see above), your character still takes Strain even if he spends a Karma Point to power the talent.

EARTHDAWN TALENTS

ABATE CURSE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Abate Curse talent allows a character to temporarily nullify any curses on a weapon so that someone can handle the weapon without suffering the effects of the curse. The character must use Abate Curse on the weapon before touching it, however. The character must be within 3 yards of the weapon to use Abate Curse, and he must remain within that distance while using the talent or the effect ends. To use this talent, make an Abate Curse Test against the weapon's Spell Defense. A successful test temporarily negates the curse. Abate Curse lasts a number of hours equal to the result of the test. Abate Curse cannot be used to help a character cursed by a weapon. See **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 233, for more on curses.

ACROBATIC STRIKE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Characters use the Acrobatic Strike talent to make impossibly graceful, leaping, spinning attacks. In combat situations, use Acrobatic Strike to substitute for a character's Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat Test. Add the ranks of Acrobatic Strike to the character's Physical Defense Rating for the rest of the Combat Round. If the character does not have the Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat talent, they may not use Acrobatic Strike.

AIR DANCE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Air Dance talent allows a character to walk on air, about an inch above the ground. Air Dance does not allow a character to stand suspended in midair, and can only be used during Combat. Air Dance makes it possible for a character to perform quick, gliding movements and rapid attacks. Roll the Air Dance Talent dice in place of the character's normal Initiative dice for that round (see **Initiative** in **Combat**, p. 217). Initiative penalties from armor and shields still apply. Air Dance may be used in the same round as other attack talents. If the Air Dance result equals at least twice an opponent's Initiative, the character using the talent can make an extra attack that round following his opponent's attack.

AIR SAILING

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Air Sailing is the art of maneuvering the great flying ships used by Sky Raiders and Air Sailors. With this talent, a character knows how to work the rigging, tiller, or oars of the ships. Any character who wishes to join a crew must have at least Rank 1 Air Sailing Talent. Command ranks require higher ability: a mate must have at least Rank 4, a captain at least Rank 7, and a navigator at least Rank 8. Not all ships have navigators.

Characters use Air Sailing for the rowing that propels airships through the sky. To help row an airship, a character must roll a 4 on an Air Sailing Test. An above-average success will permit the character to take the place of more than one rower: a Good success counts as 2 rowers. An Excellent success means the character can replace 3 rowers. An Extraordinary success counts as 4 rowers.

For a ship to stay airborne, at least one-fourth of its rowers must make successful Air Sailing Tests. If at least half the rowers make successful tests, the ship can maneuver at its current altitude, dive, or climb slowly in a straight line. If three-fourths of the rowers are successful, the ship can speed up, maneuver while climbing, or perform aerobatics. A ship with a rowing crew of 20 needs at least 5 rowers to succeed at Air Sailing Tests in order to stay afloat. This might also be an equivalent number, such as 2 rowers, 1 of whom achieved an Extraordinary success on the Air Sailing Test (thereby replacing 4 rowers).

ANIMAL BOND

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Animal Bond talent creates a bond of trust between an animal and an adept. The adept makes an Animal Bond Test against either the animal's Social or Spell Defense, whichever is higher.

After the Beastmaster has successfully used this talent one time, the animal takes a neutral attitude ("live and let live") toward him or her. A second successful use, which may only be done after the character has worked with the animal for at least 40 hours, makes the animal friendly enough to the character that he will play with the character. The character cannot further attach the animal to him until he improves his Animal Bond talent to at least Rank 4. Once a character has Animal Bond at Rank 4 or more, he can begin to train the animal. When training becomes possible, a successful Animal Bond Test makes the animal loyal to the character as long as the character remains loyal to the animal. The animal willingly takes risks for the character and expects appropriate rewards for doing so (This is often more easily accomplished than for human friends. All a dog really wants is lots of affection and enough food). A loyal animal will accompany a character on adventures if the character so desires. Statistics for common animals can be found in the **Creatures** chapter, p. 312.

ANIMAL POSSESSION

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Animal Possession talent allows a character to place his or her spirit into the body of an animal. This talent requires the character to touch the animal. Make an Animal Possession Test against the Willpower step of the animal. If the character makes a successful Animal Possession Test, his spirit takes possession of the animal's body and the animal's spirit goes into the character's body. The character now controls the animal's body, but not vice versa. While using Animal Possession, the character's physical form slumps into a coma-like state. He retains his own intelligence while in the animal body, but cannot perform any actions of which the animal is not normally capable.

The character's control lasts for a number of hours equal to his Animal Possession rank or until the animal and character touch again. When the possession ends or the animal and character touch, both spirits return to their proper bodies. If either the animal's or the character's body is killed, the spirits and bodies will both die.

ANIMAL TRAINING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Animal Training talent allows a character to train animals to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead for creatures," "smell that rock," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." Each command requires a separate, successful use of Animal Training. At least 40 hours must pass between Animal Training Tests, during which time the character must treat the animal well. The character makes an Animal Training Test against either the creature's Social or Spell Defense, whichever is higher. A successful test means the animal understands and obeys the command given by the character; the animal will not obey that same command given by any other character. The effects of Animal Training last for a number of months equal to the character's rank. Repeated uses of the Animal Training Talent can extend the duration of the effect (somewhat like a refresher course).

ANTICIPATE BLOW

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Anticipate Blow talent allows a character to better defend against an incoming melee, missile, throwing or unarmed attack. The

character must have a higher Initiative in order to use Anticipate Blow against an attacking opponent. A character may use Anticipate Blow in the same round that he makes an Attack Test, but not in the same round as Air Dance. Before making an Attack Test, the character makes an Anticipate Blow Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the character adds his talent rank to both his Physical Defense Rating and to the result of the Attack Test.

Taranya has Rank 3 Anticipate Blow Talent. Using the talent successfully adds 3 to her Physical Defense Rating for that round as well as +3 to the result of her Attack Test. Anticipate Blow allows her to add 3 to this result, increasing her chance of hitting her opponent (see ***Combat****, p. 219).*

ARCANE MUTTERINGS

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None



The Arcane Mutterings talent allows a character to confuse others by uttering dire and largely incomprehensible warnings. Arcane Mutterings has no effect when used against targets engaged in combat. The character makes an Arcane Mutterings Test against the target's Social Defense. If the character is attempting to use the talent against more than one character, he makes the test against the highest Social Defense Rating among the group, +1 for each additional character. That becomes the Difficulty Number for the test. On a Good success or better, the target characters become confused and feel a slight unease. They will take no hostile action while under the effects of Arcane Mutterings as long as no one takes hostile action against them. The effect of Arcane Mutterings lasts a number of rounds equal to the character's Arcane Mutterings Rank. During this time, the character must continually "mutter" or else the effect ends. While suffering from the effects of Arcane Mutterings, the characters are disheartened, which makes them easier to affect using other social talents. If other characters are also attempting to overcome the Social Defense of the targets, add a bonus equal to the wizard's rank in Arcane Mutterings to any tests he makes for social interaction.

ASTRAL SIGHT

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Astral Sight talent allows a character to see into the astral plane. The character must roll at least a 6 on an Astral Sight Test to see into the astral plane. Compare the result of that test to determine the Spell Defense Ratings of any other characters or objects within range. Astral Sight will allow him or her to see all objects and characters with a Spell Defense Rating equal to or less than the Astral Sight Test result. A character or object with a Spell Defense greater than the test result remains invisible to your character. Astral Sight has a range of the character's Astral Sight Rank x 10 yards. The character cannot see anything outside that range. Astral Sight lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Astral Sight. The character takes Strain each time he or she attempts to use the talent.

AVOID BLOW

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Avoid Blow talent allows a character to dodge melee, missile, throwing, and unarmed attacks directed at him in combat at the last minute. Any time an opponent attacks a character with the Avoid Blow talent, the attacked individual makes an Avoid Blow Test to dodge the blow before it causes damage. If he rolls a result equal to or higher than that of the opponent's Attack Test, the target avoids the blow. This means that he or she saw the attack coming and dodged out of the way at the last minute. A character may use Avoid Blow once per every attack directed at him per round. Your character cannot use the Avoid Blow Talent to dodge blindside attacks, however. A character who attempts and fails to use Avoid Blow is knocked down, whether or not the blow would normally have done so (see **Make Knockdown Test** in **Combat**, p. 220). Avoid Blow can be used in the same round as an Attack Test.

Poorht, windling Thief, has a Physical Defense Rating of 8. The jehuthra attacking him rolls a 12 on the Attack Test, which is higher than Poorht's Physical Defense of 8. The blow would normally have landed, but Poorht sees it coming and decides to use his Avoid Blow talent. He rolls a 12, just enough for Poorht to dodge and take no damage.

BANK SHOT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Bank Shot talent allows a character to ricochet missile and thrown weapons off obstacles on the way to their target. A character need not have line of sight to the target in the round during which he

uses Bank Shot, but must have had line of sight to the target during his last action. The character points out the objects off which he intends to ricochet his shots, then uses his Bank Shot step to make the Attack Test. If successful, his shot makes a number of banks equals to the character's rank in Bank Shot. A failed Attack Test using Bank Shot means the missile flies completely off target. A bank shot destroys arrows and bolts used to make the shot. Though the bank shot nicks and scratches daggers and other throwing weapons, these remain usable.

BATTLE BELLOW

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Battle Bellow talent allows a character to intimidate her foes en masse. The character makes a Battle Bellow test against the highest Social Defense in the group she is attempting to intimidate, modified by the number of people in the group. Add 1 to the difficulty number for every person after the first. A good success or better reduces all of the targets' steps by the character's rank in Battle Bellow for 1 round. The effects of Battle Bellow last until the end of the round after Battle Bellow is used. A character may only be affected by one Battle Bellow at a time. Also, a character may be affected by a Battle Shout and a Battle Bellow at the same time.

A character can also use Battle Bellow to inspire her companions. If the character rolls an Excellent success or better in the Battle Bellow Test, it also adds a positive modifier to any Battle Shout Tests by all friendly characters within a distance of the Battle Bellow Rank x 10 yards of the character. The bonus is equal to the character's Battle Bellow Rank; a Rank 3 Battle Bellow, for example, adds 3 steps to all Battle Shout Tests.



BATTLE SHOUT

Step: Rank + Charisma
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Battle Shout talent allows a character to intimidate a foe. The character makes a Battle Shout Test against the Social Defense of the target character. The character must be involved in combat or threatening to engage in combat in order to use Battle Shout. Battle Shout may be used in the same round as an Attack Test. The character must roll a Good success or better for Battle Shout to succeed. A successful test reduces all the target's steps by a number equal to the character's Battle Shout Rank for a period of 1 round. A Rank 4 Battle Shout, for example, would reduce the steps for all the opponents' tests by 4 Steps. A character may be affected by only one Battle Shout at a time. The effects of Battle Shout last until the end of the turn after Battle Shout is used.

BLOOD SHARE

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Blood Share talent allows a character to transfer damage between his mount and himself. First, the character makes a small cut somewhere on himself and on his mount, then touches the two cuts together. Then he makes a Blood Share Test. The result is the number of Damage Points that can be transferred between himself and his mount. Depending on the situation, the character might want to transfer the full number of Damage Points or transfer only a portion. Again, depending on the situation, he will transfer the damage either from his mount to himself or vice versa. For example, a character might decide to transfer only 7 Damage Points on a test result of 10, or he might choose to use the whole number. Transferring only 7 points from his mount to himself, for example, would reduce the mount's damage by only 7 points, not the full 10. Transferred damage never causes a Wound, but if the transferred damage sends either the character's or the mount's (whichever is taking the transfer of damage) Current Damage higher than his Death Rating, the affected character or mount still dies.

The Blood Share talent normally does not require the character to spend Karma, but if a Cavalryman wants to use this talent on another willing character, he can do so by spending 1 Karma Point. Roll the Karma dice at the same time as the Blood Share Test is made, as normal. Using Blood Share in this way requires that deep trust exist between the character and his volunteering comrade. Members of the Cavalryman Discipline almost universally honor this trust, and have coined the term "blood betrayer" to refer to anyone who uses Blood Share to transfer so much damage to another character that the second character dies. Other Cavalrymen shun blood betrayers.

BOOK MEMORY

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Book Memory talent allows a character to memorize knowledge from a book. The character need make only one Book

Memory Test per book, using the book's Spell Defense as the Difficulty Number. The Spell Defense of most grimoires is at least equal to the Casting Difficulty of the highest-ranking spell it contains. For the purposes of using Book Memory, one grimoire equals one book. Normal books have a Spell Defense of 5 against memorization.

The character can memorize a number of pages per round equal to his Book Memory Rank. The character must memorize the entire book at one sitting. If he or she performs any other action while memorizing, the character's concentration breaks and the memorization is lost. The character need not be able to read the language to memorize a book.

The knowledge of a memorized book stays in the character's memory for a year and a day before fading. The maximum number of books the character can hold in memory at any one time equals the character's Book Memory Rank. A character may voluntarily discard memorized knowledge in order to memorize new knowledge.

BORROW SENSE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Using the Borrow Sense talent, a character temporarily takes one of an animal's five senses of touch, taste, hearing, smell, or sight for use as his own. The character adds the animal's Perception step to his own for tests using the borrowed sense. The animal loses that sense for the duration of that borrowing. For this reason, only animals loyal to the character or those under the effect of a spell or the Dominate Beast talent will submit to Borrow Sense.

The Beastmaster makes a Borrow Sense Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the character tries to take a sense from an unwilling animal, increase the creature's Spell Defense by 5. Successful use of Borrow Sense earns the character all the benefits of the borrowed sense. The effect lasts a number of minutes equal to the character's Borrow Sense Rank.

CALL ARROW

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Call Arrow talent allows a character to retrieve fired arrows by spending 1 round to call back arrows he has fired. The talent works on any arrows the character fired that remain within 100 yards of him or her. The called arrows fly toward the character, tumbling and rotating into proper position, then drop into the quiver. Call Arrow only retrieves the arrows; the character cannot also tie or attach the called arrows to another object in an attempt to retrieve that object. Call Arrow also extracts arrows from targets and returns them to the character. To use this talent, the character makes a Call Arrow Test; the result is the maximum number of arrows returned. If the character fired fewer arrows than that number, he or she simply gets back all the arrows she fired.

CAT'S PAW

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Cat's Paw talent permits a character to move quietly. Make a Cat's Paw Test, then use the result as the Difficulty Number for tests by anyone else attempting to hear the character. Because Cat's Paw makes a target even harder to hear than normal, a detecting character must roll a Good success or better to discern a character using the Cat's Paw. In addition, the Cat's Paw talent reduces falling damage by the character's rank in Cat's Paw.

CHARGE

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Charge talent increases the damage of a mounted attack (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 223). The attacker makes a full move riding towards the target to build momentum in the same round as the Charge Attack. The magic fueling the talent increases the damage for any type of physical attack, be it by spear, club, sword, fist, and so on. Use the Charge step in place of the Strength step to make the Damage Test. Add the Charge steps to the Strength dice of the rider or the mount, whichever is greater. The character also adds his rank in Charge to his Strength Test to remain mounted after the Charge (see **Combat**, p. 223). Cavalryman adepts may add Karma to this roll.

CLAW FRENZY

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1 Per Attack

Using the Claw Frenzy talent, a character can make more effective, and possibly, multiple attacks using the Claw Shape talent. When using Claw Frenzy to attack with Claw Shape, the character uses the Claw Frenzy talent instead of Unarmed Combat.

In one round, a character may attack using Claw Shape a number of times equal to his rank in Claw Frenzy. Before he begins his attack, the character must declare how many attacks he wishes to make. The character may spend Karma on each attack using Claw Frenzy, but must stop making attacks after the first one misses. The character then takes strain equal to the number of attacks he declared at the beginning of his barrage.

CLAW SHAPE

Step: Rank + Strength Step + 3
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Claw Shape talent changes a character's dominant hand into a fearsome clawed weapon. The character uses his Unarmed Combat talent or skill to make Attack Tests with Claw Shape. Make the Damage Test using the Claw Shape step, plus the required Karma dice. If using Claw Shape with Claw Frenzy, the character may use a Karma Point for each Damage Test. Claw Shape lasts until it does damage, then immediately fades away.

CLIMBING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Climbing talent allows a character to climb up the sides of various surfaces and objects. A character makes a Climbing Test against the climb's difficulty, a number determined by the gamemaster (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 230). If the result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number, the character climbs successfully. A character can climb at a rate of (3 + Climbing Rank) yards per round, i.e., a character with Rank 2 Climbing Talent could climb 5 yards a round. Climbing takes the place of a character's Combat Movement and may be performed twice as a Full Movement.

COBRA STRIKE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Cobra Strike talent allows a character to make incredibly quick attacks in the first round of combat. Cobra Strike only works for the first round of combat against any one opponent. Make a Cobra Strike Test instead of a standard Initiative Test for that one round. The magic powering the Cobra Strike Talent overcomes Initiative modifiers based on armor or shields. Ignore any applicable Initiative step decreases when using Cobra Strike. Cobra Strike can be used in the same round as an Attack Test. A character may also add a number of steps equal to his or her rank in Cobra Strike talent to one Attack Test during the round in which it is used. Cobra Strike cannot be used with other talents that augment Initiative.

COLD PURIFY

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Cold Purify talent stops the effects of poison. Using this talent requires access to ice, snow, or chilled water. The character packs the ice (or cold material) around a poisoned character's wound. After one minute of concentration, the character makes a Cold Purify Test against the poison's step number. A successful test stops the effect of the poison, and the victim recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Cold Purify result and the poison step number. The Cold Purify Talent only heals damage inflicted by poison.

CONCEAL WEAPON

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

A character can use the Conceal Weapon talent to use sleight of hand and illusion to hide weapons somewhere on his or her body. The character makes a Conceal Weapon Test and subtracts the size of the weapon (see the **Goods and Services Table**, p. 211) from the result. That number becomes the Difficulty Number for tests by any character attempting to detect the weapon. The concealment lasts for 24 hours, but ends immediately if someone discovers the weapon or if the character removes the weapon from its hiding place.

As long as the weapon remains concealed, use of this talent gives the character an Initiative bonus equal to his rank in Conceal Weapon when drawing and striking with a concealed weapon.

CREATURE ANALYSIS

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Creature Analysis talent allows a character to use scholarship and divination magic to gain information about a creature he is observing. If the character makes a successful test against the creature's Spell Defense Rating, he may ask the gamemaster one specific question about the creature. For the purposes of this talent, the player can ask a specific question that would reveal one of the creature's game statistics or abilities. The gamemaster should, however, cheerfully disallow questions comparing more than one statistic, such as "Is this beast a better fighter than I am?" or "Which is higher, its Physical Defense or Spell Defense?"

CRUSHING BLOW

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Crushing Blow talent is a fearsome attack used to inflict maximum damage. When a character uses Crushing Blow against an opponent, he uses his Crushing Blow step instead of his Strength step for the Damage Test. The required Karma die is spent on this Damage Test. The character must use Battle Shout or Battle Bellow in the same round against the target of the Crushing Blow. If the Battle Shout or Battle Bellow Test succeeds, add 3 steps to the step of the Damage Test. If the Battle Shout or Battle Bellow Test fails, the opponent takes standard Crushing Blow damage.

DEAD FALL

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Dead Fall talent to feign death. As the character collapses, he makes a Dead Fall Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character who sees him. If the test succeeds, he uses minor illusion magic to exaggerate the appearance of any wound, poison, or disease effect to persuade observers that he is really dead. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Dead Fall. The Dead Fall talent may be used repeatedly by making additional Talent Tests to maintain the illusion each time the duration of the talent ends. If the character's Dead Fall Test is not successful, at least one observer realizes that the character is faking.

DETECT TRAP

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Detect Trap talent allows a character to uncover hidden traps, both mechanical and magical. The average Difficulty Number for mechanical traps is 5, though some may be as high as 9. The Difficulty Number for magical traps is equal to the trap's Spell Defense. A successful

Detect Trap Test enables the character to notice some aspect of the trap, usually the trigger. A better-than-Average success level provides the character with additional information about the trap. On a Good success, the character can pinpoint the trap's trigger and figure out how to avoid setting it off. An Excellent success tells the character what type of effect (i.e., crushing, smashing, poison, and so on) the trap uses. An Extraordinary success gives the character a step bonus equal to the character's rank in Detect Trap when disarming the trap. The character adds the bonus to any tests he or she makes when attempting to disarm the trap.

DETECT WEAPON

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Detect Weapon talent allows a character to notice hidden weapons, whether concealed by normal or magical means. The character makes a Detect Weapon Test against the weapon's Concealment Difficulty Number (see **Conceal Weapon**, p. 91). With a successful test, the character spots the weapon and knows its type. This eliminates the initiative bonus that is granted by Conceal Weapon. The character cannot detect a weapon's magical abilities using this talent. Once the character detects a weapon, he becomes alert to possible treachery. This alertness lasts for a number of minutes equal to the result of the Detect Weapon Test. If the character carrying the detected weapon tries to initiate combat, the alerted character has a first-round Initiative step bonus equal to his rank in Detect Weapon.

DIRECTION ARROW

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 4

Using the Direction Arrow talent, a character can locate another character or an object. The character must first possess a piece of clothing or a piece of wall from a building or something else directly connected to the person or object he seeks. The character fires an arrow straight up into the air. The arrow rises to its full height, then plummets to the earth. When it hits the ground, it shatters and sparks into a flaming arrow 1 yard long.

The character makes a Direction Arrow Test against the Spell Defense of the person or object being sought. If the test succeeds, the arrow points in the right direction. Each success level beyond Average reduces the amount of Strain the character takes when using this talent. For example, a Good success reduces the Strain to 3 points, an Excellent success reduces the Strain to 2 points, and so on. The person or object must be within a number of miles equal to the character's rank in Direction Arrow for the talent to work. Thus, a character with Rank 4 Direction Arrow could look for a person who is up to 4 miles away.

DISARM

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Disarm talent uses a combination of flashing swordplay and instinctive levitation magic to help a character to knock the weapon from an opponent's hand. After first declaring that he intends to use the Disarm talent, the character makes his Attack Test using the Disarm talent step. A successful result sends the weapon spinning away from the opponent in the direction the Disarming character chooses. Make a Damage Test for the number of feet the weapon flies. The Disarm talent does not effect any weapon that is part of the defender, such as an animal's claws.

DISARM TRAP

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

Characters with the Disarm Trap talent use deduction, dexterity, and a magical touch to render traps inoperative. The character makes a Talent Test against the trap's Difficulty Number (determined by the gamemaster when creating the trap; see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 235, for information about traps). A successful result disables the trap's trigger, preventing it from going off.

DISGUISE SELF

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Disguise Self talent allows a character to use illusion magic to disguise herself as any human-like being, within the limits of the talent. The disguised being can weigh up to twice the character's weight, but not less than half. The character may not vary the height, width, or length of any part of her body by more than 25 percent. For example, a human character trying to disguise herself as a t'skrang would have an awfully short tail.

The character makes a Disguise Self Test. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the result of the Disguise Self Test or until the character chooses to drop the disguise. The result is also the Difficulty Number to see through the illusion.

DOMINATE BEAST

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Dominate Beast talent allows a character to temporarily subdue and control an animal, wild or trained. The character must have eye contact with the animal and make a Dominate Beast Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, he can establish dominance over the animal for a number of minutes equal to his or her rank in Dominate Beast. An animal under the effect of Dominate Beast will not take any hostile action against the character using the talent. The character may verbally command the creature to perform one simple task that requires less time than the duration of Dominate Beast. The task cannot pose more danger to the animal than to the character.

DOWN STRIKE

Step: Rank + Strength Step + 3
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Down Strike talent allows a character to inflict greater-than-normal damage on a target in combat. The character's waist must be at least 6 feet above the head of his opponent to use Down Strike. The

character must scream like a bird of prey as he drops onto his target. If he hits his opponent, the Down Strike step substitutes for the Strength step in the Damage Test, causing the blow to inflict extra damage.

DURABILITY

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Each rank of the Durability talent permanently increases a character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings. The character's Discipline determines the amount of this increase. The list below gives each Discipline and the appropriate increase per Durability Rank listed as two numbers separated by a slash. The number to the left of the slash represents the increase to the character's Death Rating. The number to the right is the increase to the character's Unconsciousness Rating.

Discipline	Durability Increase
Air Sailor	6/5
Archer	6/5
Beastmaster	7/6
Cavalryman	7/6
Elementalist	4/3
Illusionist	4/3
Nethermancer	4/3
Scout	6/5
Sky Raider	8/6
Swordmaster	7/6
Thief	5/4
Troubadour	6/5
Warrior	9/7
Weaponsmith	6/5
Wizard	4/3

List this talent on the character record sheet as "Discipline Name" Durability (i.e., Archer Durability, Sky Raider Durability, and so on).

A player assigns his Archer character Rank 3 Durability. According to the list, this will increase an Archer's Death Rating by 6 points per rank of Archer Durability and his Unconsciousness Rating by 5 points per rank. This character permanently adds 18 points to his Death Rating and 15 points to his Unconsciousness Rating.

DURABILITY (MOUNT)

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Durability (Mount) talent is a variation of the Durability talent (see above). Each rank of Durability (Mount) increases a mount's Death Rating by 5 and its Unconsciousness Rating by 4. A character may transfer this talent from one mount to another, but only one mount at a time may benefit. The Durability (Mount) Talent only works for living mounts, not mechanical, undead, or spirit mounts.

EAGLE EYE

Step: Rank + Perception
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Eagle Eye talent to aim at distant targets. If the character makes a successful test against the Spell Defense of the target, Eagle Eye will enable him to fire at the target as if it were at close range, ignoring any range modifier penalties that would normally apply. Each use of the Eagle Eye talent lasts a number of rounds equal to the character's talent rank. The talent takes effect immediately after the successful Eagle Eye Test. The Eagle Eye talent only gives a character a better chance of hitting a target; it does not actually increase the range of missile weapons.

EARTH SKIN

Step: Rank
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Earth Skin talent makes a character much more resistant to damage. Earth Skin requires one of the character's Recovery Tests each day it is used. The character can only use this talent once per day, and must have ranks in the Wood Skin talent, p. 113, in order to use Earth Skin. The character's rank in Earth Skin may not exceed his or her rank in Wood Skin. The character must use the Wood Skin talent on the same day he uses Earth Skin. Earth Skin lasts for a full 24 hours, until Wood Skin wears off, or until the character ends the effect.

Earth Skin adds to the effectiveness of a character's Wood Skin talent, making the character's skin even tougher. Earth Skin allows the character to take even more damage before dying. Its primary magic increases the character's Spell Defense. As with Wood Skin, the character's skin still appears bark-like or wood-like, but with veins the color of dark earth.

The character's Spell Defense and Death Ratings increase by a number equal to his rank in Earth Skin.

ELEMENTAL HOLD

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Elemental Hold talent allows a character to prevent an elemental from moving or taking any action other than communicating. The character must possess the Elemental Tongues talent and be able to speak the elemental's language to use this talent. The elemental must be within 40 yards of the character. The character boldly faces the elemental and orders it to halt, then makes a Talent Test against the Spell Defense of the elemental. A successful test holds the elemental for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Elemental Hold. The character must concentrate to hold the elemental; he cannot move, cast spells, or take any action other than communication.

ELEMENTAL TONGUES

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Elemental Tongues talent allows a character to speak the languages of air, earth, fire, and water—the four elemental tongues.

Characters cannot communicate with wood or plant elementals using this talent, because it requires a special spell to unravel their peculiar tongue. Each rank in Elemental Tongues gives the speaker an additional elemental language. Rank 1 Elemental Tongues allows the character to speak one elemental language of his choice. At Rank 4, he can speak all four basic elemental languages. When speaking the language, the character makes a Talent Test against the Spell Defense of the elemental. The success level determines how well the character communicates with the elemental. On an Average or Good success, the elemental basically understands what the character is talking about, but the character is not able to ask complex questions or make requests. An Excellent or better success means the elemental completely understands the character. The character can discuss complex topics with the elemental and ask it detailed questions.

EMOTION SONG

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Emotion Song talent uses a character's powerful voice to sing songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, and joy. The audience directs the basic emotion at the subject of the song; if the character sings about a king, the audience feels the emotion about the king.

The character makes a Talent Test against the highest Social Defense among the members of the audience. The success level determines how many members of the audience the character affects. An Average success indicates that one-quarter of the audience is affected by the song. A Good success affects half the audience, an Excellent success affects three-quarters, and an Extraordinary success means the entire audience is affected by the song.



Consecutive uses of Emotion Song create a cumulative effect. For example, two consecutive Average successes have the same effect as one Good success, two Good successes create the same effect as one Excellent success, and so on.

The effects of the song last a number of days equal to the character's rank in Emotion Song. During this time, affected characters are more susceptible to suggestions related to the emotion of the song. Characters making such suggestions add 1 step to any Interaction Tests. Characters making suggestions counter to the Emotion Song suffer a -1 step to Interaction Tests. See **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 332, for information about Interaction Tests.

If a character fails an Emotion Song Test, the crowd has grown weary of the performance. The character may not use Emotion Song against members of that crowd until the following morning.

EMPATHIC COMMAND

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Empathic Command talent allows a character to command a mount through emotion and mental images. The character need not speak the commands, but must be in contact with the mount to use Empathic Command. The talent will not affect any other animal except his mount. A mount uses the character's Empathic Command step instead of its own Willpower step when making a Willpower Test to resist fear, charm, or spells directed at the mount or its rider.

EMPATHIC SENSE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Empathic Sense talent allows a character to sense the feelings or emotions of another character. In order to use Empathic Sense, the character must "attune" the talent to a target character. This attuning remains in effect for a year and a day, or until the character changes the attunement. A character may attune to one character per rank of Empathic Sense. For example, a character with Rank 4 Empathic Sense could attune to up to four characters. To attune with a target character, the character must spend three minutes of quiet meditation with that character.

To use Empathic Sense, the character makes an Empathic Sense Test against the Spell Defense of the attuned target character to sense emotions or feelings. Empathic Sense also gives a character a vague sense of the location of an attuned character, within a 90-degree arc, but does not reveal distance. Empathic Sense is effective up to a range of miles equal to the character's Empathic Sense Rank.

ENCORE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The Encore talent allows a character to make a second social attack in a round. For the second attack, the character makes a Encore Test for any of the social attacks listed below. The Encore talent can only be used if the character's first action was one of the Social attacks listed below. The character may not use talents or skills to make a melee,

missile, thrown, or unarmed attack this round. The step dice used for the second social attack is the step dice for Encore. For example, if the character had a Charisma step of 7, a Rank 6 Taunt, and a Rank 3 Encore, they would roll Step 10 (7 + 3) for their second Taunt, instead of Step 13 (7 + 6).

Arcane Mutterings
Engaging Banter
Frighten
Mind Wave
Steely Stare
Taunt

ENDURE COLD

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Endure Cold talent allows characters to withstand damage caused by ice or cold temperatures. Each time a character takes freezing or cold damage, the character should immediately make an Endure Cold Test. A successful test result immediately reduces the damage by that amount, up to the amount of cold damage taken. Reduce the damage before determining Wounds, unconsciousness, or death.

Cedric takes 9 points of cold damage from a Blizzard Sphere spell. His player rolls an 11 on an Endure Cold Test, removing all 9 points of damage, and so Cedric takes no damage from Blizzard Sphere. The remaining 2 points worth of the Endure Cold talent cannot be used to reduce any other damage Cedric may have taken.

A character can use Endure Cold any number of times to resist the effects of exposure, as well as a number of times each day equal to his talent rank to resist other sources of cold. For example, a character with Rank 4 Endure Cold could use the talent 4 times per day to resist the Ice Spear spell (see **Spell Magic**, p. 158).

ENGAGING BANTER

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Engaging Banter talent allows a character to use his charming style and a touch of magical suggestion to distract an opponent, even during combat. The target character must be able to understand what the character is saying in order for the talent to work. The character makes an Engaging Banter Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test is successful, the target and the character spend time in witty, idle chatter. The banter lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Engaging Banter. During this time, the target is distracted, suffering a -1 step to all tests and reducing all combat ratings (Physical Defense, Mental Defense, and Social Defense) by -1. The character using Engaging Banter may end the banter any time, but this will also end the effect.

The talent can be used against targets under attack, but a successful attack that causes a Wound negates the effect of Engaging Banter, making the target character immune to further Engaging Banter for the next 24 hours.

ENHANCED MATRIX

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Magicians learn the Enhanced Matrix talent to make better use of spells requiring threads. An Enhanced Matrix holds the pattern of a spell. Unlike a regular spell matrix, an Enhanced Matrix also holds one spell thread as well as the spell pattern. The magician weaves this thread when he attunes the Enhanced Matrix. This allows him to cast the spell without weaving the held thread. An Enhanced Matrix must be acquired specifically for a particular kind of magic, whether it be Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry. That is then the only kind of spell that can be stored in the matrix.

EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

A character uses the Evidence Analysis talent to examine physical evidence. This examination consists of equal parts observation, logic, and divination. A character might be able to examine a bed, for example, and determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might be able to identify a weapon as a murder weapon. As a general rule, Evidence Analysis can only answer questions regarding what happened to an object or place or how something happened to an object or place. The character makes an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person responsible for the physical evidence. In the above example, he would use the Spell Defense of the person who had slept in the bed. If the activity occurred within the previous 24 hours, the character using the talent can get a general impression of when the event happened (i.e., morning, afternoon, or evening). When using the Evidence Analysis talent to evaluate evidence more than 1 day old, add 1 to the target's Spell Defense for the Difficulty Number. This talent cannot help the character answer the questions of "who" or "why."



FALSE SIGHT

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The False Sight talent allows a character to intensify his illusions, making them more difficult for observing characters to penetrate. A character can use False Sight only on illusions he creates himself, not on those cast by other characters. The character using this talent must be able to see his target for False Sight to work. The character makes a

Talent Test against the target's Spell Defense. If using False Sight against multiple targets, make a test against the highest Spell Defense in the group +1 for each additional target character. A successful test result increases the Difficulty Number for characters attempting to disbelieve or dispel the illusion by a number of points equal to the character's rank in False Sight. This increase only applies to the actions of the target character, and it lasts for a number of minutes equal to the character's rank in False Sight.

FAST HAND

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Fast Hand talent lets a character move items from one place to another or to switch items between one character and another without being observed. All target items and characters must be within 2 yards of the character using the talent. The target items must measure 6 inches or less along their longest dimension. For his Talent Test, the character adds the number of items switched to the highest Spell Defense among his targets to find the Difficulty Number.

Callera wants to switch the purses of 3 merchants, so that each merchant ends up with another merchant's purse. The merchants have Spell Defenses of 4, 6, and 5, respectively. The highest is 6, + 3 for the number of items being switched, resulting in a Difficulty Number of 9.

FEARSOME CHARGE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Fearsome Charge talent allows a character to intimidate an opponent when making a charging attack. Fearsome Charge can also make opponents flee in fear. Only a mounted character may use Fearsome Charge. A character using the talent transforms when he is charging. His eyes grow larger or glow, his teeth become pointed or the canines become longer, and his hair stands away from his head in a wild tangle.



The character makes a Fearsome Charge Test against the Social Defense of his opponent. On an Average success, the opponent is frozen with fear and cannot move. On a Good success or better, the opponent flees at his fastest movement rate. The Fearsome Charge talent may work against multiple opponents who see the charge. When making a test to affect multiple targets, use the highest Social Defense of the opponents that the character is trying to affect as the Difficulty Number. Add 1 to this Difficulty Number for each additional person beyond one.

An opponent affected by Fearsome Charge may overcome its effects on any subsequent round. The opponent must make a Willpower (or other fear-resisting talent) Test against the character's Fearsome Charge step number. A successful test means the opponent overcomes his fear in that round. The maximum duration for the effects of Fearsome Charge is equal to the character's Fearsome Charge rank in rounds.

FIREBLOOD

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Fireblood talent allows the character to make one of his available Recovery Tests in the middle of a Combat Round, substituting the Fireblood step for his Toughness step in the test. The character cannot make an attack in the same round he uses the Fireblood talent, but he may still be engaged on the field of battle. Fireblood makes the blood oozing from a character's scratches, cuts, and wounds bubble and hiss; during the round in which Fireblood is used, the blood steams, cleaning and partially healing the character's damage.

FIRE HEAL

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Fire Heal talent poses certain risks for low-Circle magicians, who generally begin with relatively low Wound Thresholds and Death Ratings. Successful use of the Fire Heal talent grants a character extra Recovery Tests. A failed Fire Heal Test burns the character. To use the Fire Heal talent, the character must build an open fire large enough to completely engulf him or her, and step into it.

The character declares how many extra Recovery Tests he is attempting to gain with this talent. Fire Heal requires 30 minutes for each additional Recovery Test the character desires. He or she must attempt to gain at least 2 Recovery Tests. The character makes a Fire Heal Test using a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster as follows: the gamemaster rolls 1D6 for each Recovery Test the character attempts to gain. If the character's Fire Heal Test is equal to or higher than the gamemaster's dice roll for the fire, the character earns the Recovery Tests and makes them normally. The Recovery Tests remain available for 24 hours after the successful Fire Heal Test. If the gamemaster's dice result is greater, the character automatically takes a Wound, plus a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Fire Attack Test and the Fire Heal Test. This damage can result in further Wounds.

The Fire Heal talent requires that the character be in full contact with the elemental power of fire. If a spell or item protects the character from fire, the Fire Heal Talent has no effect.

FIRST IMPRESSION

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The First Impression talent helps a character to favorably impress characters he or she has just met. The character makes a First Impression Test against the target's Social Defense. A successful First Impression Test gains the character a bonus equal to his rank in First Impression for all Charisma Tests against that character. For example, a character with Rank 3 First Impression adds a 3 step bonus to all Charisma Tests made against a favorably impressed character. The effects of First Impression last a number of days equal to the amount by which the First Impression Test exceeded the target's Social Defense. The First Impression talent may only be used once against any one character.

FLAME ARROW

Step: Rank + Willpower Step + 3
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

The Flame Arrow talent allows a character to create a flaming arrow from a normal one, transforming his arrow into a missile of fire. This process destroys the arrow. When the character is wielding a normal missile weapon, use the Flame Arrow step number when making the Damage Test. When using a missile weapon to which he has threads attached, a character may add his rank in Flame Arrow to the Damage step of the thread weapon. In both cases, add the Karma Poinr to the Damage Test.



FORGE ARMOR

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

With the Forge Armor talent, a character can improve the Armor Rating of a set of armor. To use this talent, the character must spend a total of 40 hours of work within 1 month working on the armor. At the end of that time, he makes a Forge Armor Test against the weapon's Armor Rating plus its Mystic Armor Rating (see **Goods and Services**, p. 199). Hide armor with an Armor Rating of 5 and a Mystic Armor Rating of 1, for example, would have a Difficulty Number of 6. If the test is successful, increase the Armor Rating of the armor by +1. In the case of the above hide armor, the Armor Rating would increase to Step 6. The Mystic Armor Rating remains unchanged. The Armor Rating on a set of armor may not be increased in this fashion more times than the value of its natural Armor Rating. Over time, the magic causing the bonus will fade away. The bonus will last a number of months equal to the character's rank in Forge Armor at the time of the work. Use of the Forge Armor talent requires a hammer, anvil, tongs, and fire.

Characters with this talent often charge others for the time they spend using it. The base rate to Forge a set of armor is 100 x a number of silver pieces equal to the character's talent rank per +1 bonus. This charge is in addition to the actual cost of the armor. For example, a character with Rank 3 Forge Armor would charge 300 silver pieces per +1 bonus to forge a set of armor. Buying a set of hide armor that such a character improved by 2 points of Armor Rating would cost at least 650 silver pieces.

FORGE BLADE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

With the Forge Blade talent, a character can improve the Damage step of weapons. To use this talent, the character must spend a total of 8 hours of work within 1 week working on the weapon. At the end of that time, he makes a Forge Blade Test against the weapon's Damage step (see **Goods and Services**, p. 195). A broadsword with a Damage step of 5, for example, would have a Difficulty Number of 5. If the test is successful, increase the Damage step of the weapon by +1. In the case of the above broadsword, the Damage would increase to Step 6. The Damage step on a weapon may not be increased in this fashion more times than the value of its natural Damage step. Over time, the magic causing the damage bonus will fade away. The bonus will last a number of months equal to the character's rank in Forge Blade at the time of the work. Use of the Forge Blade talent requires a hammer, anvil, tongs, and fire.

Characters with this talent often charge others for the time they spend using it. The base rate to Forge a special weapon is 50 x a number of silver pieces equal to the character's talent rank per +1 bonus. This charge is in addition to the actual cost of the weapon. For example, a character with Rank 3 Forge Blade would charge 150 silver pieces per +1 bonus to forge a weapon. Buying a broadsword that such a character improved by 2 Damage steps would cost at least 325 silver pieces.

Despite its name, the Forge Blade talent may be used to improve any melee weapon, not just bladed weapons. The name came because people with this talent originally made their reputations by forging swords and daggers. The talent may also be used on thrown weapons, arrows, or bolts, but not on bows or crossbows.

FRIGHTEN

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Frighten talent allows a character to scare another character. Stepping in front of his target, the character stares silently at the target character for 1 round. For the talent to have effect, the character must see the eyes of his target or else the target must be able to see the character's eyes. In the next round, the character using Frighten makes a Talent Test against the Spell Defense of the target. If the test is successful, the target character stays away from the Frightening character for a number of rounds equal to the character's talent rank. If Frightened characters are not able to completely escape from the immediate area, they will at least move as far away as possible.

An opponent affected by Frighten may overcome its effects on any subsequent round. The opponent must make a Willpower (or other fear-resisting talent) Test against the character's Frighten step number. A successful test means the opponent overcomes his fear in that round.

FRIGHTEN ANIMAL SERVANTS

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Frighten Animal Servants talent allows a character to terrorize servant animals. The talent focuses magic through the animals' master, making him the source of the animals' fear. The character makes a Talent Test against the highest Social Defense among the target animals. A successful test means all animal servants of a particular master flee from him or her in terror. Hounds will desert a hunter, a mount will throw its rider, guard tigers will flee from their ward. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Frighten Animal Servants.

GLAMOUR

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 2

With this talent, an Illusionist can create generic, visual illusions. The illusions may be no larger than the size of a troll, and they can only have a visual component. The Illusionist makes a Glamour Test and the result is the Difficulty Number to see through the illusion. To maintain an illusion created with the Glamour talent, the Illusionist must have a line of sight to the illusion. The Illusionist receives a -1 penalty to all tests for each Glamour that he is maintaining. Unmaintained Glamours will fade after a number of minutes equal to the character's rank in Glamour. Glamours cannot directly cause damage, although their effects may indirectly be quite harmful (illusionary bridges, etc.).

GLIDING STRIDE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1 (see below)

Gliding Stride is a movement talent that allows the character to move in a graceful glide through the air. For each use of this talent, the character makes a Gliding Stride Test. A successful result gives the maximum horizontal distance in yards the character can move in 1 round using this talent, though the character still cannot move further horizontally than his Combat Movement. The effects of Gliding Stride last for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Gliding Stride. Gliding Stride suspends a character in midair, but cannot suspend him higher than a number of feet above the ground equal to 10 times the character's talent rank. If the character is suspended more than rank x 10 feet above the ground (say he stepped off a cliff), he falls to the ground, but only takes the damage he would have suffered from falling a distance equal to the difference between the Gliding Stride suspension limit and the actual height. The character also modifies the falling damage by a number of Armor Points equal to his rank in Gliding Stride.

The Warrior Fezwit has Rank 2 Gliding Stride. His grappling partner pushes him off the top of a 100-foot tower. He falls all 100 feet to the ground, but takes only 80 feet worth of falling damage. He also modifies the falling damage by 2 Armor Points (see ***Falling Damage****, p. 231).*

If a character using Gliding Stride stands still at more than 2 feet above the ground, he slowly sinks toward the ground. The character loses 1D6 inches of altitude each round he remains stationary until he lands on the ground.

A character may use the Gliding Stride talent to move horizontally without suffering Strain; moving upward, however, does cause Strain. The character attempting to move vertically makes a Gliding Stride Test as above; a successful result gives the total number of yards (in this case both horizontal and vertical) the character may move using Gliding Stride. For each yard the character moves vertically, he must move 2 yards horizontally. Divide the Gliding Stride result by 3 to determine the maximum distance the character can move vertically using Gliding Stride. Gliding Stride takes the place of a character's Combat Movement and can be performed twice as a Full Movement.

GRACEFUL EXIT

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character can escape combat by making an enchanted Graceful Exit. To determine the Difficulty Number for the Talent Test, use the highest Social Defense Rating among the targeted group, +1 for every other character in the group. Each targeted opponent must understand what the character says as his or her exit line or else Graceful Exit has no effect. If the Graceful Exit Test is successful, the character must move away from the combat; he may not take any other action but that. The characters bedazzled by the Graceful Exit may not follow and can take no action against the character using the talent for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Graceful Exit. Graceful Exit protects only the character using it; his or her associates must fend for themselves.

If the character returns to the combat after making a Graceful Exit, the characters affected by this talent become enraged. They try to attack the character, and are immune to all tests made against their Social Defense (any attempts to further influence them). Their anger adds 1 step to all their tests.

GREAT LEAP

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Great Leap talent allows characters to jump across large distances. Sky Raiders often use this talent to cross the chasms between airships and to leap clear of burning rigging and debris. To use this talent, the character rolls his Great Leap dice. The result is the number of yards he can jump, up to a maximum of his Combat Movement. Up to one-half the jump distance may be vertical. Great Leap may be used to avoid falling rigging, burning sails, or similar hazards. The Great Leap result replaces the character's Physical Defense Rating for the round in which the character uses the talent, even if that number is less than the character's normal Physical Defense. Great Leap takes the place of a character's Combat Movement and may be performed twice as a Full Movement.

HAGGLE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Haggle talent allows characters to drive a bargain when buying or selling. A character makes a Haggle Test against a difficulty number of the customer's or merchant's Social Defense Rating plus their Haggle talent rating (if applicable). The level of success determines the change in price of the item being sold, see table below.

Success level	Price change
Poor failure	20% in the opponent's favor
Failure	10% in the opponent's favor
Average success	5% in the character's favor
Good success	10% in the character's favor
Excellent success	20% in the character's favor
Extraordinary success	30% in the character's favor

HEAL ANIMAL SERVANT

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character with the Heal Animal Servant talent may heal any of his or her animal servants. The character spends 1 of his own Recovery Tests to use the talent, reducing the animal's Current Damage by the result of the dice roll. Only standard Recovery Tests can be used to Heal Animal Servant. The character cannot use other talents, such as Fireblood, with this talent.

HEARTENING LAUGH

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Heartening Laugh talent allows a character to support friendly characters against fear. The character spends a round directing a booming, mocking laugh at one opponent. The character makes a Heartening Laugh Test against the highest Social Defense among all of the opponents present. If the test is successful, all friendly characters who hear the character's laugh receive a step bonus equal to the character's Heartening Laugh Rank to all Willpower Tests to resist fear and fear-type effects generated by the opponent. The step bonus effect of Heartening Laugh lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Heartening Laugh.

HOLD THREAD

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Hold Thread talent allows a character to weave a thread to a spell (see **Spell Magic**, p. 149) and to hold the spell ready until the magician is prepared to cast it. If the Thread Weaving Test is successful, the character makes a Hold Thread Test to keep the spell within its matrix. The Difficulty Number for the test is the Weaving Difficulty (see **Spell Magic**, p. 149) of the thread(s) being held. A successful result holds the spell for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Hold Thread. The character may cast the spell during any one of these rounds. In the final round, the character may make another Hold Thread Test. A successful result will let the character continue to hold the spell for the same number of rounds. A failed Hold Thread Test means the character immediately casts the spell. A magician cannot weave or cast another spell while using Hold Thread to hold a spell.

HYPNOTIZE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Hypnotize talent allows a character to mesmerize another character, making the target very susceptible to persuasion through Interaction tests. The Hypnotize talent is a magical effect rather than an actual hypnosis process. A character can hypnotize any single target within 10 yards. The character must speak to use this talent. The target cannot be involved in physical conflict and must be able to understand the hypnotist. The character using the talent makes a Hypnotize test against the Spell Defense of the target. A successful test improves the attitude of the target toward the character by one degree, to a maximum of friendly (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 330). While under the influence of the Hypnotize talent, the target remains placid unless attacked. The character has a maximum number of minutes equal to his Hypnotize rank to make post-hypnotic suggestions. During this time, the character can make Interaction Tests against the target, using successful tests and success levels to persuade the target to perform desired actions. The target character will perform any actions to which he or she agreed while under the effects of the Hypnotize talent, as long as the actions can be performed within a number of hours of the Hypnotize session equal to the character's rank in Hypnotize.

While in a tavern, Sir Nef the Troubadour hypnotizes an off-duty private guard. Sir Nef improves the guard's attitude and uses a little persuasion. While hypnotized, the guard agrees to let Sir Nef into the house he guards as long as Sir Nef brings along some Rivercask ale to share. Sir Nef agrees. Sir Nef has Rank 3 Hypnotize, and so the effect lasts for 3 hours. At the end of that time, the guard comes to his senses. While he may not blame Sir Nef for having tricked him, the guard is no longer bound by his word.

IMPRESSIVE SHOT

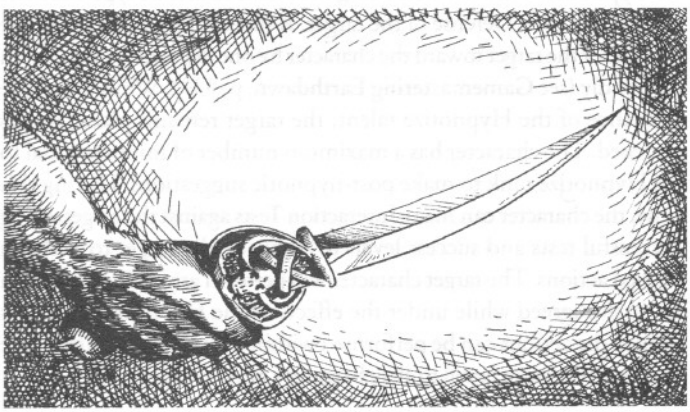
Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

A character can use the Impressive Shot talent to impress onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy with missile or throwing weapons. The character announces his attack aloud, naming his target and roughly where the shot will strike. The character makes an Impressive Shot Test instead of a standard Attack Test. A successful test means the shot hit in approximately the called spot. Opponents who see this display of skill are suitably impressed. A successful test affects a number of characters equal to the character's Impressive Shot talent, modifying the next test the onlookers make by -1 step. For example, if a character engaged in combat successfully calls a shot, the opponents preparing to attack his companions would make their next Attack Test at -1 step. The character using the talent chooses the characters to be affected. The affected characters must understand the language the character is speaking in order to be affected by a successful Impressive Shot. Impressive Shot not only impresses opponents; the talent increases the damage from the attack by the character's rank in Impressive Shot.

IMPROVE BLADE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Improve Blade talent allows a character to add a temporary bonus to the Damage step of a weapon. Improve Blade is a quick magic ritual based on the Forge Blade talent, so a character must have Forge Blade in order to use Improve Blade. To perform Improve Blade, the character needs a fire the size of a large campfire. Within the time limit of half an hour, he quickly runs through a mock forging of the weapon to be improved. The character makes an Improve Blade Test against the Damage step of the weapon (as in Forge Blade). If the test fails, the weapon shatters. If the test is successful, the Damage step of the weapon increases by +1 step. A character may improve a single blade a number of times equal to his rank in Improve Blade. The Improve Blade talent can also be used to improve non-bladed weapons. Each increase provided by Improve Blade lasts for 24 hours from the end of the ritual.



INCITE MOB

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Incite Mob talent allows a character to motivate a group to act against a specific target. The character must spend at least 1 minute shouting and encouraging a large group of sentient beings to act. The character must state a target, a grievance, and propose an action for the mob to take. The action may be peaceful or violent, constructive or destructive. The character makes an Incite Mob Test against the highest Social Defense among the members of the mob. The size of the mob determines the success level needed to motivate the mob:

Mob Size	Success Level Needed
Rank x 10	Average
Rank x 25	Good
Rank x 50	Excellent
Rank x 100	Extraordinary

The mob follows the inciter's course of action for a number of hours equal to the character's rank in Incite Mob. Once motivated, the mob becomes largely uncontrollable. A character can only control the mob by making a second, equally successful Incite Mob Test.

INCITE STAMPEDE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

With the Incite Stampede talent, a character can make a group of animals stampede in a specific direction. The character must first spend at least 1 minute running and screaming around the herd of animals he is trying to stampede. The character then makes an Incite Stampede Test against the highest Social Defense among the animals of the group. The number of animals in the herd determines the success level needed to start a stampede:

Herd Size	Success Level Needed
Rank x 10	Average
Rank x 25	Good
Rank x 50	Excellent
Rank x 100	Extraordinary

If the test is successful, the animals stampede uncontrollably in the direction chosen by the character. The Incite Stampede talent can also stop a stampede, though the practical problem of screaming through a stampeding herd limits this use. The animals stampede for a number of hours equal to the character's rank in Incite Stampede, until they are exhausted, or until they encounter a great enough danger or obstacle to break the stampede.

ITEM HISTORY

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Item History talent allows a character to learn the history of an enchanted or mundane item. The character must carry the item on his or her person for at least one week, studying it carefully for one hour each night. As soon as he completes seven nights of study, the character makes an Item History Test using the Spell Defense of the item as the Difficulty Number. The success level determines the amount of knowledge gained. An Average success reveals one Key Knowledge from the item's history. A Good success provides two Key Knowledges from its history, an Excellent success reveals three Key Knowledges, and an Extraordinary success reveals four Key Knowledges from the history of the item. The Item History talent can be used multiple times on the same item, each time after a week of study. When a character studies an item multiple times, the level of success of each succeeding test indicates the number of additional Key Knowledges from the item's history the character discovers. The character's rank in Item History is the maximum number of Key Knowledges that a character can learn through his talent. Once he increases the rank of Item History, he can then learn more Key Knowledges. The rank of Item History is also the maximum thread rank of any Key Knowledge that can be learned from an item.

Jerreck, an elf Wizard, is studying the Ring of Gorlianna. He has already learned three Key Knowledges from the ring's history. On his latest attempt to use his Item History talent, Jerreck gets an Excellent result, giving him knowledge of three more Key Knowledges from the ring's past. This means Jerreck would know six Key Knowledges from the history of the Ring of Gorlianna. But because Jerreck has only five ranks in Item History, he can only learn up to five of the Key Knowledges.

As a character learns Key Knowledges from the history of the item, he or she begins to learn the Pattern Knowledge of the item. The character can use the Pattern Knowledge to create a thread to the item. The character may reveal the Pattern Knowledge to other characters, who then may also weave threads to the item. The maximum rank of a thread woven to a item equals the number of known events from the item's history. Some items require additional Research before threads can be woven. See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 134, for more information regarding threads and Pattern Knowledge.

KARMA RITUAL

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

All Disciplines have a Karma Ritual (see descriptions of individual Disciplines). Each ritual takes 30 minutes to perform, and can only be performed once per day. Each time your character performs the ritual, he or she can purchase a number of Karma Points equal to his or her rank in Karma Ritual. See **Creating A Character**, p. 52, and **Building Your Legend**, p. 246, for more on purchasing Karma Points.

LASTING IMPRESSION

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Lasting Impression talent allows a character to impress a group of onlookers. A character can only use Lasting Impression when he first meets a group of characters or when he prepares to leave a group of characters and will not return for at least 24 hours. This talent imprints a dramatic image of the character in the minds of those affected. The character chooses the characters upon whom he wants to leave a Lasting Impression; he must choose these characters before making the Talent Test. The maximum number of characters he can impress is equal to his rank in Lasting Impression. The character must strike a dramatic pose, then make a Lasting Impression Test and compare the result to the Social Defense of each target he wants to impress. If his test result is equal to or higher than the Social Defense, the character adds a positive modifier equal to his rank in Lasting Impression to all tests made against the target's Social Defense. The effects of Lasting Impression last for a year and a day. All the impressed characters and the character who used the talent should record the Lasting Impression effect on their Character Record Sheets for easy reference.

LIFE CHECK

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Life Check talent gives the character a chance to save himself from death. A character immediately makes a Life Check Test as soon as his Current Damage is higher than his Death Rating. Each use of the Life Check talent uses up one of the character's Recovery Tests. If the character does not have a Recovery Test available, he cannot use Life Check. The character rolls his Life Check dice and reduces his Current Damage by the result. If the Current Damage is now less than the character's Death Rating, the character remains alive. If the Damage is now less than the character's Unconsciousness Rating, the character regains consciousness.

LIFESIGHT

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Lifesight talent gives a character the ability to see the strength and composition of a character's life force. The character learns qualitative information, not quantitative. A strong, healthy life force appears as a strong but delicate latticework of light and opalescent force. Weaker life forces are dimmer, and parts of the latticework may be warped or broken. The life force of a character near death shows almost no visible latticework, just a few disconnected bright spots, one or more of which is fading. Each use of Life Sight requires 1 minute. Lifesight has a range of 5 yards per rank of Lifesight.

The character makes a Lifesight Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of each character within range. Anytime his dice result is higher than that number, the character can see a target's life force.

A character can use Lifesight to view a target's life force through solid, non-living objects. For example, a character could see the life

forces of people hiding behind a brick wall, but not someone hiding in a hollow giant redwood tree. Once seen by Lifesight, the life forces remain visible as long as the targets stay in range.

LIGHTNING THROW

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** Special

Lightning Throw allows a character to throw multiple weapons in a single Combat Round. The character must declare how many weapons he wishes to throw before making his attack. The limit on the number of weapons is equal to the character's rank in Lightning Throw. The strain cost is 1 for each weapon thrown. The character makes a Lightning Throw test for each weapon thrown in succession. If the Lightning Throw test is successful, then the weapon hits, and the character makes a normal damage test for that weapon. The character then rolls for the next thrown weapon. If a Lightning Throw test fails, then the weapon misses, and the character may make no further Lightning Throw tests this round. Regardless of how many weapons the character throws, he takes strain for every weapon he declared before attacking. All weapons need not share the same target. As with Throwing Weapons, no weapon may be thrown that the character cannot wield in one hand. Lightning Throw can not be used with weapons larger than size 2.

LION HEART

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Lion Heart talent helps a character resist fear and intimidation. Substitute the Lion Heart step for the character's Willpower step when making tests to resist fear or intimidation effects.

LIZARD LEAP

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Lizard Leap talent enables a character to leap a great distance straight up. To determine how high, the character rolls his Lizard Leap dice; the result is the number of yards he may leap straight up. The character may also make a horizontal jump a number of yards up to twice the Lizard Leap dice result. Lizard Leap may be used in the same round as an Attack Test. A character may use the Lizard Leap Talent to engage an opponent and cause extra damage for one attack. The character rolls his Lizard Leap dice, then makes his Attack Test. Increase the Damage step of a successful Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat attack by a number equal to the character's rank in Lizard Leap. In addition, increase his Physical Defense by +2 to reflect the increased difficulty of hitting a target while using Lizard Leap.

LOCK PICK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Lock Pick talent to open locks. This magical talent conjures a pale blue telekinetic "lock pick." The pick may be used to open ordinary locks or magical locks. The character makes a Lock Pick Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, or against the lock's Spell Defense when picking magical locks. A successful test means the lock opens. The maximum number of times a character may attempt to open any one lock is equal to his rank in Lock Pick. If a character attempts and fails to open a lock the maximum times allowed, he may not try to pick the lock again until he gains another rank in the Lock Pick talent.

MANEUVER

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

When using the Maneuver talent, the character sacrifices his attack to try to avoid attacks made against him. The character must direct the Maneuver talent against one opponent within melee range. The character makes a Maneuver Test instead of an Attack Test, using the result of the test as his or her Physical Defense for the round even if the result is lower than his normal Physical Defense. If the character avoids all attacks during the round in which he uses Maneuver, in the next round he adds his rank in Maneuver talent to the result of the next Attack Test he makes against the opponent he out-maneuvered. If this attack hits, the character also adds his Maneuver Rank to the Damage Test result.

MELEE WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Melee Weapons talent to hit a target using a hand-held weapon. The character makes a Melee Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. A successful test means the attack hits the target.

METAL WARD

Step: Rank + Perception Step + 5
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Metal Ward talent reduces damage from attacks made using any form of metal, including weapons, spikes in pit traps, and so on, by increasing a character's Physical Armor Rating by the Metal Ward Rank. To use Metal Ward, the character makes a Metal Ward Test. The effects of Metal Ward last a number of hours equal to the result.

MIMIC VOICE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Mimic Voice talent gives a character the ability to mimic any voice he or she hears. A character uses the Mimic Voice talent both to learn the voice and to mimic it. When a character hears a voice he wants to mimic, he makes a Mimic Voice Test against the speaker's Spell Defense to learn the voice. A successful test means the character can mimic the voice any time during the next 24 hours.

When attempting to fool a target by mimicking the voice, the character makes a Mimic Voice Test against the Social Defense of the target. If the test is a success, the target believes he is hearing the person

to whom the voice belongs, rather than the character. If the Mimic Voice talent is used against more than 1 target, make the Talent Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group + 1 for each additional character targeted. If the target characters have strong physical evidence that the voice is being mimicked, such as the character standing before them in his normal appearance while using the talent, they may make a Willpower Test against the result of the Mimic Voice Test to disbelieve the effect. If the test is successful, they reject the effect of Mimic Voice.

If the character does not understand the language of the person whose voice he is trying to mimic, Mimic Voice produces the equivalent of baby babble; the sounds are right, but the words don't mean much.

MIND WAVE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step + 5
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Mind Wave talent allows a character to confuse and confound a target. The character makes a Mind Wave Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, it washes away all thoughts from the target's mind. He completely loses his train of thought, but the magic washing away his thoughts is a vaguely pleasant sensation. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Mind Wave. A character using Mind Wave cannot take part in any social interactions, such as persuasion or intimidation. The range of this talent is 1 yard. Mind Wave cannot be used during combat.

MISSILE WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Missile Weapons talent to fire bows, crossbows, and other ranged weapons. The character makes a Missile Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. If the result is equal to or higher than the target's Physical Defense, the attack hits. The Missile Weapons talent cannot be used with thrown weapons such as daggers and knives.

MOMENTUM ATTACK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Momentum Attack talent allows a character to make a second melee weapon attack against an opponent in the same round. The character makes a Melee Weapons Test. On an Extraordinary success, he may choose to make a Momentum Attack Test against the same opponent. Using Momentum Attack allows the character to make a second Attack while his opponent attempts to recover from the effects of the first blow. The character makes a Momentum Attack Test for the second attack, determining damage normally. Damage bonuses earned for the first attack do not carry over to the Momentum Attack; for example, if the character uses the Crushing Blow talent with the first attack, he does not add that bonus on to the Momentum Attack.

MOUNT ATTACK

Step: Rank + Mount's Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Mount Attack talent increases a mount's accuracy as well as the strength of a mount for the purpose of determining damage. The character makes a Mount Attack Test against the Spell Defense of the mount. If the test is successful, add the rank of the Mount Attack talent to the mount's Attack step when making Attack Tests, as well as the mount's Strength step when making Damage Tests for the mount. If a mount does not normally make Attack Tests, this talent gives the animal one attack; use the mount's Dexterity step plus the character's Mount Attack rank to make the attack. A single use of the Mount Attack talent lasts a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Mount Attack.

MYSTIC AIM

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Mystic Aim talent allows a character to draw a steady aim on a target when using a missile weapon. The character spends a round aiming at a target within line-of-sight. The character makes a Mystic Aim Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, a small visible mark appears on the target, and the character adds a bonus equal to his Mystic Aim Rank to his Missile Weapons step. This bonus lasts until the character fires his weapon, or until the target moves out of line-of-sight.

The mark created on the target by Mystic Aim is unique to the character using the talent. The mark may appear as plain white dots or as a symbol from the character's town or village, or any other unique, simple image.

ORBITING SPY

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Orbiting Spy talent allows a character to summon an invisible spirit to watch over the character and to serve as a lookout. To conjure the spirit, the character performs a half hour ritual and then makes a Orbiting Spy Test. The result is the number of hours that the conjuring lasts. The spy spirit hovers over the character at a height ranging from a few feet to 20 yards, traveling in a circular pattern that is centered on the character. The character determines how high or low the spirit hovers. Conjured spies cannot affect nor be affected by the physical world. Dispel Magic (see p. 153) may be cast against Orbiting Spies as if they were a spell of the same Rank as the Talent. Conjured spy spirits are on constant alert. Whenever the character wants to use the spirit to perceive something, the player makes an Orbiting Spy Test in place of a Perception Test. The spy spirit informs the conjurer character of anything unusual it notices. Many characters using Orbiting Spy give the spirit specific instructions regarding what to look for in order to prevent unpleasant surprises. Spy spirits can see into the astral plane as well as the physical world.

PARRY

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step + 3
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The Parry talent allows a character to deflect an attack through keen swordplay. The character makes a Parry Test against the result of the Attack Test made by a single opponent. If the Parry result is higher than the Attack Test result, the attacked character deflects the blow. A character can only use the Parry talent against attacks made with melee weapons, and must be armed with a melee weapon himself. A character may only use Parry once per round. A character may not use both Parry and Avoid Blow against the same attack.

PICK POCKETS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Characters use the Pick Pockets talent to pick the pockets of likely targets. This talent combines sleight of hand with minor levitation magic. The character can palm coins, cards, and other small objects. The Pick Pockets talent comes in handy for card tricks and for lightening a purse or two. To use Pick Pockets a character makes a Talent Test against the Spell Defense of the target. An Average success means the character successfully picks one pocket (steals one item, and so on), but the target has a chance to notice the act. The target makes a Perception Test using the result of the Pick Pockets Test as the Difficulty Number. If the test is successful, the target notices that the character picked his pocket. If the character using the talent rolls a Good or better success in the Pick Pockets Test, the character successfully picks one pocket without the victim noticing.

POISON RESISTANCE

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Poison Resistance talent helps a character withstand the effects of poison. When resisting poison, a character uses his Poison Resistance step rather than his Toughness step. A character can also make a Poison Resistance Test in place of one Recovery Test to reduce damage from a poison. This talent actually removes some of the poison from the character's body. When a character makes a Poison Resistance Test, a few drops of blood seep through his skin, carrying away some of the poison. Reduce the Difficulty Number by -1 for each successive test to resist that same dose of poison.

READ AND WRITE LANGUAGE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Read and Write Language talent allows a character to learn one new language for each rank of the talent. To learn a language, your character must first have access to one written page of text in that language. If the character has a rank of Read and Write Language available and the written page of text, he can then learn a new language. To learn a language, the character makes a Read and Write Language Test against the Difficulty Number of the language as shown below. The Difficulty Numbers refer to the standard versions of these languages. Each racial language has many dialects. If a character is attempting to learn a dialect of a language, add 2 to the Difficulty Number. A successful test result means the character can now use the talent to read and write the language. Once a rank is assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other language. Record the languages your character learns on the Character Record Sheet.

Language	Difficulty Number
Dwarf	5
Elf (*Sperethiel*)	6
Human	6
Obsidimen	7
Ork	6
Troll	6
T'skrang	7
Windling	7

When reading another language, the character makes a Read and Write Language Test to see how well he understands what he is reading. The result determines the level of understanding. To understand simple sentences or ideas, such as "The sheriff's house lies east of here," only requires a result of 2. Histories or legends containing some idioms or flowery phrases require a result of 6. Magical manuals or other books filled with jargon specific to a field of study require a result of 10. To understand philosophical treatises on the nature of magic or other writing filled with specialized academic language and abstract ideas requires a result of 13. When writing a language, use the same Difficulty Numbers as required for reading, depending on the complexity of the topic the character is writing about. Reading a page takes 1 minute. Writing a page takes 10 minutes.

READ AND WRITE MAGIC

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Read and Write Magic talent allows a magician to learn new spells and write them in his or her grimoire. Without the Read and Write Magic talent, a magician cannot learn new spells. A magician can usually attempt to learn only one spell per day. To learn a new spell, the



magician makes a Read and Write Magic Test against the Difficulty Number of the spell. If the test is successful, the magician has learned the spell and can write it in his grimoire.

See the **Spell Magic**, p. 147, chapter for information regarding spell difficulties and limits on learning new spells. This talent also allows magicians to read and write magical writing such as that on scrolls or magical glyphs. The character makes a Read and Write Magic Test using the Difficulty Number of the writing. The success level determines how well the magician understands the writing. An Average success allows the magician to understand the basic gist of the text, but not any subtle or complex ideas it contains. A Good or Excellent success means the magician understands the subtleties of the text, though he might misinterpret obscure clues or riddles. An Extraordinary success means the magician completely understands the magical writing and easily deciphers any hints, clues, or hidden meanings. A magician may attempt to read or write one piece of magical writing a number of times a day equal to his rank in Read and Write Magic.

RESHAPE OBJECT

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Reshape Object talent allows a character to change the shape, but not the mass, of an object. The character makes a Reshape Object Test against the Physical Armor Rating of the object to be reshaped (see **Barriers and Structures** in **Adventuring In Earthdawn**, p. 235). If the object is magical, make the test against either the object's Barrier Rating or Spell Defense, whichever is higher. A successful result allows the character to reshape the object. The character can reshape a number of pounds of material equal to 5 x his or her Reshape Object Rank with a single use of the talent. Reshape Object is permanent. This talent does not work against living beings, including plants.

RESIST TAUNT

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Resist Taunt talent allows a character to resist the effects of Interaction Tests. Any time another character's social action affects a character, the victim may make a Resist Taunt Test to ignore the effect. If the test result equals or exceeds the result of the opponent's Interaction Test, the character resists the effect. On a successful use of Resist Taunt, it is as if the target character steeled himself and reconsidered his action at the last minute. The Resist Taunt Talent works much like Avoid Blow, except that it operates against social attacks such as persuasion, taunts, or intimidation. Resist Taunt may be used only once per opponent.

Segue, a t'skrang Troubadour, has a Social Defense of 7. A soldier taunts him, rolling a test result of 14. Segue decides to use his Resist Taunt talent. His player rolls a 9, and so his attempt to Resist Taunt fails. Segue's tail flails in frustration.

RIPOSTE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step + 3
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The Riposte talent must be used in concert with the Parry talent and allows a character to counterattack the opponent while he is off-guard. If a character successfully uses the Parry talent to deflect an attack, the character can then immediately make a Riposte test to counterattack the opponent. The Difficulty Number for the Riposte test is the attacker's Physical Defense. If the Riposte test is successful, make a Damage Test as normal. The Riposte talent can be used only once per round.

SAFE PATH

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Safe Path talent allows a character to determine the safest path through unfamiliar territory by contacting an elemental spirit. The character does not conjure the elemental, only establishes mental contact with it. Sometimes, the elemental animates a part of the landscape nearby, making its conversation audible to other characters. The character using the talent rolls his Safe Path dice. The result is the number of miles of safe travel the elemental can predict. The elemental tells the character which is the safest path to take and what possible elemental dangers and/or natural beasts might lie ahead. For example, a dice roll of 21 means the elemental can direct your character to the safest route in the direction your character wants to go for at least the next 21 miles. If an obstacle lurks at mile 25, or even 22, the elemental will not be able to give your character even a hint about it. Keep in mind that what an elemental considers dangerous is probably vastly different than what poses danger to an adventurer. An elemental's knowledge of an area is also limited by its type. Earth elementals probably know nothing of flying or swimming dangers, but may be able to describe exactly the kinds of arms and armor nearby groups carry. Even that information cannot indicate the intentions of these other groups.

SECOND ATTACK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The Second Attack talent allows a character to make a second melee or unarmed attack in a round. For the second attack, the character makes a Second Attack Test for the same weapon he used in the first attack. The Second Attack talent cannot be used in the same round as another talent that gives a character an additional attack, such as Momentum Attack or Second Weapon. The damage of a Second Attack is the same as for a normal Attack Test.

SECOND SHOT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Second Shot talent allows a character to make a second missile weapon attack in a round. For the second shot, the character makes a

Second Shot Test for the same weapon he used in the first shot. The damage of a Second Attack is the same as for a normal Attack Test.

SECOND WEAPON

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Second Weapon talent allows a character to attack with two different weapons in the same round. To use this talent, the character holds one weapon in each hand. The Second Weapon must be the same size or smaller than the character's primary weapon (see the **Goods and Services Table**, p. 211). The character must be able to wield either weapon with only one hand. When attacking using the Second Weapon talent, the character uses the Second Weapon step number for the Attack Test but determines damage normally.

SENSE POISON

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Sense Poison talent detects poisons in food, drink, and even the air. A character must be able to sniff the target substance to use the Sense Poison talent. The character makes a Sense Poison Test against the poison's Spell Defense; in the case of a poison stinger or poisoned weapon, he rolls against the Spell Defense of the creature or wielder. A successful test result means the character detects poison on the target substance, object, or character. The range at which the character can detect the poison equals the character's Sense Poison Rank x 10 yards. If the target carries the poison in a tightly sealed container such as a vial, or if the poison comprises a natural part of an animal, such as venom in a spider, increase the Difficulty Number to sense the poison by +5.

SHIELD CHARGE

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Shield Charge talent allows a character to make an attack using his shield. The character makes a standard Attack Test using the Melee Weapons Talent (p. 102) to hit. The character uses the Shield Charge dice for damage, rather than making a normal Damage Test.

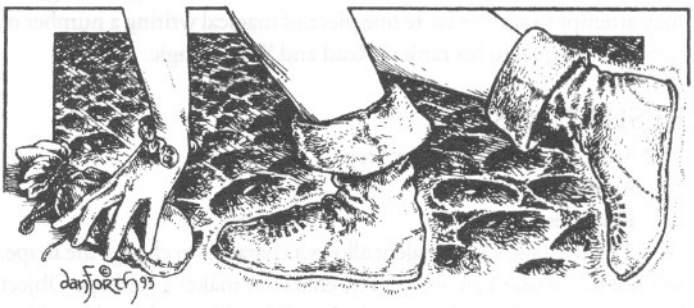
A successful attack with Shield Charge not only does damage, but also increases the Knockdown Number by +7 (see **Make Knockdown Test** in **Combat**, p. 220).

Targ Boneslicer uses the Shield Charge talent to attack an espagra. He hits the creature, and then rolls the Shield Charge dice for a total of 25, modified to 18 points of damage by the espargra's armor. The creature's Wound Threshold is 7, giving it a Knockdown Number of 14. Because Targ used Shield Charge, the espagra must make a successful Knockdown Test against a Difficulty Number of 21.

SILENT WALK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Silent Walk talent combines fluid movement with magical effects to make a character hard to detect. This is not merely a dampening of sound, but also a deepening of shadows, and an overall ability to hide. The character rolls the Silent Walk dice to avoid detection. Use the result as the Difficulty Number for any characters attempting to detect the character via a Perception Test or other ability. A character using Silent Walk can move a maximum distance equal to his or her Combat Movement. If the character using Silent Walk attacks an opponent, the effects of the Silent Walk Talent immediately end.



SPEAK LANGUAGE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** 1

The Speak Language talent allows a character to magically and permanently learn to speak a new language. Each rank of the talent allows the character to learn one new language. If the character has a rank of Speak Language available, he can the learn the new language. Once a rank is assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other language. To learn a language, the character must hear 1 minute of conversation in the language. The character makes a Speak Language Test against the Difficulty Number shown below. The Difficulty Numbers refer to the standard languages. Each racial language has many variations. If a character is attempting to learn a dialect of a language, add +2 to the Difficulty Number. A successful test means the character can now speak and understand the language. The player should record which languages his character speaks on the Character Record Sheet.

Language	Difficulty Number
Dwarf	5
Elf (*Sperethiel*)	6
Human	6
Obsidimen	7
Ork	6
Troll	6
T'skrang	7
Windling	7

When speaking or listening to the new language, the character makes a Speak Language Test to see how well he or she is communicating. The dice result determines the level of communication. Simple sentences or ideas, such as "Which way to the sheriff?" only require a result of 2. Normal conversation that includes idioms or jargon requires a result of 6. Technical conversations or other discussions filled with specialized jargon require a result of 10. Conversations about philosophical topics or other abstract ideas require a result of 13.

SPELLCASTING

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Spellcasting talent to cast spells. The character makes a Spellcasting Test. If the result is equal to or greater than the target's Spell Defense Rating, the Spellcasting Test succeeds.

SPELL MATRIX

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A Spell Matrix is an astral construct that allows magicians to cast spells without interference from the denizens of astral space. A magician may only use a spell after he or she places it into a Spell Matrix. Each Spell Matrix represents a separate talent with its own rank. See the Circle summary of a magician's Discipline to determine how many Spell Matrices he or she may hold at a given time. For example, a First Circle Wizard can have up to two Spell Matrices. The player purchases ranks for Spell Matrices in the same way as for other talents. The rank of each Spell Matrix determines the Circle of spells it can hold. A Rank 1 Spell Matrix can hold only First Circle spells. See the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 147, for more details on Spell Matrices. A Spell Matrix must be acquired specifically for a particular kind of magic, whether it be Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry. That is then the only kind of spell that can be stored in the matrix.

SPIRIT DODGE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1 per roll

Using the Spirit Dodge talent, the character conjures a spirit that protects him in combat. The character performs a half hour ritual and then rolls the Spirit Dodge dice, automatically conjuring the spirit. The spirit rests within the character for a number of hours equal to the dice result or until dismissed by the character.

When the character using the talent engages in combat, the spirit conjured by Spirit Dodge automatically tries to avoid any melee, missile, thrown or unarmed attack that would otherwise strike the character. When an opponent hits the character with an attack, the character makes a Spirit Dodge Test and compares the result to the opponent's Attack Test. If the character's test result is greater than the attacker's, the attack misses. Each time the character makes a Spirit Dodge Test to avoid a blow, the Strain causes 1 point of damage. However, the Spirit Dodge does not count as the character's Action; he remains free to cast a spell, fight, or take some other Action.

SPIRIT HOLD

Step: Rank + Willpower Step + 5
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Spirit Hold talent allows a character to root a restless spirit or entity to one spot, preventing it from moving or taking any Action other than communicating. Spirit Hold works on many creature from astral space as well as undead creatures. The spirit must be within 10 yards of the character using the Spirit Hold talent. The character must boldly face the spirit, order it to halt, then make a Spirit Hold Test against the Spell Defense of the spirit. If the test is successful, the spirit is held for a number of rounds equal to the character's Spirit Hold Rank. During this time, the character must concentrate to hold the spirit. He cannot move, cast spells, or take any action other than communication. Spirit Hold does not work on Horrors.

SPIRIT MOUNT

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Spirit Mount talent allows a character to conjure a mount to ride. The character makes a Spirit Mount Test against a Conjuring Difficulty Number of 8. A successful test conjures a spirit mount "whose eyes are fire and whose skin is all summer lightning and fog." Spirit mounts usually take the form of horses or unicorns, but sages have recorded other shapes. Spirit mounts can walk or gallop on air when unburdened, but cannot carry riders in the air. They can sink 6 inches into the earth, allowing the mount and character to pass through corridors too short for a standard horse and rider.

No one but the conjuring character may ride the spirit mount; the spirit mount dissolves rather than obey the commands of another. A spirit mount remains in this world for a number of minutes equal to the result of the Spirit Mount Test, then melts into mist (See **Creatures**, p. 293, for an explanation of the game statistics given below). The Strength and Damage of a Spirit Mount is equal to the character's Talent Rank + 3.

Spirit Mount
DEX: 5 **STR:** * **TOU:** 5
PER: 4 **WIL:** 6 **CHA:** 2
Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 5
Damage: *
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 3
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 24
Wound Threshold: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: 16

Combat Movement: 75
Full Movement: 150

Experience Award: 20
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

SPIRIT STRIKE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Spirit Strike talent allows a character to at strike at opponents through astral space. The character must have either the Astral Sight talent or a Thread Weaving talent in order to use Spirit Strike. The character uses the Spirit Strike step number to make an Attack Test against the Spell Defense of the target. A successful hit causes the normal damage for an attack of that type. Defensive talents like Avoid Blow and Parry cannot be used against attacks made with Spirit Strike. The target's physical armor, if any, still provides protection. The character's weapon disappears from view as it enters astral space and then reemerges trailing cold green wisps of mist.

SPIRIT TALK

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Spirit Talk talent allows a character to talk to spirits and other astral entities, including those who do not speak his language and those who do not normally communicate verbally. The character makes a Spirit Talk Test against the Spell Defense of the spirit. A successful result means the character may talk to the spirit. The effect lasts a number of minutes equal to the character's rank in Spirit Talk. This talent does not compel the spirit to talk to the character, but merely makes verbal communication possible.

SPOT ARMOR FLAW

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 2

The Spot Armor Flaw talent allows a character to identify flaws in an opponent's armor. The character makes a Spot Armor Flaw Test against the Spell Defense of the opponent or the opponent's armor, whichever is higher. If the test is successful, the character sees chinks in his opponent's armor. The character's opponent's Physical Armor rating is then reduced by the rank of the Spot Armor Flaw Talent for any of the Character's Attacks. The effects of Spot Armor Flaw last for a number of rounds equal to the character's Spot Armor Flaw Rank.

SPRINT

Step: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Sprint talent allows a character to temporarily increase his movement rate. Magic infuses the character with speed; each rank of Sprint increases the character's Full Movement by 20 yards per round, and his Combat Movement by 10 yards per round. The Sprint talent can be used in the same round as an Attack Test.

STEEL THOUGHT

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Steel Thought talent allows a character to increase his Mystic Armor. The character firms his resolve, figuratively forging his thoughts into tougher, more resilient patterns. The character then rolls the Steel Thought dice and substitutes the result for his Mystic Armor for a number of rounds equal to his Steel Thought Rank. The character must use this test result, even if his normal Mystic Armor Rating is higher.

STEELY STARE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Steely Stare talent allows a character to intimidate an opponent. The character stares at a target, who immediately feels a chill travel up his spine. The character makes a Steely Stare Test against the target's Social Defense. A successful test makes the target incapable of taking an action against another character's Social Defense (i.e., persuasion, intimidation, and so on) for a number of rounds equal to the Steely Stare result.



STOPPING AIM

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Stopping Aim talent allows a character to stop an opponent dead in his tracks. This talent can only be used with a bow or crossbow. The character spends a round aiming at a target within line of sight. At the end of the round, the character makes a Stopping Aim Test against the target's Social Defense. A successful test makes a small mark appear on the target, and the target stops dead in his tracks for fear of being skewered by the arrow. The target remains transfixed until the Archer moves his aim or until the target makes a successful Willpower Test against the result of the Stopping Aim Test. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Stopping Aim result.

STREETWISE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Streetwise talent allows the character to instinctively know the inner workings of an urban environment, even in cities he's never been in before. The character makes a Streetwise Test against the Complexity Rating of the city (see table below). A Good success or better results in the character having an intuitive knowledge of the city in question. This knowledge can include anything from government workings to the functions and locations of local merchants, or the ways and locations in which the local underworld does business. The gamemaster should feel free to have the character make separate tests for different kinds of information, or place modifiers on the Difficulty Number to represent different cities of the same size. This talent can only be used while within the city in question.

City Size	Complexity Rating	Example
Village	8	Hanto
Town	10	Haven
City	12	Bartertown
Large City	13	Travar

SURE MOUNT

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Sure Mount talent helps a character stay on his mount during combat. The character makes a Sure Mount Test in place of any Knockdown Tests required during combat or any other time he might be knocked from the mount. The Sure Mount Talent also helps the character control a mount panicked by natural or magical events. To use this talent to control a mount, the character makes a Sure Mount Test against the Strength step of the mount. A successful test means the character gains control over his mount and magically calms the beast.

SURPRISE STRIKE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The Surprise Strike talent allows characters to take advantage of the element of surprise. When using this talent, characters use the Surprise Strike step for the Attack Test. Surprise Strike may only be used once on any one target in one encounter. Add 7 steps to the damage step for the Damage Test. The Karma dice apply to the Surprise Strike Test, not the Damage Test. Surprise Strike may only be used to substitute for the Melee Weapons or Throwing Weapons talents.

SWIFT KICK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Swift Kick talent grants the character an extra attack when using Unarmed Combat, if his Initiative comes before that of his opponent. If the character wins Initiative, he may choose to make a Swift Kick attack in addition to his normal attack. The character makes a Swift Kick Test as the additional Attack Test. Use the character's Strength step as the Damage step for the Swift Kick attack. T'skrang may make this attack with their tails.

TAUNT

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Taunt talent allows a character to enrage an opponent, thereby distracting him. The character makes a Taunt Test that round rather than an attack, using an opponent's Social Defense as the Difficulty Number. A successful Taunt Test means the opponent is so angered that he must reduce all his dice steps by a number equal to the character's Taunt Rank, for a duration determined by the table below. Only one Taunt can affect a character at any time. The target character must understand the language that the character is speaking.

Success level	Duration
Average	1 round
Good	2 rounds
Excellent	3 rounds
Extraordinary	4 rounds

TEMPER OTHER

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Temper Other talent allows a character to toughen another character, making him more resistant to physical attacks. The character draws forth icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over the recipient character. This ritual requires one half-hour of intense meditation by both the character and the target character. The character using the talent makes a Temper Other Test against the target's Toughness step. If the character makes a successful Talent Test, the recipient's Death Rating, Wound Threshold, and Unconsciousness Ratings all increase by the character's rank in Temper Other. Temper Other lasts for 24 hours from the end of the ritual.

If the Temper Other Test fails, the target automatically takes a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, taking both the Damage Points and a Wound. Physical armor does not protect against this damage, and the character can suffer knockdown.

TEMPER SELF

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Sustained
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Temper Self talent allows a character to toughen himself and become more resistant to physical attacks. The character draws icy ether from astral space and rolls the chilling substance over himself. This ritual requires one half-hour of intense meditation. The character makes a Temper Self Test using his own Toughness step as the Difficulty Number. A successful test increases the character's Death Rating, Wound Threshold, and Unconsciousness Ratings by the character's rank in Temper Self. Temper Self lasts for 24 hours from the end of the ritual.

If the Temper Self test fails, the character automatically takes a number of Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, taking both the Wound and the damage. Physical armor does not protect against this damage, and the character can be knocked down.

TEMPERATURE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Temperature talent allows a character to control the temperature within a room or small shelter, up to 10 by 10 by 8 feet in size. For each rank of the Temperature talent, the character can raise or lower the temperature by 10 degrees Fahrenheit. The character makes a Temperature Test against the Spell Defense of the room (minimum of 2). The effects of Temperature last for a number of hours equal to the Temperature Test result. The character may cancel the effect any time he is in or adjacent to the room.

THREAD WEAVING

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Characters use the Thread Weaving talent to create and weave magical threads. A character can only have a number of threads active equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. For example, a character with Rank 3 Thread Weaving could have 3 threads active at once. This limit does not apply to threads woven into spell patterns. See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 131, for more information about threads and spell patterns.

Each Discipline has a unique variation of the Thread Weaving talent, as listed below.

Discipline	Thread Weaving Talent
Air Sailor	Air Weaving
Archer	Arrow Weaving
Beastmaster	Beast Weaving
Cavalryman	Rider Weaving
Elementalist	Elementalism
Illusionist	Illusion
Nethermancer	Nethermancy
Scout	Scout Weaving
Sky Raider	Sky Weaving
Swordmaster	Blade Weaving
Thief	Thief Weaving
Troubadour	Story Weaving
Warrior	War Weaving
Weaponsmith	Thread Smithing
Wizard	Wizardry

Record the appropriate Thread Weaving talent on the Character Record Sheet. For example, the Character Record Sheet for an Archer would list Arrow Weaving.

The Thread Weaving talent also gives characters a limited version of the Astral Sight talent. The astral sight provided by Thread Weaving allows characters only enough vision to see threads and patterns. See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 131, for more information on threads, thread weaving, and True Patterns.

Using the Versatility talent, human characters may purchase ranks in Thread Weaving talents other than the one listed for their Discipline. These talent ranks cost the same as normal for Thread Weaving.

THROWING WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Throwing Weapons talent to attack with rocks, daggers, spears, and other thrown weapons. The character makes a Throwing Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. A successful test result means the attack hits the target. To use an item as a thrown weapon, the character must be able to wield the object in one hand (See **Goods and Services**, p. 195).



TIGER SPRING

Step: Rank
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Tiger Spring talent allows a character to react more quickly than normal in combat situations. The character may add her Tiger Spring Rank to her Initiative step. For example, Rank 3 Tiger Spring would add 3 steps to a character's Initiative step. Tiger Spring can be used with other talents that increase Initiative, such as Air Dance.

TRACKING

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Tracking talent allows a character to track people and animals across great distances using her keen senses and divination magic. To

use the Tracking talent, the character touches a visible track and makes a Tracking Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the trail is more than a day old, increase the target's Spell Defense by 3. If the trail is more than a week old, add 10 to the target's Spell Defense. A successful test imprints faint, luminous images of the tracks on the pupils of the character using the talent. The character sees these same luminescent prints on the ground, allowing him to follow the tracks of the target, even those obliterated by the weather. The effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's rank in Tracking.

TRAP INITIATIVE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1 (2, see below)

The Trap Initiative talent allows a character to react more quickly to traps. When a character with this talent accidentally triggers a trap, the character makes a Trap Initiative Test against the Initiative of the trap. If the character's Initiative is higher than the trap's, he can react before it goes off, perhaps avoiding the effect of the trap. The Trap Initiative talent can be used against both mechanical and magical traps.

During combat, if the character triggers a trap after his normal Initiative, this talent allows the character to make an additional Initiative Test to see if he can avoid the trap. Using Trap Initiative in this way causes 1 additional point of Strain to the character.

Marcon is a Thief with Rank 2 Trap Initiative. While investigating an old kaer, Marcon and his companions encounter a group of ghouls. Opting to flee, Marcon runs down a corridor, declaring Full Movement as his combat action, which will allow him to get as far away from the ghouls as possible. While running, Marcon triggers a pit trap located in the corridor. Though Marcon has already taken his action for the round, he can use Trap Initiative to try and avoid the pit trap. Marcon makes a Trap Initiative Test with a result of 12. The trap has an Initiative of 14. Poor Marcon falls into the trap, thinking he might have been better off with the ghouls.

TRICK RIDING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Trick Riding talent allows a character to perform acrobatics on his mount. Once per round, the character may use this talent to defend either himself or his mount from a melee, missile, thrown, or unarmed attack. Any time an opponent attacks a mounted character with the Trick Riding talent, the attacked individual may make a Trick Riding Test to dodge the blow before it causes damage. If he rolls a result equal to or higher than that of the opponent's Attack Test, the target avoids the blow. The character may also use Trick Riding to jump fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles. The character makes a Trick Riding Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the maneuver attempted. Jumping a short fence would be a Difficulty of 4, while jumping over a 10-foot-wide chasm would have a Difficulty Number of 10. If any of these acrobatics require a Dexterity Test, substitute the Trick Riding result for the mount's Dexterity step.

TRUE SHOT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: Yes **Strain:** None

The True Shot talent allows a character to make a very accurate missile attack. The character makes an Attack Test using the True Shot step instead of the Missile Weapons step. The character must spend at least 1 Karma Point on the Attack Test, and may spend a total number of Karma Points equal to her rank in True Shot on the Attack Test. When using this talent, a character must continue to spend Karma Points, 1 at a time, until the Attack Test result is higher than the target's Physical Defense Rating, or until the character can spend no more points. Once the attack hits, the character cannot spend additional Karma Points to increase the success level of the test.

TRUE SIGHT

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The True Sight talent allows a character to penetrate illusions. The character makes a True Sight Test against the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty (see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 155). A successful test result allows the character to penetrate the illusion.

UNARMED COMBAT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

A character uses the Unarmed Combat talent when attempting to hit a defender with his hands, feet, or any other part of his body. The character makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. A successful test result means the attack hits the target.



UNSHAKABLE EARTH

Step: Rank + Strength Step + 5
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Unshakable Earth talent makes a character more resistant to knockdown by allowing him to attach himself to the ground, actually blending with parts of the earth. The Unshakable Earth talent can only be used on natural ground, earthen, or stone surfaces. The character makes an Unshakable Earth Test instead of a Strength Test when resisting the effects of knockdown. A character may not move from the spot where he stands in the same round in which he uses the Unshakable Earth talent.

VERSATILITY

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

Versatility is a human racial talent, available to all human characters at First Circle. A human character with ranks in Versatility may learn talents from Disciplines other than his own, paying the same Legend Point costs as would a member of that Discipline to gain those talents. The character must be trained for each talent he learns. A human may learn a number of talents equal to his rank in Versatility. A character cannot learn a talent from a Circle higher than his current Circle. For example, if the character is Third Circle, he can learn talents from other Disciplines available at Third Circle or lower.

The Versatility talent and talents bought with Versatility do not count toward the requirements to advance to a higher Circle. This means that characters who consistently purchase talents from other Disciplines using the Versatility talent will take much longer to advance through the Circles of their own Discipline.

Characters with Versatility may buy ranks in variations of the Thread Weaving Talents. For example, a human Wizard could buy ranks in the Elementalism variation of Thread Weaving.

A character cannot use the Versatility talent to purchase talents available in his own Discipline. This includes talents available to the character at a higher Circle. For example, a First Circle human Warrior could not purchase the Missile Weapons talent using Versatility because Warriors have access to the Missile Weapons talent at a higher Circle.

WARP MISSILE

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Warp Missile talent allows a character to reduce the effectiveness of an opponent's missile weapon. The character makes a Warp Missile Test against the Spell Defense of the missile weapon or the firer, whichever is higher. If the test is successful, reduce the Damage step of every missile fired from that weapon by the character's rank in Warp Missile. For example, Rank 2 Warp Missile reduces the missile Damage Tests for each attack by 2 steps. The effects of Warp Missile last a number of rounds equal to the character's Warp Missile Rank.

WHEELING ATTACK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Wheeling Attack talent allows a character to make a mounted attack and move away a distance equal to a Full Movement. When making an Attack Test while using this talent, a character substitutes the Wheeling Attack step for the Melee Weapons or Missile Weapons step. Wheeling Attack may be used with the Charge talent, however when doing so, the Full Movement of the Wheeling Attack must be along the same line as the Full Movement of the Charge.

Kos the Cavalryman Charges an opponent using his Wheeling Attack talent. As is required for the Charge, Kos makes a full move toward the target. He makes his Attack Test using his Wheeling Attack step. For damage, he uses his mount's Strength plus the damage step of the weapon plus his rank in the Charge talent. Finally, he makes a Full Movement away from his target, putting some distance between himself and his foe.

WHEELING DEFENSE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** 1

The Wheeling Defense talent increases the Physical Defense of a rider and his mount. The character urges his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers with the moving, shifting targets. Make a Wheeling Defense Test, and increase the Physical Defense of the mount and character by the character's rank in Wheeling Defense for a number of rounds equal to the test result.

WILLFORCE

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: NA
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Willforce talent provides the punch for spells. Because Willforce has a Default Attribute, a character does not need Willforce to cast a spell. However, spells cast by characters with this talent are usually more effective. Each rank of Willforce talent increases the effect of spells cast by the character. The character may substitute the Willforce step for the Willpower step to resist any effect targeted against his or her Spell Defense.

WIND CATCHER

Step: Rank + Willpower Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Wind Catcher talent gives a character a chance to control his fall from a height. The character makes a Wind Catcher Test, using the test result to determine what effect the talent had on his or her descent. A result of 6 - 12 allows a character to land safely and take no falling damage. A result of 13 or more allows the character to direct his descent, though his landing point cannot be farther from his natural landing site than the distance he fell. For example, a character who falls 50 yards could use Wind Catcher talent to land up to 50 yards away from where he would have landed unassisted. A single use of the Wind

Catcher talent can protect a character from a fall of 100 x the character's rank in Wind Catcher in yards. Falling 100 yards takes one Combat Round (10 seconds). Elite Sky Raiders and Air Sailors use the Wind Catcher talent to make precise assaults on enemy positions.

WINNING SMILE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Winning Smile talent causes a character to appear more attractive to members of the opposite sex. The character makes a Winning Smile Test against the Social Defense of the target. A successful result means the target finds the character's appearance very pleasing, and for the next 24 hours, the character using the talent receives a step bonus equal to his rank in Winning Smile for tests against the target's Social Defense.

A character may attempt to use Winning Smile against any single target a maximum of three times in one 24-hour period. After the third attempt, the character must wait 24 hours before trying to use the talent again on the same target.



Though effective most often against members of the same race, characters can use the Winning Smile talent successfully on members of other races. The gamemaster should judge such attempts to be either Hard or Very Hard on the **Success Level Table** (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 340), using the target's Social Defense as the Average Difficulty. For example, a human trying to impress a dwarf of Social Defense 7 might be thought of as attempting a Hard task, increasing the Difficulty Number to 12. That same human attempting to impress a t'skrang would have a Very Hard task, raising a Social Defense of 7 to a Difficulty Number of 15. See **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 332, for more information on Interaction Tests.

WOOD SKIN

Step: Rank + Toughness Step
Action: Yes
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Wood Skin talent increases a character's resistance to physical damage by causing the character's skin, and portions of the muscles and ligaments, to become tougher. When using this talent, the character's skin takes on the appearance of wood or bark.



The character must use one of his available Recovery Tests for Wood Skin each day the talent is used. The character can only use the Wood Skin talent once per day, but the effect lasts for a full 24 hours, or until the character ends it. The character makes a Wood Skin Test, adding the test result to both her Death Rating and Unconsciousness Rating. The character can now take more damage before dying or falling unconscious.

WOUND BALANCE

Step: Rank + Strength Step
Action: No
Requires Karma: No **Strain:** None

The Wound Balance talent improves a character's ability to resist knockdown. The character uses the Wound Balance step in place of the Strength step when making a Knockdown Test after taking a Wound.

SKILLS



Not all people in the world are Adepts.
Some of us learn our trade the old-fashioned way.
— Harrok, Blacksmith

Many people of Barsaive lack the magical talents of Adepts, but can often accomplish the same tasks using mundane abilities. In **Earthdawn**, these mundane abilities are called skills.

Skills add steps to one of your character's Attributes, giving him or her an advantage when making tests for actions, engaging in combat, and so on. Skills enable your character to perform certain physical actions and to make informed decisions about various courses of action during an adventure. This section describes the three types of skills available to characters in **Earthdawn**, and includes detailed descriptions of how each type of skill functions in the game.

Using skills is similar to using talents, except that skills do not require magic to learn and use. Instead, a character must invest considerable time, effort, and money into acquiring them. There are certain skills that are very similar to talents, but unlike talents these skills do not require a person to possess the inherent magic of a Discipline.

Because learning skills takes good old-fashioned physical and mental effort, skills cost more to learn than many talents. A character must spend money to pay instructors and time to train and practice in order to acquire a skill or to acquire additional ranks in a skill he already possesses (see **Increasing Skill Ranks** in **Building Your Legend**, p. 245).

CHOOSING BEGINNING SKILLS

Earthdawn characters can have three types of skills: Knowledge, General, and Artisan. Artisan Skills represent the arts and crafts practiced by every denizen of Barsaive, Knowledge Skills represent how much your character knows about the world of **Earthdawn**, and General Skills allow your character to perform certain actions. In this age of magic, skills belong largely to the mass of ordinary folk, though all Adepts begin the game with a few skills and most like to learn a couple of additional skills to supplement their magical talents. For information on improving a character's skills, see **Building Your Legend**, p. 245.

Characters in **Earthdawn** begin the game with one Rank 1 Artisan Skill, two ranks of Knowledge Skills, and a number equal to their Charisma step of Rank 1 skills of their choice. They can assign both ranks of Knowledge Skills to a single Knowledge Skill, thus making the skill Rank 2, or assign Rank 1 to two different Knowledge Skills. The Rank 1 skills equal in number to the character's Charisma step may be Knowledge, General, or Artisan skills. Apart from the suggestions given for Knowledge and Artisan Skills in the sections following, there is no master list of **Earthdawn** skills; players simply choose or invent an Artisan or Knowledge Skill they want, and the gamemaster either accepts or rejects the choice.

USING SKILLS

Nearly every time your character uses a skill, he makes a test to determine how successfully he used that skill (see **Making Tests** in **Game Concepts** p. 26). This test often replaces an Attack Test (see **Combat**, p. 218). The step number he uses for the test is determined by one of your character's Attribute steps plus the rank of the skill. Knowledge Skills use the character's Perception step; Artisan Skills, the Charisma step; and General Skills, the step number listed with each individual description. The Difficulty Number, the number the character's dice roll must equal or exceed, appears in the sections explaining Knowledge and Artisan Skills, and also in the descriptions of each individual General Skill.

SKILL TEST

To make a Skill Test, the character rolls a number of Action dice based on the skill's step number against a Difficulty Number. For the test to succeed, the dice roll result must be equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number. If the dice roll result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a substantial margin, the character using the skill may have achieved an advantageous success level, which would increase or change the effect of the character's skill use (see **Test Results** in **Game Concepts**, p. XX). The success level becomes particularly important when making Skill Tests for Knowledge Skills (also called Knowledge Tests), because the success level can determine whether or not a character successfully uses a particular Knowledge Skill.

DEFAULT ATTRIBUTES

Certain skills represent abilities that every character should have in order to be a well-rounded person. The Default Attribute system allows characters who do not have these skills available to use the Default Attribute to perform the actions normally allowed by these fundamental skills. For example, a character who did not have the Melee Weapons skill could still swing a sword using his Dexterity, because the Melee Weapons skill defaults to the Dexterity Attribute. That character would use his Dexterity step to make the Melee Weapons Test. Only the skills listed below default to an Attribute.

DEFAULT ATTRIBUTE TABLE

Skill	Default Attribute
Air Sailing	Willpower
Avoid Blow	Dexterity
Climbing	Dexterity
Haggle	Charisma
Melee Weapons	Dexterity
Missile Weapons	Dexterity
Sailing	Dexterity
Throwing Weapons	Dexterity
Unarmed Combat	Dexterity

USING TALENTS AS SKILLS

Many of the talents described in the **Talents** chapter can be learned as a skill. In other words, a character can use the talent in a non-magical way. For example, the Melee Weapons talent can be used as a skill because almost everyone can pick up a sword and swing it; doing so does not require magical training. On the other hand, talents such as Air Dance and Spot Armor Flaw require magic to function, and therefore cannot be used as skills.

When purchasing talents as skills, use the Legend Point costs for skills, not the equivalent cost for purchasing that talent as a talent. For example, for a Swordmaster to increase his Unarmed Combat skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires 4 days of training, 4 weeks of practice, and costs 800 Legend Points, whereas increasing the Melee Combat talent from Rank 3 to Rank 4 costs only 500 Legend Points (see **Building Your Legend**, p. 245).

Any talent that can be learned as a skill will be listed in the General Skills section. Use the description for the skill rather than the talent

description. There is no such thing as a Discipline Skill, so there is no equivalent to **Discipline Talent Use** listed. No skill requires a character to use Karma, however, there are some skills that cause Strain.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Your character has lived in the world of **Earthdawn** for his or her entire life, and so he or she will know more about the world of **Earthdawn** than you possibly can. Knowledge Skills represent that kind of knowledge, and are the skills most often used in the course of a game. In a game session, Knowledge Skills come into play whenever something your character might know would help you make an informed choice about what to do next. Your character may know a tremendous amount about the world of **Earthdawn**, but you, the player, will only learn that knowledge when the story dictates the need.

Knowledge Skills serve two purposes:

1. They simulate your character's knowledge of the world. The gamemaster reveals or adds to this knowledge when it will advance the story.

2. They give you a chance to further define your character, giving him or her unique quirks and interests.

CHOOSING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

As noted in **Choosing Beginning Skills**, above, characters in **Earthdawn** begin the game with at least two ranks in Knowledge Skills. You choose what you would like your character to know about the world, and how much you want him or her to know about any given subject. He may have broad knowledge, meaning that your character knows a little bit about a lot of things, or he may have focused knowledge, giving him more detailed knowledge within a smaller area of expertise. You choose the area of expertise you want your character to have; when your character uses the skill, the gamemaster determines how applicable the knowledge is to the question at hand.

Define your character's Knowledge Skills any way you want. As noted in **Choosing Beginning Skills**, there is no master list of Knowledge Skills in Earthdawn. The following list represents a sample of the kind of Knowledge Skills that might be appropriate or useful for characters:

Alchemy and Potions
Ancient Weapons
Baking
Barsaive History
Botany
Court Dancing
Creature Lore
Dwarf Military Organization
Games of Chance
History of the Scourge
The Horrors
Legends and Heroes
Racial Lore (specific to each race)
Theran History
Theran Politics
Wild Animals

Feel free to make up the precise Knowledge Skill that you would like for your character, keeping in mind that all Knowledge Skills are subject to the gamemaster's approval. Simply decide what sorts of things you want your character to know, then assign ranks in Knowledge Skills to those areas of knowledge.

ADDING RANKS

Knowledge Skill Ranks add steps to the character's Perception step, on which all Knowledge Skills are based. The two ranks in Knowledge Skills that each player assigns to his character during character creation reflect the assumption that the character studied with a teacher of some sort while growing up. To add Knowledge Ranks later in life, the character must find and learn from a master, a library, or ancient scrolls.

A rank in a Knowledge Skill is roughly equal to the amount of time an average person studying a subject might need to learn that subject. Use the table below as a guideline for how much your character would know about the subject based on the years of study listed. Of course, your character does not have to study this long to gain Knowledge Ranks. Adventurers, after all, are exceptional people with exceptional abilities. If your character has the experience (counted in Legend Points) to gain an additional rank in a Knowledge Skill and access to a teacher or other source of knowledge, he or she can gain 1 or more ranks in that skill. Much like the training time needed to acquire General Skills, your character must study for a number of weeks and practice for a number of months equal to the desired rank in that Knowledge Skill. If studying with a master, he must also pay that master an average fee in silver pieces of 25 x the desired rank. For more information on increasing skill ranks, see **Building Your Legend**, p. 245. Following is a list of the amount of study usually needed to achieve each rank:

Rank	Years of Study
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	6
6	8
7	12
8	16
9	20
10	25+

USING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Your character uses his Knowledge Skills to learn information that can help determine his next course of action. If your character's Knowledge Skill does not exactly apply to the subject at hand, the gamemaster decides how the Knowledge Skill relates to the current question or situation. The relationship of a Knowledge Skill to the information needed falls into the following five categories.

Unrelated Knowledge

Unrelated Knowledge cannot be used to find facts. If a player wants to know what special attacks cadaver men can make, his character's knowledge of Theran cuisine is unrelated and cannot help him. Such a character does not know the required information about cadaver men.

General Knowledge

General Knowledge covers a wide range of information and cannot be easily applied to answer specific questions. A Knowledge Skill is considered general if the same knowledge can provide answers to similar questions about several different topics. For example, a character with a Knowledge Skill in Barsaive History might recall incidents of cadaver man attacks. The character can just as easily recall stories of dwarf

bravery during siege, Theran romances among nobility, or the destruction of a kaer by the Horrors. Though a knowledge of Barsaive history might cover specifics such as cadaver men, it covers many other specifics equally well. A character using a General Knowledge Skill to answer a question must get an Extraordinary success to know useful information.

Somewhat Related Knowledge

A character attempting to apply **Somewhat Related** Knowledge Skills might be able to answer a specific question, but connecting the information the skill provides to the question at hand requires a stretch. For example, a character who possesses a Knowledge Skill in Military Tactics might know stories of cadaver man attacks, even though cadaver men do not function in military units. Because armies employ a wide variety of attack strategies, it is possible (though not likely) that a tactician may have patterned an attack on the furious assaults common to cadaver men. A character using a Somewhat Related Skill must get at least a Good success to know the needed information.

Related Field

Knowledge Skills that fall into the **Related Field** category cover the pertinent subject matter to the question at hand. For example, a character who studied undead creatures can accurately and comprehensively answer a question about the attacks of cadaver men because the study of the undead includes the study of cadaver men. Because such study covers a wider range of topics than just the attack style of a single undead creature, the character might not be able to immediately think of the specific information he needs.



In another example, a character with Knowledge Skill in horses has studied the appropriate field to answer a question on zebras. The subject matter (horses) is closely related to the subject of zebras, making the knowledge of horses a Related Field.

A character using a Knowledge Skill in the Related Field category requires at least an Average success to know the needed information.

Specific Knowledge

Knowledge considered **Specific Knowledge** covers the precise subject and question at hand, but only the subject and question at hand. For example, a character who studied monster attack forms would have specific knowledge of cadaver man attacks, but could not use that same Knowledge Skill to describe any weaknesses of cadaver men. A character using Specific Knowledge requires at least an Average success to know the needed information. When using Specific Knowledge, add +3 steps to the character's Perception step when making the Knowledge Test.

MAKING KNOWLEDGE TESTS

A Knowledge Test is a Skill Test, using the Step of the Knowledge Skill (Perception step + skill rank) against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information sought. Why does your character need to make a test to use his Knowledge Skills? He either knows a fact or doesn't, right? Well, not exactly. A character's ability to use Knowledge Skills depends not just on how much he knows, but also how he thinks. You make a Knowledge Test to use your character's Knowledge Skills for the following reasons.

1. The Knowledge Test reflects how memory works under pressure. If you've ever taken an exam and missed a question to which you actually knew the answer, then you understand this point. Just when your character most needs the answer, nervous tension might make it elude him or make him forget the most important part. Your character cannot always drag the answer out of his memory when he needs it.

2. The Knowledge Test represents analytical thought and deduction as much as regurgitation of facts. Like all sentient beings, your character analyzes and rearranges known or presumed facts to form a new piece of information or conclusion. Under pressure, your character may not be able to make the necessary deductions or put all the pieces together in a logical progression in order to arrive at the information that would answer the question.

3. The Knowledge Test allows for the "Aha!" factor, those times when your character does a bit of inspired thinking or looks at a problem in a new way. These sorts of insights rarely occur in a predictable way or on a reliable timetable.

To use a Knowledge Skill, the character makes a Knowledge Test. The following table offers guidelines for assigning Difficulty Numbers to Knowledge Tests.

KNOWLEDGE TEST TABLE

Type of Information	Difficulty Number
General Information	5
Detailed Information	7
Intricate Information	9
Obscure Information	11

In most cases, an Average success on a Knowledge Skill Test gets your character the needed information. The success level needed also depends on the relationship of the Knowledge Skill to the information sought. See **Using Knowledge Skills**, above, for information on determining the usefulness of Knowledge Skills.

Achieving a greater success level than needed to remember information can increase the amount of information your character remembers about a topic. For each success level beyond the one required, your character can receive either more information or insight as to how the information relates to your character's current situation. How much, if any, additional information your character receives depends on the gamemaster's discretion.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL LIMITS

Knowledge Skills give your character facts, not abilities. They do not enable your character to perform an action. For example, knowledge of art does not make your character a painter; your character may know everything about every ship ever built and remain unable to sail one out of harbor or build one himself. Knowledge Skills let you determine what your character might want to do next; they do not necessarily enable your character to put a plan into action.

A character successfully using a Knowledge Skill knows critical information applicable to his current situation. The gamemaster gives the pertinent information to the player, allowing the character to act knowledgeably. If the gamemaster considers the information the character is looking for unimportant to the adventure, using a Knowledge Skill probably yields little information. Quite simply, players cannot expect the gamemaster to know or create and catalogue every possible fact about the world of **Earthdawn**.

Kricklen the Swordmaster discovers a heretofore unexpected interest in botany, especially flowers. Steve, Kricklen's player, purchases the Knowledge Skill of Botany (flowers). During the game, the gamemaster describes an open meadow the characters cross on their way to an abandoned castle. Kricklen stops to examine some flowers. Steve asks the gamemaster if Kricklen knows what these flowers are, then makes a Knowledge Test. He gets a Good success. Heidi, the gamemaster, has four options. She quickly judges the situation and chooses what she feels is the best option at the moment.

1. The gamemaster decides the investigation is not important to the story. *Heidi says, "Steve, the meadow flowers are not important to the story. Kricklen can look at them, but I have no information to give you."*

2. The gamemaster decides to withhold judgment on the importance of the question until later in the story. *Heidi says, "Yes, Kricklen knows what the flowers are. If that fact is important to the story, Kricklen will already have gathered all the information he needs," and leaves the answer at that. She does not need to offer more specifics at this point.*

3. The gamemaster may invite the player to provide details for the campaign world. *Heidi says, "Kricklen knows what the flowers are. I haven't worked up the details, but they could be interesting. Steve, what sort of flowers did Kricklen find?" In this case, the gamemaster is asking the player to create details to flesh out the campaign. If Steve wants to add those details, he should work up descriptions of the meadow flowers for Heidi using words, pictures, or any other media. If Steve decides that these flowers possess special qualities — for example, flowers that enhance Charisma based skills — Heidi may accept, reject, or modify any of the mechanics Steve suggests.*

4. If the gamemaster happens to have created details for the situation, she can describe them to the player.

"White and crimson foxglove blossoms dominate the meadow, while gold three-petal angeline and blue and yellow goosewort lie in scattered clumps among the grass."

GENERAL SKILLS

As noted in **Choosing Beginning Skills**, General Skills give your character certain abilities that allow him or her to perform certain actions. Your character might use the Acrobatics skill to give him an edge in combat, for example, or the Conversation skill to more easily worm vital information from someone. Characters in **Earthdawn** will often end up in situations where they might wish to have a General Skill — assuming, of course, that they have the time and money necessary to acquire it.

All General Skills take time and money to learn. Unless noted in the description of a specific skill, the training time to learn a skill is a number of days equal to the desired skill Rank, plus practice time for an additional number of weeks equal to the desired Rank. To go from, for example, Rank 3 Acting skill to Rank 4 Acting skill would require 4 days of training followed by 4 weeks of practice. An average week of training costs 25 x the desired rank in silver pieces, and can cost more if a character wants individual training. Because of the costs involved, characters may choose not to acquire General Skills, or may have fewer General Skills than Knowledge Skills to use in the course of a game session.

General Skills are described in detail in the following pages. The **Step** given with each description tells you which of your character's Attribute steps determine the step number when using the skill. For example, a character with Melee Weapons skill adds his skill Rank to his Dexterity step number to find that skill's step number. A character with a Dexterity of Step 6 and Rank 5 Melee Weapons (Broadsword) skill would therefore use Step 11 when using the Melee Weapons (Broadsword) skill. The Difficulty Number to use when making Skill Tests (also given as the specific skill name test, i.e., Acrobatics Test) is also listed in the following skill descriptions.

ACROBATICS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Characters use the Acrobatics skill to perform flips, jumps, swings, or other physical maneuvers during movement. A character using the Acrobatics skill in a Combat Round may also make a Combat Movement in that round. In other words, a character can make an Acrobatics Test to use that skill and, for example, can also use a talent that requires an action in that same round. Using the Acrobatics skill in combat would make a character harder to hit. The character makes an Acrobatics Test against the highest Physical Defense Rating of any opponent able to attack him. A successful Test increases the character's Physical Defense by a number equal to his rank in Acrobatics. A failure results in a Knockdown, because it means something has gone wrong. Your character has made a faulty landing, or hit an obstacle, or tripped, and

so on. Acrobatics cannot be used in the same Combat Round that a character uses the Acrobatic Strike Talent.



ACTING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

The Acting skill allows a character to act out other personalities and persuade an audience that he or she is someone else. Actors can portray emotions they do not feel, persuading listeners and watchers that the emotions are genuine. Though the Acting skill does not allow a character to physically alter his or her appearance (the character must have Disguise skill to do that), the character can mimic voice and speech patterns, copy gestures and movements, and convey energy, attitudes, and mannerisms appropriate to his role. A character using the Acting skill makes an Acting Test against his target's Social Defense. A successful test means the target believes the character to be the type of person he is portraying. If the character pretends to be a specific person whom the target knows, the character needs at least an Excellent success to convince the target of his authenticity.

When using the Acting skill in performance, the character makes an Acting Test against the average Social Defense Rating of the audience. The success level determines how much the audience enjoys the performance. Acting can be used as an Artisan Skill (see **Artisan Skills**, p. 130).

AIR SAILING

Step: Rank + Willpower Step

Air Sailing is the skill of maneuvering the great flying ships used by Sky Raiders. With this skill, a character knows how to work the rigging, tiller, or oars of the ships. Any character who wishes to join a crew must have at least Rank 1 Air Sailing. Command ranks require higher ability: a mate must have at least Rank 4, a captain at least Rank 7, and a navigator at least Rank 8. Not all ships have navigators.

Characters use Air Sailing for the rowing that propels airships through the sky. To help row an airship, a character must roll a 4 on an Air Sailing Test. An above-average success will permit the character to take the place of more than one rower: a Good success counts as 2 rowers. An Excellent success means the character can replace 3 rowers.

For a ship to stay airborne, at least one-fourth of its rowers must make successful Air Sailing Tests. If at least half the rowers make successful tests, the ship can maneuver at its current altitude, dive, or climb slowly in a straight line. If three-fourths of the rowers are successful, the ship can speed up, maneuver while climbing, or perform aerobatics. A ship with a rowing crew of 20 needs at least 5 rowers to succeed at Air Sailing Tests in order to stay afloat. This might also be an equivalent number, such as 2 rowers, 1 of whom achieved an Extraordinary success on the Air Sailing Test (thereby replacing 4 rowers).

The Air Sailing skill must be taken for the specific type of airships the character is skilled in operating, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate skills in different types of vessels.

Drakkar
Galley and Galleon
Vedette
Kila and Behemoth

ANIMAL BOND

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

The Animal Bond skill creates a bond of trust between an animal and a character. The character must work with the animal for a week previous to each use of the Animal Bond skill, treating the animal well during this time. The character then makes an Animal Bond Test against either the animal's Social or Spell Defense, whichever is higher.

After the character has successfully used this skill one time, the animal takes a neutral attitude ("live and let live") toward him or her. A second successful use makes the animal friendly enough to the character that he will play with the character. The character cannot further attach the animal to him until he improves his Animal Bond skill to at least Rank 4. Once a character has Animal Bond at Rank 4 or more, he can begin to train the animal. When training becomes possible, a successful Animal Bond Test makes the animal loyal to the character as long as the character remains loyal to the animal. The animal willingly takes risks for the character and expects appropriate rewards for doing so. (This is often more easily accomplished than for human friends. All a dog really wants is lots of affection and enough food.) A loyal animal will accompany a character on adventures if the character so desires.

ANIMAL HANDLING

Step: Rank + Willpower Step

The Animal Handling skill allows a character to work with domesticated animals; he might, for example, be a rider commanding horses, a driver urging mules to move, or a character getting attack dogs to attack. Making an animal perform any action beyond its normal activities requires that the character make an Animal Handling Test against the animal's Social Defense. A successful test means the animal performs the requested action. The Animal Handling skill assumes the character has established a level of trust with the animal, because without that trust most animals will refuse to perform an action that puts them in mortal danger. Giving such a command breaks the bond of trust between the character and the animal, and the character cannot command that animal again until he reestablishes trust.

A character can use this skill against more than one animal at a time. To do so, the character makes his Animal Handling Test against the highest Social Defense Rating among the target animals, adding 1 for every additional animal.

ANIMAL TRAINING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

The Animal Training skill allows a character to train animals to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead for creatures," "smell that rock," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." Each command requires a separate, successful use of Animal Training. Each use takes 1 week, during which time the character must treat the animal well. The character makes an Animal Training Test against either the creature's Social or Spell Defense, whichever is higher. A successful test means the animal understands and obeys the command given by the character; the animal will not obey that same command given by any other character. The effects of Animal Training last for a number of months equal to the character's rank. Repeated uses of the Animal Training skill can extend the duration of the effect (somewhat like a refresher course).

ANTICIPATE BLOW

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Strain: 1

The Anticipate Blow skill allows a character to better defend against an incoming attack. The character must specify what kind of blow – Melee, Missile, Thrown, or Unarmed – when purchasing the skill. The character must have a higher Initiative in order to use Anticipate Blow against an attacking opponent. A character may use Anticipate Blow in the same round that he makes an Attack Test, but not in the same round as Air Dance. Before making an Attack Test, the character makes an Anticipate Blow Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the character adds one to both his Physical Defense Rating and to the result of the Attack Test.

Taranya has Rank 3 Anticipate Blow (Melee) skill. Using the skill successfully adds +1 to her Physical Defense Rating against melee attacks for that round as well as +1 to the result of her Attack Test, increasing her chance of hitting her opponent.

ARTIST

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Artists create works of art either by performing before an audience or producing a physical piece of art. To use the Artist Skill for the performing arts, a character makes an Artist Test against the highest Social Defense of any observer of his or her work. The success level determines how much the observers enjoy the art. The higher the success level, the more the observers enjoy and remember the performance.

To use the Artist skill for the fine arts, a character makes an Artist Test and records the test result. Later, an observer makes a Perception Test to determine how much meaning he gleans from the work of art. Increase the observer's Perception step by the other character's rank in the Artist skill; better artists earn higher appreciation. Contrary to popular belief, an observer cannot get more out of a work of art than the artist put into it. Treat any Perception Test result that is higher than the result of the Artist Test as equal to the Artist Test result. Then compare the Perception Test result to the Social Defense of the observer character. The success level determines how well the character remembers the work of art. Higher success levels create a more memorable experience for the observer.

Vialaque is a Theran poet with a Rank 6 Artist Skill. Vialaque writes what he personally judges to be one of his best poems. When he finishes the poem, he makes an Artist Test with a result of 17.

Some time later, Poorht the Thief acquires and reads the poem. To make his Perception Test, Poorht adds his Perception Step 6 to Vialaque's Artist Rank, ending up with Step 12 (2D10 Action dice). Poorht rolls 2D10 to appreciate the poem. The result is 19, which is reduced to 17 because that is the "value" of the poem. Comparing 17 to Poorht's Social Defense 5 shows an Extraordinary success. Poorht thinks Vialaque's poem is the most moving composition he has ever read. He commits it to memory, and recites it often — far too often for his companions' comfort.

Examples of the performing arts include Musician (one instrument), Singer, and Storyteller. Examples of the fine arts include Painting, Poetry, Sculpture, and Writing. If he wishes, a character may acquire the Artist Skill multiple times to learn new types of art. The Artist skill can be used as an Artisan Skill (see **Artisan Skills**, p 130).

AVOID BLOW

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Avoid Blow skill allows a character to dodge blows directed at him in combat at the last minute. Any time an opponent attacks a character with the Avoid Blow skill, the attacked individual may make an Avoid Blow Test to dodge the blow before it causes damage. If he rolls a result equal to or higher than that of the opponent's Attack Test, the target avoids the blow. This means that he or she saw the attack coming and dodged out of the way at the last minute. Your character cannot use the Avoid Blow skill to dodge blind-side attacks, however. Avoid Blow can only be used once per Combat Round. A character who attempts and fails to use Avoid Blow is knocked down, whether or not the blow would normally have done so (See **Make Knockdown Test** in **Combat**, p. 220). Avoid Blow can be used in the same round as an Attack Test. The character must specify what kind of blow – Melee, Missile, Thrown, or Unarmed – when purchasing the skill.

Poorht, windling Thief, has a Physical Defense Rating of 8. The jehuthra attacking him rolls a 12 on the Attack Test, which is higher than Poorht's Physical Defense of 8. The blow would normally have landed, but Poorht sees it coming and decides to use his Avoid Blow skill. He rolls a 12, just enough for Poorht to dodge and take no damage.

BATTLE SHOUT

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Strain: 1

The Battle Shout skill allows a character to intimidate foes with a ferocious war cry. The character makes a Battle Shout Test against the Social Defense of the target character. If the character is attempting to use Battle Shout against more than one target, add +1 to the highest Social Defense Rating in the group (the Difficulty Number) for each additional target character.

The character must be involved in combat or threatening to engage in combat in order to use Battle Shout. Battle Shout may be used in the

same round as an Attack Test. The character must roll a Good success or better for Battle Shout to succeed. A successful test reduces all the target's steps by one for a period of 1 round. The effects of a Battle Shout last until the end of the next round. A character may be affected by only one Battle Shout at a time.

A troll uses Battle Shout against a group of 6 soldiers, one of whom is a sergeant. The sergeant's Social Defense is highest, so it becomes the Social Defense for the group. Because the troll is also targeting 5 additional characters, he adds the +5 to the sergeant's Social Defense to get the Difficulty Number for the Battle Shout Test.

BRIBERY

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Bribery is the skill of discreetly buying favors. Though most societies publicly disapprove of bribes, those same societies harbor many members who are more than willing to take them. Characters who have this skill can use any number of successful methods to disguise the exchange. To use the skill, the character makes a Bribery Test against the Social Defense of the target. A successful test means the target will do the favor asked. Small favors require a small amount of cash, for example, 5 silver pieces or the equivalent of a few hours' wages for the target. For large favors, the asking character must produce a bribe equal to a day's earnings for the target. See **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 334, for more on favors. A character willing to offer larger-than-necessary bribes may receive a bonus, at the gamemaster's discretion.



CHARGE

Step: Rank + Strength Step

Unlike the Charge talent, the Charge skill only protects an attacker from being dismounted by the force of his own Charge. The character adds his rank in Charge to his Strength Test to remain mounted after the charge (see **Combat**, p. 223).

CLIMBING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

The Climbing skill allows a character to climb up the sides of various surfaces and objects. A character makes a Climbing Test against the climb's difficulty, a number determined by the gamemaster (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 230). If the result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number, the character climbs successfully. A character can climb at a rate of (3 + Climbing Rank) feet per round, i.e., a character with Rank 2 Climbing skill could climb 5 feet a round.

CONCEAL WEAPON

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Strain: 1

A character can use the Conceal Weapon skill to use sleight of hand and their choice of wardrobe to hide weapons somewhere on his or her body. The character makes a Conceal Weapon Test and subtracts the size of the weapon (see the **Goods and Services Table**, p. 211) from the result. That number becomes the Difficulty Number for tests by any character attempting to detect the weapon. The concealment lasts for at most 4 hours, but ends immediately if someone discovers the weapon, or if the character removes the weapon from its hiding place.

As long as the weapon remains concealed, use of this skill gives the character an Initiative bonus equal to his rank in Conceal Weapon when drawing and striking with a concealed weapon.

Windlings can only conceal weapons of size class 1 or less; dwarfs are limited to size class 2 or less; humans, elves, orks, and t'skrang can conceal weapons of size class 3 or less; trolls and obsidimen can conceal weapons of size class 4 or less.

CONVERSATION

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Characters with Conversation skill can hold their own in social conversations, using quips, timing, and other verbal abilities to make a favorable impression. The character makes a Conversation Test against the Social Defense of the target. If the test is successful, the attitude of the target character rises favorably by one degree, say, from Neutral to Friendly. This change in attitude lasts only for the duration of the conversation and for a number of minutes afterward equal to the character's Conversation Rank. When trying to impress more than one person, the character makes a Conversation Test against the highest Social Defense among the group, adding 1 for each additional character.

CRAFTSMAN

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Characters use the Craftsman skills to make and/or repair everyday items. A character makes a Craftsman Test against the Difficulty of making or repairing the item. Ordinary items have a Difficulty Number of 6; unusual or exotic items have a Difficulty Number of 9 or more. A successful test means the character has successfully made or repaired the item. An Excellent or greater success means that the have created a quality example of an item. In the case of a weapon or armor, this is the same as being Forged 1 (See **Forge Blade** and **Forge Armor**, p. XX). A Poor failure or worse means the attempt failed completely, destroying the item beyond salvation. If the test is unsuccessful but the success level is better than Poor, the character can try again; the only thing the character has lost in the first attempt is time. Making or repairing simple, everyday items does not require a Craftsman Test. Simply having the Craftsman skill allows a character to create or repair these items. The Craftsman skill can be used as an Artisan skill (see **Artisan Skills**, p. 130). Common crafts include Armorer (weapons and armor), Baker, Blacksmith, Cooper (barrel maker), Mason, Mechanic, Tailor, and Woodworker.

DETECT TRAP

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Strain: 1

The Detect Trap skill allows a character to uncover hidden mechanical traps. The average Difficulty Number for mechanical traps is 5, though some may be as high as 9. A successful Detect Trap Test enables the character to notice some aspect of the trap, usually the trigger.

A better-than-Average success level provides the character with additional information about the trap. On a Good success, the character can pinpoint the trap's trigger and figure out how to avoid setting it off. An Excellent success tells the character what type of effect (i.e., crushing, smashing, poison, and so on) the trap uses. An Extraordinary success gives the character a step bonus equal to the character's rank in Detect Trap when disarming the trap. The character adds the bonus to any tests he or she makes when attempting to disarm the trap.

DETECT WEAPON

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Strain: 1

The Detect Weapon skill allows a character to notice hidden weapons, but only those concealed by normal means. This skill does not assist against the Conceal Weapon talent. The character makes a Detect Weapon Test against the weapon's Concealment Difficulty Number (see the **Conceal Weapon skill**, p. 121). With a successful test, the character spots the weapon and knows its type. The character cannot detect a weapon's magical abilities using this skill.

Once the character detects a weapon, he becomes alert to possible treachery. This alertness lasts for a number of minutes equal to the result of the Detect Weapon Test. If the character carrying the detected weapon tries to initiate combat, the alerted character has a first-round Initiative step bonus equal to his rank in Detect Weapon.

DISARM

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Strain: 1

The Disarm skill uses flashing swordplay to knock the weapon from an opponent's hand. After first declaring that he intends to use the Disarm skill, the character makes his Attack Test using the Disarm skill step. A successful result sends the weapon spinning away from the opponent in the direction the Disarming character chooses. Make a Damage Test for the number of feet the weapon flies. The Disarm skill does not affect any weapon that is part of the defender, such as an animal's claws.

The Disarm skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Axe, Battle
- Axe, Hand
- Broadsword
- Flail
- Knife or Dagger
- Mace or Spiked Mace
- Pole Arms
- Pole Axe
- Quarterstaff
- Short Sword
- Spear
- Trispear
- Two Handed Sword
- Warhammer
- Whip

DISARM TRAP

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step
Strain: 1

Characters with the Disarm Trap skill use deduction and dexterity to render mechanical traps inoperative. The character makes a Skill Test against the trap's Difficulty Number (determined by the gamemaster when creating the trap; see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 235, for information about traps). A successful result disables the trap's trigger, preventing it from going off.

DISGUISE

Step: Rank + Perception Step

The Disguise skill allows a character to alter his facial features, skin, and hair color and texture to look like another being. Use of the Disguise skill requires a disguise kit and at least half an hour to prepare the disguise. Effective disguises also often require a costume, though creative lying might explain the absence of some distinctive piece of clothing. Once disguised, the character makes a Disguise Test against the highest Social Defense of any viewer. A successful test result means the onlookers believe the disguise. If a character attempts to disguise himself as a specific person, the player must roll an Excellent success on the Disguise Test to fool onlookers who know the individual he is impersonating.

ENGAGING BANTER

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Strain: 1

The Engaging Banter skill allows a character to use his charming style to distract an opponent. The target character must be able to understand what the character is sayig in order for the skill to work. The Engaging Banter skill may not be used in combat. The character makes an Engaging Banter Test against the target's Social Defense. If the test is successful, the target and the character spend time in witty, idle chatter. The banter lasts for a number of rounds equal to the character's rank in Engaging Banter. During this time, the target is distracted, suffering a -1 step to all tests and reducing all combat ratings (Social Defense, Physical Defense, and Spell Defense) by -1. The character using Engaging Banter may end the banter any time, but this will also end the effect.

ETIQUETTE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Etiquette is the art of proper behavior in social situations. Etiquette is important; improper behavior may be punished by responses ranging from the scorn of nobles to a beheading at the hands of enraged ork scorchers. Characters should strive to avoid committing faux pas in the society of Barsaive. To use the Etiquette skill, a character makes an Etiquette Test against the Difficulty of knowing the proper behavior for a given social situation. The base Difficulty Number is 5, with modifiers to that number per the **Etiquette Table**, p. 123.

Etiquette modifiers are cumulative. For example, a commoner who attends a banquet for a noble of a different race being hosted by someone from a completely alien culture suffers a +9 Difficulty Modifier (2 + 3 + 4 = 9).

ETIQUETTE TABLE

Modifier	Situation
+2	Current company of higher social class than character
+3	Current company of different race or culture than character
+4	Surrounding culture completely alien to character

The Etiquette Test success level alters the reaction of observers. An Average success means that observers believe that your character seems to possess the rudiments of proper behavior. A Good success means those same people fully approve of your character's manners. An Excellent success so impresses observers with your character's manners that their attitude improves 1 degree, to a maximum of Friendly (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 329).

EVIDENCE ANALYSIS

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Strain: 1

A character uses the Evidence Analysis skill to examine physical evidence. This examination consists of equal parts observation and logic. A character might be able to examine a bed, for example, and determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might be able to identify a weapon as a murder weapon. As a general rule, Evidence Analysis can only answer questions regarding what happened to an object or place or how something happened to an object or place. The character makes an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person responsible for the physical evidence. In the above example, he would use the Spell Defense of the person who had slept in the bed. When using the Evidence Analysis skill to evaluate evidence more than 1 hour old, add +1 for every hour that has gone by to the target's Spell Defense for the Difficulty Number. This skill cannot help the character answer the questions of "who" or "why."

FAST HAND

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Strain: 2

The Fast Hand skill lets a character move items from one place to another or to switch items between one character and another without being observed. All target items and characters must be within reach of the character using the skill. The target items must measure 6 inches or less along their longest dimension. For his Fast Hand Test, the character adds the number of items switched to the highest Spell Defense among his targets to find the Difficulty Number. The character requires a Good success to successfully switch the items, but he is only noticed if he fails the Test.

Callera wants to switch the purses of 3 merchants, so that each merchant ends up with another merchant's purse. The merchants have Spell Defenses of 4, 6, and 5, respectively. The highest is 6, + 3 for the number of items being switched, resulting in a Difficulty Number of 9.

FENCE

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

The Fence skill helps a character get a better price for stolen or illegal goods. Shady merchants usually buy stolen or illegal goods for 10 percent of their cost (see **Goods and Services**, p. 194). A character makes a Fence Test against a difficulty number of the customer's or merchant's Social Defense Rating plus their Fence skill or Haggle talent rating (if applicable). The level of success determines the change in price of the item being sold, see table below.

Success level	Price change
Poor failure	20% in the opponent's favor
Failure	10% in the opponent's favor
Average success	5% in the character's favor
Good success	10% in the character's favor
Excellent success	20% in the character's favor
Extraordinary success	30% in the character's favor

FIRST IMPRESSION

Step: Rank + Charisma Step
Strain: 2

The First Impression skill helps a character to favorably impress characters he or she has just met. The character makes a First Impression Test against the target's Social Defense. A successful First Impression Test gains the character a bonus of plus one step for all Charisma Tests. The effects of First Impression last a number of days equal to the amount by which the First Impression Test exceeded the target's Social Defense. The First Impression skill may only be used once against any one target.

FISHING

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Characters use Fishing skill to find food in lakes, rivers, or seas. To use this skill, the character makes a Fishing Test against a Difficulty Number ranging from 3 to 10 (determined by the gamemaster; see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 338). Each use of the Fishing skill takes 1 hour. The success level of the test determines the amount of food captured, measured in the amount of food it would take to feed 1 person for 1 day:

Average	1 day
Good	2 days
Excellent	5 days
Extraordinary	10 days

FLIRTING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

A form of interaction with members of a character's preferred sex, the Flirting skill combines elements of flattery, intense attention, and clever word-play to affect another person. Flirtatious behavior accents conversations with hints of romance. A character uses the Flirting skill against the Social Defense of the target character. An Average success intrigues the target; he or she spends time with your character, trying to learn more about him or her. A Good success completely occupies the target character's attention; he or she spends almost all available time

with your character, more or less ignoring anyone else who might be around. An Excellent success leaves a lasting impression on the target. He or she exhibits all the symptoms mentioned so far and will follow up on the relationship, seeking to continue and deepen it at a later time. An Extraordinary success smites the target with love. He or she has it bad; for 1 week after the Flirting Test the other character cannot get enough of yours. He or she thinks your character is the greatest. The effect fades when the week ends, but another successful Flirting Test could start it all over again.

FORGERY

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Forgers create false papers, legal documents, and correspondence. A character with Forgery skill might even forge artwork if he or she also has the appropriate Artist skill. A character with the Forgery and Artist (Painter) skills could copy the work of a famous master. Creating a forgery takes two to five times as long to create as did the original; for example, a letter jotted hastily in a few minutes might take nearly an hour to forge. To use the Forgery skill, the character makes a Forgery Test and records the result. That number becomes the Difficulty Number for a Perception Test by any person trying to detect the forgery.

GREAT LEAP

Step: Rank + Strength Step + 3

The Great Leap skill allows characters to jump across large distances. To use this skill, the character makes a Great Leap Test. The result is the number of feet he can jump, up to a maximum of his combat movement. Up to one-half the jump distance may be vertical. Great Leap may be used to avoid falling rigging, burning sails, or similar hazards.

HIDING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Hiding skill combines choice of wardrobe with stealth techniques to keep from being seen. The character makes a Hiding Test to avoid detection. Use the result as the Difficulty Number for any characters attempting to detect the character with a Perception Test or other ability. A character cannot move while using the Hiding skill.

HUNTING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

The Hunting skill allows a character to hunt for food in wilderness areas. The Difficulty Number for hunting ranges from 5 to 12, determined by the gamemaster (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 338). Some barren areas may not support wildlife at all; a character cannot successfully hunt for food in a barren area. The success level determines the amount of food captured, measured in the amount of food it would take to feed 1 person for 1 day:

Average	1 day
Good	2 days
Excellent	5 days
Extraordinary	10 days

Each use of Hunting skill takes 4 hours. A character may make up to 2 Hunting Tests a day.

IMPRESSIVE SHOT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

A character can use the Impressive Shot skill to impress onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy. The character announces his attack aloud, naming his target and roughly where the shot will strike. The character makes an Impressive Shot Test instead of a standard Attack Test. A successful test means the shot hit in approximately the called spot. Opponents who see this display of skill are suitably impressed. A successful test affects a number of characters equal to the character's Impressive Shot skill, modifying the next test the onlookers make by -1 step. For example, if a character engaged in combat successfully calls a shot, the opponents preparing to attack his companions would make their next Attack Test at -1 step. The character using the skill chooses the characters to be affected. The affected characters must understand the language the character is speaking in order to be affected by a successful Impressive Shot. Impressive Shot can only impress opponents; the skill does not increase the damage from an attack.

The Impressive Shot skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

Axe, Thrown	Light Crossbow
Dagge	Longbow
Dagger, Throw	Medium Crossbow
Dart	Short-bow
Elven Warbow	Spear
Great Crossbow	Sling
Hawk Hatchet	

LIP READING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Strain: 2

The Lip Reading skill gives a character a discreet method of eavesdropping on a conversation. The character must be able to see a speaker's lips and understand his language in order to use Lip Reading. The character makes a Lip Reading Test against the speaker's Social Defense. If the test is a success the character can understand the speaker's words. The effect lasts for a number of minutes equal to the character's rank in Lip Reading, and has a maximum range of 50 feet.

LOCK PICK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Unlike the Lock Pick talent, a character using the Lock Picking skill does not conjure a pick; the character must provide his or her own equipment. To use the skill, the character makes a Lock Picking Test against the lock's Difficulty Number. A successful test result opens the lock.

MANEUVER

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

When using the Maneuver skill, the character sacrifices his attack to try to avoid attacks made against him. The character must direct the Maneuver skill against one opponent who is within melee combat range. The character makes a Maneuver Action Test instead of an Attack

Test, using the result of the test as his or her Physical Defense for the round even if the result is lower than his normal Physical Defense. If the character avoids all attacks during the round in which he uses Maneuver, in the next round he adds one to the result of the next Unarmed or Melee Attack Test that he makes against the opponent he out-maneuvered. If this attack hits, the character also adds one to the Damage Test result.

MELEE WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

A character uses the Melee Weapons skill to hit a target using a hand-held weapon. The character makes a Melee Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. A successful test means the attack hits the target.

The Melee Weapons skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons that the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Axes
- Clubs
- Flails
- Knives and Daggers
- Maces and Hammers
- Pole Arms
- Spears
- Staffs
- Swords
- Whips

MISSILE WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

A character uses the Missile Weapons skill to fire bows, crossbows, and other ranged weapons. The character makes a Missile Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. If the result is equal to or higher than the target's Physical Defense, the attack hits.

The Missile Weapons skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Blowguns
- Bows
- Crossbows
- Slings

MOMENTUM ATTACK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Momentum Attack skill allows a character to make a second melee weapon attack against an opponent in the same round. The character makes a Melee Weapons Test. On an Extraordinary success, he may choose to make a Momentum Attack Test against the same opponent. Using Momentum Attack allows the character to make a second Attack while his opponent attempts to recover from the effects of the first blow. The character makes a Momentum Attack Test for the second attack, determining damage normally. Damage bonuses earned for the first attack do not carry over to the Momentum Attack; for example, if the character uses the Crushing Blow talent with the first attack, he does not add that damage to the Momentum Attack.

The Momentum Attack skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Axe, Battle
- Axe, Hand
- Axe, Pole
- Broadsword
- Club
- Flail
- Knife or Dagger
- Mace or Spiked Mace
- Pole Arms
- Quarterstaff
- Short Sword
- Spear
- Trispear
- Two Handed Sword
- Warhammer

NAVIGATION

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Navigators know how to read maps, chart courses, and use the stars to pinpoint their location on open water or land. In order to use the Navigation skill, navigators must be able to see the stars or significant landmarks and must possess a set of navigator's charts. A character must spend 1 hour using the Navigation skill, then make a Navigation Test against a Difficulty Number ranging from 5 (a crystal-clear night sky) to 12 (heavy cloud cover). A character cannot use this skill during violent storms because he cannot make the necessary observations. The success level of the test result determines the accuracy of the Navigation Test. An Average success gives a navigator his position accurately to within 10 miles. A Good success means the Navigation Test is accurate to within 5 miles, an Excellent success is accurate to within 2, and an Extraordinary success places the navigator within 1 mile of his target.

PARRY

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 2

The Parry skill allows a character to block an incoming melee attack. The character makes a Parry Test against the result of the Attack Test made by a single opponent. If the Parry result is higher than the Attack Test result, the attacked character avoids the blow. A character may use the Parry skill in the same round as an attack. A character may only use Parry once per round, regardless of how many attacks he suffers in that round. This skill does not allow characters to parry ranged or natural creature attacks.

The Parry skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Axe, Battle
- Axe, Hand
- Axe, Pole
- Broadsword
- Club
- Flail
- Knife or Dagger*
- Mace or Spiked Mace
- Pole Arms
- Quarterstaff
- Short Sword
- Spear
- Trispear
- Two Handed Sword
- Warhammer

*note: cannot parry size class 4 or greater weapons

PHYSICIAN

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Physicians diagnose and prescribe treatments for injuries and diseases. To use this skill, the character makes a Physician Test against the Difficulty Number of the diagnosis. A successful test means the physician knows what the problem is and how to treat it. Following are suggested Difficulty Numbers for diagnosing common ailments, in order of seriousness:

Ailment	Difficulty Number
Common Cold	4
Wounds	5
Flu	6
Mild Poison	6
Broken Bones	8
Strong Poison	11
Black Death	15

It takes 30 minutes to make a diagnosis using the Physician skill. A successful test also adds a number of steps equal to the diagnosing character's rank in Physician to the next Recovery Test the patient makes.

Poorht, the windling Thief, took a Wound. Fortunately for him, a character with Rank 3 Physician skill was in the area. This character successfully diagnosed Poorht, and so Poorht adds 3 steps to his next Recovery Test.

PICK POCKETS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Characters use the Pick Pockets skill to pick the pockets of likely targets. The character can also palm coins, cards, and other small objects, making it handy for card tricks and sleight of hand. To use Pick Pockets, a character makes a Skill Test against the Spell Defense of the target. An Average success means the character has not been able to pick the pocket, but the target has not noticed the attempt. A Good success means the character successfully picks one pocket or palmed one item, but the target has a chance to notice the act. The target makes a Perception Test using the result of the Pick Pockets Test as the Difficulty Number. If the test is successful, the target notices that the character picked his pocket. If the character using the skill rolls a Excellent or better success in the Pick Pockets Test, the character successfully picks one pocket without the victim noticing. If the character fails the Picking Pockets test, then not only has he been unable to steal an item, but the target notices his attempt.

READ AND WRITE LANGUAGE

Step: Rank + Perception Step

Each rank of the Read and Write Language skill enables your character to learn 1 new language by spending at least 4 months studying with a teacher or literate native speaker. If your character has a rank of the Read and Write Language skill available, he can learn the new language. The character makes a Read and Write Language Test against the Difficulty Number given for the language in question in the table below. These Difficulty Numbers indicate the effort required to learn the standard racial languages. If the character wants to learn a dialect, add +2 to the difficulty.

A successful test result means the character has learned to read and write the desired language, and can do so from now on without difficulty. Once assigned to a language, the rank cannot be used to learn any other language. Note which languages your character speaks and reads on the Character Record Sheet.

Language	Difficulty Number
Dwarf	5
Elf (*Sperethiel*)	6
Human	6
Obsidimen	7
Ork	6
Troll	6
T'skrang	7
Windling	7

RESEARCH

Step: Rank + Perception Step

The Research skill allows characters to find information through study and investigation. This includes research at libraries and following up on rumors and legends. To use this skill, a character makes a Research Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information being sought. The gamemaster may use the guidelines for creating Difficulty Numbers given on p. 338 in **Gamemastering Earthdawn** to assign the Difficulty Number, or he may use the numbers suggested below:

Type of Information	Difficulty Number
General Information	5
Detailed Information	7
Intricate Information	9
Obscure Information	11

The success level of the Research Test determines how much information a character obtains. Making a good dice roll often turns up more detailed information than the character had initially sought.

While at the library of Throal, Jerreck is studying the legend of Jalendale, an abandoned kaer rumored to be full of magical treasure. Based on the nature of the information he is seeking, the Difficulty Number for his Research Test is 7. Jerreck rolls a 15, giving him an Excellent success. Jerreck had only been searching for the kaer's general location, but the gamemaster decides that an Excellent success earns a bonus. Jerreck learns not only the general location of the kaer, but also its specific location, and the fact that it lies near an area rumored to hold a tribe of ork scorchers.

SAILING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

The Sailing skill enables a character to sail (or help sail) any watercraft, whether muscle-powered, wind-powered, or even fire-powered like the legendary t'skrang riverboats. To use this skill, the character makes a Sailing Test. The Difficulty of this test depends on

the condition of the water (determined by the gamemaster). Sailing over a smooth lake has Difficulty Number of 3, a turbulent river has a Difficulty Number of 7, and sailing through fierce storms at sea has a Difficulty Number of 13. A successful test allows the character to sail the ship safely until the conditions change or until the ship docks.

SECOND WEAPON

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Second Weapon skill allows a character to attack with two different weapons in the same round. To use this skill, the character holds one weapon in each hand. The Second Weapon may be no larger than the character's primary weapon (see the **Goods and Services Table**, p. 211). The character must be able to wield either weapon with only one hand. When attacking using the Second Weapon skill, the character uses the Second Weapon step number for the Attack Test but determines damage normally.

The Second Weapon skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

Axe, Hand
Broadsword*
Club
Flail*
Knife or Dagger
Mace*
Short Sword
Unarmed
Whip

*Trolls and Obsidimen Only

SEDUCTION

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Characters use the Seduction skill to convince members of their preferred sex to become romantically involved with them. In addition to making a successful Skill Test, seduction requires convincing roleplaying. A seduction has four stages: First Impression, Intriguing Conversation, Move to Intimacy, and the Suggestion. For each stage, the seducing character makes a Seduction Test against the target's Social Defense. For each success level above that required for a successful test (see below), the character adds +3 steps to all Seduction Tests made during the next stage of the Seduction.

First Impression can be a glance, a striking outfit, a dramatic entrance, an opening line — all the pieces that fit together to make a first impression. To make a successful First Impression, a character needs an Average success.

Intriguing Conversation requires wit, flattery, a willingness to reveal hints about oneself, and the ability to pick up and respond to cues from the target. The object of Intriguing Conversation is to make the target feel special, like the most important and attractive person in the room, and at the same time, to present your character as an attractive partner. To be successful, Intriguing Conversation requires a Good success. Achieving an Average success does not mean your character's Intriguing Conversation failed to produce the desired effect; it just prolongs the process.

With Move to Intimacy, your character begins to get more personal with the target character, gradually altering tone of voice, body language, and the subjects of conversation to reveal even more about himself, learn more about the target, and develop a deeper rapport. A successful Move to Intimacy requires a Good success. As with Intriguing Conversation, achieving an Average success does not mean the attempt to Move to Intimacy failed, it just prolongs the process.

The Suggestion occurs when your character suggests to the target character just how your character would like this encounter to end. A successful Suggestion requires an Excellent success. Your character only gets one chance to make the Suggestion.

A successful seduction creates other effects beyond satisfying the immediate suggestion. The seduced character's attitude toward your character improves by two degrees for the next 24 hours, and permanently improves by one degree as long as your character does not behave badly toward or betray the seduced character (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 329).



SILENT WALK

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Silent Walk skill combines fluid movement with a careful placement of footfalls to dampen the sound of a character's movement, including walking and other means of travel, such as the sound of a windling's flight. The character rolls the Silent Walk dice to avoid detection. Use the result as the Difficulty Number for any characters attempting to hear the character with a Perception Test or other ability. A character using Silent Walk can move a maximum distance equal to his or her Combat Movement.

SPEAK LANGUAGE

Step: Rank + Perception Step

The Speak Language skill is similar to the talent, but harder to learn. To learn a language, the character must study with a teacher or hear native speakers for two uninterrupted months. Each rank of the skill entitles a character to learn 1 new language. If the character has a rank of Speak Language available, he can then learn the new language. The character makes a Speak Language Test against the Difficulty Number. A successful test means the character has learned to speak the language. The Difficulty Numbers listed below represent the effort required to learn the standard racial languages. Add +2 anytime a character attempts to learn a dialect.

Language	Difficulty Number
Dwarf	5
Elf (*Sperethiel*)	6
Human	6
Obsidimen	7
Ork	6
Troll	6
T'skrang	7
Windling	7

Once a skill rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other language. Record which language your character speaks on the Character Sheet. After a character learns a language, the Speak Language skill allows the character to speak that language. When speaking, the character makes a Skill Test to determine how well he is communicating. The outcome determines the level of communication. Simple sentences or ideas, such as "Which way to the sheriff?" require a dice result of no more than 2 to communicate. Normal conversation that includes idioms or jargon requires a result of at least 6. Technical conversations or other discussions filled with specialized language require a result of at least 10. Conversations about philosophical topics or other abstract ideas require a result of at least 13.

SPRINT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Sprint skill allows a character to temporarily increase his movement rate. The character rolls a Sprint Test, and the result, in feet, is added to the character's Full Movement. The Sprint skill cannot be used in the same round as an Attack Test.

STREETWISE

Step: Rank + Perception Step

A character with Streetwise skill knows the ins and outs of an urban environment, particularly the seedier side of cities. A successful Streetwise Test allows the character to seem to be an "insider" who can be trusted, at least a little, by another person on the street. The Streetwise skill also acts as a Knowledge Skill, giving a character knowledge of the current street culture. (See **Knowledge Skills**, p. 116)

To use the Streetwise skill, the character makes a Streetwise Test against the Social Defense of the target character(s). When dealing with more than one person, use the highest Social Defense number among all the targets, adding +1 for each additional character. If the test is successful, the target trusts the character, who can then attempt an Interaction Test (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 332). A character may make a Streetwise Test to ask about the location of the local black market or any other illegal operation; the Streetwise skill can also allow the character to spot a con game or scam. When characters use Streetwise skill to make Knowledge Tests, the gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number for the test (see **Knowledge Skills** earlier in this section). The character must specify a city for his Streetwise skill when he purchases it.

SURPRISE STRIKE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Surprise Strike skill allows characters to take advantage of the element of surprise. When using this skill, characters use the Surprise Strike step for the Attack Test. Surprise Strike may only be used once on any one target in one encounter. Add 4 steps to the damage step for the Damage Test, if the Attack Test is successful.

The Surprise Strike skill must be taken for the specific type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

- Axe, Hand
- Axe, Thrown
- Blowgun
- Bola
- Broadsword
- Club
- Dagger, Thrown
- Elven Warbow
- Flail
- Great Crossbow
- Hawk Hatchet
- Knife or Dagger
- Light Crossbow
- Longbow
- Mace or Spiked Mace
- Medium Crossbow
- Sap
- Short Sword
- Short Bow
- Sling
- Spear
- Spear, Thrown
- Trispear

TACTICS

Step: Rank + Perception Step

The Tactics skill enables a character to direct combat to the advantage of his fighters. The character using this skill makes a Tactics Test against the highest Social Defense of any opponent. If the test is successful, add the character's Tactics Rank to the step number of all Attack Tests made by the "commander's" troops. One character may command a number of characters equal to 5 times his Tactics Rank; for

example, a character with Rank 4 Tactics can command up to 20 characters. In order for the "commander" character to effectively use Tactics skill, the other characters must follow his commands in combat.

THROWING WEAPONS

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

A character uses the Throwing Weapons skill to attack with rocks, daggers, spears, and other thrown weapons. The character makes a Throwing Weapons Test against the Physical Defense of the target. A successful test result means the attack hits the target.

The Throwing Weapons skill must be taken for the type of weapons the character is skilled in using, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience in different types of combat.

Bolas and Nets
Darts and Spears
Hatchets and Axes
Knives and Daggers
Rocks, Balls, and Flasks

TRACKING

Step: Rank + Perception Step

A character uses the Tracking skill to follow the trail left by animals or other characters. The quarry must have left physical traces of its passage in order for a character to use this skill. Tracking Tests most often use the Dexterity step of the quarry as the Difficulty Number. At his discretion, the gamemaster may modify the number based on the environment or the size and/or cunning of the quarry.

A character may also use the Tracking skill to obscure his own trail. A character may travel at half his or her normal rate and still use Tracking skill to obscure his tracks. In this case, the dice result of the Tracking Test becomes the Difficulty Number for another character attempting to use the Tracking skill to follow the first character.



TRADING

Step: Rank + Charisma Step

Merchants use the Trading skill to bargain for a better price for their goods. A character makes a Trading Test against a difficulty number of the customer's or merchant's Social Defense Rating plus their Trading skill or Haggle talent rating (if applicable). The level of success determines the change in price of the item being sold, see table below.

Success level	Price change
Poor failure	20% in the opponent's favor
Failure	10% in the opponent's favor
Average success	5% in the character's favor
Good success	10% in the character's favor
Excellent success	20% in the character's favor
Extraordinary success	30% in the character's favor

The Trading skill must be taken for the specific type of wares with which the character deals in, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate skills in different types of wares. Additional Trading skills may be available at the gamemaster's discretion.

Airships
Animals
Armor and Shields
Blood Charms
Boats
Books
Carts and Wagons
Clothing
Equipment
Healing Aids
Information
Minor Magic Items
Provisions
Services
Weapons

TRAP INITIATIVE

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1 (2, see below)

The Trap Initiative skill allows a character to react more quickly to traps. When a character with this skill accidentally triggers a trap, the character makes a Trap Initiative Test against the Initiative of the trap. If the character's Initiative is higher than the trap's, he can react before it goes off, perhaps avoiding the effect of the trap. The Trap Initiative skill can be used only against mechanical traps.

During combat, if the character triggers a trap after his normal Initiative, this skill allows the character to make an additional Initiative Test to see if he can avoid the trap. Using Trap Initiative in this way causes 1 additional point of Strain to the character.

Marcon has a Rank 2 Trap Initiative skill. While investigating an old kaer, Marcon and his companions encounter a group of ghouls. Opting to flee, Marcon runs down a corridor, declaring Full Movement as his combat action, which will allow him to get as far away from the ghouls as possible. While running, Marcon triggers a pit trap located in the corridor. Though Marcon has already taken his action for the round, he can use Trap Initiative to try and avoid the pit trap. Marcon makes a Trap Initiative Test with a result of 12. The trap has an Initiative of 14. Poor Marcon falls into the trap, thinking he might have been better off with the ghouls.

TRICK RIDING

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

Strain: 1

The Trick Riding skill allows a character to perform acrobatics on his mount. The character may use this skill instead of Avoid Blow to defend either himself or his mount from an attack, and may also use Trick Riding to jump fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles. The character makes a Trick Riding Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the maneuver attempted. Jumping a short fence would be a Difficulty of 4, while jumping over a 10-foot-wide chasm would have a Difficulty Number of 12. If any of these acrobatics require a Dexterity Test, substitute the Trick Riding result for the mount's Dexterity step.

The Trick Riding skill must be taken for the type of mount the character is skilled in riding, as listed below. The skill may be taken multiple times to indicate experience with different types of animals.

Elephants
Granlain
Griffin
Horse
Huttawa
Kue
Thundra Beast
Troajin
Zoak

UNARMED COMBAT

Step: Rank + Dexterity Step

A character uses the Unarmed Combat skill when attempting to hit a defender with his hands, feet, or any other part of his body. The character makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. A successful test result means the attack hits the target.

The Unarmed Combat skill must be taken for the type of combat in which the character is skilled, as listed below. The skill may be taken twice to indicate experience with both styles of Unarmed Combat.

Grappling
Striking

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Step: Rank + Perception Rank

The Wilderness Survival skill allows a character to find or build shelter, start a fire, find water, and distinguish between edible and dangerous plants. This skill does not give a character any advantages for hunting, fishing, or tracking because other skills exist for these abilities. To use this skill, the character makes a Wilderness Survival Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, taking into account the weather and environment (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 240). A successful test allows a character to find enough water for one day, build shelter, and so on.

ARTISAN SKILLS

As noted earlier, all characters in **Earthdawn** begin the game with one Rank 1 Artisan Skill. Of the three types of skills available in **Earthdawn**, Artisan Skills are the least used. They serve primarily to help define a character and as a way to prove him or her untainted by the Horrors. Ever since the time when people discovered that those touched by the Horrors could not maintain the discipline to practice an art or craft, every adept has learned one. Only by constantly practicing his art or craft can an adept prove that the Horrors have not corrupted his power. Though they rarely do so, characters can use Artisan Skills if the situation calls for it. For example, if a gamemaster decides that a character must create a sculpture or painting in order to advance the story, the character may use the appropriate Artisan Skill to do so.

The Difficulty Number for using Artisan Skills is usually 5 or 7, making it relatively easy for novice characters to make successful Skill Tests. This ease reflects the fact that everyone in Barsaive regularly practices Artisan Skills. Practicing an Artisan Skill, however, does not necessarily make a character an artist. A character whose Artisan Skill is Painting may paint pictures every other day, but they may well lack the impact of a true artist's work.

When you choose an Artisan Skill for your character, he also gains the tools necessary to practice that skill. For example, a wood carver would get carving tools and an embroiderer would get needles and thread. If a player chooses a Craftsman skill as his character's Artisan Skill, he gains only those tools he can carry on his person. For example, an Armorer or Blacksmith does not get a smithy, but instead carries hammers, awls, and other small tools of his trade. The gamemaster must approve the tools you choose for your character's Artisan Skill.

The table below lists common Artisan Skills, some of which are also General Skills and are described earlier in this section. Players may invent any Artisan Skill they please, subject to the gamemaster's approval. All Artisan Skill step numbers are based on a character's Charisma step plus the rank of the skill in question.

COMMON ARTISAN SKILLS

Acting
Artist
- Painting (body painting, canvas painting)
- Sculpting (stone, crystal, wood)
- Carving (stone, crystal, wood, metal)
- Runic Carving (weapons, armor, and so on)
- Embroidery/Needlepoint (spellcasters)
- Performing Arts (music, dancing)
- Poetry

Craftsman



WORKINGS OF MAGIC



Magic is the key to our civilization and the source of our greatest challenge. Without magic, our world would be far more primitive, but at least we wouldn't have faced the Scourge.

— Mestoph, Elven Nethermancer

Magic is at the heart of the **Earthdawn** game. It is the source of the characters' abilities, and it is the Horrors' path to the world. Magic is a part of everyday life in **Earthdawn**. It is used to light villages and towns at night, as well as to battle the Horrors. Heroes use magic to become legends, while the Horrors and those who serve them use it to spread their corruption and evil over the world. As the history of Barsaive and the rest of the world are played out, magic will play the central role.

This section describes how magic came to the world of **Earthdawn**, the theory behind how it works, and how characters can manipulate it to their advantage. It also provides the basics on two of the three different types of magic: Thread magic and blood magic. Thread magic tells players how to find and learn to use the magical treasures scattered across Barsaive that will increase their status as heroes. Blood magic is a special use of magic that allows characters to strengthen their magic-wielding powers. We devote an entire chapter to the third type of magic, spell magic, which allows characters to shape and power spells by drawing magical energy from astral space to the physical plane.

THE CYCLE OF MAGIC

Over the course of time, the magic level of the world of **Earthdawn** grows and subsides, at times imbuing the denizens of the world with magical abilities, at other times not.

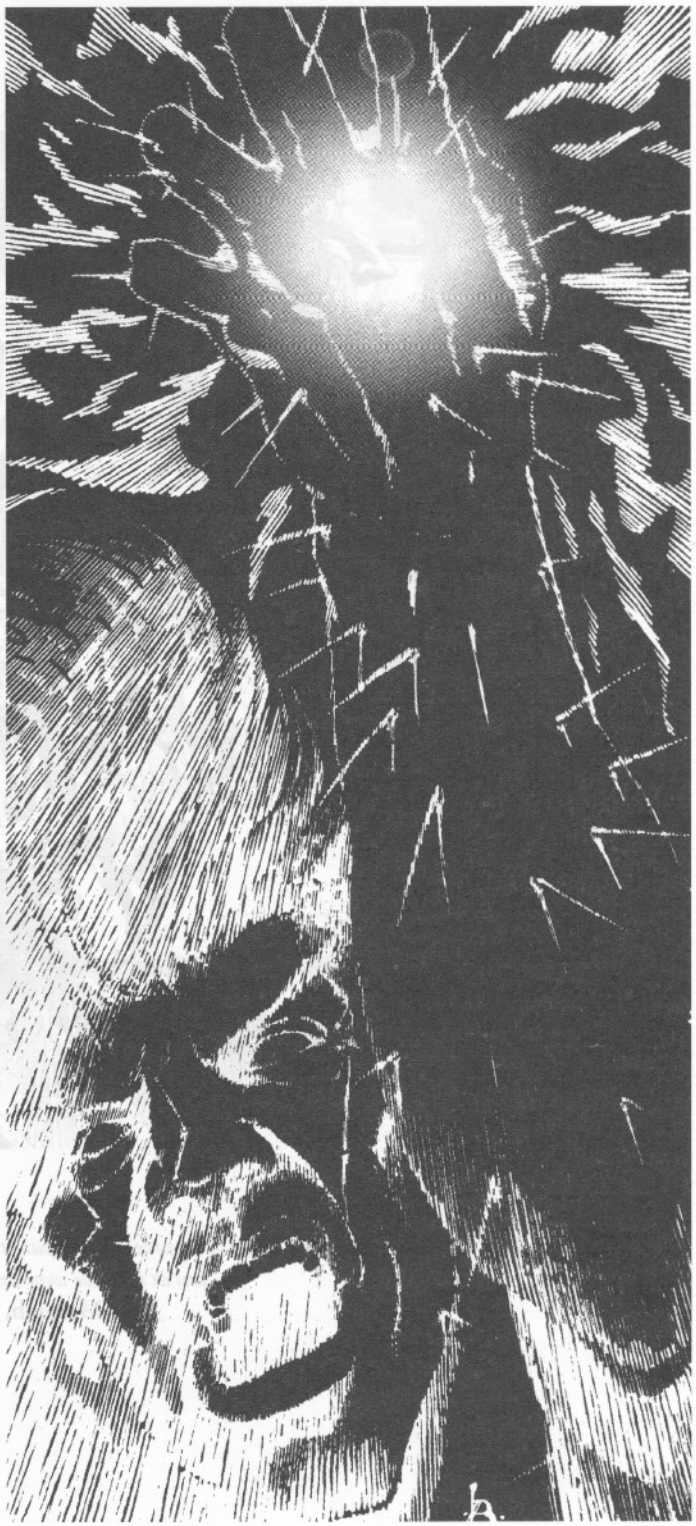
The positive side of this magical cycle is that for periods of up to 5,000 years, the world is magically active. On the negative side, the surge of magical energy enables dreadful creatures from astral space to cross into the physical world. These creatures are collectively known as the Horrors. At the peak of the magical energy cycle, the Horrors cross into the physical world, laying waste to the land in an orgy of destruction commonly known as the Scourge (see **Horrors**, p. 314).

Sages across Barsaive theorize that this cresting of the magic cycle has occurred at least one other time in the past, bringing an earlier Scourge. According to the few documents remaining from that time, the level of magic dropped steadily after the Scourge ended, eventually disappearing altogether. After the most recent Scourge, however, the magic level ebbed, but did not disappear. In fact, the Scourge ended earlier than predicted, and instead of steadily ebbing away, the level simply steadied — it has remained stable and relatively high for the past 100 years. Many scholars have devoted their lives to unraveling this mystery. Others believe that the workings of magic and the Universe are beyond our ken, and we shouldn't even attempt to comprehend its deeper ways. Though debate over the ambient magical energy of the world rages on, one thing remains true. The magic level of the world has stabilized, and it is possible that this age of magic will endure for all time.

ASTRAL SPACE

Any discussion of magic must include an explanation of astral space. Essentially, astral space is another dimension of our own world. It exists on a different plane than the physical one on which we exist, but the two planes are inextricably linked. Indeed, they are interdependent, for astral space cannot exist without our world, nor can ours exist without the astral. The biggest difference between the way our world looks to us and the way it appears astrally is that, when viewed from astral space, we perceive the glow emanating from all living things — a glow that represents their life energy. Living things include not only people and animals, but also plant life, elemental Air, Earth, Fire, Water, and Wood, and the magical energy of the world.

The current high level of magic makes incredible feats possible, but the only way to access that magical energy is through astral space. The people and creatures who use magic do so by drawing energy from astral space into the physical world. As long as there is a sufficient level of magic, beings can actively perceive astral space. Sensing the astral and the nature of astral space are more fully described below.



All the talents available to characters in **Earthdawn** are magical in nature and allow Adepts to manipulate magical energy. For example, an Adept's use of Karma is just another method of magical manipulation, accomplished through a character's force of will. The adept can 'feel' the energy of the Karma, and utilize it almost instinctively.

It is much rarer for a character to actually be able to see into astral space. Windlings, however, have no problem looking into astral space. It has been postulated that due to the high levels of magic inherent in their race, they have a much easier time perceiving the astral plane.

NATURE OF ASTRAL SPACE

During the approximately 400 years of time known as the Scourge the Horrors from the depths of astral space roamed the physical world, leaving it ravaged and scarred, populated by twisted creatures, a pale reflection of its former splendor. Because the Horrors are astral in nature, the harm they did to the physical plane was reflected in astral space. During the Scourge, the Horrors corrupted the very nature of astral space.

Under most normal conditions (depending on what is normal for astral space), the astral plane is imbued with magical energy that appears as misty, swirling streams of energy, similar to wisps of smoke. The Scourge polluted that magical energy, poisoning the very fabric of astral space itself. The view of the astral is now obscured by black, inky swirls, a residue of the Horrors' corruptive influence. This pollution can cause serious damage to magicians and Adepts unless they use magical energies with great care. This pollution makes casting raw magic (see **Raw Magic**, p. 151, in the **Spell Magic** chapter) unpredictable and dangerous.

The only way an Adept or magician trained in a Discipline can use magic without fear of damage from the polluted astral plane is by first learning to draw pure astral energy from the polluted energy. The ability to draw pure energy from astral space is an integral part of any magician's training, as is forming that pure energy into spell matrix constructs. The matrix acts as a filter, allowing magicians and Adepts to draw pure energy from astral space while at the same time shielding their magical activity from the Horrors. The Horrors generally cannot detect the use of magic to weave threads and power spell matrices, but they always notice the use of raw magic, because a character who uses raw magic draws both polluted and pure magical energy into the physical plane. Even casting spells through a matrix is not complete protection, as Horrors are sometimes drawn to areas whose astral space has been clouded through repeated spellcasting.

SENSING THE ASTRAL

Perceiving astral space is a dangerous activity in the world of **Earthdawn**. To fully perceive astral space, a character (or being) must concentrate on forming an image of himself in astral space, essentially creating a huge projection guaranteed to attract any Horror's notice. A being with an astral form can be noticed by creatures who inhabit astral space, as well as by others actively perceiving astral space, making the being vulnerable to astral attacks. Fortunately, the talents, spells, and abilities adepts use for astral "perception" allow a limited type of astral viewing called astral sensing. Astral sensing allows a viewer to sense the magical energies, the astral imprints and images of people, places, and things present in astral space, but does not force him to see astral space itself. Essentially, astral sensing allows characters and beings to sense the auras of magical beings and items. Its polluted nature makes astral space a very unnerving sight for most viewers, and magicians perceiving astral space can become disoriented quickly.

Many tales tell of those who attempted to view astral space directly and ended up either insane or dead at the hands of the Horrors. The presence of the Horrors alone discourages most adepts from attempting astral perception.

COMBAT IN THE ASTRAL PLANE

Some of the creatures and Horrors that inhabit Barsaive exist at least partially in the astral plane. Adepts have found several methods that are effective to combat these creatures. Spellcasting is perhaps the most common method. As most spells require the caster to see the target, this is only possible if the caster can see (not just sense) the astral plane. This can be accomplished with the Astral Sight talent, or with other talents or spells. However, spellcasting in the astral plane can be quite different. A spell cast from the normal world into the astral plane (by a magician using the Astral Sight talent, for instance) will have no physical effect. For example, a Mind Dagger spell (which has no physical form) would be effective in this situation. An Earth Dart spell would have no effect at all. If the magician is actually present in the astral plane, however, then physical spells operate normally, as no translation from physical to astral is required.

Adepts can also attack astral beings, provided that they can sense the being and have some way of hurting them. Unfortunately, most normal weapons have no strong presence in the astral plane. Magic and magical items do reflect strongly in the astral plane, and magical items (and weapons) can be used to good effect against astral forms. In addition, talents that increase the damage done by a weapon can also cause them to damage astral beings, as the magic infuses the weapon for a brief time. In cases where the talent increases the damage through a physical effect (such as Flame Arrow), the attack damage may not be increased through the use of the talent. In these cases, the weapon can still damage astral forms, but the damage will be calculated normally. The physical effect will appear as normal in the physical plane.

Finally, an Adept (being inherently magical) can choose to attack an astral being with his own body. The Adept still must be able to perceive the being. Unarmed Combat is an excellent talent to have in this situation, although only the greatest Adepts in Barsaive would feel comfortable taking on an astral being hand-to-hand.

MAGIC IN OUR WORLD

The following is from Writings of Jaron, *a magical treatise dated 435 TH. Both the Eternal Library of Thera and the Great Library of Throal still consider this work the definitive explanation of magic.*

When discussing the workings of magic, one must first consider the role that magic plays in our lives. Magic is a part of all things, animate and inanimate. Its energies permeate us and everything around us.

My fellow scholars call this age of powerful, ever-present magic the Age of Magical Thought. They contend that magic is such a fundamental part of our daily existence that it pervades our every thought and action. Building on that principle, they argue that as the magic of our world affects our thoughts and actions, so too do our actions and thoughts affect the magic of our world. This basic tenet

explains the existence of heroes. As those adventuring men and women we call heroes learn to use magic to perform their valiant deeds, their understanding of magic grows. As their understanding of magic grows, they learn to use ever more powerful magics to reach their goals. And as ordinary people hear of and admire their deeds as actions worthy of heroes, these heroes continue to behave more like other, legendary heroes. Magic affects our actions and thoughts, and our thoughts and actions affect magic.

The workings of magic in our world are diverse and complex. I endeavor to explain them here to the best of my understanding, in the hope that my attempt leads others to an even greater understanding of magic than my own.

MAGICAL THEORY

To fully understand the use of magic in our world, it is necessary to explore the theoretical foundation of how magic interacts with the world.

Understanding magical theory requires a grasp of six key ideas. These are Patterns, Names and Name-Giving, True Patterns, Pattern Knowledge, Pattern Items, and Threads. Each of these concepts is described below.

PATTERNS

Our world is alive with magical energy, which is ordered into patterns. Because magic permeates everything in the physical world, all people, places, and things have patterns. These patterns allow all things to exist in our magical world, and make it possible for magic to affect or interact with any person, place, or thing.

Any being that wants to use magical energy to cast spells or use talents and other magical abilities must form a tiny part of the magical energy of the world into a pattern. This pattern holds the true form of a magical ability. For example, a pattern may represent the true form of a spell, defining its form, structure, and use, much like a formula. When the magician casts that spell, he is expressing and using the spell's pattern.

Everything in the world – people, places, and things – can be connected to magical energy through its patterns. However, patterns of people, places, and things are static in nature. Left to themselves, they do not change over time. A pattern only changes by interacting with the magical energies of the world in important ways. When the pattern of a person, place, or thing interacts with the world in an important way, the pattern grows in complexity and power.

NAMES AND NAMING

The act of Naming is important in our world because it focuses the world's magical forces into a Pattern. From that moment on the Named person, place, or thing is important in the world. Naming only occurs in conjunction with the interaction of magic and a person, place, or thing. Magic can be introduced deliberately, through a talent, spell, ritual (such as a Weaponsmith's Forge Weapon talent, or a child's coming-of-age Naming ritual), or accidentally. The use of powerful magics near a person, place, or thing might spontaneously Name something (the site of a major battle, the grove of trees where a great hero died, and so on).

For example, you may have a name for the stand of common trees behind your home such as "the grove" or "those trees out back," but there is nothing important about those trees. The stand has its own pattern and, like everything in the world, is inherently magical. But this inherent magic is so weak you do not notice it. Most patterns in the world are like this, low in magic and effectively negligible. Named patterns, called True Patterns, are much more powerful.

Say that one terrible night, a pack of malevolent shadowhounds chases the wounded hero Samaran into that grove of trees. There, despite all the courage, bravery, and strength he can muster, Samaran is slain. The death of a great hero is a sufficiently powerful enough event to focus the forces of magic and give the nameless grove of trees a Name. The no-longer-ordinary stand of trees becomes Samaran's Demise. It now has a Name, and therefore a True Pattern.

What qualifies an ordinary thing or person for a Name? Association with magic or with some important event confers a Name upon the nameless. The following information describes those things most likely to be Named.

People

As intelligent, aware beings who are Name-givers, people must always have a Name. After all, how can one give a Name without having one? By definition, all Name-givers have Names.

People can be Named, and re-Named, at various stages of their lives. Different cultures Name at different times. In many cultures, Naming occurs just after birth, usually as part of a spiritual ritual. Some cultures allow a child to choose a new Name for him or herself upon reaching majority, including such Naming in a coming-of-age ceremony. In other cultures, a person can choose to be re-Named at any time as a symbol of a new beginning or a new stage of life.

Naming a person forms his or her True Pattern. If that same person is re-Named, his or her True Pattern changes; the power of the magical energy focused on him alters much of what he previously was. This change is more than symbolic because a person's talents and discipline are an integral part of his True Pattern. If the True Pattern changes, the individual will lose the power to use those talents and the abilities of his chosen Discipline. The re-Named person can begin again, and learn an entirely new Discipline (or relearn the old one) but who and what the person was is gone forever. He or she has a new Name, and has become a new person.

Places

A place is usually named for its association with an important event or powerful magics. Many cultures have specific Named places for birth and death (usually different places, but not always) to keep from having scores of individually Named places scattered all over town serving the same purpose.

The site of a major battle might be Named, as might the place of a subsequent surrender or treaty signing. A husband and wife might Name the place where they first met. The site of weddings is often Named, for the same reasons as the places of birth and death.

A place where people regularly work powerful magics is often Named. The Naming of such a place contributes to its power, making any magical workings there even stronger. A magician often names his inner sanctum or workplace for this reason.

Places where powerful magics were used, even if only once, also can be Named, though they rarely are. Such a place might be the site of a great battle fought with magic or simply the spot on which a magician stood to cast a high-level spell. Only the highest-ranked spells (Circle

14 or 15) are powerful enough to create a Name, and only dragons and very powerful magicians can cast them.

A great temptation exists to Name places in honor of a powerful individual or creature. But because Naming a place for its association to a person builds an echo of that individual's True Pattern into the True Pattern of the place, such Naming is discouraged. An item taken from that place could be used as a Pattern Item (see **Pattern Items,** p.136) against that person. However, many places are Named posthumously after a great hero falls there.



Things

Important items and objects are commonly Named when created. Creation of a magical item demands a Name; Naming focuses the magical forces to create the item's True Pattern. Without its name, the legendary weapon Fireheart would be a simple broadsword, and Ork-Cleaver nothing more than a well-made dwarf axe.

Non-magical items can also be Named, usually by a person who wants to link personal items more strongly to himself. For example, an ordinary person aspiring to become a Warrior might Name his weapon. This is a heroic thing to do, and the self-confidence such an act would inspire might spur the person to perform heroic deeds. This kind of minor Naming also poses a disadvantage; the item may become a Pattern Item for that individual (see **Pattern Items,** p. 136).

TRUE PATTERNS

As stated above, everything in the world has a pattern that defines its form, structure, and use. The patterns of important people, places, and things (those with a Name) are known as True Patterns. A True Pattern can be viewed as a blueprint for what it represents. True Patterns not only define physical nature (like a builder's plan for a house), but metaphysical nature as well: how a person, place, or thing is formed by and interacts with the magical world. A person's True Pattern defines that person's abilities, talents, skills, knowledge, psychology, and history. All that the person is makes up his True Pattern. The same holds true for places or things; everything that defines that place or thing from the moment of its creation up to the present moment is woven into its True Pattern.

Only Named things have a True Pattern (see **Names and Naming,** p. 134). Un-Named things have a pattern (everything in existence does), but these patterns are less complex and powerful than a True Pattern. Naming gives a pattern its power.

A True Pattern identifies an entity, place, or object as an individual, something separate from others of its type. True Patterns consist of three intertwined parts:

- The name associated with the pattern, usually what we would refer to as a proper noun.
- A history of that pattern; interactions with magic, significant events, important behaviors.
- Rules or ways in which the pattern uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.

A True Pattern designates a specific person, place, or thing, along with its history and ways of interacting with magic. A person, place, or thing can have only one True Pattern.

For example, dwarven magicians tell their apprentices that a True Pattern is the sum of an individual's important interactions with magic, behaviors that affect an individual's use of magic, and a record of events that led to his or her use of magic. The True Pattern defines everything magically important about the individual, what the individual has done/can do that is important to magic, what magic has done/can do that is important to the individual.

Because True Patterns represent things that interact with magic, they change over time. The True Pattern of a person, place, or thing is dynamic, changing as it continues to interact with the magical energies of the world.

Because a True Pattern contains the information that defines the person, place, or thing, a skillful magician or Adept can use the knowledge

gained from that True Pattern to his or her advantage. Knowledge of a True Pattern brings insights into the person, place, or thing to whom the True Pattern belongs. And knowledge, some say, is a form of power. But before a person can use a True Pattern to affect another person, place, or thing, he must first learn its Pattern Knowledge.

PATTERN KNOWLEDGE

Pattern Knowledge is the specific knowledge contained in a True Pattern. This includes its Name, all events in the True Pattern's history, and how it has interacted with magic.

The Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern is made up of Key Knowledges. Each Key Knowledge represents one specific piece of information about the True Pattern. Together, all the Key Knowledges of a True Pattern form its Pattern Knowledge. Only rarely can an entire Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern be learned; most True Patterns have too many Key Knowledges to be learned in the course of a single lifetime. Luckily (or not, as the case may be), only a few of these Key Knowledges are strong enough to be necessary for magical purposes.

Key Knowledges can take many forms. For example, the Key Knowledges of a certain place might include the Name of the place, the name of the last person to die in that place, and the date the place was built. The Key Knowledges of a person might include his place of birth, his strong hatred for another person or persons, and the Name of his favorite weapon.

PATTERN ITEMS

People and places with True Patterns may become associated with items that reflect the knowledge stored in their patterns. Usually personal possessions or items directly associated with the person or place. These items are called Pattern Items. Objects cannot have Pattern Items associated with their True Pattern; an object is its own Pattern Item.

Study and examination of the magics present in a Pattern Item yields insights into the True Pattern that influenced it. Think of a Pattern Item as a keyhole through which the True Pattern can be viewed. Though restricted, such a view can enable a magician or Adept to grasp the Key Knowledges of a True Pattern.

Proximity to or association with the True Pattern infuses an item with the magics needed to make it a Pattern Item. Because magic itself does this, the magician or Adept rarely controls which items become Pattern Items. In game terms, it is the GM's choice when an item becomes a Pattern Item, although having a character Name the item is a good start.

Because a Pattern Item contains a bit of a True Pattern's Pattern Knowledge, anyone trying to affect the True Pattern may use a Pattern Item in order to weave a thread between two True Patterns. The Pattern Item serves as a material source of Key Knowledge.

There are three classes of Pattern Items: Minor, Major, and Core Pattern Items. Each is described below.

Minor Pattern Items

The weakest of the three types, Minor Pattern Items are also the most difficult to use to find Key Knowledges because their link to the True Pattern is the most tenuous. A Minor Pattern Item has no distinctive physical appearance. The proper magical inquiry will reveal its magical properties, but it has no increased resistance to damage or any other special properties.

Minor Pattern Items are usually spontaneously created by the whims of magic, objects that gain a True Pattern through constant proximity to the use of magic. They often seem to be peripheral elements; personal possessions, minor features of a place, and so on. A magician's walking stick might become a Minor Pattern Item, as might a stone from a tavern where a questor of Garlen regularly performs healing for travelers and townsfolk. Minor Pattern Items tend to be physically important to their True Pattern's person or place, but rarely have any other importance.

Major Pattern Items

Major Pattern Items have a stronger connection to the True Pattern. The stronger, more direct magical link between the True Pattern and the Pattern Item makes them easier to use to gain knowledge about the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items are also more resistant to damage than that same item would be if it lacked magical energy. For example, books serving as Pattern Items might singe but not burn, or vials might only crack under conditions that would normally shatter them. Though it takes more effort to destroy them, Major Pattern Items are not indestructible.

Major Pattern Items must almost always be deliberately created. Most such creations spontaneously occur in connection with significant events or magics. Also, a Minor Pattern Item can transform into a Major Pattern Item if that item grows in significance in relation to its True Pattern, provided that the Minor Pattern Item has existed for at least one season (three months) prior to the transformation and that it remains in contact with or in proximity to the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items are almost always items of psychological importance to the person or place; a favorite weapon, a coat of arms signifying a great hall, and so on.

Core Pattern Items

Core Pattern Items have the strongest connection to the True Pattern. Like Major Pattern Items, they are rarely created spontaneously, but their creation invariably marks a significant event or turning point in the life of the person or place. Magical energy is most concentrated in Core Pattern Items, and they prove the most easily and effectively used for accessing a Key Knowledge of the True Pattern. Core Pattern Items are as durable as Major Pattern Items, but have two additional magical advantages. The first is the aura of luck that seems to surround them. If it is possible to save a Core Pattern Item from destruction, events often seem to arrange themselves in a way that saves the item. Fate and Lady Luck are on its side.

In its second advantage, if a Core Pattern Item is destroyed, the True Pattern it reflects will act upon the magical energies in the world to recreate the item. Recreating the item takes anywhere from a few days to a year and a day, averaging three to seven months. A Core Pattern Item may appear anywhere after the magical world recreates it.

Major Pattern Items can transform into Core Pattern Items, but only if the item continually grows in importance to the person or place and has existed for at least a year and a day. Core Pattern Items have intrinsic spiritual significance for the person or place, representing who or what they are in every respect. For example, a king's crown could be a Core Pattern Item for the king to whom it belongs.

Troubadours sing many stories of unusual Pattern Items, items that seem to have little connection with the person or place they represent. The troubadours sing about these items because they are the

exception rather than the rule. Most Pattern Items are common, familiar objects transformed because of their importance to a person or place.

Pattern Item Creation

Scholars have long noted that Pattern Items are created in a flexible sequence, as follows:

•The first Pattern Item created for a character or place is always a Minor Pattern Item.

•A Major Pattern Item for a character or place can only be created once a Minor Pattern Item exists.

•A Core Pattern Item for a character or place can be created only after the creation of a Major Pattern Item

The flexibility of this sequence is that it never requires the creation of Major or Core Pattern Items. Nor does it require that Minor items be "upgraded" to Major or Core items (although it can happen). Any combination of Pattern Items is possible for a given character or place.

THREADS

The magical energy flowing through our world can be separated into strands called threads. These threads can then be "woven" and used to better perform specific tasks. For example, magicians use threads to supply the power needed for their more complex spell castings. Adepts use threads to activate magical items' special powers and capabilities. (In this case, knowledge of an item's history is key to the actual weaving of the threads. Without that knowledge, an Adept cannot weave the thread that will give the item power, and the item remains inert. But that discussion belongs elsewhere). The use of threads in this manner, to give power to complex spells and magical items, is called, appropriately enough, Thread Magic.

Threads are conduits for magical energy used to give patterns greater power. They are created from the magical energies of astral space using the mystical talent of Thread Weaving. Each magical Discipline has its own variation of this talent that reflects the unique nature of that Discipline. Threads woven into existing Patterns, whether the Pattern of a spell, the Pattern of a magical item, or the Pattern of an ability, power and strengthen that Pattern. The magical energy fed into the Pattern through the woven thread enhances the Pattern and increases its potential. For example, each talent a hero possesses has a Pattern that is part of his or her True Pattern. As the hero becomes more experienced or more legendary, he weaves more threads to the talent, increasing that talent's potential. As each talent Pattern is strengthened, the hero's True Pattern becomes stronger and more durable.

There are two main types of threads. Pattern threads are used to connect two patterns, such as a thread between a Warrior and his Named sword. Spell threads, on the other hand, connect the pattern of a Spell to astral space, allowing the energy of astral space to power the spell.

SPELL MATRICES

When using spell magic, magicians often use astral constructs called spell matrices. A spell matrix is a structure of energy that exists solely in astral space and functions as a sort of container. Much as each Discipline has a unique way of weaving threads, Spell Matrices are also specific to each Discipline. Through a process known as attuning, magicians can shape a matrix into a mimicry of a known spell's Pattern. Once this has been done, the magician can cast that spell simply by drawing magical energy through the matrix. If the magician wishes to cast a different spell using that matrix, the matrix must be reattuned to reflect the new spell. It is important to note, however, that once a matrix has been attuned to reflect a certain spell's Pattern, a magician can cast the spell multiple times (by weaving threads and casting) without having to reattune the matrix. Magicians can have many spell matrices (attuned as they wish) as long as the matrix is of the proper type to hold the spell.

The spell matrix was created as an alternative to directly shaping and using the raw magic of astral space. That technique, known as casting raw magic, killed many magicians during this and the last magical age. During and after the Scourge, spell matrices served two additional purposes. The first was to protect and shield a spell's pure astral energy from the polluted energy of astral space itself (see **Nature of Astral Space**, p. 133). The second was to dampen that spell's "echo" in astral space and thus reduce the matrix's and magician's vulnerability to Horrors. The working of magic, the manipulation of pure astral energy, acts as a beacon to Horrors. By using a spell matrix, that beacon is dimmed. Before this dampening effect was perfected, some magicians took to "hiding" their spell matrices in physical objects to conceal them from the Horrors. Of course, if the item was lost or damaged, the matrices were lost with it. Even with the dim beacon produced by matrix spellcasting, Horrors are often drawn to areas where repeated spellcasting has taken place.

Some spells require too much energy for a simple spell matrix. When a spell matrix is attuned to reflect these more complex spells the mimic-Pattern of the matrix is created using a sort of "shorthand." This abbreviated version allows the matrix to reflect the entirety of the complex spell's own Pattern, but the magician cannot cast the spell with this form of the matrix. The magician must weave additional threads of power (the exact number dependent on the complexity of the spell) into the matrix. These threads power the matrix and expand its capabilities temporarily so that the complex spell can be properly cast. Once the threads have been woven, the spell must be cast. Once the spell is cast, the matrix returns to its "compressed" state. Each time the magician casts that spell, he must once again weave the required threads to provide the power for the spell.

THREAD MAGIC

Thread magic is the process by which a thread of magical energy is woven into an existing True Pattern, thereby strengthening and enhancing that Pattern. Magicians of higher Circles can weave threads to any True Pattern, such as those possessed by any Named person, place, or thing. Once a character has learned the knowledge contained in a True Pattern, he can use thread magic to turn that knowledge to his advantage. The following sections will describe how threads can be used in conjunction with the True Patterns of people and places, and to access the power of magical items found while adventuring.

USING THREAD MAGIC

There are several steps to using thread magic successfully. These steps are summarized here, then described fully below.

Step 1: Obtain Key Knowledge.

Step 2: Spend Legend Points for thread.

Step 3: Weave thread to True Pattern.

STEP 1: OBTAIN KEY KNOWLEDGE

The first step in using thread magic is to obtain the Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern. To fully access a True Pattern requires that a character carefully study the person, place, or thing it represents - the Pattern Knowledge of a pattern. Remember that this Pattern Knowledge will consist of several individual Key Knowledges, each containing one piece of knowledge about the True Pattern. Through an understanding of a True Pattern's Key Knowledges, someone can affect that pattern with magic.

This research can be done in only a few specific ways. The most common method of obtaining a True Pattern's Key Knowledges is to obtain and study one or more of its Pattern Items. When dealing with the True Pattern of items, which have no Pattern Items themselves, old-fashioned research is often the only recourse.

Obtaining a Pattern Item

Pattern items are obtained through adventuring. Through reasoning and roleplaying, a character can use his talents to obtain Pattern Items. Pattern items are important objects. They are not easily found, and obtaining them often involves overcoming opposition. In a world of magical thought, many people and creatures know the value of Pattern Items, and guard them accordingly.

Key Knowledge

Each single Pattern Item holds one Key Knowledge about a True Pattern. The relationship between the Key Knowledge and the True Pattern is based on the type of Pattern Item from which the Key Knowledge comes. A Minor Pattern Item holds knowledge that is related to, but not integral to, the True Pattern. Major Pattern Items often hold knowledge that is an important part of the True Pattern, but is only knowledge created via the item's association with the True Pattern. Core Pattern Items hold knowledge that is a part of the essence of the True Pattern.

In addition to learning the Key Knowledge held by a Pattern Item, it is also necessary to know the truth behind the knowledge the Pattern Item represents.

Grolk enters the village of Corthy, hunting a vampire who has bitten the archer Delthrien. While in the village he hears a story about how a gem merchant managed to ward off the vampire with a clove of garlic. Grolk now knows that garlic affects this vampire, and he reasons that this knowledge is the sort associated with a Pattern Item. The ability of garlic to drive off a vampire sounds like a magical interaction derived from the nature of the vampire's True Pattern. Grolk now needs the clove that drove off the vampire. The clove of garlic is a Minor Pattern Item for the vampire.

Something unique to Minor Pattern Items is that they can lose their status as a Pattern Item. This often happens as they become less relevant to the True Pattern. Separation, in terms of time and space, is a major factor in this situation.

Grolk, clove of garlic firmly in hand, has finally hunted down the vampire after five years of exhaustive search. For the vampire, however, being warded off by a clove of garlic has long been forgotten, and the clove of garlic has lost its relevance to the vampire. When Grolk fights the vampire, he may be surprised to learn that the clove of garlic is no longer a Minor Pattern Item for the vampire. In fact, it may well have become a Minor Pattern Item for Grolk.

The knowledge in a Pattern Item always represents at least a portion of the target's True Pattern, the magical essence of the target. When trying to discover what knowledge is linked to a Pattern Item, a character should look for one of the types of knowledge that the True Pattern contains:

- The name associated with the pattern
- A history of that name, events, behaviors, and interaction with magic
- Ways the pattern uses, or is affected by, or interacts with magic

Knowing that a Wizard visited the Kaer Cache Tavern last Thursday is not the kind of information connected to a pattern item. That bit of information is not enough to help a character know where the Wizard is now, where he might be in the future, or even his preference in taverns. If the character learns that the Wizard visits the Kaer Cache Tavern every Thursday, that is something useful. Repetition of this behavior may have worn the habit into the Wizard's True Pattern. The character may now have a piece of information strong enough to be connected to a Pattern Item.

A character learns that Lord Malban's favorite clothes are made from a magically treated silk. Might this be the kind of knowledge attached to a Pattern Item? Lord Malban is more likely to wear his favorite clothes - again, repetition may have worn the fact into Lord Malban's True Pattern.

Remember that knowledge alone is not enough. A character must also have a Pattern Item that exemplifies what he or she has learned about the owner of the True Pattern. Using the above examples, a character might discover that the Pattern Item is a mug from the Kaer Cache Tavern. To create a thread from knowledge of Lord Malban's clothes, a character would most likely have to get hold of one of Lord Malban's robes.

Studying a Pattern Item

Once a Pattern Item is obtained, a character can study it in order to use the Key Knowledges it contains. To learn the Key Knowledge of a Pattern Item, it is recommended that a character have the Item History talent. The character must study the Pattern Item, as described in the rules for the talent. A character studying a Pattern Item makes a Talent Test against the Pattern Item's Spell Defense, which is determined by the gamemaster and based on the specific type of Pattern Item studied.

SPELL DEFENSE TABLE

Class of Pattern Item	Spell Defense Range
Minor	7-12
Major	13-18
Core	19+

The **Spell Defense Table** shows the common ranges for each class of Pattern Items.

If the test is successful, the character has learned the Key Knowledge held by the Pattern Item. In the case of objects, which are their own Pattern Items, it is occasionally possible to obtain more than one Key Knowledge with a single test.

Repeating Study Attempts

If the Item History test fails, the character may try again after another period of study. This period of additional study time is based on how many previous attempts he or she has made to study the same item. The more a character studies a Pattern Item, the more the item comes in contact with the character's own True Pattern. Characters must be careful not to imprint their own True Pattern on the item, as this would destroy the item's value as a Pattern Item. This caution slows the pace of study. The more study attempts your character makes, the longer he or she must spend on the attempt.

Each day of study requires that the character examine the Pattern Item for at least one hour per day, and at least six days of each week. Any study time less than a full week (six days) is wasted.

After the character has completed his additional study, he may attempt another Item History Test. If this test fails, he may try again after further study time. The **Study Time Table** has the suggested amount of time for additional study of a Pattern Item after failed attempts. The study can be less that the suggested time, representing a more intense study of the item, but carries with it a much greater risk of imprinting the character's True Pattern on the item.

STUDY TIME TABLE

Attempt Number	Study Time
1	1 week
2	1 additional week
3	1 additional week
4	2 additional weeks
5	2 additional weeks
6	2 additional weeks
7	3 additional weeks
8	3 additional weeks
9	1 additional month
10	1 additional month
11	2 additional months
12	3 additional months
13	4 additional months
14	6 additional months
15+	1 additional year

Research

Another method of obtaining the Key Knowledges for a True Pattern is through research. People, places, and things important enough to have True Patterns also tend to be remembered by those who interact with them. The name of the Archer who fired the arrow that killed the Horror that had been terrorizing a village is likely to be a part of the history of the village. By researching the history and activities of a True Pattern, it is possible to obtain its Key Knowledges, but this often takes a very long time. Some legends tell of Wizards spending years researching a True Pattern, only to discover that the pattern had changed before they could use the Key Knowledges obtained. The Research Skill can be helpful in obtaining information about a Key Knowledge.

STEP 2: SPEND LEGEND POINTS

Once a character knows one or more Key Knowledges of a True Pattern, it now becomes possible for him or her to weave a thread to the True Pattern. First, however, he must spend Legend Points to buy the required number of Thread Ranks. The cost of the Thread Ranks is determined by the nature of the True Pattern to which the thread is woven. The cost of Thread Ranks to be woven to the True Patterns of people and places is the same as costs for Ranks of a First Circle Talent, found on pg. 245. Much like talents, new threads start at rank 1, and must be paid for with Legend Points (and re-woven) to increase them.

*Farliv, having acquired a Pattern Item of his enemy, wants to buy a Rank 1 thread to connect to his foe's True Pattern. Consulting the **Talent Rank Cost Table**, we see this would cost Farliv 100 Legend Points.*

*Alachia wants to increase the rank of a thread that she has attached to the True Pattern of Blood Wood. The thread is currently Rank 3. Consulting the **Talent Rank Cost Table**, we find that the cost of increasing the rank from 3 to 4 is 500 Legend Points.*

The maximum Thread Rank for a thread woven to the True Pattern of a person or place depends on the class of Pattern Item used to weave it. A Minor Pattern Item can support up to a Rank 5 thread, and a Major Pattern Item supports up to a Rank 9. Core Pattern Items have no maximum Thread Rank.

STEP 3: WEAVE THREAD TO TRUE PATTERN

Once a character has spent Legend Points for the Thread Rank, he can then weave the thread to the subject's True Pattern. Weaving the thread is done using the Thread Weaving talent. The character makes a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank, per the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table.

THREAD WEAVING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Thread Rank	Weaving Difficulty
1	8
2	9
3	10
4	11
5	12
6	13
7	14
8	15
9	16
10	17
11	18
12	19
13	20
14	21
15	22

If the Thread Weaving Test is successful, the character has woven a thread to the True Pattern. If the Thread Weaving Test fails, the character can make no further attempts at weaving the thread until he has gained a new rank in the Thread Weaving talent. Neither the Legend Points nor the old thread (if one existed) are lost, however. As soon as the character increases his rank in Thread Weaving, he can try again to weave the thread.

Weaving Threads and Pattern Items

The character must be in possession of the Pattern Item he studied in order to successfully weave the thread. The Pattern Item is a material link between the character and the True Pattern to which he is weaving the thread.

A single Pattern Item can have only one thread associated with it. When increasing the rank of a pre-existing thread, the new thread replaces the previous one. Because Minor Pattern Items are only loosely connected to a subject's True Pattern, Thread Weaving Tests made for a Minor Pattern Item require a Good Success level.

Using Woven Threads

When a character uses a pattern item to weave a thread to a subject's True Pattern, that act establishes a link between the character's True Pattern and the True Pattern of the target.

Once a thread is woven, the weaving character can use it to boost one of his own abilities against the subject of the True Pattern. To do this, he must attach the thread to one of his abilities. A character can attach one thread to any of the following abilities:

- 1 talent
- Physical Defense Rating
- Spell Defense Rating
- Social Defense Rating
- Wound Threshold
- Mystic Armor

The Thread Rank increases the ability to which it is attached when the character interacts with the True Pattern to which his thread is woven. In the case of talents and skills, this increases the rank. For other abilities, each Thread Rank increases the value of the ability by 1.

Me'gana weaves a Rank 2 thread from the True Pattern of Noraim, a Theran Wizard, to her Melee Weapons talent through the Wizard's "lost" grimoire. This thread increases her Melee Weapons talent by 2 ranks when interacting with Noraim.

Weaving Threads to Your Pattern Items

As characters adventure in the world of Barsaive, it is quite likely that some of their items may become Pattern Items connected to the character's True Pattern. Characters can weave threads to these Pattern Items which can increase their abilities much like threads woven to other True Patterns.

The first step of weaving a thread is a good deal easier in this case. As you are only trying to weave a thread between your own True Pattern and one of its Pattern Items, it is assumed that you know the appropriate key knowledges. The cost for Thread Ranks is the same, with the difficulties given in the **Thread Weaving Difficulty Table**. Weaving threads to Minor Pattern Items requires a Good or better success on the Thread Weaving test, while for Major and Core Pattern Items an Average success is enough.

Minor pattern items can increase an ability by up to one rank, Major Pattern Items can increase a single ability by up to four ranks, and Core Pattern Items can increase a single ability by up to eight ranks. The gamemaster may require that the abilities increased by the Pattern Item relate in some way to the Pattern Item itself, such as a piece of armor increasing a character's Physical Defense Rating, or a troubadour's lute increasing his Emotion Song talent.

To gain the benefits of the woven threads, the character must have the Pattern Item on his person. The closeness to the character enhances the connection between the Pattern Item and the character's True Pattern, and allows the thread between the two patterns to empower the character.

Farak has worn the same suit of battered leather armor for many years, and it has become a Minor Pattern Item for him. Taking advantage of this fact, Farak wishes to weave a thread to the leather armor. Spending 100 Legend Points, Farak must make a Good success against a Thread Weaving Test with a Difficulty Number of 8. He succeeds, and ties a Rank 1 thread to his leather armor. He chooses to have this thread increase his Physical Defense Rating, and so his Physical Defense Rating will be increased by one whenever he is wearing Farak's Leather Armor.

Limits on Thread Magic

There are some limits on how many threads a character can weave with Thread Weaving. At any one time, a character can have a number of threads active (attached to True Patterns) equal to the sum of his ranks in Thread Weaving talents. This limit does not include spell threads, as those are temporary. Also, the character's highest rank in Thread Weaving is the maximum rank to which any of his threads can be increased.

Jerreck has Rank 4 Thread Weaving (Wizardry). He can have at most 4 threads active, and the maximum rank for any of them is 4.

LOSING THREADS

All the threads a character currently has active are lost when that character dies. When a character loses an item to which he has woven a thread, the thread remains active until someone else weaves a thread to that item, effectively disconnecting the character's thread.

OTHER TYPES OF THREAD MAGIC

The above discussion provides players with the basics for using thread magic in **Earthdawn**. The following section describes how to use thread magic in a number of additional ways.

Thread magic can be used in **Earthdawn**, for example, to help one character gain an advantage over another, to boost a character's abilities in a specific place, to permit a character to use magical items, and to enhance a character's abilities when in possession of his pattern items. The following sections will cover some of the possibilities not previous discussed.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

The use of thread magic with the True Patterns of people and places works exactly as described above. There are a few aspects peculiar to use with either people or places, which are discussed below.

People

When a character weaves a thread to the True Pattern of another person, the thread functions as a link between the True Patterns of the weaving character and the subject. The weaver can use this link in one of two fashions. First, he can use it to boost his abilities when interacting with the subject, or he can use it to boost the abilities of the subject. The first use – boosting the character's abilities when interacting with the subject of the True Pattern – is described above.

If a character wants to boost the abilities of the subject, he chooses one of the subject's abilities to which he will attach the thread. The character can choose to attach the thread to any of the same abilities listed above. Threads used in this way work exactly as those already described.

A character must choose how he will use the thread when he creates the thread. Once he has chose, the thread cannot be changed to any other use.

Thom Hammerblade has obtained a Minor Pattern Item for Me'gana. After studying the Pattern Item and learning its Key Knowledge, Thom chooses to weave a Rank 1 thread to Me'gana's True Pattern in order to boost her spell defense. Once this thread is in place, Me'gana's Spell Defense Rating increases by +1.

Places

A character can use threads created from the True Pattern of a place in one of two ways. The character must choose one of these when creating the thread. Once he makes that decision, he cannot change the thread for use in the second way.

A character may use the Thread Ranks to boost abilities, as described above. The thread strengthens the character as long as he or she remains in that place. If a character has a thread woven to the True Pattern of the Blood Wood, the Thread Rank boosts the character's abilities as long as he was in Blood Wood. Once the character leaves Blood Wood, he loses the thread benefit. He regains the benefit as soon as he reenters the Wood, however.

Alternatively, a character can increase various game ratings associated with the place. A Wizard might, for example, increase the Barrier Rating of the wall of her tower, the Difficulty Number to open the locks on her doors, or even enhance the appearance of her library. As above, the rank of the thread determines the increase in rating.

Noraim, a Theran Wizard from Vivane, has woven a Rank 5 thread to the True Pattern of his laboratory. He has decided to use the thread to increase the difficulty of opening the locks in his lab. The Difficulty Number for Lock Pick Tests in Noraim's lab increases by 5 with the help of this thread.

MAGIC ITEMS

Most magic items in **Earthdawn** are unique, produced by a conjunction of magical energy and emotion that imbues the item with magical powers. These powers reflect the events that created it. These powers are not enchanted into the item; they simply come into being when the item is involved in some significant event. It is important to remember that in **Earthdawn**, magic is life and life itself is magic. This means that because of magic, all the world is alive in one way or another. The forces of magic and life also interact with each other, sometimes in distinct and sometimes subtle ways. This interaction is described in the concepts of Patterns, True Patterns, Pattern Items, and threads.

The greater the legend of an item, the more significant events it has been a part of, the greater its powers. The person wielding or using such an item rarely sees the full force of that power manifest. Because it takes time for the forces of magic to empower an item, we provide a selection of pre-generated magic items. These items possess magical abilities and the power to enhance the user's abilities, though those abilities will not manifest until the character who acquires that item can empower it with a thread of magic. The procedure for powering a magic item with a thread appears in the sections following and in Magical Treasure. Players and gamemasters should review both sections carefully before introducing magic items into their game.

Not all magical items are created by unique circumstance. Some are created by more traditional means. These items all have similar capabilities (within their kind) because they were specifically enchanted with those powers. However, because each item has a unique history after its construction, the information needed to empower each item may differ.



USING MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items, by virtue of their creation (coincidence or design) all have True Patterns. The True Pattern reflects all of an item's history and all of its potential. Like a spell matrix holding a complex spell, a magic item cannot manifest its powers until a character weaves a magic thread to it. Magicians find weaving spell threads relatively easy, since they are intimately familiar with the Pattern of the spell they are casting and know how to connect the empowering threads. A character who discovers a magic item is not so lucky. The item's True Pattern is a mystery of history, facts, and magic intricately braided together. Before the Adept can use the item he must unravel some of the mystery of that item. He does that in part by using his own mystical talents, and in part by old-fashioned mundane research.

Each ability or power of a magic item has a specific rank, similar to the ranks of talents. Each ability or power is also associated with a specific piece of information, or Key Knowledge, which must be learned before that power can be used. The magical thread that empowers the particular ability can only be woven once the appropriate Key Knowledge, that little bit of insight into the item's True Pattern, has been learned.

For example, a particular magic item may have three ranks of powers, Ranks 1, 2, and 3. Items can have more or less depending on the power and history of the item. (See **Magical Treasure**, p. 276). Each rank provides a unique power and is tied to a Key Knowledge that the character must know to unlock that power. Each Key Knowledge must be learned (and used) in succession. The Rank 2 Key Knowledge must be learned and used before the Rank 3, and so on.

Each character must perform the following steps to empower a magic item's abilities. Each step is outlined in greater detail here and in the opening sections of **Magical Treasures.**

1. Obtain the Key Knowledge for this rank.
   a. Make an Item History Test to learn the general nature of the Key Knowledge.
   b. Or, Research the specifics of the Key Knowledge.
2. Weave the thread.
   a. Spend a number of Legend Points based on the rank of the thread being woven. The Thread Rank is equal to rank of the Key Knowledge or power being activated.
   b. Make a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the rank of the thread (see the **Weaving Difficulty Table**)
3. Use the item (but use it wisely).

OBTAINING THE KEY KNOWLEDGE

A character who uses his or her Item History talent successfully discovers the basic information of a particular Key Knowledge at a specific rank. However, the basic knowledge does not give the character any advantage until he learns the full Key Knowledge of those ranks.

This basic Key Knowledge is known as the Test Knowledge. This is the general nature of the Key Knowledge, but not the specific information. For example, the Test Knowledge might be that the character has to learn the name of the item's creator. He does not learn the name, only that he must discover it before he can weave a thread at that Rank. The specific information, such as the name itself, is known as the Research Knowledge.

To learn the Test Knowledge, the character makes an Item History Test against the item's Spell Defense. The success level determines how many ranks of Key Knowledge the character learns. An Average success reveals the Key Knowledge at the next rank. A Good success reveals the next two, an Excellent success the next three, and an Extraordinary success the Test Knowledge for next four Key Knowledges. A character can only learn a number of Test Knowledges from one test equal to his rank in Item History. An Extraordinary Item History success can also provide the character with some of the Research Knowledges for a particular item. The character may learn up to three of the beginning Research Knowledges for a specific item, but never more than his rank in Item History. The exact number of Research Knowledges learned (if any) in such a case is left to the GM.

Thom Hammerblade is using his Item History talent to study a magic sword he found during his last adventure. His Item History Rank is 2. After a week of study, he makes his Item History Test against the sword's Spell Defense. With a few Bonus dice, he gets an Excellent success, meaning he should learn the first three Key Knowledges of the sword. But because Thom has only a Rank 2 Item History talent, he can only learn the Key Knowledges for Thread Ranks 1 and 2. If he wants to learn more of the sword's Key Knowledges, he must first increase the rank of his Item History talent.

The character now knows what he must learn before he can weave the threads for those ranks, and must research it. See **Research**, below, and the information presented in **Magical Treasure.**

Rank 1 Information

As part of the Rank 1 Test Knowledge, the adept also finds out the item's total number of Thread Ranks and the number of Deeds associated with that item (see **Deeds**, p. 143).

Additional Ranks

Once a character weaves a thread to an item, he or she can continue to weave a new, stronger thread at each rank beyond the first. This new thread replaces the old thread, but maintains the powers and abilities of the old thread. This new thread cannot be woven until the character learns the appropriate Test and Research Knowledges. A character who fails to learn the Key Knowledges for multiple Thread Ranks as a result of a better-than-average success level on an Item History Test (see **Obtaining Key Knowledge**, this page) must simply make an Item History Test to learn the Key Knowledge for each consecutive rank as he reaches it.

Research

Once the character learns the Test Knowledge, he must learn the specific information that will allow him to weave a thread. Learning this information can occur as part of an adventure and should be integrated into a story, or can be something that takes place between adventures. In either case, research is something the character does during the course of a story. It cannot be resolved with a simple die roll, but must happen through adventuring and roleplaying. The character must seek out the source of that information and somehow discover what he needs to know. The process could be simple and quick, or complex and arduous, depending on the nature of the item, the

information to be learned, and the gamemaster's mood. More about handling research and research-based adventures is presented specifically in the **Magical Treasure** chapter, and generally in **Gamemastering Earthdawn.**



WEAVING THE THREAD

Once the character learns the Research Knowledge, he will become aware that he can now weave the thread to empower the item at the appropriate rank.

The thread must be woven at a rank equal to the Key Knowledge Rank learned. The maximum rank at which a character can weave a thread is equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. When the character prepares to weave the thread, he must spend a number of Legend Points to do so. This cost represents the experience and effort the character puts into weaving the thread. The actual Legend Point cost varies with the item and the rank desired. The items listed in Magical Treasure list the Legend Point cost with each rank. For example, the cost to weave a Rank 1 thread to a Counterspell Staff is 200 Legend Points. The cost to weave a Rank 5 thread to Nioku's Bow is 3,400 Legend Points!

Ardis Foarr, the Wizard, found a Counterspell Staff in the ruins of a citadel he traveled through and wants to weave a thread to it. He studies the item and learns its first Key Knowledge. Now he must spend Legend Points to weave the thread. The gamemaster checks the description of the Counterspell Staff and finds that Ardis Foarr must spend 200 Legend Points to weave a Rank 1 thread. If Ardis later becomes ambitious and wants to increase the Thread Rank from 1 to 2, he must spend 300 Legend Points to weave the Rank 2 thread.

Once he spends the Legend Points, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test to weave the thread. The Difficulty Number for this test is based on the rank of the thread, as listed in the **Thread Weaving Difficulty Table,** pg. 139.

If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the character attaches the thread to the item's True Pattern and the item's ability at that Rank is empowered. When increasing the rank of an existing thread, the new thread replaces the existing thread. The abilities gained at lower Ranks are still enabled with the new, more powerful thread in place.

If the Thread Weaving Test fails, the character cannot make another attempt at weaving a thread to that item until he has gained the next higher rank in Thread Weaving. Because the test failed, the character regains the Legend Points spent on weaving a new thread, and the old thread, if one existed, remains in effect. As soon as the character increases his rank in the Thread Weaving talent, he can try again to weave the thread, spending the same amount of Legend Points as he did for his first attempt.

Jerreck makes a Thread Weaving Test to increase the rank from 2 to 3 of the thread he has woven to Drea's Magic Pouch. The Difficulty Number of his Thread Weaving Test is 10. He makes his test and fails, getting only a 9. Jerreck must now increase his Rank in Thread Weaving before he can again attempt to weave that thread. His Rank 2 thread remains in place, and the next time he tries to increase the rank of the thread attached to the pouch, he follows the same steps as he did in the first attempt.

Deeds

Sometimes it is possible to perform a specific Deed to earn the Legend Points used to weave a thread to an item. Sometimes, the character must perform the Deed to earn the Legend Points to weave the thread. Whether an item requires any Deeds is learned at Rank 1, but the Key Knowledge of the Deed can only be learned at the rank with which the Deed is associated. Deeds must be researched in the same way as Research Knowledge.

Some Deeds are voluntary. However, if the character chooses to perform the Deed, he can only spend the Legend Points earned by completing the Deed-adventure on weaving the thread for that item at that rank.

Deeds are usually symbolically or directly associated with the history of the item and the magical forces at work in its empowering. See the section on **Deeds** in **Magical Treasure,** p. 279.

BLOOD MAGIC

Blood magic is a special type of magic that draws its power from small sacrifices, usually a small amount of blood. The sacrifice is represented by the character taking (sacrificing) a few points of permanent damage to strengthen the magic of a talent or ability. Record this damage in the Blood Magic circle in the Damage section of the Character Record Sheet.

USING BLOOD MAGIC

The most common use of blood magic is to power special talents and abilities. At some Discipline Circles, Adepts have access to special abilities whose use requires blood magic. Similarly, some available talents can be made more effective and made to last longer through blood magic.

The use of blood magic can also make some magical items more powerful. The sacrifice strengthens the thread link between the character and the item, allowing the character to use the item's known abilities more fully. Blood magic also allows characters to use certain powerful charms and to seal oaths.

DURATION OF BLOOD MAGIC

Though each type of blood magic functions differently, all share one feature. Nearly all uses of blood magic last for a year and a day. Some magical scholars and theorists suggest that the seemingly standard duration springs from the common factor of blood sacrifice in the various uses of this specific type of magic. Other learned sources contend that the stable magic level affects blood magic in this unique way.

Records in the Throal libraries indicate that the use of blood magic was less common before the Scourge, but these pre-Scourge sources do not refer to a standard or common duration for blood magic.

Overuse of blood magic has been found to be dangerous. The ill effects (apart from the permanent damage) include weakness, malfunctioning magic, and even explosive depatternization (death).

DEPATTERNING

Depatterning is the bland euphemism coined by Theran magicians to describe what happens when excessive stress placed on a Namegiver's True Pattern causes that Pattern to collapse in on itself. Depatterning can be fatal, at times spectacularly so. The most common cause of depatterning is the use of certain powerful blood charms that put an unusual amount of stress on the True Pattern of the user.

Blood charms come at a cost. The stress they cause to a Namegiver's pattern can cause wounds, permanent disfigurements, and in some cases even death. When a character takes the permanent damage required to power a blood charm, he or she earns a Depatterning Rating, or DR: a measure of how much stress the use of blood magic caused to the character's True Pattern. Each blood magic charm described below has its own Depatterning Rating, the amount by which the character's rating increases when he first powers the charm.

Depatterning Checks

When the gamemaster believes that a blood charm is being stressed, he may make a Depatterning Check. This stress can be caused by many things: damage to the charm itself or overuse of the charm are two common reasons. For some of the more unusual (high DR) charms, merely using he charm may be enough to trigger a Depatterning Check. To make a Depatterning check, the gamemaster adds up all of the DRs of the charms currently in use by the character, along with any modifiers (discussed later) that the character may have picked up. He then rolls that step against a target number equal to the character's Willpower attribute value (not the Step). If the check fails, then the character's pattern has successfully withstood the interference of the blood charm.

If the check makes at least an Average success, then the use of the blood charm has warped the character's True Pattern. This causes the character to receive a wound, in addition to any other effects that may occur. This wound is usually in the same general area as, or related to, the blood charm that was being stressed. A success level better than Average means that the blood charm has greater effects, as described on this page.

A Good success indicates that the character has gained a cumulative +1 to his DR rating. This is usually accompanied by an effect similar to the following:

- The character's skin and hair turns white.
- Blood occasionally drips from the character's tear ducts.
- Lesions appear on the hands and face of the character.
- The character loses his voice in times of stress.
- The character can no longer drink pure water.
- Arthritis.
- The character begins to hear voices whispering to him unintelligibly.

An Excellent success indicates that the character has gained a cumulative +2 to his DR rating. This is usually accompanied by an effect similar to the following:

- The character has fits of uncontrollable screaming.
- The character develops an intense fear associated with his blood charms (i.e. A character with a Darksight Eye has a fear of bright lights).
- The character develops a limp, giving him an effective -4 to his Dexterity for purposes of calculating movement rates.
- The character's wound threshold is halved.
- The character suffers four additional wounds.
- The character loses two points from an attribute.
- The character's True Pattern is so badly damaged that he can no longer spend Legend Points on anything but Karma.

An Extraordinary success indicates that the character has stressed his True Pattern to the point of breaking. This is always fatal. Due to the disintegration of his True Pattern, the character cannot be raised from the dead. These deaths are usually quite spectacular, involving effects such as:

- The character suffers a massive, fatal heart attack.
- The character implodes, deflating like a punctured balloon.
- The character explodes in a shower of mangled flesh.
- The character turns to crystal and shatters into a million shards, causing Step 7 damage to all characters in a 10 foot radius.
- The character melts like wax in a flame.
- The character putrefies on the spot.

Recovering

Wounds gained as a result of a Depatterning Check heal normally. Once a character fails a Depatterning Test, his astral imprint reflects the weakening of his pattern. Characters can detect this weakening in astral space by achieving a Good or better success against the affected character's Spell Defense. Once the depatterning is known, the character can restore his True Pattern. This is a slow process, and is only possible when the character has removed all blood charms. Note that some blood charms are nigh impossible to remove — an adventurer would be wise to consider this fact before using such a charm. The character must then not employ any form of Blood Magic except Strain for a year and a day. At the end of this period, the character's True Pattern is restored, and any DR modifiers the character had picked up are no longer in effect. He can thereafter adventure without risk, unless he chooses to use another blood charm and begins the hazardous cycle all over again.

SPELL MAGIC



The way of the magician is both power and danger.
A spell, like any other thing of power, is often a two-edged sword.
–Mestoph, Elven Nethermancer

All Adepts use magic to power their talents. Many characters use their ability to wield magic to find, learn about, and use fantastic magical items and weapons. A few specialize in the use of arcane magics called spell magic. Characters that specialize in spell magic are known as magicians. These characters learn to create the patterns of spells and channel pure magical energy through those patterns to affect the physical world. This section describes the basic elements of spellcasting, gives the procedure for casting spells of all types, and warns characters of the dangers of certain ways of casting spells.

ABOUT SPELLCASTING

Characters can cast spells using one of three different methods. The three share similar elements, but each also differs slightly from the others. The first, and most common method is referred to simply as spellcasting. The safest way to cast spells, this method requires the use of spell matrices, and is sometimes called matrix casting.



The second method is called casting from a grimoire. As its name implies, this method enables a magician to cast spells directly from a grimoire, rather than using a spell matrix. A magician usually only casts spells from a grimoire belonging to someone else. By writing spells into his own grimoire he learns them, and so can generally cast them without reading them.

The last method of spellcasting, casting raw magic, is also the most dangerous. Using this method, a magician draws energy directly from astral space and channels it through his body. Raw magic casting serves as a sort of last-resort method of casting spells. For example, say a magician has spell matrices available, but the spells attuned to the matrices (see **Attuning and Reattuning Matrices**, p. 150) are not the ones he needs. If he also has no time to reattune his spells, even on the fly, he might risk casting raw magic just to get the job done or even survive. Casting raw magic can (and usually does) inflict physical damage on the magician. Because a magician casting raw magic has momentarily abandoned the teaching of his Discipline that allows him to draw only pure magical energy into his spells, the polluted energy that flows from the astral plane as raw magic allows Horrors to locate magicians casting such spells and mark them (see **Horrors**, p. 315, as well as p. 152 of this chapter for more information on Horror-marks).

TALENTS FOR CASTING SPELLS

In order to cast spells, all magicians must use the Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents. These talents allow magicians to shape the pattern of spells, power the spells, and cast them. Each discipline has its own method of Spellcasting and Thread Weaving, and characters must use those methods in order to cast spells of that discipline.

In order to cast spells safely and minimize the danger from the Horrors, a magician also needs the Spell Matrix talent. This talent gives a magician a conduit through which to transfer magical energy from astral space to the physical world. As a magician gains experience, he learns to channel more magical energy into his spells and uses the Willforce talent to increase the power of his spells.

The information below summarizes how to use these basic spellcasting talents. Full descriptions appear in Talents.

SPELLCASTING TALENT

Each of the four magician Disciplines-Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard-have a Spellcasting talent available to them. This talent allows them to channel magical energies in the proper way to create a spell. Spellcasting steps are added to a character's Perception step to make Spellcasting Tests, so a character created with a high Perception Attribute Value begins with an advantage as a magician. When casting a spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number, also called the Spellcasting Difficulty. Most often this is the target's Spell Defense, though in some cases another number is used. Each of the following spell descriptions lists a Spellcasting Difficulty. If the result of the Spellcasting Test is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds when used.

In combat, Spellcasting Tests are considered Attack Tests. If the spellcaster achieves an Excellent success or better, that spell attack defeats the appropriate armor, physical or mystic, with an Armor-Defeating Hit (see **Combat**, p. 219).

Many creatures also have the Spellcasting Talent among their listed abilities. When casting spells, creatures use the step number indicated under Spellcasting in the game statistics block included in each individual creature description (see **Creatures**, p. 293)

THREAD WEAVING TALENT

Each magician Discipline has its own Thread Weaving talent. These are known, respectively, as Elementalism, Illusion, Nethermancy, and Wizardry. Thread Weaving talents allow magicians to weave spell threads into a spell's pattern to empower the spell. A magician can also use Thread Weaving to place a spell pattern into a spell matrix, an astral construct that allows a magician to safely transfer the energy of a spell from astral space to the physical world. A magician may only cast spells for which he has the appropriate Spellcasting, Thread Weaving, and (if appropriate) Spell Matrix talents. Without the Thread Weaving talent, a magician cannot attune his spell to either a spell matrix or grimoire, and so is very limited in his choice of spells (see **Casting Raw Magic**, p. 151).

SPELL MATRIX TALENT

The Spell Matrix talent allows a character to place a spell pattern in a spell matrix in order to cast it. In Earthdawn, magicians rarely cast spells without placing them in a spell matrix because the other methods of casting a spell, casting from a grimoire and casting raw magic, are often more dangerous and less reliable. For that reason, the following rules assume that magicians are using spell matrices when casting spells, though this section also provides guidelines for using the other methods.

The Spell Matrix Talent Rank represents the maximum Circle of spell the matrix can hold. For example, a Rank 3 Spell Matrix can hold a single spell of up to Circle 3.

The Spell Matrices section below provides more details about the different types of matrices and how they are used in the game.

WILLFORCE TALENT

The Willforce talent determines and provides the energy for a spell's effect. Characters do not have access to the Willforce talent until they reach at least Fourth Circle. Until a magician character purchases the Willforce talent, his or her spell effects will be based on his Willpower step. (The Willpower Attribute is the default Attribute for the Willforce talent. See **Talents**, p. 112).

STARTING SPELLS

Magician characters begin the game knowing only a limited number of spells. Each beginning character has a number of Spell Points equal to his Willpower step, with which he can purchase spells. For example, a character with a Perception Attribute Value of 9 has a Willpower step of 4, and so 4 Spell Points. He or she can learn 4 Spell Points' worth of spells. Learning a Circle 1 spell costs 1 Spell Point, Circle 2 spells cost 2 points to learn, and so on.

A character may only select starting spells from a Discipline for which he has the appropriate Spellcasting talent, though characters can choose spells from higher Circles. As the character progresses through the Discipline Circles, he or she can begin to use the more powerful spells.

GRIMOIRES

Though your character may cast a spell from any grimoire without learning the spell, in order to learn a spell he must write the spell's symbols and patterns into his or her own grimoire. The magical act of manipulating spell symbols on paper (or wood, metal, and so on) is necessary for the magician to lock the spell in his memory. Once a magician has successfully placed a spell in his grimoire, he has learned the spell. He need not use his grimoire to cast it.

Though a grimoire is often defined as a book of spells, implying a bundle of paper, grimoires can be written on almost any type of material. Grimoires come in many shapes and sizes. Some are thick tomes, with spells inscribed on the pages. Another might be a bag of coins with runes finely etched on the silver. Others might be sticks of bone. Some might be written on gems, and the spells appear only under moonlight. The shape of a grimoire is limited only by the knowledge and idiosyncrasies of its owner.

If a spell caster's grimoire is destroyed, the spell caster looses one spell per week, starting with the highest circle spells, until they recreate the grimoire. To recreate a spell in a grimoire takes a successful Read and Write Magic Test (see **Spell Difficulty Table**, p. 148). If this Test fails, it may be attempted multiple times for each spell. The character may only use the Read and Write Magic talent once per day to rewrite spells into his grimoire, unless he sacrifices available Recovery Tests; for each Recovery Test sacrificed he may make one additional Read and Write Magic Test per day. It takes one half hour per spell level to copy a spell into a Grimoire.

LEARNING NEW SPELLS

When players of spell casting Disciplines begin the game they receive a number of spell levels equal to their Willpower step. As they advance in their Discipline they also learn additional spell levels. Each time a character advances to a new Circle they also learn a number of new spell levels equal to twice the new Circle without a Legend Point cost. Depending on the arrangements made during training, the character can learn any spell available in their trainer's Grimoire. These levels can be divided as the player sees fit. He can learn spells of any Circle, even those higher than his own Discipline Circle, although he may not be able to cast them.

> *The windling Jarna Tail Song has just completed training to become an Elementalist of the 4th Circle. During the conclusion of her training she learns 8 levels of new spells from her teacher's Grimoire. She chooses to learn two new fourth Circle spells so she can impress her party members with her new levels of power.*
>
> *Larak Trant has just completed his training to become a Neathermancer of the 3rd circle. During the conclusion of his training he learns 6 levels of new spells from his trainer's Grimoire. Having already discovered a Grimoire of third and fourth Circle spells during his adventures he chooses to learn two new second Circle spells and two new first Circle spells to round out his repertoire.*

Characters can also learn new spells while adventuring. In order to learn a new spell the character must first find the spell formula somewhere. The easiest way to do this is through another spell caster who has the desired spell in their Grimoire and is willing to let the character learn it. Generally, magicians will charge 50 silver per level of spell learned in this manner, although higher prices for rare spells are not unheard of. Alternatively, the character may attempt to learn the spell without instruction, either from a Grimoire found while adventuring, stolen from another spell caster, or some other source of spells. As Grimoires are, amongst their other valuable properties, minor pattern items of the spell casters who created them, theft can prove to be hazardous.

The character must then make a successful Read and Write Magic Test (see **Talents**, p. 104) to be able to understand the information continued in the spell and copy it into his own Grimoire. Consult the **Spell Difficulty Table** below for the Difficulty Number to learn the spell. The character may only use Rand and Write Magic talent once per day to learn spells, unless he sacrifices available Recovery Tests; for each Recovery Test sacrificed he may make one additional Read and Write Magic Test per day. It takes one half hour per spell level to copy a spell into a Grimoire.

A magician can more easily learn a spell directly from another magician. The spell caster attempting to learn the spell first makes a

Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If the test is successful the magician adds his teacher's rank in Thread Weaving to the result of his Read and Write Magic Test. For example, a magician learning a spell from a teacher with Rank 4 Illusion adds 4 to his Read and write Magic Test result, increasing the likelihood of successfully learning the spell.

Finally, in addition to money, access to the spell, and a successful Read and Write Magic attempt, the character must have Legend Points available to place the new spell in their Grimoire and learn to cast it. Each new spell copied into a magician's Grimoire (outside of training for a new Circle) costs a number of Legend Points equal to 100 times the circle of the spell. Thus a first circle spell would cost 100 legend points to learn, while an eighth circle spell would cost 800 legend points to learn. This reflects both the experience to learn the new spells and the alterations to the magician's pattern as they make the spell a minor part of their pattern item (Grimoire) and thus themselves.

SPELL DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Learning Difficulty
1	7
2	9
3	10
4	12
5	13
6	14
7	15
8	17
9	18
10	20
11	21
12	22
13	24
14	25
15	26

If the character fails their Read and Write Magic roll and is unable to understand that particular version of the spell formula, they do not have to spend the Legend Points for the spell. Most spell casters will also not charge the character if they fail the read/write magic roll, although certain mercenary ones will charge for the privilege of attempting to learn the spell, regardless of the end result. If successful, the character spends the appropriate number of Legend Points and spends the requisite amount of time studying the spell formula (see **Read and Write Magic** in **Talents**, p. 104) to add it into his or her own Grimoire.

Garth Simdax, an ork Wizard, has stolen a Grimoire from a passing Theran magician. Knowing he will have to return it within 2 hours or he will be found out, he chooses to attempt to learn Astral Shield, a second circle spell. Garth rolls a 11 on his Read and Write Magic Roll, which beats the 9 he needed, and he spends the next hour copying the spell into his Grimoire. At the end of the hour he spends the 200 legend points to learn the 2nd circle spell. Now he only has to worry about returning the Grimoire before his remaining hour is up.

Attila, a t'skrang Elementalist, has found a fellow Elementalist willing to teach him Repair. As Repair is a common 3rd circle spell Attila is charged 150 silver to copy the spell over to his Grimoire. As Attila has someone to help teach him the spell he makes a Thread Weaving Test against a target number of 10 and rolls a 12. Now he will be able to add a +3 bonus for his teacher's Rank 3 Thread Weaving to his Read and Write Magic Roll. This is a good thing, as Attila rolls an 8, making his total 11. Barely enough to copy the spell into his Grimoire. As he finishes copying the spell he spends the 300 legend points to incorporate knowledge of the spell into his Grimoir's pattern.

SPELL THREADS

Some spells are simple enough that a magician can put the entire spell pattern and all the energy needed to power it into a spell matrix. Other spells are too complex or require too much power to be fully represented in a spell matrix. Before a magician can cast such spells, he must add magical energy to the spell in the form of threads. Threads used to power spells (as opposed to threads used to connect two True Patterns) are most often referred to as spell threads. The magician creates these spell threads to connect the spell pattern with the energy of astral space. The spell threads expand, strengthen, and define the spell, fully empowering it. A spell that requires spell threads is incomplete without all of its threads, and cannot be cast.

A magician weaves spell threads into his spell with his Thread Weaving talent. For the four standard magician types, these talents are Elementalism, Illusion, Nethermancy, and Wizardry. If a magician fails a Thread Weaving Test, the only harm the spellcaster suffers is wasted time; any spell threads already woven into the spell remain intact, as do those held by Enhanced matrices (see **Spell Matrix Types**, p. 150). Once a magician starts to weave a spell's threads, he must finish the spell or abandon it entirely. A magician cannot weave only some of the required threads for a spell. Once the weaving is complete, he must cast the spell during the next round (10 seconds of game time) of the game. If a magician begins to weave a spell and breaks off for a round or longer, or finishes weaving the spell threads and then fails to cast the spell in the next round, the spell threads woven are lost.

CASTING SPELLS

Magician characters who have the needed talents, have learned spells by creating and using a grimoire, and who successfully weave spell threads can cast spells through a matrix. The process of spellcasting is straightforward, as shown below in the Spellcasting Sequence section, but it has the following limits.

LIMITS

Your character cannot cast every spell in this book. To cast a spell:

- Your character must have learned the spell or else must cast it from a grimoire (see **Casting from a Grimoire**, p. 151).
- To cast from a Spell Matrix, your character must have achieved a Circle of his Discipline at least equal to the Circle of the spell to be cast. The matrix must also be of the same Discipline as the spell being cast. Spells being cast from a grimoire or with raw magic can be of any Circle, including a Circle higher than your character's current Discipline Circle.

•Your character must have the appropriate Thread Weaving and Spellcasting talent for the Discipline of the spell.

•Generally, the spell should be in a Spell Matrix. The two ways to cast spells without a matrix, using raw magic or casting from a grimoire, carry higher risk to the caster and are not recommended (see **Casting from a Grimoire** and **Casting Raw Magic**, p. 151).

Concentration

Some spells require that the magician (or the spell target) concentrate in order to control the spell. If a magician concentrating on a spell tries to make any other tests for any other action while concentrating, he breaks his concentration. Injury to the magician also breaks his concentration. Once a magician has lost concentration on a spell, he may only regain use of the spell by re-casting it, including weaving any required spell threads.

SPELLCASTING SEQUENCE

The following summary outlines the steps necessary to cast a spell. More details on each step follow the summary.

When using standard spellcasting, or matrix casting, remember that the caster must place a spell in one of his or her spell matrices before he or she can cast the spell. Even though the mage knows the spell, he cannot cast it unless it is in a spell matrix. Once he has a spell in a matrix, though, the caster can cast that spell multiple times without reattuning the matrix.

All types of spellcasting follow the procedure below:

1. **Weave Threads Into Spell**
2. **Make Spellcasting Test**
3. **Check Success**
4. **Determine Spell Effect**
5. **Determine Duration**

WEAVE THREADS INTO SPELL

If a spell requires spell threads, the magician weaves them using the appropriate Thread Weaving talent (i.e., Wizardry). To do this, the magician makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Difficulty Number is given in the description of each spell. A success against this Difficulty Number means that the caster has succeeded in weaving a single thread from astral space to the spell's pattern.

A magician may use his Thread Weaving talent to weave more than one spell thread per round. To weave multiple threads, multiply the Difficulty for weaving one thread by the total number of threads to be woven. Attempts to weave more than one thread in a round must be announced before the Thread Weaving Test is made.

A magician cannot weave spell threads and cast a spell during the same round. After weaving the last thread required for the spell, however, the magician must cast the spell during the next round.

Cymric's companions are in a jam, and Cymric knows the perfect spell to get them out. The 3-thread spell has a Weaving Difficulty of 4, and so each spell thread has a Weaving Difficulty of 4. Cymric recognizes the need for speed and decides to attempt to weave all 3 spell threads in one round, giving him a Weaving Difficulty of 12. To successfully weave all 3 threads, Cymric's player must roll a 12 or higher in the Thread Weaving Test.

Remember that although Cymric has woven all the required spell threads for the spell, he must wait until the following round to cast the spell.

MAKE SPELLCASTING TEST

The magician uses his or her Spellcasting talent to cast a spell, making a Spellcasting Test against the Casting Difficulty of the spell. If the result is equal to or greater than the Spellcasting Difficulty, the magician has successfully cast the spell. A result lower than the Spellcasting Difficulty means that the spell has fizzled, having no effect. Each spell's description includes its Spellcasting Difficulty, beginning on p. 156. The Difficulty Number is often equal to the Spell Defense of the spell's target.

Most living creatures have a Spell Defense based on their Perception Attribute Value, though some creatures are more resistant than others to magic. Dull-witted creatures and many inanimate objects have a Spell Defense of 2, the lowest natural Spell Defense.

In all cases, the lowest possible Spellcasting Difficulty is 2.

Lowering Your Spell Defense

Even spells that benefit the target character must overcome that character's Spell Defense. A character may take an action to voluntarily lower his Spell Defense, increasing the chances of receiving the spell's benefit. The target character makes a Perception Test, then reduces his Spell Defense by the result of the test, down to a minimum of 2. When a character chooses to lower his Spell Defense, he forfeits his action for that round. This means that he may not use a talent that requires an action in the same round in which he voluntarily lowers his Spell Defense. This reduced Spell Defense is used for all spells cast on the character during that round, even those cast by hostile magicians.

Magicians casting spells on themselves automatically lower their Spell Defense against their own spells to 2. This occurs in the same round in which they cast their spell. The magician's Spell Defense against spells cast by other characters is NOT reduced, but a character casting a spell against a magician who has voluntarily lowered his Spell Defense adds +2 steps to his Spellcasting Test step. This bonus is similar to the advantage an attacker receives for a Blindside Attack in combat.

Line Of Sight/Astral Sense

Before a magician can cast a spell against a target, he must be able to see or astrally sense the target within range. Spells aren't like rocks thrown blindly into the dark in hopes of a hit. Spells travel in an astral arc between the caster and the target, an arc the spellcaster creates only upon seeing or sensing the target. Without the correct arc from caster to target, the spell veers into astral space and has no effect against its intended target. It might also draw the attention of the denizens of astral space, including the Horrors.

Creatures whose primary sense is not sight may create this arc using their primary sense. In other cases, magicians may also violate this rule. For example, creating the astral arc is unimportant for the magician who is touching a target when casting a spell because the touch makes him certain of the target's location. A magician could also place the center of an area effect spell at the edge of his outstretched fingertips.

CHECK SUCCESS

If the outcome of the Spellcasting Test is less than the Difficulty Number, the spell fails. If the Spellcasting Test dice result is equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds. The character must then determine the spell's effect and duration.

A combat spell that does damage may qualify as an Armor-Defeating hit if the Spellcasting Test results in a high enough success level. In this case, any benefits granted by physical or mystic armor are negated (see **Armor-Defeating Hits** in **Combat**, p. 219).

DETERMINE SPELL EFFECT

The effect of each spell is given in its description. The character makes an Effect Test using the Effect step listed in the spell description.

Some spells have a predetermined effect that occurs if the result of the Spellcasting Test is equal to or greater than the Spellcasting Difficulty. These spells do not require an Effect Test. Other spells' effects are described in a form such as "Willforce + 5 steps," for example. If one of these spells is successfully cast, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine the effect of the spell. The Effect Test steps of the spell are the character's Willforce (or Willpower) step plus the indicated number (5 in the example above).

Combat spells, or spells that cause damage to targets, use their Effect Test as the Damage Test (see **Make Damage Test** in **Combat**, p. 220).

DETERMINE DURATION

After determining the spell's effect, the caster must determine its duration. Most combat spells have a duration of a single Combat Round; once the spell has affected the target, its duration ends. The description for most non-combat spells lists the spell duration as, for example, "7 + Rank" rounds, minutes, or some other time period. The word rank refers to the magician's Spellcasting Talent Rank. The more competent a magician, the longer his spells will last.

Variable Duration

If a spell has a variable duration, the magician immediately rolls the dice indicated in the spell description to determine the spell's duration.

SPELLCASTING METHODS

The general steps provided above apply to all methods of spellcasting-matrix casting, casting from a grimoire, and casting raw magic. Matrix casting, more commonly referred to as spellcasting, employs spell matrices and is the safest method. Magicians generally only use a grimoire when casting a spell they have not learned yet, or one that is of a higher Circle. Due to the inherent danger in casting from raw magic, magicians generally resort to this method only in dire emergencies. Directions for using each method appear below.

SPELLCASTING (MATRIX CASTING)

A spell matrix is an astral construct linked to the intelligence of the magician, energized by the magical energies of the astral plane. Magicians in Earthdawn use spell matrices as a filter through which they can safely pull the energy of astral space into the physical world. Without a spell matrix, the energy must travel through the magician's body, an action that could cause him severe damage (see **Casting Raw Magic**, p. 151). As stated earlier, spellcasting with spell matrices is the most common and safest method of spellcasting used in the Earthdawn game.

Magicians are trained to design their matrices carefully in order to hide their magical activity from astral creatures. Though the corruption of astral space by the Horrors helps conceal the pure magical energy used to create spell matrices, when detected these constructs can usually be seen more clearly by astral creatures, namely the Horrors, than by the magician himself.

Magicians with the Spell Matrix talent can create spell matrices. Each Spell Matrix talent purchased represents one spell matrix. Spell matrices are ranked, just like any other talent. The highest Circle spell that can be placed in a particular spell matrix is equal to the rank of that Spell Matrix talent. You purchase new ranks for spell matrices using Legend Points, at the same cost as for other talents of the same Circle (see the **Talent Rank Cost Table** in **Building Your Legend**, p. 245. See also **Spell Matrix Types**, below).

To cast a spell from a spell matrix, the magician must place the pattern of the spell into the matrix. This process is called attuning a matrix. Simple spells, those that do not require threads, fit entirely into a spell matrix. The spell matrices described in this book hold only one spell at a time.

Spell Matrix Types

Four types of Spell Matrix talents are Spell Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Armored Matrix, and Share Matrix. This section explains how to use the first two types. The rules for using the Armored Matrix and the Share Matrix will be provided in other Earthdawn products.

The Spell Matrix is the standard matrix used by most magicians in Barsaive, and has a Death Rating of 10. An Enhanced Matrix holds one of a spell's required threads in addition to the spell pattern, and has a Death Rating of 15. The Death Rating of a matrix becomes important when the matrix itself is attacked by spells or the abilities of characters and creatures.

Attuning And Reattuning Matrices

A magician uses his Thread Weaving talent to place a spell in a matrix. This is called attuning the matrix. Once attuned, a spell will remain in the matrix until:

1. The owning spellcaster dies;
2. The owner reattunes the matrix to hold another spell; or
3. A magical process (for example, a spell effect) dislodges the spell from its matrix.

Placing or replacing a spell in a matrix is a simple matter for trained magicians, but it takes time. All magicians learn simple meditative exercises through which they place spells in their spell matrices. Each performance of the exercise takes ten minutes. Each exercise allows the magician to attune or reattune a number of matrix ranks equal to his Thread Weaving rank. For example, a Wizard with Rank 3 in Wizardry can attune or reattune 3 ranks of spell matrices with each meditative exercise. If a meditative exercise is interrupted, the exercise fails and the spells being attuned are not placed in the matrix. Otherwise, the exercise is successful, and the matrix now holds the new spell.

Reattuning On The Fly

On occasion a magician may suddenly discover he does not have the spells he needs in his matrices, and can't afford ten minutes of peaceful meditation to reattune them. A magician can hurry the reattuning process by reattuning on the fly. First, the character must make a Thread Weaving Test against the Reattunement Difficulty of the spell he is trying to put into the matrix (see **Spell Descriptions**, p. 156). This process takes a single round, and counts as an action. If the test succeeds, the new spell replaces the old. If the test fails, the magician has lost only time. Reattuning on the fly costs Strain; your character takes 1 Damage Point for each attempt.

Working with spell matrices is a delicate business and reattuning on the fly is risky. Once a magician begins to reattune a matrix, he should not take an action other than reattuning the matrix. If the magician chooses or is forced to take another action, all of his spell matrices are wiped clean. The new spell is not placed in the matrix, and all of his spells are dislodged from the rest of his matrices. The magician may not cast any spells (except by casting raw magic) until he has once again attuned his spells to a matrix.

A magician must declare which spell matrix he is trying to attune before making his Thread Weaving Test.

Magicians can attempt to reattune more than one spell matrix at the same time. To do this, the magician adds up the Reattuning Difficulty of all the spells he is trying to reattune to get the final Difficulty Number.

Jerreck, the elven Wizard, needs to reattune two of his spell matrices in the same round. The two spells he is trying to reattune are Dodge Boost and Ignite. Dodge Boost has a Reattuning Difficulty of 8, and Ignite has a Reattuning Difficulty of 11. Adding these together, Jerreck's player needs to roll a 19 in his Thread Weaving Test to successfully reattune both spells.

Damaging A Spell Matrix

Spell matrices can be damaged. Magicians must keep track of Current Damage to their spell matrices, just as they keep track of damage to themselves. Some talents and spells may allow an opponent to strike a character's spell matrix. Damage from such strikes does not gradually make the matrix work less well; spell matrices either work or they do not work. As long as the Current Damage of the matrix is less than its Death Rating, the matrix works. Once the Current Damage equals or exceeds the Death Rating, the matrix no longer functions. A magician cannot cast a spell from a dead matrix.

A damaged spell matrix will recover on its own in 24 hours, as the magician's Willpower slowly repairs the damage done. The magician can make a Recovery Test to repair a damaged spell matrix before the 24 hours are up. The result is the new, temporary Death Rating of the matrix. Once the 24 hours have passed, the matrix returns to its normal Death Rating.

CASTING FROM A GRIMOIRE

Magicians occasionally need or want to cast spells from a grimoire. A magician will use this spellcasting method whenever he has a spell in a grimoire and needs to use one of its spells before he has had a chance to learn the spell. A magician can cast any spell from a grimoire, including spells of a higher Circle than his current one. Casting from a grimoire is more difficult than normal spellcasting (matrix casting), and is generally avoided when possible. However, even the difficulties inherent in casting from a grimoire rarely prevent a magician from doing so in a crisis. If the only Stop Horror Dead in its Tracks spell he has ever encountered happens to be in the ancient grimoire he just picked up in the dusty lorehouse of the abandoned kaer, and he's facing the Horror to which it refers right now, he will cast the spell no matter what the risk.

Grimoires are similar to spell matrices, in that grimoires contain the spell patterns for all the spells written in them. In fact, the concept of the spell matrix was derived from the way grimoires store spells. Use the following steps to cast a spell from a grimoire.

1. Attune the Spell

The magician must first attune the spell he wishes to cast. When casting from a grimoire, attuning links the character to the spell pattern in the grimoire. Increase the listed Reattuning Difficulty by 2 when attuning a spell from a grimoire.

2. Weave Spell Threads

After he attunes the spell, the magician must weave any spell threads the spell requires. Reduce the magician's Thread Weaving talent step by 2 steps when weaving spell threads to a spell cast from a grimoire.

3. Make Spellcasting Test

After weaving the necessary spell threads, the magician makes his Spellcasting Test. Reduce the magician's Spellcasting talent step by 2 steps when casting spells from a grimoire.

4. Effect and Duration

The effect and duration of spells cast from a grimoire are the same as if the spell were cast from a spell matrix.

CASTING RAW MAGIC

The most infrequently used method of spellcasting is known as casting raw magic. Any time a character casts a spell not in a grimoire or spell matrix, he or she is using raw magic. Using this method, the magician taps directly into astral space to draw forth the magical energy for the spell, channeling it through his body. This almost always damages the magician, and can also have the harmful side effects described below. A magician can use raw magic to cast any spell he knows, that is, any spell he has successfully transferred to his grimoire with the Read and Write Magic talent.

RAW MAGIC TABLE

Region Type	Warping Step	Damage Step	Horror-mark Step**
Safe	Circle*	Circle + 4	1
Open	Circle + 5	Circle + 8	Circle + 2
Tainted	Circle + 10	Circle + 12	Circle + 5
Corrupt	Circle + 15	Circle + 16	Circle + 15

* Circle refers to the Circle of the spell being cast with raw magic

** Horror-mark steps cannot exceed a Horror's Spellcasting steps.

To cast raw magic, the magician weaves spell threads and casts the spell as for any other spell. The gamemaster then consults the **Raw Magic Table**, p. 151, to determine the consequences of his cast, if any. Spells cast with raw magic have the same effect and duration as spells cast using matrices. The only differences are the potential consequences to the magician represented by Warping, Damage, and Horror-mark Tests. The likelihood and seriousness of these side effects depends on the extent to which astral space has been corrupted by the Horrors.

Classifications of Astral Space

Because of the corrupted nature of astral space, magicians who cast spells that are not in spell matrices or grimoires are taking a considerable risk. Astral space suffered more than the physical plane during the Scourge. Much like what happened to the Badlands in Barsaive, astral space itself has been warped by the Horrors. Spell matrices were designed to protect magicians from the Horrors, and to serve as a filter between astral space and the magician's body. Spell matrices shield the magician against the warping and corruption of Horror-affected astral space. Raw magic uses no shield, and leaves its caster vulnerable to evil influences.

The warped nature of astral space itself warps and energizes the spell as it is being created. The strength of this effect depends on how recently the area has been occupied by a Horror. The more recently a Horror occupied or touched that space, the worse the warping effect. The warped astral energy causes damage to a magician casting raw magic.

The four classifications of astral space distinguish the extent to which corrupted astral space may warp a spell, and the potential damage the magician may take. The classifications are Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt. See also the **Raw Magic Table**, p. 151, for specific game information on each of the four classifications of astral space.

Safe: Safe regions of astral space are those areas the Horrors were unable to touch or corrupt. For example, because the entire city of Throal and the surrounding area was sealed off from the rest of the world during the Scourge, the astral space connected to Throal was not invaded by the Horrors and so remains pure. It is safe to cast raw magic in Throal.

Open: Open regions are those areas where Horrors passed through, but used little magic. In these places they caused little pain and suffering and left the countryside mostly intact; what they did destroy has been rebuilt since the end of the Scourge. Most of Barsaive fits into this classification.

Tainted: Tainted regions are those areas where the Horrors caused considerable destruction and pain. Though Horrors may no longer be active in the area, the region once suffered terribly under the Horrors' influence. Some areas of the cities of Parlainth and Haven fall under this classification.

Corrupt: Corrupt regions are areas currently inhabited by a Horror. A Horror can affect a region varying in size from a few hundred yards to hundreds of square miles, depending on its power. The Badlands, the Wastes, and some areas of Parlainth are Corrupt.

Warping and Damage

Astral space has been twisted by the Horrors, and this twisting can affect spells cast with raw magic. After a magician successfully casts a spell using raw magic, the gamemaster must then determine any Warping and Damage Effects the caster may suffer. The gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the basic Spell Defense of the magician. Because Warping is an internal process, items, spells, and armor that normally increase the magician's Spell Defense do not protect against Warping. The gamemaster uses the Warping step from the **Raw Magic Table**, p. 151, to make the Warping Test.

If the Warping Test is successful, the magician takes damage. The gamemaster then makes a Damage Test for the Warping using the step shown in the **Raw Magic Table**. This step is based on the classification of astral space for the area in which the caster used raw magic and the Circle of the spell he cast. Because this damage is also internal, only the character's basic mystic armor helps defend against this damage.

> *Cymric wishes to cast a Circle 1 spell using raw magic. He casts the spell along the road to Throal, which he guesses is Open space. Unfortunately, he is wrong. The road he is on passes close to an undiscovered kaer, one that is Tainted. The Warping steps are Circle + 10, for Step 11 (1D10 + 1D8). Cymric's basic Spell Defense is 9. The gamemaster makes a successful Warping Test, rolling 10. The twisting of astral space has warped Cymric's spell, and so his use of raw magic damages him. The gamemaster then makes a Damage Test using Step 13 (1D12 + 1D10) and gets a result of 14. Cymric takes 14 points of damage.*

Horror-Mark

When a spell is cast using raw magic, the effect is the equivalent of firing a brilliant flare on a dark night. Such an act might attract the attention of someone or something from whom your character may prefer to remain hidden. During the first Scourge, powerful magicians doomed themselves by casting raw magic against the first signs of the Horrors. These men and women were not foolish, but they had no way of knowing the consequences of their actions. Spell matrices were developed only after the survivors saw (or heard) what became of these unfortunate magicians.

Anytime a character uses raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Horror-mark Test in addition to the tests for Warping and Damage against the basic Spell Defense of the caster. A successful result means a Horror has noticed the caster and marked him or her. The mark is usually visible only to Horrors, even in astral space, and has the same effect as any other use of the Horror-mark power (see **Horror-Mark** in **Horrors**, p. 315).

Horrors use their mark to locate the caster at any time. Many Horrors have ways of communicating with marked victims who are hundreds of miles away. Some can cast spells on their victims from a great distance. Below are some additional guidelines for using Horror-marks.

- A Horror-mark is a Horror's personal gateway to a character. The Horror may use the gateway any time it wishes. Range may sometimes, though not often, restrict a Horror's options.
- A Horror-mark lasts for a year and a day. No known way exists to remove a Horror-mark other than killing the Horror. At the end of the first year and a day, the Horror may renew the Horror-mark for another year and a day if it so wishes. This renewal may have range restrictions, but other than being out of range, a character cannot prevent a live Horror from renewing a Horror-mark. Horrors have been known to quietly renew their Horror-marks for years, without the victim being aware of the mark.

•Magical protections, even those specifically geared to protect a character from Horrors and Horror magic, have no effect against Horror-marks. A Horror-marked character has little defense against the Horror that marked him.

ASTRAL CLOUDING

Even though casting spells through a matrix is reasonably safe, repeated casting of spells can cause a buildup of magical energy on the astral plane. This buildup occurs as the pure energy is repeatedly drained from astral space through the filtering action of the spell matrix. When the pure energy is drained from an area of astral space, the result is a increase in the corruption of astral space in that area. This area of corruption can act quite similarly to casting Raw Magic, as the astral backlash warps the caster's pattern. Horrors have been known to be attracted to these areas of corruption.

Effects such as these can usually be detected by assensing or viewing astral space in the area. It shows up as a clouding, or darkening, of the normally light gray haze of astral space. The more pronounced the effect, the more clouded astral space will appear. Casting magic in such an area can be quite dangerous, but these areas are usually somewhat localized, ranging no more than 200 yards from their center point. The clouding of the astral plane usually drops off within a few days of the casting, although especially strong or numerous effects may last for days or even weeks.

DISPELLING MAGIC

Many spells in the descriptions below have extended durations (see **Determine Duration,** p. 150). It is possible to prematurely interrupt the duration of a spell, disrupting the effect of the spell. This is known as Dispelling. The primary way in which spells can be dispelled is through the use of the Dispel Magic spell (see **Wizard Spells,** p. 186). It is also possible to dispel the effects of some spells through a Willpower Test or Perception Test. The spell descriptions will indicate whether the spell can be dispelled with a successful Test.

DISPELLING TABLE

Spell Circle	Dispel Difficulty
1	15
2	18
3	20
4	23
5	25
6	28
7	30
8	33
9	35
10	38
11	40
12	43
13	45
14	48
15	50

The Difficulty Number of dispelling a spell is based on the Circle of the spell. The table below shows the Dispel Difficulty Number for each spell Circle.

Unless a talent or creature power specifically states otherwise, these magical abilities can not be dispelled using the Dispel Magic spell. Abilities that can be dispelled will have a Dispel Difficulty listed in their description.

EARTHDAWN SPELLS

This section contains most of the spells available to magicians in the world of Earthdawn. Though the spells listed here go no higher than Circle 8, higher spells do exist-even as high as Circle 14 and 15. Higher Circle spells are mostly very old. During the current magic cycle the deepest magical research went into developing shelters against the Horrors rather than spell research.

In decades past some magicians experimented on their own, developing new knowledge and spells outside the fellowship of magical research. There are also legends of 5,000-year-old grimoires buried beneath ruins long before Throal's first ruler united the wild dwarf tribes. Dragons are also rumored to know these high-Circle spells, but their covetousness is common knowledge. If you want your character to have these great spells, he or she will have to find them.

The spells in this section are organized according to the Discipline that casts them, in other words, Elementalist spells, Illusionist spells, and so on. In each category, the spells are organized and ranked by Circle Number. Spells of Circle 1 are the least powerful spells in the game, while Circle 8 spells are the most powerful (for now).

Each spell listing provides both a spell's description and its game statistics. These statistics are for the spell's Thread Number, Range, Effect, Casting Difficulty, Weaving Difficulty, Reattunement Difficulty, and Duration. Also, if the spell has an Illusion or Fear based effect, then that will be noted in the spell's statistics.

THREADS

The Thread Number tells how many spell threads a magician must weave into a spell pattern in order to fully form the spell. Simple spells do not require the caster to weave additional spell threads. The spell matrix is sufficient to hold the entire spell intact. If the spell requires no spell threads, that is indicated by the word None.

RANGE

The Range of the spell is usually given in yards. A range of Touch means the caster must be within a few inches of the recipient of the spell, which could also be the caster himself. It does not necessarily mean that contact must be made. A range of Self means the spell only works upon the caster.

EFFECT

The spell Effect varies with the spell. The most common use of the Effect dice is to generate a number. This number then represents another value, for example, the duration of the spell, the amount of damage the target takes, a creature's Attribute Values, the Difficulty Number for tests made by opponents, and so on. When a character needs to generate such a number, the spell description instructs the player to "roll the Effect dice."

In the case of spells that do damage to a target, the result of the Effect dice roll is the step number used to determine the damage done by the spell (see **Make Damage Test** in **Combat**, p. 220). When a spell requires an Effect dice roll, the step number will be indicated as, for example, Willforce + 4. This means that if the magician is successful in casting the spell, he adds 4 steps to his Willforce step to determine the Effect. If the character does not have the Willforce talent, then he should use his character's Willpower (see **Willforce**, p. 112). A magician player should calculate, then record the Effect steps for all his character's spells. This will save time in the thick of combat.

Some spells require the magician to make an Effect Test. In this case, use the Effect step indicated under Effect, and make a test as normal against the Difficulty Number given, usually the target's Spell Defense (see **Making Tests**, in **Game Concepts**, p. 26).

CASTING DIFFICULTY

The Casting Difficulty is the Difficulty Number for the Spellcasting Test. For some spells, this will be the target's Spell Defense Rating. For other spells, it is simply a predetermined number given in the spell description. The term target can refer to the recipient of a beneficial spell as well as to an opponent.

The spell description explains the spell's effect or any special information for the spell.

WEAVING DIFFICULTY

The Weaving Difficulty is the Difficulty Number for weaving spell threads into a spell pattern (see **Weave Threads into Spell**, p. 149). A notation of NA means the spell requires no spell threads and so has no Weaving Difficulty.

REATTUNEMENT DIFFICULTY

The Reattunement Difficulty, used when a magician is attempting to reattune on the fly (see **Reattuning on the Fly**, p. 151). Reattuning a matrix on the fly takes only one round. The character makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Reattunement Difficulty Number of the spell he is trying to place into a matrix. If the test is successful, the new spell replaces the old. All that happens if the test fails is that the magician has wasted some time. Reattuning on the fly costs Strain; a character takes 1 Damage Point for each attempt.

If a character performs any other action while reattuning on the fly, all spell matrices are wiped clean. The character can cast no spells until they are again placed in spell matrices unless he casts from a grimoire or uses raw magic.

DURATION

This is the length of time the spell remains in effect. A spell's duration is usually given in rounds (10 seconds of game time), though spell durations can also be measured in minutes, hours, or longer.

Unless the description specifically says otherwise, Rank refers to the rank of the magician's Spellcasting Talent. Thus, a duration listed as "10 + Rank minutes" refers to a number of minutes equal to the character's Spellcasting Rank + 10.

ILLUSION

Many spells, especially those of the Illusionist discipline, depend on creating an illusionary object or effect. These spells will be denoted by the use of the word Illusion in the spell statistics for that spell. These illusions are full-spectrum, encompassing all five senses (where applicable). Illusions are also specific to the person or persons affected by them. A person outside the range of an illusion spell would not see, hear, smell, feel, or taste the illusory creations. Illusions not only affect a Name-giver's perceptions of the world around him, they even affect his perceptions of his own body.

Illusions are in no way real. They have no lasting effect after their duration, other than that allowed them by the reactions of Name-givers. For instance, if an illusionist made a house appear to catch fire, then the house may eventually look like it has burned to the ground. When the duration of the illusion is over, though, the house will return intact. The actions of Name-givers under the effects of the illusion, such as dumping gallons of water on the illusory fire, will cause the homeowner to have a very wet homecoming. Name-givers under the effects of an illusion will attempt to match their actions in the real world with those in the illusion, but as the illusion is not real, this generally is ineffective. A Name-giver may think the illusionary rope bridge he is walking across is completely real, but he will still fall down into the canyon when he has walked far enough.

Illusions are also very personal. One person can disbelieve an illusion, causing it to disappear for him, while another still languishes under its effects. Even being told by a companion that something is illusionary is not an instant solution, although it does increase your chances of breaking out of the illusion. When you can feel the brithan's hot breath on your neck, hear his roar as he attacks, and feel the claws savagely scrape across your armor, having someone tell you that the brithan is an illusion can be a little hard to believe in itself. It does help, however, as it becomes one more thing where the world described by the illusion is inconsistent with the real world. No illusion is perfect, and the key to disbelief lies in finding those inconsistencies and using them to reinforce your belief that what you see is indeed only an illusion.

The key to a good illusion is believability. If an obsidiman is locked in a titanic struggle with his hated enemy one round, and the next round he finds himself relaxing in his library, then the odds are good that the illusion will be disbelieved, and quickly. If instead, he finds himself striking the fatal blow against his enemy, searching the corpse, and stopping to heal, then what reason does he have to disbelieve? Well, perhaps the end came too quickly, or the final blow didn't feel right for some reason, but this scenario is much more believable, and therefore, is a much stronger illusion. Wise illusionist will keep this fact in mind as they practice their art.

Limitations

Illusionary spells have several restrictions when compared to normal spells. If a character receives a Wound due to illusionary damage, that Wound (and its ill effects) are gone by sunrise of the next day. Illusionary damage, however, must be healed at a normal rate. Only a successful disbelief test attempted immediately after the damage is received can prevent the character from being hurt – otherwise, the Adept's pattern will adjust, causing the illusionary damage to become actual damage, which must be healed by normal means. Many an adventurer has woken up in the morning free of wounds, bemoaning the fact that he didn't disbelieve what was obviously an illusion. Damage done by illusionary magic can never go above a character's Unconsciousness Rating.

Range and Illusion Spells

Illusionary spells have associated with them a range. This range determines only what the spell can be cast upon. After the casting, the illusion may move (and probably will if cast upon a Name-giver or object), and will generally last until the duration of the spell is over. The illusionary image will be seen by all, not merely those in range of the spell when it was cast.

Disbelief

Characters have a chance to break out of an illusion by refusing to believe it. If a character believes that an effect is illusionary, he must state so and attempt to disbelieve it. To do this, the player must state to the gamemaster why his character believes that the spell is an illusion. Afterwards, the character makes a Disbelief Test against a Difficulty Number generally equal to the result of the spell's Effect Test. For some spells that do not involve an Effect Test, this may be calculated differently; the information will be provided in the spell description. The attempt of disbelief costs the character 2 Strain. The first attempt to disbelieve an Illusion does not count as an action. Additional attempts to disbelieve the Illusion are harder, though, and count as the character's action for that round.

DISBELIEF BONUSES TABLE

Perception Bonus	Sample Reason
-2	Player's reasons are consistent with the illusion
0	Player gives no (or very weak) reasons
+1	Illusion did not hit as hard as it should have
+1	For each round spent attempting to disbelieve
+2	For each of the five senses which were not affected by the illusion (e.g. Character had his back turned when hit by an Ephemeral Bolt)
+4	Sensory input not explained by the illusion (slapped across the face)
+2 - +5	Other characters are acting inconsistently
+4	Character's talent interacting with the spell
+4	Viewed the illusion astrally
+5	Impossible events occurring
+7	Illusion is completely out of place (a battlefield turns into a peaceful garden)

Sometimes, as an Adept uses his talents to interact with the Illusion, he will be able to perceive slight imperfections in the illusion. If an adept achieves an Excellent or better success on a talent test that interacts with the illusion, then the gamemaster should indicate to the player that something felt a bit strange about that last exchange. Often, Disbelief Tests are prompted in this manner.

The Disbelief Test is made using a Disbelief step equal to the sum of the character's Perception step and the highest Circle that he has attained in a Discipline. The gamemaster will assign the target character a bonus to his Disbelief step for the purposes of this test based on the validity (in the gamemaster's opinion) of the reasons the player gave him for disbelief. Some suggested bonuses can be found in the **Disbelief Bonuses Table**, above, but this is by no means an exhaustive list. These bonuses are cumulative.

If the attempt fails, then the character has failed to break out of the illusion. He still suffers the effects of the illusion, and may attempt to disbelieve again next round. Note that an Illusionist may attempt to continually modify the illusion to better fool the target character, but doing so counts as concentrating on the spell.

If the attempt succeeds, however, then the character has disbelieved the illusion, and the damage (and Wounds) caused by it disappear instantly.

Preserving the Illusion

To keep Name-giver from disbelieving an illusion, it must be modified constantly. The illusion magic itself can handle only minor changes, and an illusion that doesn't react properly will be much easier to disbelieve. At the beginning of each turn, the Illusionist must announce if he is maintaining any illusion spells. For each illusion that the Illusionist maintains, he receives a -1 step penalty to all tests. This attention to detail gives each character that attempts to disbelieve a maintained illusion a -3 penalty to their Disbelief Test. To maintain an illusion, the Illusionist must be able to see the illusion or have another means of knowing what changes are appropriate.

False Disbelief

There may be times when the character attempts to disbelieve an effect that is actually real. In such a case, the character receives -3 to his Physical, Spell, and Social Defense Ratings for the purpose of interacting with the (supposed illusionary) effect. These penalties will never lower a step or Defense Rating below 1.

FEAR

Some of the spells listed in the Spells section have a Fear effect associated with them, noted in the spell's statistics. These spells are effective by causing fear in the target, forcing them to act unnaturally. Assuming that the caster has succeeded on his Spellcasting test, the Fear-based spell is generally effective for the first round. It is rare that characters are able to react rationally to a sudden attack of panic. At the beginning of each round after the first that the character is affected by Fear, the character may attempt to control his Fear.

To break out of the Fear spell, the character must make a Fear Test using his Willforce talent, or Willpower step if he does not have Willforce. This test is against the Fear Difficulty specified in the spell's description. If a Fear Difficulty is not given, then the Effect step of the Spell may be used in its place. If the character succeeds, then he has broken out of the Fear spell and may act as he chooses. If the character fails, then he is still under the influence of the Fear spell. For each Fear Test after the first, the character receives a cumulative +1 step bonus.

In rare cases (where the Fear effect is especially inappropriate) the gamemaster may allow the character to make an immediate test to break out of the Fear spell.

ELEMENTALIST SPELLS

Elementalists use their magic to manipulate the magical elements. Their spells most often affect one or more of the elements, but can also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.



FIRST CIRCLE SPELLS

Crunch Climb

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank minutes
Effect: +3 steps to Climbing Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell enhances the target's climbing ability. The spellcaster weaves the thread, then casts the spell as the target starts to climb. Success gives the climber +3 steps to Climbing Tests.

Earth Blend

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank + 5 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell makes a character blend completely with his surroundings, making it more difficult for someone else to spot him. The Elementalist throws a stone, rubs some dirt, or touches a pebble to the spell target. The Elementalist and the target must both be standing on stone or earth for the spell to work.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target rolls the Effect dice. The result is the Difficulty of someone else spotting the character using normal sight. If, however, a character moves while under the effects of Earth Blend, the spell is broken. Characters using magical sight or senses may make a test against the Spell Defense of the character to perceive him. Earth Blend provides no additional physical defense.

Earth Darts

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 30 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist flings dirt into the air while casting the spell. The dirt then changes into crystalline darts that fly at the foe when the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice to determine damage. This powerful spell is not uncommon, and more knowledgeable foes can retreat out of range of the spell if they see the crystal darts forming. Physical armor provides protection against the Earth Dart spell.

Flameweapon

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: Step 3 damage added to weapon's damage
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target weapon's Spell Defense

The Elementalist conjures a small flame as he casts the spell. This flame leaps to cover a weapon chosen by the Elementalist, except where the wielder touches it. The weapon's Spell Defense resists the spell; for most weapons this number is 2. The spell increases the weapon's damage by 1D4, which is called the Flame die. This increase affects all creatures that can be hurt by flames. Physical armor provides protection against Flameweapon attacks.

While the weapon is under the Flameweapon spell, its temperature is hot but bearable. Whenever the result of the Flameweapon damage is more than 4, the wielder takes 1 point of damage from the high heat.

Heat Food

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Heat rejuvenating food
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell heats up food and infuses it with magic that will have a beneficial effect on the target. The Elementalist breathes on his hands as if to warm them, and his hands begin to glow a gentle red. As the Elementalist touches the food to be warmed, the glow transfers to the food. Within a minute, the food is steaming hot. Eating the food during the spell's duration increases the effectiveness of Recovery Tests made while eating. Recovery Tests gain steps equal to the Elementalist's Spellcasting Rank. If an Elementalist with Rank 3 Spellcasting talent casts the Heat Food spell, he increases the Recovery Tests of those who eat the food by +3 steps. Each use of the spell may heat a number of meals equal to the magician's Spellcasting Talent rank.

Plant Talk

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Self **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Converse with plant spirits
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist puts his ear to a plant as he casts this spell. The Plant Talk spell enables him to converse with the spirits who often inhabit such plants rather than with the plants themselves. Plant spirits vary widely in intelligence, but they are a considerable step up from the plants they inhabit. Plant spirits vary in temperament as much as characters do. They may be very willing to talk, for example, or grumpy and taciturn or even sleepy from lying out in the sun so long. Plant spirits are usually aware of events that happen within one to five yards of their roots. Plant spirits only inhabit living plants; they must seek a new plant when their old host dies.

Purify Water

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 8 quarts
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 2 or more (see text)

The Elementalist smears a drop of the water to be purified on his lips, then casts the spell. Water that is merely muddy has a Spell Defense of 2; disease-ridden water has a Spell Defense of 5 or higher. Water that has been poisoned resists with the Spell Defense of the poison, which usually starts at 6.

An Elementalist may use this spell to try to purify a beverage that has a large water content, such as wine, juice, beer, or milk. The Elementalist must beat the Spell Defense of the beverage (usually 2) by 5 in order to purify the drink. If he beats the Spell Defense by less than 5, the spell removes all those flavorful "impurities," resulting in pure water.

Resist Cold

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank minutes
Effect: +3 Armor Points against cold damage
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist conjures frost on his palm. The frost melts away as he touches the target. The Resist Cold spell adds 3 points of armor against all cold-based attacks or damage.

A target may benefit from only one Resist Cold spell at a time.

Resist Fire

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank minutes
Effect: +3 Armor Points against fire damage
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist conjures a small flame on the tip of each index finger. She touches the target on the eyebrows (or ridge above the eyes approximating the position of the eyebrows). A bright flash singes the brows, but does no damage. The Resist Fire spell adds 3 Armor Points against all fire-based attacks or damage.

A recipient may benefit from only one Resist Fire spell at a time.

SECOND CIRCLE SPELLS

Boil Water

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Boils 1 quart of water
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist touches a vessel containing water, tapping it very quickly as if the vessel were very hot. The enchanted vessel immediately begins to heat the water it contains, bringing a quart of water to boil each round. A gallon of water would take 4 rounds to reach the boiling point. Boil Water can only be cast on inanimate objects.

Though the spell was not originally designed for combat, each quart of boiling water can do 5 steps of damage, up to a maximum of 20 steps (for 4 quarts). A character must still throw the water at a victim, and must make a successful Dexterity or Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense.

Gills

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 4
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Allows breathing underwater
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist mimics the mouthings of a fish while casting the spell, then touches the target of the spell. The spell allows a character to breathe comfortably underwater. The Gills spell does not prevent a character from breathing air.

Ice Spear

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Frost forms on the fingers of the Elementalist while he is casting this spell. As the Elementalist casts the spell at a target, Ice Spear forms a weapon that is five feet long. The spears trails frost as it arcs toward the target. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice for damage. Physical armor protects against this damage.

Icy Surface

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce
Reattunement Difficulty: 8
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist blows on the surface she wishes to ice, and the spell immediately covers a 100-square-yard area with ice. The spot the Elementalist blows on is one edge of the area. The Elementalist can choose the shape of the icy surface as long as no dimension exceeds 20 yards (i.e. 10x10, 20x5, a circle roughly 11 yards across, etc.).

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Elementalist rolls the Effect dice. The result is the Difficulty of crossing the ice without slipping. Characters use Dexterity steps or other applicable talents. Creatures use their Knockdown step. A successful result means the character can move at only one-half his Combat Movement across the icy surface. Failure means the character falls. The effects of falling are the same as a Knockdown in Combat (see **Make Knockdown Test**, p. 220). If multiple Icy Surfaces are cast on the same area, then only the Effect of the topmost (most recently cast) surface is used.

Path Home

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 20 + Rank minutes
Effect: Shows a path home
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: 5

The spellcaster closes his eyes, envisioning the last place where he slept. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell summons a pair of shimmering wings, translucent and sparkling green or gold. The wings have the same movement speed as the caster, and they begin to fly toward the last place the Elementalist slept. Always remaining within 60 yards of the spellcaster, the wings will slow down or speed up on command. They have a Physical Defense and a Spell Defense of 10 each, and are destroyed if they take damage.

Slow Metal Weapon

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 8 + Rank rounds
Effect: -3 steps to damage
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist mimes a slow-moving attack, targeting any weapon designed to attack with a metal edge or point for attacking that is within range. The Difficulty Number is the Spell Defense of the wielder or the weapon, whichever is higher. Most weapons have a Spell Defense of 2. A successful Spellcasting Test makes the weapon slow down just before it hits a target, reducing its damage by 3 steps for the duration of the spell.

Only one Slow Metal Weapon spell may affect any one weapon at a time.

Sterilize Object

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: 2

The spellcaster rubs his wrists together, sending a white spark from his wrist to the object to be sterilized. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician makes an Effect Test. If the result is higher than the resistance of any disease or poison, the object is cleansed of the disease or poison. The spell is effective only against inanimate objects. If used against food, the food becomes thoroughly overcooked, losing flavor and texture. In order to bring himself to eat sterilized food, a character must make a Willpower Test with a result of at least 4.

Stick Together

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell bonds two targets tightly together. The Elementalist mimes putting his hands together and then trying to pull them apart. He points both hands, still stuck together, at two targets. The Spellcasting Test succeeds if the result is equal to the sum of the Spell Defenses of the two targets. As soon as the two targets touch, they bond together. The two targets must be within ten feet of each other for the spell to be effective. This spell does not cause the targets to come together if they are not already in contact. The Elementalist can also choose to bond two targets already in contact, such as a character and the floor. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The result is the strength of the bond. Breaking the bond requires the target to make a Strength Test equal to or greater than the bond strength. Breaking the bond dispels this spell.

Stick Together produces a bond strong enough to support 2,150 pounds of weight. The Elementalist may break the bond by making a second Spellcasting Test equal to or higher than the higher Spell Defense of the two targets.

THIRD CIRCLE SPELLS

Behind Eye

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 30 + Rank minutes
Effect: Step 4 Perception to rear
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist chants softly while holding a burning candle, torch, or other source of flame, then casts the spell by touching the flame to the back of the target's head.

A successful Spellcasting Test produces a single flaming eye in the back of the target character's head. This eye sees with a Perception of 7 (Step 4), and the spell's target can see what the eye sees. The eye can see any obviously visible image. In combat, Behind Eye prevents a character from being blind-sided (see **Combat**, p. 227). An attacker can counter by using a skill or talent that makes him harder to see; if the eye fails a Perception Test against the talent, the attacker may blindside the target of the spell.

Ice Mace and Chain

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 40 yards **Duration:** 2 rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist hurls two pebbles, coins, or other small objects at the target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the two objects become spiked mace-heads joined by an icy chain. The chain and mace-heads wrap around the target, often shattering when they hit. The magician rolls the Effect Test for damage. If he rolls any Bonus dice for the Damage Test, the mace and chain shatter. If the mace and chain survive the hit, the target character is considered Harried (see **Combat**, p. 227) for the next Combat Round, suffering -2 to his Attack Tests.

Plant Feast

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist needs three plants, no matter how scrawny, for this spell, which converts that meager material into a feast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The result is the number of nourishing meals the spell produces. Each meal has the following parts: appetizer, soup, salad, bread, entree, vegetable, and dessert. All meals are identical. The Elementalist can only create items he has tasted within the last year, a good excuse for the Elementalist to eat excessively on occasion while in cities.

The food created by this spell must be eaten during the spell's duration. Food not eaten vanishes the instant the spell expires.

Porter

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** Rank days
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell creates a semi-sentient being who will carry equipment for the Elementalist. The magician first makes an earthen mound, molding it into a humanoid shape roughly his own size. A successful Spellcasting Test animates the mound. The porter travels with its feet still attached to the ground, which ripples under the porter to let it pass. Once the porter is animated, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The result of the test determines the porter's Strength attribute value (not step). The porter must remain within 15 yards of the caster or the spell is broken. The porter's statistics are listed below.

Porter

DEX: 4 **STR:** * **TOU:** 12
PER: 2 **WIL:** 2 **CHA:** 3
*Dependent on Effect result

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: None
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Number of Spells: None
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 15
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: Strength step
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Legend Points: NA
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Puddle Deep

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2

While casting this spell, the Elementalist must touch a shallow puddle. The spell increases the depth of the puddle within 15 yards of the caster. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The puddle's depth increases by a number of feet equal to the result.

Characters whose Spell Defense is greater than the Effect dice roll result either do not fall into the puddle or manage to stay to one side of it. Characters who fall in must climb out. The Difficulty of climbing out is the Elementalist's Spellcasting Rank + the Armor Rating of the armor (plus shield) worn by the character. Climbing requires a Dexterity or Climbing Test; creatures make an Attack Test for climbing.

Anything still in the puddle when the spell expires finds itself in the original puddle, with its original depth. The rest of the water disappears. The water created with Puddle Deep cannot be used to quench thirst and cannot be stored for later use.

Repair

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank months
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: 2

Repair uses elemental force to mend damage to inanimate objects. The Elementalist takes the object or its pieces, and imagines them whole again. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The result is the Strength of the bond holding the object together. The spell can rearrange the mass of the object to make up for any missing pieces, but this has limits. The Elementalist must have at least 80 percent of the original object to successfully use this spell.

Sky Lattice

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Sky Lattice spell creates a shimmering web of air energy that can support up to 4,000 pounds. The lattice is attached to air and appears within reach of the Elementalist; it need not touch the ground. A sky lattice is always one yard wide. The Elementalist can vary the length of the lattice, from one yard up to the spell's full 120 yards.

It is also possible to climb the lattice, whose force helps grip a climber to it. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice, using the result as the Strength of the grip. The grip only secures the climber; it does not hinder his movement in any way.

An Elementalist can use blood magic to extend the duration of Sky Lattice to a year and a day by taking 1 Damage Point. The Damage Point is recovered when the spell expires. Sky Raiders often use Sky Lattice to support bases hidden in the midst of clouds.

Throne of Air

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Self **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist casts this spell by taking a sitting position. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Throne of Air forms as a shimmering, turbulent image underneath the magician. The Elementalist can move in the throne: Full Movement is 150 yards per round, Combat Movement is 75 yards. The throne is very agile. If the Elementalist is aware of an incoming attack, use the Effect step as for the **Avoid Blow talent**, p. 88, without the possibility of knockdown.

The Throne of Air spell has limited vertical movement. It can move above the ground a number of yards equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank.

FOURTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Air Blast

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 9
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell creates a howling wind to blast a path starting directly in front of the spellcaster. The Elementalist weaves the thread, placing both hands to his lips when finished. Then he casts the spell by blowing hard and flinging his arms wide. A successful Spellcasting Test creates an air blast path extending five yards to the left, right, up, and down (if possible) from the caster.

All characters caught in the blast must make a Strength or Knockdown Test against the effect of Air Blast. Failure means the character is knocked down (see **Make Knockdown Test** in **Combat**, p. 220).

Blizzard Sphere

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist conjures a small blizzard to strike his foes. The blizzard fills a sphere 10 yards across. The Elementalist targets the sphere wherever he wants, within spell range. Compare the result of the Spellcasting Test to the Spell Defense of all characters caught within the sphere. If the magician's test result is equal to or higher than a character's Spell Defense, the character takes damage from the spell. Make an Effect Test for the damage from this spell.

The Elementalist makes a new Spellcasting Test every round to see who takes damage within the sphere. Once the sphere is successfully cast, it remains stationary. Maintaining the effects of Blizzard Sphere requires the Elementalist's concentration.

Lighten Load

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell can lighten the load of an object. A character or group of characters must be lifting the target object or objects. The Elementalist braces and grimaces as if lifting a heavy object, then straightens and smiles as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. Each point of the test result reduces the weight of the object by 50 pounds, down to a minimum of 10 pounds.

Lightning Shield

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist snaps his fingers to create a spark of electricity, which leaps to the target character's shield. To be successful, the Spellcasting Test result must be equal to or higher than the Spell Defense of the shield or the target character, whichever is higher.

Unless an attacker gets a Good success on an Attack Test, he will hit the shield every time he attacks the wielder. An Average success will still result in a hit. Whenever an attacker strikes the Lightning Shield, he takes a jolt of lightning in return. The shield wielder rolls the Effect dice for the damage to the attacker. Mystic armor protects against the damage.

Suffocating Paste

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 2 + Rank rounds
Effect: Suffocates and blinds target
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist creates a blob of greenish-yellow paste and throws it at the target. A successful Spellcasting Test lets him hit the victim's head or anywhere else the creature breathes. The paste coats the target,

blinding the target and causing Step 4 suffocation damage each round. Physical armor and mystic armor do not absorb any damage from Suffocating Paste. If the paste hits a person's head, he is blinded as well as suffocated.

If someone wipes the paste off, it merely flies back to the victim or re-forms. Rolling a 15 on a Dispel Magic or Willpower Test is the only way to dispel the paste. The Elementalist may dispel the paste anytime he wishes, as long as he is within range.

Uneven Ground

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 4 + Rank rounds
Effect: Penalty to enemy character actions
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell makes the ground shake and move violently in a radius of 25 yards around the spellcaster. The Elementalist wobbles as he casts this spell. During this time the all friendly characters should touch the Elementalist to avoid being affected by this spell; the touch can be brief and does not prevent the characters from taking another action that round. The magician touches the ground with her hands to cast the spell.

The Spellcasting Test is made against the highest Spell Defense Rating of any character who did not touch the Elementalist. Because characters are being flung about by the movement of the ground, all characters who have not touched the Elementalist suffer -4 to all tests to take an action.

Weapon Back

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 2
Range: 40 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The spellcaster must first prepare a weapon for Weapon Back to work on it. At dawn each day for a week, the magician places a drop of his blood on the weapon. At the end of the week, he carves a small scar-design on the target (either himself or another character) with the weapon. He then inscribes the same design on the weapon, creating a link between the target and the weapon. An Elementalist may prepare a number of weapons equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Destroying a weapon destroys the link.

To cast Weapon Back, the target touches his scar-design. The link between the target and weapon allows the Elementalist to cast the spell even if he cannot see the weapon. The Casting Difficulty is the Spell Defense of either the weapon or the target, whichever is higher. A successful result moves the weapon toward the character at the rate of 15 yards per round. The weapon travels along the ground, scraping lightly. Whenever the weapon would have to make an Attribute Test, i.e., for the weapon's Strength to break out of a cabinet or for its Dexterity to slide along a narrow window sill, the character rolls the Effect dice. The weapon must return to the target character within the duration of the spell, or the spell is broken.

Weapon Back can be targeted on characters other than the Elementalist. In that case the scar-design is placed on the target character, not the Elementalist. When casting the spell, the Elementalist must touch the scar-design on the other character.

FIFTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Earth Staff

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank minutes
Effect: Strength + 10 steps
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist needs a pinch of dirt or a small pebble to cast this spell. The Spell Defense of an ordinary bit of dirt or a pebble is 2. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the dirt expands to a five-foot-long staff that the Elementalist can use in melee combat. Each time the Elementalist hits his target with an earth staff, it does Strength +10 steps of damage. Only an Elementalist can use an earth staff, though any Elementalist may have created the staff.

Fireball

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist needs a source of flame to cast the Fireball spell. As he casts the spell, he places one of his hands to the side of the flame, then moves it over the top in a circular motion. When cast, the fireball expands to the size of a beach ball. As the fireball reaches the point of impact, the Elementalist makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within 10 yards of the point of impact. A successful Spellcasting Test explodes the fireball. The magician then rolls the Effect dice. All characters within 10 yards take damage equal to the result of the Effect dice roll. Mystic armor protects against fireballs.

Metal Scream

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Fear**
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist grimaces and mouths horrible screams while weaving the thread to this spell. He may cast the spell upon a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The Difficulty Number is the highest Spell Defense among the target characters.

The spell makes every piece of metal on a character's body scream with an eerie, shrieking wail. If successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. Everyone within earshot (excepting the spellcaster) must make a Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number 3. Characters specifically targeted by the spell must make Willpower Tests against the result of the Effect dice roll. Characters who fail their Willpower Tests must flee out of range of the caster (at least 100 yards) or suffer a -5 penalty to their Willpower step due to fear. This penalty does not apply to attempts to break out of the Fear effect. The Fear Difficulty for this spell is 10.

Metal Wings

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** 20 + Rank minutes
Effect: Flight, +5 steps to lifting Strength
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist first touches the shoulder blades of the target. While casting, he then spreads his arms to represent the unfolding of wings. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, gleaming silver metal wings appear on the target's back. The wings allow him or her to fly at a speed of 100 yards per round, 50 yards per round for Combat Movement. When the winged recipient must make a Strength Test to lift objects, the metal wings add 5 steps to his Strength step. The metal wings have a 9-foot wingspan. No being weighing more than 400 pounds (including equipment carried) can use Metal Wings for flight.

Stone Cage

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist creates a stone cage around another character by casting the spell with his fingers locked together to represent bars closing. Stone Cage may be cast on only one character. The character may not be taller, wider, or longer than 10 feet. If the character exceeds 10 feet in one of these dimensions, the spell automatically fails.

The Stone Cage has a Death Rating of 50; 50 points of damage destroys the cage. The cage has an Armor Rating of 7; no Armor-Defeating Hits are possible against a Stone Cage. The magician rolls the Effect dice to get the Difficulty Number for any attempts to dispel the spell. The entrapped character may make a Willpower Test to try to disrupt the magic of the cage. If the Willpower Test result is equal to or higher than the result of the Effect dice roll, the cage immediately shatters.

SIXTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Drastic Temperature

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Elementalist causes radical changes in temperature within a sphere 10 yards in diameter. The sphere cannot be moved once the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the temperature inside the sphere instantly rises above the boiling point of water or drops below the freezing point of water, at the discretion of the Elementalist. Water will freeze or boil on the third round of the spell. Each round a character is caught in, or passes through, the sphere, the magician rolls the Effect dice. The result is the damage taken by characters within the sphere. This spell is normally used to create barriers to discourage opponents from passing a given point.

Ease Passage

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist whispers words of praise to the elements, declaring the spell's target to be a friend of the weather elements. These whispers are automatically translated into the elemental tongue, and the elemental forces yield to the spell's recipient. The spell negates the adverse effects of terrain or vegetation. Loose sand magically compacts, bramble parts to ease passage. Any negative modifiers due to terrain are ignored. Make an Effect Test in place of any Dexterity, Strength, or Toughness Tests required by the terrain. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty of the test.

Flameshaw

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

With this spell, the Elementalist conjures a hulking spirit, but he needs a roaring fire at least the size of a campfire to cast the spell. The lower half of the conjured spirit appears in the shape of a two-person rickshaw, which is pulled by the creature's upper torso. Though the flameshaw has wheels, it does not actually touch the ground. The Elementalist and one passenger may ride in the rickshaw unharmed by the flames, although the ride is a warm one.

The spirit responds to verbal commands from the Elementalist. The flameshaw normally travels a few inches above the ground, but can rise as high as a thousand feet above the ground.

The Elementalist may instruct the flameshaw to run over a character. If so, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense to hit, and then rolls the Effect dice for damage. This does not count as an action for the Elementalist.

The flameshaw has a Death Rating of 40, Physical Armor of 12, and Mystic Armor of 10. The riders do not benefit from this armor; only attacks against the flameshaw itself cause the flames to coalesce and toughen to form the armor. The flameshaw has Combat Movement of 75 yards and Full Movement of 150 yards.

Ricochet Attack

Threads: Variable **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 75 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist creates a ball of energy filled with glowing, glass-like shards. When the spell is successful, the ball will hit one target, then ricochet among multiple other targets. The magician must declare how many threads he will attempt to weave before beginning the spell. When cast, he specifies a number of attacks equal to the number of threads he weaves to the spell. The ricocheting ball may attack a single character more than once, and cannot be targeted against the same character twice in a row.

For each attack by the ball against a target, the caster makes a Spellcasting Test. If the test succeeds, so does the attack. The magician rolls the Effect dice for the damage done to each target. If the test fails, then the ball flies past its target, unable to attack further.

Tossing Earth

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 1
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

If the spellcasting is successful, this spell can toss a character wildly into the air. To cast the spell, the Elementalist hurls pebbles, dirt, or stones toward the area he wishes to affect, making an explosive sound as he does so. The Tossing Earth spell can affect a 100-square-yard area, with no dimension greater than 20 yards.

Any round that a character touches the affected area, he must make a Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the Elementalist's Spell Defense. Failure sends the character shooting 1D6 yards into the air. Roll the Effect dice for damage to a tossed character. Mystic armor protects against Tossing Earth. Characters can attempt to exit this area by making a Dexterity Test at a -2 step penalty and moving that many yards.

SEVENTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Calm Water

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 500 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 9
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 6 (or more, see text)

With this spell, the Elementalist can calm the water during a storm, natural or magical. Calm water reduces the severity of the waves. The Elementalist must cast the Calm Water spell from the highest point available within range. He shouts at the water while casting the spell. Against natural storms the spell requires a Spellcasting Test of 6 or better; particularly severe storms may have a resistance of 9 or more. Magically or elementally caused storms resist with the Spell Defense of the storm's creator.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice to determine the number of feet by which the waves are reduced. If the Elementalist is on a ship facing 25-foot waves, and rolls 13, the ship still faces 12-foot waves. The Calm Water spell may be cast more than once on the same portion of water.

Cloud Summon

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 1 mile **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 8 (or more, see text)

An Elementalist may cast the Cloud Summon spell in order to cast the Death Rain spell (this page), or simply to achieve impressive weather effects. While casting the spell, the Elementalist makes gestures mimicking the swirling pattern of rapidly moving clouds. Then he tosses some water into the air. If the spellcasting is successful, the water instantly billows into a wispy bit of cloud, rising rapidly toward the sky. Summoning clouds with this spell requires a result of 8 on a Spellcasting Test. Stormy weather requires a 13, while gale-force storms require a result of 20.

If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, the magician rolls the Effect dice to determine how long it takes for the clouds to arrive. Clouds normally take 60 minutes to arrive from a summoning, but this is reduced by a number of minutes equal to the result of the Effect dice roll.

The Cloud Summon spell may be cast more than once on the same clouds, hastening their arrival. The effect of the spell centers on the Elementalist's position at the time of casting. The effect does not move with the Elementalist. The range of 1 mile refers to the radius of the ground area that will fall under cloud cover. The spell can summon any type of natural clouds the Elementalist has seen.

Death Rain

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 15
Range: 75 yards **Duration:** 12 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 steps (see text)
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist needs cloudy skies to cast the Death Rain spell. While casting, he must shout the names of all allies in order to protect them from the damaging effects of Death Rain. The spell will attack all unnamed characters, taking them to be enemies. The Elementalist makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of all enemy characters within range. If the test succeeds, all characters within the area of effect suffer damage from the rain. The spell effect extends 75 yards in all directions from the spot of the casting. Should the Elementalist move, the spell effect stays put. There is still rain 75 yards above the point of the casting, but the rain no longer does damage to enemy characters.

For each round an enemy character is in the area of the death rain, he takes Step 5 damage. Mystic armor protects against the Death Rain spell. If the Elementalist decides to concentrate on the spell, he adds his Willforce step to the Damage Test during each round he concentrates. Once the Elementalist breaks concentration, he cannot regain it without recasting the spell.

Storm Manacles

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 12 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist takes a drop of water, working it into a wisp of cloud. If he successfully casts Storm Manacles on a target character, the wisp darkens and grows to become manacles that shackle two of the target's arms or legs. Characters in storm shackles are considered Harried, suffering a -2 modifier to any Attack Tests. More important, if the shackled character attempts any hostile action toward the Elementalist or his allies, the manacles zap the shackled character with lightning. The magician rolls the Effect dice for the damage. The manacles can do damage for each round of the spell's duration without the Elementalist's concentration. Mystic armor protects a character against this spell's damage.

Whirlwind

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 9
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 2/Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Elementalist makes whirling motions with his fingers. The whirlwind spins from the Elementalist's hands as the spell is cast, which requires a result of 2 to be successful. The next round and each round thereafter, the Elementalist may move the whirlwind to strike any and all characters within a radius of 10 feet. The Elementalist makes a Spellcasting Test as the Attack Test and compares the result against the Spell Defense of each of his targets. The Elementalist makes one Spellcasting Test, but each target is attacked separately. The magician rolls the Effect dice for damage taken by characters hit by the Whirlwind spell. This spell requires the Elementalist to concentrate or else it will dissipate.

EIGHTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Blade Fury

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Elementalist shouts a battle cry and touches the target of the Blade Fury spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target's melee weapon gleams red, and a pale-red double of the weapon hovers not more than 3 inches away. Whenever the spell recipient hits with his weapon, the double-blade also does damage. The wielder of the weapon rolls the Effect dice, using the Elementalist's Effect step of Willforce + 10, for the damage.

Earth Wall

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 2

With this spell, the magician summons an earth wall that he may place along the ground wherever he chooses. The wall is composed of 10-by-10 foot sections of enchanted earth, each section 1 foot thick. The magician must be standing on the ground to cast this spell, which will summon a number of sections equal to the Elementalist's rank in Spellcasting. The wall may not be placed on a (Name-giver size or greater) living being; doing so immediately destroys the section of wall. Each wall section has the following characteristics:

Physical Defense: 8 **Armor:** 12
Spell Defense: 10 **Mystic Armor:** 10
Death Rating: 70

A character who fails an Attack Test against the Earth Wall spell has still struck the wall, but the blow has absolutely no effect on the wall. Only an Extraordinary success can defeat the armor of an Earth Wall.

The wall may be toppled, however. The magician rolls the Effect dice to get the Difficulty Number for knocking the wall down. If an attacking character makes a successful Strength Test against that number, he topples the wall.

Perimeter Alarm

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: Rank yards **Duration:** 4 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 2

Perimeter Alarm creates an alarm that will detect any creature crossing into a perimeter defined by the spell. The Elementalist walks the perimeter, then stands in the center to cast the spell. If the casting succeeds, use the Effect step of the spell as the Perception step of the perimeter. Whenever a creature or character crosses the line, the magician makes an Effect Test against the trespasser's Spell Defense. A successful result means the spell detects the trespasser. The Elementalist may set the alarm to ignore creatures under a specified size. The alarm is audible within the perimeter to every person who was within the area when the spell was cast. Any others present will not hear it.

Silence Metal

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell silences all noise made by any metal weapons, armor, or other equipment the spell target is carrying. To cast the spell, the Elementalist takes a dagger or other metal tool from the recipient. He puts the dagger to his lips, makes a shushing noise, then hands the dagger back. The Difficulty Number for casting the spell is the Spell Defense of the object or target character, whichever is higher. If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, then whenever the target character could possibly be heard, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of the listeners. A success means the metal makes no noise. Failure means the metal makes its normal amount of noise.

Silver Shadow

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Silver Shadow makes the target's metal objects become gauzy and insubstantial. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, normal tools, coins, and basic equipment are automatically rendered ineffective. The magician then makes an Effect Test, which then is compared to the steps of the weapons or the Armor Rating of any armor. If the test succeeds, the item becomes a useless, silvery shadow for the duration of the spell.



ILLUSIONIST SPELLS

The illusionist works with deception, spells that create things that are not what they seem. Sometimes he takes the unreal and gives it the appearance of reality. Other times he uses real effects to deceive or throw opponents off guard. Illusionist spells can be quite effective, but it is also possible for opponents to see through or otherwise sense the deception. A character who senses the true nature of an illusion unravels the spell. A character might sense an illusion whenever he acts against or reacts to an illusion. In some cases, a Disbelief Test is required (see **Disbelief**, p. 155). In others, characters may sense the illusion merely by defeating it with normal means.

FIRST CIRCLE SPELLS

Assuring Touch

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 12 + Rank rounds
Effect: +3 steps versus fear
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell increases the target's resistance to fear-causing attacks. The illusionist thinks positive thoughts about any subject he chooses, then gently touches the spell's target on the arm, shoulder, or head. The magician must murmur some bromide like "everything is going to be all right" for the spell to take effect. The subject adds 3 steps to the target's Spell Defense and Social Defense against fear-causing attacks. The target also adds 3 steps to any Willpower Tests made to resist the effects of fear.

Best Face

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: Touch **Duration:** 8 + Rank minutes
Effect: Charisma + 5 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell disguises the illusionist's identity. While casting the spell, he splashes water or cologne on his face. If the illusionist is copying a specific face, he must have seen that individual. The illusionist may cast this spell on himself or others. The spell adds +5 to a character's Charisma step when he is trying to convince others of his false identity and attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception. For example, a character wearing the face of a local militiaman adds the step bonus when ordering a crowd to disperse or taking any other action appropriate to militia. The Difficulty Number to disbelieve this illusion is equivalent to the caster's Charisma Attribute Value.

This spell only affects the head and neck of the target, including hair and ears. The rest of the spell target's body is unaffected. The maximum possible difference in size between the recipient's face and the face mimicked is 100 percent in any dimension. This illusionist must find some other way to disguise any obvious differences. This spell does not change the voice of the target, so the character will have to try to speak with the intonation and mannerisms of the character whose face he has borrowed.

If the character fails a Charisma-based test when interacting with others as the disguised, then the illusion is broken for that person.

Disguise Metal

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** Willforce Test + 7 minutes
Effect: Changes appearance of metal **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The illusionist can cast this spell on metal to disguise as any other metal of his choosing. The spell works on up to 100 pounds of metal. The spell does not change the shape or physical properties of the metal, only its appearance. Disguising a steel sword as mercury, for example, would be useless because the blade would not flow at room temperatures like mercury. Disguise Metal has a Spell Defense of 7 against magic that identifies metal. Disbelief Tests are made against a Difficulty Number of 7.

Displace Image

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank in rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The illusionist traces the outline of the target, then touches first the "shoulder" of the outline and then the shoulder of the spell target. The outline figure is shrouded in a shimmering blur that drifts 3 yards away, then reforms into the image of the spell target. The recipient is no longer visible in his actual location, the illusion having displaced his image. Other senses, such as smell and hearing, are not affected by this illusion.

Attacks on the image have no effect, but if the recipient does not mimic the effect of a blow against him that would have caused a Wound, the attacker is entitled to an immediate Disbelief Test. A result of 15 or more on an Attack Test will also dispel the illusion.

Light

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** Willpower Test + 5 minutes
Effect: Summons light
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

Light is a real spell, not an illusion. The illusionist briefly taps into the astral plane to release some energy for the light. The Light spell forms a floating, glowing sphere about the size of an orange, illuminating everything within 30 feet. The illusionist controls the movement of the light, but this requires concentration, preventing him from casting any other spell. He may place the light on a character or object if the outcome of the Illusion Test is equal to or higher than the target's Spell Defense. The illusionist can no longer move the light once he has placed it on a character or object.

An illusionist can blind a character by casting light on his or her eyes. This is more difficult than simply placing the light on the character: when making the Spellcasting Test to blind a target, increase the target's Spell Defense by +5. If the character is blinded by light, reduce any test to take an action requiring sight by -3 steps.

The magician can use blood magic to extend the duration of a Light spell. By sacrificing 1 point of permanent damage he can extend the duration of the spell to a year and a day.

Pauper's Purse

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell makes the target appear to have less money than he actually does. The illusionist touches the target purse, cash box, or other container holding coinage. If the container is on a person, such as a belt-pouch, cast the spell against whichever has the higher Spell Defense Rating, the wearer or the container. If the container is unattended, use the container's Spell Defense. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the magician rolls the Effect dice. Each point of effect moves ten coins into an extra-dimensional pocket that is invisible to those without astral perception. The coins are inaccessible until the spell expires or is dispelled.

Rope Guide

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (usually 2)

The illusionist casts the spell on a rope of up to 25 yards in length. By concentrating, the illusionist can direct the rope to move at a rate of 10 yards per round. If the rope must make a Dexterity Test (to tie itself off or tie up an opponent in combat), the illusionist makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster.

The rope cannot carry any weight while the illusionist is directing it. He could use Rope Guide to tie the rope around the bars of a window, but characters would still have to do the climbing themselves. Use the result of the Effect dice roll as the rope's Strength Value to determine how much weight the rope can hold when tied using this spell.

Unseen Voices

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 40 yards **Duration:** 15 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell creates the illusion of unseen voices to distract a target. The illusionist casts the spell while quietly muttering to himself. By concentrating, the caster can control what each voice says. The illusionist need not use the wide range of voices the spell gives him. The voices do not sound like the illusionist's unless he so desires. If the Illusionist chooses not to maintain the illusion, the voices will repeat whatever they said in the last round.

This spell does not give the illusionist any special ability to hear what is being said at the source of the voices. He must be in a position to hear what is being said if he wants to mimic a conversation.

SECOND CIRCLE SPELLS

Crafty Thought

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 2 yards **Duration:** Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell can be used to distract or confuse an opponent. The illusionist must be talking to the target while casting this spell, which will plant a thought created by the illusionist in the target's mind. The spell also incorporates the effect of small gestures that might be used to emphasize speech. The thought must be simple and visual. The image cannot be more than ten seconds' worth of action, and the area of the image "seen" no larger than a tavern common room, with no more than four characters acting in the image. The target does not have to act on the thought, but the idea has been planted.

Each round after the first, the illusionist can make the thought recur simply by deciding to do so. He can also modify the thought by making an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. Success means the illusionist can modify the thought, but the setting must remain the same. Any of the four (or fewer) principal characters in the thought can change their actions. If any Effect Test result is less than the target's Spell Defense, the spell fails.

If the illusionist fails either to weave the thread or to cast the spell, the target may make a Perception (or other applicable talent) Test. If the Test is successful, the target knows the illusionist was trying to cast a spell upon him.

Ephemeral Bolt

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 7 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Ephemeral Bolt spell creates a wriggling, glowing green bolt. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice for Damage. Physical armor protects against the spell. If the target takes a Wound, the Gamemaster should make an immediate Disbelief Test for him.

Innocent Activity

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 12 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell creates a flowing wave of color over the target. The wave coalesces into an image of that character performing an innocent-seeming activity. In order to avoid suspicion and possible disbelief, the Illusionist must choose an activity appropriate to the setting. If the recipient of the illusion moves from the spot, the illusion is broken. The subject may perform any action, even an attack, while under the spell of Innocent Activity. Any inexplicable phenomena, such as voices, spells, or attacks, should prompt an immediate Disbelief Test (likely with a bonus). If a character senses the illusion, it is broken. If not, the target character concocts some other explanation for what happened.

Monstrous Mantle

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** Willforce Test + 5 rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell increases the combat prowess of the spell target. While casting the spell, the Illusionist makes snarling and growling sounds, and mimics the attack of a violent monster. He then touches the target. Two helices of light form around the character, rotating to spin out the form of the monster. The illusion is most effective if the Illusionist has fought and suffered damage in a melee with the creature depicted. If the Illusionist has never taken damage from the attack of this type of beast, add 3 steps to all Disbelief Tests. If the Illusionist has never fought the creature at all, the Test gains an additional 3 step bonus. These sensing bonuses are cumulative. If the Illusionist has never even seen the creature, for example, any Disbelief Tests made against the illusion would get the full bonus of 6 steps.

The illusion adds 3 steps to the spell target's Attack Test and Damage Test, and 3 to his Physical Defense Rating. The recipient also gains 12 extra Damage Points. The first 12 points of damage done to the character come from this pool, and do not count as Current Damage for the character.

The illusion does not give the recipient any of the creature's special attack forms or special abilities. If, for example, the Illusionist places the illusion of a crakbill onto a Swordmaster, the Swordmaster does not get the breath attack, nor can he make the running attack of a crakbill. The illusion of the "breath attack" appears, but the only way the Swordmaster can actually do damage is to successfully strike the target with his sword. The "breath attack" does no damage.

Tailor

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

When casting this spell, the Illusionist clenches his teeth as if biting a thread, then touches his target. The spell alters the style, cut, and color of the target's clothes, either improving or worsening his or her appearance. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist makes an Effect Test against the Social Defense of any characters who view the newly tailored character. A successful test moves the attitude of viewing characters one degree in the direction chosen by the Illusionist (see **Gamemaster Characters** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 329).

True Ephemeral Bolt

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell is not an illusion. It looks and acts exactly like the Ephemeral Bolt spell. True Ephemeral Bolt packs less punch than its ersatz twin, however. Illusionists find the spell useful against characters that are busy disbelieving every spell the Illusionist casts.

Weather Cloak

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Weather Cloak spell is not an illusion. If successful, the spell creates a shimmering-weave cloak of blue and silver around the target, protecting him or her from the elements and adding 3 steps to any tests to resist heat or cold from the weather. The cloaked character may also successfully resist supernatural weather effects, such as the **Death Rain** spell, p. 163, by making a successful Effect Test against the Spell Defense of the creator. The Effect Test is available in addition to any other action the character takes.

THIRD CIRCLE SPELLS

Alarm

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Illusionist gives a slight shriek as he attempts to cast the Alarm spell on an object or a place. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice and records the result. Compare that result to the Spell Defense of any living or sentient being that comes within 10 feet of the alarm. If the trespasser's Spell Defense is the same or lower than the result of the Effect dice roll, the alarm goes off. It will continue to shout a warning in a loud voice for a full minute. The Illusionist determines the warning, which may consist of as many words as his rank in Spellcasting.

Blinding Glare

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 30 yards **Duration:** See text
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Blinding Glare spell creates a blinding flash of light at a spot of the caster's choice within the spell's range. The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any target within 10 feet of the flash. If the test succeeds, the Illusionist makes an Effect Test and compares the result to the Perception step of all affected targets, then consults the **Success Level Table**, p. 340. For each level of success achieved, the target is blinded for 1 Combat Round. This spell is not an illusion, so targets cannot disbelieve its effects.

Dampen Karma

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: -4 to target's Karma dice
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell reduces the target's ability to use Karma. The Illusionist must spend 1 Karma Point to cast this spell. He may add Karma dice to the Thread Weaving or the Spellcasting Test of the spell. Dampen Karma is cast on one character. A successful test reduces the effect of Karma Points spent by the target character. He must reduce the result of his Karma die roll by 2 steps. The Karma die result cannot be lowered to less than 0.

False Floor

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 3 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell creates the Illusion of a false floor or other trap in a normal section of floor (up to 20 by 20 feet). While casting, the Illusionist imagines some manner of trap concealed by the floor. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice. This number is the Difficulty Number for Perception Tests by characters to properly identify the false trap. Characters may use Detect Trap in place of this Perception Test.

If a character rolls a result lower than the Difficulty Number, he still believes that something is wrong with the floor. The gamemaster gives information hinting that a trap might be triggered if the character were to cross the section of floor, with disastrous results. If a character crosses anyway, no trap is triggered.

False floor may also be cast on sections of wall or a ceiling. The spell is not limited only to the floor.

Impossible Lock

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 7 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2

While casting this spell, the Illusionist pantomimes failing to open the lock he is touching. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice.

A character attempting to pick the lock must make a Pick Lock Test with a result equal to or higher than the Effect. Failure means the lock will not open. A success makes the Impossible Lock spell fade as soon as it is picked.

Mind Fog

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 3 rounds
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell makes the target forget what he or she was about to do. While casting the spell, the Illusionist scratches her temple as if trying to remember something. Mind Fog is cast on a single character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target character cannot take any action except dodging, until he "remembers" what he wanted to do. The Illusionist rolls the Effect dice and records the result. The target "remembers" by making a Willpower Test against that number. If the result of the Willpower Test is at least equal to the result of the Illusionist's Effect dice roll, the character breaks the Mind Fog spell.

Nobody Here

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 8 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 8 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell hides normally visible characters from another character. The Illusionist concentrates intensely on the thought of "nobody here" while weaving the thread. He casts the spell against the highest Spell Defense of any character within range. The spell centers on the spot where the Illusionist casts it, radiating out ten yards. The effect does not move. Characters who exit the circle lose the benefit of the spell, regaining the benefit only by moving back inside the circle. Once the Nobody Here spell is cast, no additional characters may be affected by it. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice; record the result.

A character that walks into the area of the illusion makes an automatic Disbelief Test. If the result is less than the spell Effect, the character's sensory feedback is suppressed. His senses detect any normally visible characters, but the knowledge is suppressed by the Nobody Here spell. The character adds 3 steps to his Disbelief Test if any of the characters concealed by the spell manipulate the environment in ways that require explanation (i.e., moving books in plain sight, opening and shutting doors). A target character earns a 5 step bonus if a concealed character makes physical contact with the target. Nobody Here is dispelled as soon as a concealed character causes damage to the target. Once the spell is disbelieved or the duration expired, the bamboozled character suddenly realizes what he had seen a few minutes earlier. Illusionists often use this spell to tell off an overbearing employer, escaping before the realization hits their boss.

FOURTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Circle of Well Being

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Individual's Willforce
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Illusionist walks a circle 10 feet in diameter, then casts the spell. If successful, the spell makes the area within the circle glisten like ice on a lake. The air is cool to the touch, but not uncomfortable. If the Illusionist makes a successful Spellcasting Test, characters that make Recovery Tests within the circle add the result of a Willpower or Willforce Test to their Recovery Test result.

Clarion Call

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 12 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell creates an illusory voice that can persuade characters to do the speaker's will. The Illusionist speaks quietly while weaving the thread for Clarion Call. The Illusionist casts the spell against the highest Spell Defense of any character he intends to fool. A successful Spellcasting Test allows the Illusionist to place the effect at any spot within range. Clarion Call creates one illusory voice, a voice with considerable authority that automatically translates the Illusionist's words into a language appropriate for his listeners. The targets must be able to hear and understand the commands for them to be effective, however. To determine the success of the illusion, the Illusionist makes an Effect Test against the Social Defense of the targets. Success means the characters act according to the voice's suggestions, as long as the action is not obviously harmful.

Eyes Have It

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell can be used to temporarily blind an opponent. The Illusionist touches his eyelids with his fingers, then touches his fingers to his clothes. Stylized, mirror-like eyes appear on his clothing. The number of pairs of eyes is equal to the Illusionist's rank in Spellcasting. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist may target individual opponents at the rate of one per round by making an Effect Test against each target's Spell Defense. A success transforms a pair of mirror eyes into a duplicate of the target's eyes, hence he may affect a number of opponents equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The target's eyes become a glazed, opaque white. He or she is blinded, suffering a -5 step penalty to any action requiring sight, both normal and astral.

Improved Alarm

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Illusionist mimics a whisper to place the Improved Alarm spell on an object or a place. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Illusionist rolls the Effect dice. Any living or sentient being that comes within 10 feet of the alarm may trigger it. If the trespasser's Spell Defense is the same or lower than the result of the Effect dice roll, the spell is triggered. If the Illusionist is within the spell's range, the alarm quietly notifies him that something is amiss. The Illusionist then instructs the alarm to shout its warning or to remain silent. The Illusionist determines the warning, which may consist of as many words as his rank in Spellcasting.

Multi-Missile

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank rounds (1 missile)
Effect: +4 missiles **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell adds missiles to any single missile weapon. The Illusionist casts this spell on a missile, such as an arrow or sling bullet. He makes the Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the wielder of the missile weapon, or the missile itself, whichever is higher. The wielder can lower his Spell Defense, then fire the missile next round.

If successful, Multi-Missile adds 4 missiles to the one shot by the wielder. If the real missile hits, so do all the illusory missiles. If the real

missile misses, so do all the duplicates. Each duplicate missile does Step 4 damage. Illusory damage is applied after the real damage.

This spell has an unfortunate (for the Illusionist) quirk. The defender can sense the illusion through the use of Avoid Blow or other defensive ability, possibly prompting a Disbelief Test.

Stop Right There

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell can immobilize a target. When casting the spell, the Illusionist holds up a hand, shouting "Stop!" as loudly as possible. The Illusionist casts Stop Right There against a single target. If successful, the target cannot move. The Illusionist rolls the Effect dice and records the result. The target character regains movement when the spell expires or when he makes a successful Willpower Test against the result of the caster's Effect dice roll. The character receives a cumulative 1 step bonus to his Willpower Test each round after the first. A character who takes damage while under the effect of Stop Right There adds 5 steps to any subsequent Willpower Tests.

FIFTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Flying Carpet

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 7

This spell enchants a carpet or other piece of cloth to become a flying platform. If the Illusionist makes a successful Spellcasting Test, he may command the carpet with verbal instructions. The Illusionist may also turn over command of the carpet to another character, but he can only do so once during the spell's duration. The carpet is not very intelligent and can be easily confused. The Strength Attribute Value of the flying carpet is determined by rolling the Effect dice. The Carrying Capacity of the carpet is the maximum weight it can carry and still fly. The distance the carpet can travel is 120 yards per round, with a Combat Movement of 60 yards per round. The Flying Carpet spell gives the cloth a Death Rating of 30, and an Armor Rating of 4. The Physical Defense and Spell Defense Ratings of the carpet are those of the carpet's operator. The carpet reverts to its normal form when the spell's duration expires or after it has taken 30 points of damage.

A magician can use blood magic to extend the duration of the spell. At a cost of 2 points of damage to the Illusionist, the carpet will remain animated for a year and a day. The damage can only be healed after the spell expires, even if the carpet has been destroyed.

Improve Karma

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: +5 steps to Karma dice
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Illusionist must spend a Karma Point to cast this spell, and he adds his Karma dice for the Spellcasting Test. The Illusionist may cast Improve Karma on any character, including himself.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, every time the spell's recipient spends a Karma Point, he adds 5 steps to his Karma step as a result of Improve Karma.

This spell has been known to cause extreme Astral Clouding.

Noble Manner

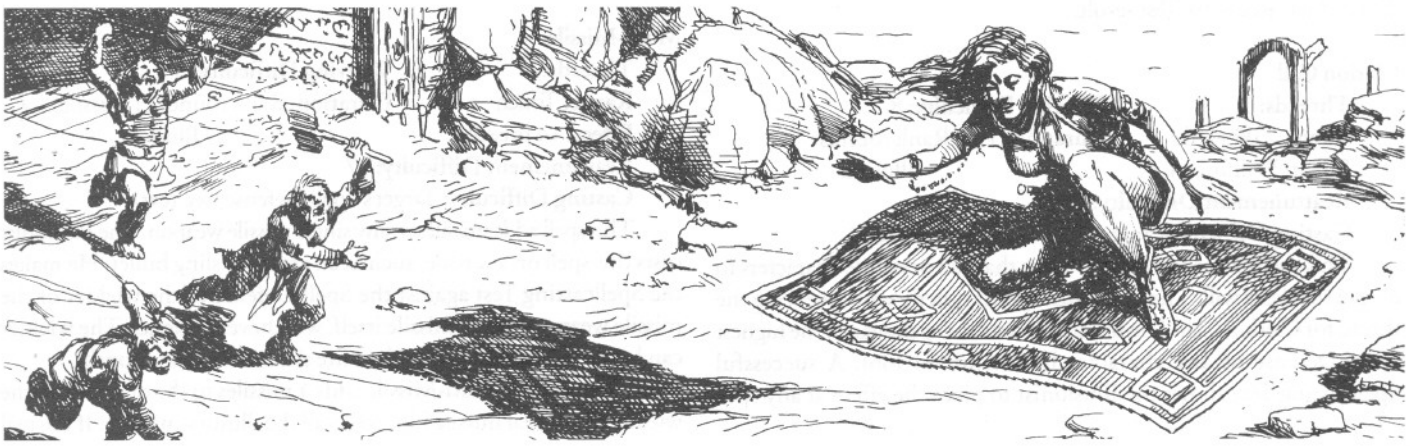
Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: +5 steps to Charisma Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 10
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Illusionist adopts a haughty expression, which slowly softens to a smile while casting Noble Manner. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the recipient gains 5 steps to all Charisma Tests as long as he acts as if he were from a superior social station. The recipient may be arrogant, gracious, friendly, condescending, or whatever, but he must behave as if he is from a social class a cut above the listener's station.

Pleasant Visions

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell prevents characters from taking actions because they are distracted by pleasant thoughts and fantasies. While weaving the thread,



the Illusionist remembers a pleasant scene or experience. Pleasant Visions may be cast upon a number of characters equal to the caster's rank in Illusion. A successful Spellcasting Test fills the targets' heads with pleasant thoughts and sensations. They will not take any action until the pleasant visions are either dispelled or they suffer harm. For this spell, characters may use either their Willforce (Willpower) or Perception step for a Disbelief Test. A character who suffers harm adds a number equal to any damage taken to the result of an automatic Disbelief Test to disbelieve.

Wall of Unfire

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 8 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

This spell creates a wall of illusory fire. While casting the spell, the Illusionist makes crackling, hissing noises like a roaring fire. A result of 2 or greater on the Spellcasting Test will create a Wall of Unfire. The Illusionist records the Spellcasting Test result. The Wall of Unfire is 10 feet by 10 feet by 1 foot thick, and almost impossible to see through. Any character passing through the wall takes damage unless his Spell Defense is higher than the Spellcasting result. The Illusionist rolls the Effect dice for damage. This spell has a Difficulty Number of 12 for Disbelief Tests.

SIXTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Bouncing Blaster

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank days
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

An Illusionist seeds the earth with the Bouncing Blaster spell. All of the blasters must be placed within a 100 by 100 foot square. The Illusionist can plant a number of blasters equal to his rank in Spellcasting. An Illusionist with Rank 8 Spellcasting, for example, would plant eight blasters. The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting Test against any character who walks within 5 feet of a blaster. Trailing fierce orange sparks, the blaster shoots 10 feet into the air, then explodes. Roll the Effect dice for damage to all characters who are within 20 feet of the blaster's launch point. Mystic Armor protects from the damage of Bouncing Blaster.

Chosen Path

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell forces characters to follow a path of the Illusionist's choosing. As he casts the spell, the Illusionist selects a path (a set of doors, a branch in the road), then indicates his choice. When other characters are faced with the same choice, the Illusionist makes an Effect Test against their Spell Defense. A successful test forces the targets to make the indicated choice. They may believe they have chosen otherwise, but in reality they have selected the path previously determined by the Illusionist. The deception will become apparent once they are out of the spell's range or the spell's duration ends.

An Illusionist stands at a three-way intersection. He chooses left, then casts the spell. A few hours later a group of merchants walks by. They try to take a right turn, but the spell makes them turn left, even though they all believe they have taken the right-hand turn. Once they are 60 yards from the intersection, they notice that they are not heading in their intended direction.

Dancing Disks

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 75 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell creates dancing disks under the feet of the spell's targets. When casting the spell, the magician finishes by spinning in tight circles. If successful, the spell can target a number of characters up to the Illusionist's rank in Spellcasting. The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of each target. If the test is successful, glowing violet or green disks appear under the feet of the targets. The Illusionist rolls the Effect dice, and records the result. Any time the result of any test made by the target is less than the Effect dice result, the disks spin the target 180 degrees immediately after his action. Dancing disks can give unaffected characters wonderful opportunities for blindside attacks.

Illusory Missiles

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 11 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Illusionist releases a barrage of illusory missiles, saturating a circle with a radius of 10 feet. The Illusionist makes the Spellcasting Test against any character caught in the barrage. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, he rolls the Effect dice for the damage to the target. Successful use of Wound Balance, Avoid Blow, or other defensive tests may prompt a Disbelief Test. The Difficulty Number for Disbelief Tests is 10.

Spotlight

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

With this spell, the Illusionist can cast a spotlight over an area with a radius of 20 feet. The Illusionist makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within the circle. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell creates spotlights, one for each character in the circle, up to a number of spotlights equal to the magician's rank in Spellcasting. If there are more characters than spotlights, the characters with lower Spell Defense Ratings are illuminated. The spotlight sits a few feet above a character's head, brightly illuminating him. If the

character tries to evade or use stealth, the Illusionist makes an Effect Test and the target makes a Willpower Test to see if the spotlight stays with the target. If the magician's test result is equal to or higher than the target's, the spotlight stays with the target.

SEVENTH CIRCLE SPELLS

False Enchantment

Threads: 5 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank days
Effect: Willpower + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

The False Enchantment spell imbues an item with an illusory magical power. The Illusionist cannot activate this power, but other magicians can detect it and be deceived. While casting the spell, the Illusionist imagines the fabulous properties he wishes the object to have. He may choose a "Spell Defense" for the item, up to his result for the Spellcasting Test. This Spell Defense determines the difficulty of magically obtaining information about the item. At the same time, he rolls the Effect dice. This result will be used as the difficulty number to see through the illusion.

Magaja casts False Enchantment on a sword. She gets an 11 on her Spellcasting Test. She chooses to give the sword a "Spell Defense" of 8. If a Weaponsmith were to use Item History Talent on the sword, he would need an 8 to gain the false information about the sword.

If magical investigation succeeds against the item's "Spell Defense" but is still lower than the Effect result, then the investigator obtains the false information planted by the Illusionist. If the investigator rolls higher than the Effect result, then he has seen through the illusion and is able to study the weapon normally. The Effect result, "Spell Defense," and bogus information about the weapon should be recorded.

An Illusionist can use blood magic to extend the duration of this spell to a year and a day by taking 2 points of permanent damage.

Rebel Limb

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 16
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 4 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell permits the magician to gain control over one limb of a target. While casting the spell, the Illusionist grabs one of his own limbs, shaking it randomly, then points it at the target character. If he makes a successful Spellcasting Test, the Illusionist takes over one of the target's limbs, choosing which limb it will be. The Illusionist controls the movement of the limb as long as the target is within range. The limb acts with any applicable physical talents or skills, i.e., a sword-arm attack, with the talent of its owner.

Once the Illusionist has the target's limb under control, the magician rolls the Effect dice, recording the result. The target character may try to regain control by making a Willpower Test against the result of the Illusionist's Effect dice roll. If the limb is attacking its owner, the owner gains 3 to his Willpower step.

Twisted Tongues

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 14
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

This spell so jumbles a target's speech that no one can understand what he's saying. While weaving the thread the Illusionist mutters nonsense syllables. Twisted Tongues may affect a number of characters up to the caster's rank in Spellcasting. The Illusionist casts Twisted Tongues against the highest Spell Defense of any target character.

If the Spellcasting is successful, Twisted Tongues reduces the targets' words to nonsense utterances, so that "Kill them all!" translates to "Slig covo bebop buttery!" No one can understand what the character or characters are saying until the illusion is dispelled or the spell expires.

Vertigo

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 75 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Cancels up to D10 Action dice
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell totally disorients a target. While casting the spell, the Illusionist spins in a tight circle, making himself slightly dizzy. He then casts Vertigo on a single character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target can no longer tell which way is up or down, becoming severely disoriented. The character loses his biggest Action die for any action, up to a D10. If the highest Action die is a D12 or D20, reduce the Action dice by 6 steps.

Walk Through

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: Creates temporary pathway
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This is a real spell mastered by Illusionists during their experiments with unreality. The spell is cast upon a wall, gate, or other obstacle to create a temporary pathway. The Spellcasting Test is made against the obstacle's Spell Defense. The success level determines how big an opening is created. The opening is not very stable; it writhes, expands, and contracts at random moments. On an Average success, one character can try to struggle through each round; a result of 7 or better on a Dexterity Test will permit the character to wriggle through. A Good success allows one character to move through each round. An Excellent success or better allows a number of characters equal to the Illusionist's rank in Spellcasting through each round.

EIGHTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Astral Nightmare

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 10 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell deceives the target into believing he has been transported to astral space. While weaving the spell, the Illusionist conjures up

memories or imaginings of astral space. Astral Nightmare is cast upon a single character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the character believes he has been transported to astral space. The Illusionist is in control of the illusion, but the control requires concentration. If the Illusionist does not maintain the illusion, the illusion fades in a single round. The Illusionist does not need to have line of sight to the target to maintain the spell, but the target must stay in the range of the spell or else the illusion fades. Any effects or creatures that the Illusionist conjures up act using the Effect step of Astral Nightmare. The Illusionist may reduce the Effect step to simulate smaller effects or creatures. Characters who have never sensed or perceived Astral Space get a 5 step bonus to Disbelief Tests when affected by this spell.

Form Exchange

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 10 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Form Exchange swaps the location and the appearance of the Illusionist and the target character. If the Illusionist's Spellcasting Test succeeds, he then makes an Effect Test against the highest Attribute step number of the target character or creature. A successful test begins the Form Exchange. The Difficulty Number to disbelieve this spell is equal to the highest Attribute step number of the imitated being. The Illusionist, looking like the target character, now stands where the target character originally stood. The target character now occupies the Illusionist's position and looks like him.

Illusory Spell

Threads: 2+ **Weaving Difficulty:** 14+
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 12 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 24
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Illusory Spell enables the Illusionist to imitate the effects of other attack spells cast by other magicians. To mimic a spell, the Illusionist must first either have seen it cast and used the True Sight talent (p. 111) to memorize its effects, or have been a target of the spell himself. If using the True Sight talent to memorize a spell, then the Difficulty Number for the True Sight is equal to the Learning Difficulty of the spell. Only spells Eighth Circle or lower can be duplicated by Illusory Spell.

The illusory version of a spell uses the same statistics as the original spell, with the following exceptions. First, the illusory spell is an illusion, which allows targets to disbelieve it per standard rules. If a Knockdown or Willpower Test is required to resist the original spell, such tests can prompt a Disbelief Test if successful. Second, the illusory version of a spell lasts for only 1 Combat Round, regardless of the original spell's duration. This means that illusory versions of spells with longer duration, such as Doom Missile, do not damage their targets after the first round. Third, the Illusionist must weave either 2 threads or however many threads the original spell requires, whichever is greater. Likewise, the Weaving Difficulty for the illusory version is equal to the original spell's Weaving Difficulty or 14, whichever is greater. The illusory spell does the mimicked spell's normal damage or Willforce + 12 damage, whichever is lower. The Difficulty Number to disbelieve the spell is equal to 14. Characters receive a bonus to their Disbelief Tests equal to the Circle of the imitated spell.

Leaping Lizards

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 150 yards **Duration:** Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 7 **Illusion**
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: 2

Leaping Lizards creates illusory monsters, up to a number equal to the Illusionist's rank in Spellcasting. The spell can create monsters other than lizards. The creature's Attribute step numbers are equal to the Effect step number, though the Illusionist may choose to reduce some Attributes for the sake of realism. The Illusionist must stay within range of the creatures or else they are instantly dispelled. The monsters are controlled by the Illusionist. Any test made against the monsters should be considered a Disbelief Test, although the character takes no Strain for these Disbelief Tests.

Massive Missiles

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 250 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

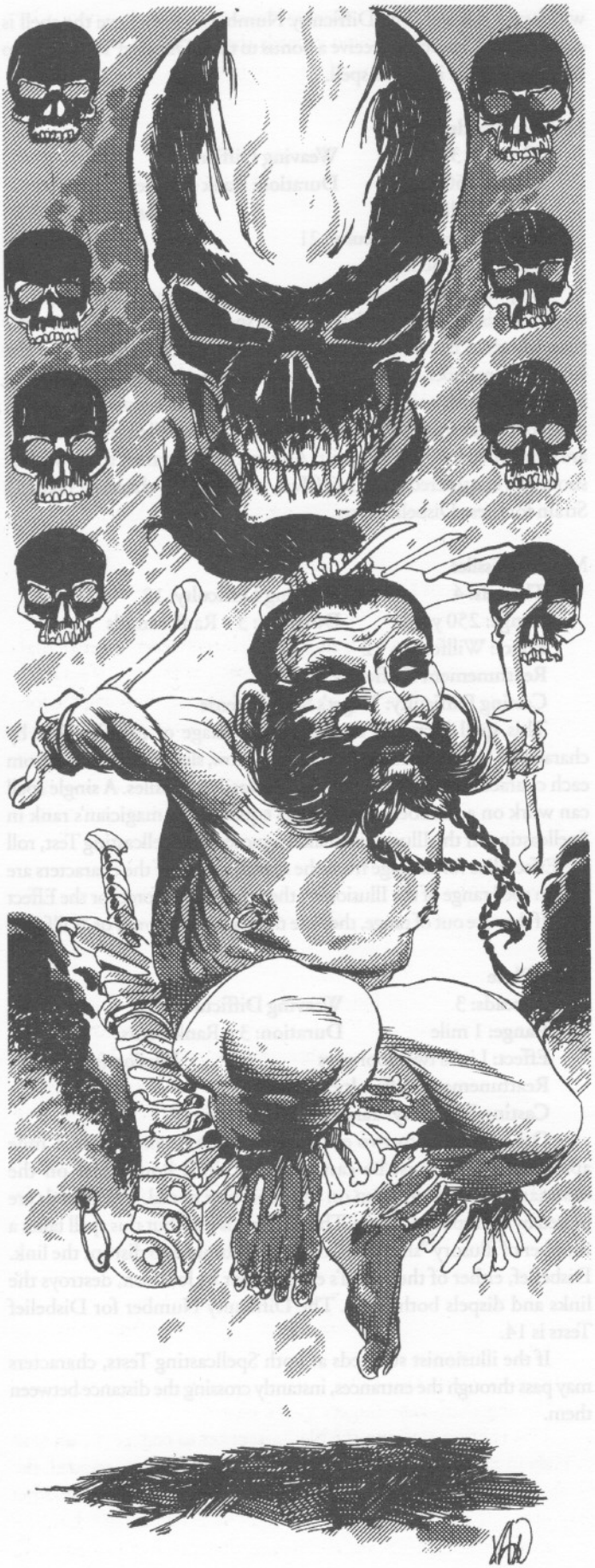
This spell increases the size and damage of missiles shot by characters. The Illusionist must hold an arrow, sling stone, or bolt from each character who is to benefit from Massive Missiles. A single spell can work on a number of characters equal to the magician's rank in Spellcasting. If the Illusionist makes a successful Spellcasting Test, roll the Effect dice for damage from the missile attack. If the characters are within spell range of the Illusionist, they use his Willforce for the Effect step. If they are out of range, they use their own Willpower or Willforce.

Other Place

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 1 mile **Duration:** 3 + Rank hours
Effect: Links two doorways **Illusion** (see text)
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Other Place joins two entrances that are no more than 1 mile apart. This spell must be cast twice within 2 hours, first on the destination portal and then on the departure portal. The portals are linked by a warping of space. The warping is real, but this spell takes a number of illusory "shortcuts" that can be broken to disrupt the link. Disbelief, either of the portal's existence or its location, destroys the links and dispels both spells. The Difficulty Number for Disbelief Tests is 14.

If the illusionist succeeds at both Spellcasting Tests, characters may pass through the entrances, instantly crossing the distance between them.



NETHERMANCER SPELLS

Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Their spells often involve spirits and other non-worldly entities. Their spells are also heavily involved with the workings of life and death and the nature of astral space.

FIRST CIRCLE SPELLS

Bone Dance

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer does a herky-jerky jig while weaving the Bone Dance spell, pointing at the target as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Bone Dance infuses the target's skeleton with an independent living force, which then moves the skeleton against the target's will. The Nethermancer next makes an Effect Test. If the result is equal to or higher than the target's Strength step number, he can control the target's movements. If the result is lower than the target's Strength, the target may move on his own. When he is doing so, however, the target suffers a negative modifier equal to the magician's rank in Spellcasting. This spell does not require the target to have a skeleton, although casting Bone Dance on a jellyfish may have unimpressive results.

The Nethermancer must concentrate each round of this spell, directing the target through its dance. The Nethermancer's control can only make the target move in a random fashion. The target wanders 1D6 yards in a random direction each round.

Chilling Circle

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank minutes
Effect: Step 4 damage when in circle
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell creates a circle of cold that can damage characters who enter it. While casting the spell, the Nethermancer spins in a slow circle, increasing speed as he nears the end of the spellcasting. He stops suddenly, kneeling to touch the center of the circle. A wave of cold ripples out for 5 yards in every direction from the center.

The Nethermancer makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of any character inside the circle. A successful Spellcasting Test does Step 4 damage to the target character. Mystic armor protects against the damage. A Spellcasting Test is made for each character present or entering the circle each round (apart from the Nethermancer).

Command Nightflyer

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 2
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell allows the Nethermancer to converse with and command nocturnal flying creatures, such as owls, bats and krilworms. The Nethermancer imitates the flying or speaking sound of the animal and

then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the creature. If the test is successful, the spell allows him to converse with the creature and to utter simple commands. The Nethermancer makes an Effect Test. If the result is equal to or higher than the creature's Social Defense, the target obeys the Nethermancer's commands.

Command Nightflyer cannot override a creature's survival instincts or force it to behave against its basic nature. For example, the spell could not force a bat to scout during daylight hours.

Detect Undead

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell permits the spell recipient to detect undead creatures. While weaving the spell, the Nethermancer must touch the spell target, smearing the recipient's brow with a bit of dust or dirt. Detecting undead requires concentration, but the spell's recipient does not have to concentrate for the duration of the spell, only during the rounds when he is trying to detect undead.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the recipient may spend a round to make an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense of any undead within range. A success indicates the number of undead within range, but not their exact position. If the spell recipient is not the Nethermancer, the recipient makes the test using his or her own Willpower or Willforce.

Dry and Wet

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell can either dry soaked items or soak dry ones. The Nethermancer gathers saliva in his mouth. If he spits, "wet" is cast. If he swallows, "dry" is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice to determine the number of pounds that can be soaked or dried.

Experience Death

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 20 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 12
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer casts this spell on a corpse to see and experience everything the dead character experienced at the time of his death. The Nethermancer touches the spirit world to recreate the events of the character's death. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the last few rounds of the target character's life are played out, equal to the duration of the spell. The Nethermancer senses everything from the point of view of the deceased. Unfortunately, this includes taking any damage the deceased suffered.

The Nethermancer then rolls the Effect dice, the result giving him a pool of extra Damage Points. The first damage done to the Nethermancer comes from this pool, not from the character's current Damage. No wounds are caused by damage done to this pool. Once the character's damage taken exceeds the amount in the pool, the Nethermancer begins to take damage normally.

Insect Repellent

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell permits the Nethermancer to repel insects of all sizes. While weaving the spell, he makes a buzzing sound like the sound of flying insects, the buzzing becoming softer as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, he then rolls the Effect dice and records the result. Insects must make a successful Willpower Test against this number, or else leave the character alone.

Putrefy

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Putrefies food
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

Nethermancers cast this simple spell by swallowing with a slight grimace, then looking at the food they wish to putrefy. If no one is eating the food, the Spell Defense is 2. If someone is eating the food when the spell is cast, the Nethermancer must overcome the highest Spell Defense of the person(s). If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the food is putrefied. When cast on the diner, all of the food, including the bite just taken, is putrefied. Putrefy works on up to 20 pounds of food.

Spirit Grip

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell permits the Nethermancer to draw on the malevolent energy of the spirits of the dead to harm others. A successful Spellcasting Test draws a small portion of their malevolent energy to damage a target. The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice for the damage. Spirit Grip cannot be cast on sacred ground or other ground that has been proofed against spirits; even a Life Circle of One (see p. 177) is enough to stop Spirit Grip. Physical and Mystic Armor protect against the Spirit Grip spell.

Undead Struggle

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This risky spell allows the Nethermancer to engage the undead directly in magical combat. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer and the undead are locked in magical combat. Neither may move or take any action other than that required for Undead Struggle until the spell expires or until one of the contestants is destroyed.

The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice and compares the result to the result of the target's Willpower Test. The winner takes no damage; the loser takes damage equal to the full result of his opponent's roll. Mystic Armor provides protection against the Undead Struggle spell.



SECOND CIRCLE SPELLS

Bone Circle

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank months
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 9

Bone Circle is a ritual spell in which the Nethermancer invites a wandering spirit to live within a circle of bones. Each test, Thread Weaving and Spellcasting, takes one hour of game time. The Nethermancer needs the bones of a non-sentient animal for the ritual of constructing a bone circle 10 yards across and inviting a wandering spirit to live within it. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spirit is summoned.

The spirit that takes up residence is not very bright. It cannot leave the circle, but it can try to prevent other characters from entering. The spirit can take physical action within the circle; its Dexterity, Attack, Strength, and Damage steps are all equal to the Effect step of Bone Circle. Other Nethermancer spells, such as Grave Message and Spirit Portal, also make use of a bone circle. A Nethermancer may have more than one bone circle in existence at any one time. The game statistics for the Bone Spirit follow.

Bone Spirit
DEX: * **STR:** * **TOU:** 8
PER: 4 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 7
*Effect step of spell

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: Effect step
Damage: Effect step
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: Effect step
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 44
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Ethereal Darkness

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** Willpower + D10 rounds
Effect: Darkness, Spell Defense 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: 2

Using this spell, the Nethermancer draws a bit of darkness from another dimension, then commands it to billow and expand. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the darkness fills a sphere 10 yards in every direction, centering on the character or object touched. Characters who are not willing recipients of Ethereal Darkness increase their Spell Defense by 5.

The darkness gives all characters a 5 step penalty to all actions requiring sight. Ordinary light does not penetrate Ethereal Darkness. Characters who wish to banish the darkness with magical light must make a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of Ethereal Darkness, which is a 12. Dispel Magic must also defeat the Spell Defense of 12 to dispel the darkness.

Nethermancers are not affected by Ethereal Darkness. They continue to see as if the spell had never been cast. All Nethermancers are immune to Ethereal Darkness, not just the Nethermancer who cast the spell.

Fog Ghost

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Summons fog ghost
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 8

With the Fog Ghost spell, the Nethermancer coalesces fog from the surrounding air and coaxes a maleficent spirit to briefly inhabit the fog. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number of 8, the Spell Defense of the Fog Ghost. If the test is successful, the Fog Ghost appears anywhere the Nethermancer wishes within range. The Fog Ghost attacks the nearest character, and continues to attack whatever character is nearest (ally or enemy) for each round of its

existence. Destroying the fog does not harm the spirit, which simply returns to the netherworld and waits for another chance to harm the living. A Fog Ghost will not attack undead or entities. Game statistics for the Fog Ghost follow.

Fog Ghost
DEX: 7 **STR:** 7 **TOU:** 5
PER: 6 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 6

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 10
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 16
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 24
Wound Threshold: 6
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

A Fog Ghost is vulnerable to damage from normal weapons. Its high Physical Defense Rating represents the difficulty of hitting the "thicker" spots of the fog, which house the spirit.

A Fog Ghost spell cannot be cast in a desert or other very dry environment, nor can it be cast when the temperature is below freezing.

Life Circle of One
Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

This spell creates a circle that attempts to repel any undead, Horror, or Horror construct that attempts to enter it. The Nethermancer spits on his fingers, then outlines the circle with his finger. The circle can be no more than ten yards in diameter. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the circle resists any undead, Horror, or Horror construct that attempts to enter. When an entity attempts to enter or reach into the circle, the Nethermancer makes a Spellcasting Test against the entity's Spell Defense. If the result is equal to or higher than that number, the circle repels the entity. Roll the Effect dice for the damage the being suffers as it is repelled.

Life Circle of One can only repel one creature per round. Numerous enemies can easily swamp the circle if they can manage to surround it. When more than one undead attack the circle, the circle will attempt to repel the being with the highest Spell Defense.

A Nethermancer may cast another Life Circle of One within an existing life circle. This can afford some protection from numerous entities for a few minutes.

Pocket Guardian
Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Self **Duration:** 1 + Rank days
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 7

Pocket Guardian summons a diminutive spirit to guard items in a character's pouch or pocket. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spirit resides entirely within the pocket, and cannot leave it. The spirits often appear as small rats or large stinging insects. Pocket Guardians permit the caster to insert and remove items from a pocket. The spirits will attack any other character that attempts to reach into the protected pocket, and they will also make as much noise as possible to alert the spellcaster.

Pocket Guardian
DEX: 5 **STR:** 3 **TOU:** 3
PER: 11 **WIL:** 3 **CHA:** 3

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 6
Damage: 4
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 3
Knockdown: 3
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 20
Wound Threshold: 7
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: NA
Full Movement: NA

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Repel Animal
Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Nethermancer draws a circle with a radius of five yards on the ground, touching the center of the circle as she casts the Repel Animal spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice and records the result. Any natural animal must make a Willpower Test against that number to enter the glowing white circle. Natural animals do not include undead, Horrors, Horror constructs, or intelligent beings.

Shield Mist
Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Self **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Nethermancer's Spell Defense

This spell creates a shield of mist that hardens and moves to deflect blows. While weaving the spell, the Nethermancer moves his

hands over his form while wisps of mist pour from his fingertips. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Effect step replaces the Avoid Blow Talent — if the Effect result is equal to or higher than the outcome of his opponent's Attack Test, the mist deflects the blow. Unlike Avoid Blow, this spell cannot result in the Nethermancer being knocked down. The Nethermancer is visible within Shield Mist, and he can easily see out. Shield Mist does not hinder the Nethermancer's actions.

THIRD CIRCLE SPELLS

Death's Head

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Self **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Fear**
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell transforms the Nethermancer's head into a gore-spattered skull. The Nethermancer touches his face as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer may make an Effect Test to inflict Fear on any character he can see for each round of the spell's duration. If the result is equal to or higher than the character's Spell Defense, the character must flee out of the Nethermancer's line of sight. This fear is an additional action granted by the spell. The Nethermancer may take one of his regular actions in the same round. A Nethermancer can cast only one Death's Head spell on himself at a time. The Fear Difficulty for this spell is equal to the caster's Willforce step + 5.



Fog of Fear

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5 **Fear**
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

With this spell, the Nethermancer conjures a spherical patch of fog 10 yards across. The fog is a luminous, wispy gray and slightly cold to the touch. Once placed, the fog cannot be moved.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer makes an Effect Test. If the result of the test is equal to or higher than the Spell Defense of any enemy character within the fog, that character must flee out of the Nethermancer's line of sight. As soon as they successfully makes a Fear test, characters can stop fleeing. Characters may only reenter the fog with an Excellent Success on a Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the result of the Effect Test.

Grave Message

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 100 miles **Duration:** Rank days
Effect: Sends message to Nethermancer
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: See text

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Grave Message spell permits a Nethermancer to magically send a message to another Nethermancer. The message can be sent to a Bone Circle or a cemetery in which spirits are active. The Difficulty Number of the Spellcasting Test is based on the distance the message must travel.

Distance	Difficulty
Less than 1 mile	2
2-5	5
6-10	8
11-25	11
26-50	14
51-100	17

The message must be sent to a specific location, and be addressed to either a specific Nethermancer or "any Nethermancer who happens by." The message cannot exceed 50 words and is delivered by a quavering spirit voice. The spirit speaks the message once, then the enchantment is broken.

Pack Bags

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce - 1
Reattunement Difficulty: 11
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Nethermancer must gather all the items to be packed, then open the chest, satchel, or other container to be packed. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the air fills with swarming, multi-colored points of light, tiny spirits come to pack the bags. Then the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice to determine the Strength Value of the spirits. They cannot pack a total weight greater than the Carrying Capacity of that value, however the items will be packed as efficiently as is physically possible.

Pain

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Step 4 damage, immobilization
Reattunement Difficulty: 11
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

With this spell, the Nethermancer causes pain in a single character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target character suffers Step 4 damage every round of the spell's duration, experiencing pain far worse than the damage might suggest. Mystic Armor protects against damage from the Pain spell.

If the target character takes damage from the spell (after Mystic Armor), then the pain immobilizes the target, preventing him from taking any action. The character can make a Willpower Test (starting on his initiative next round) against a Difficulty Number of 10 to attempt to break out of this paralysis.

Spirit Double

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: Creates spirit double of Nethermancer
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 10

With this spell, the Nethermancer summons a spirit to act as his double. If he rolls a 10 or better on the Spellcasting Test, the summoning is successful. The spirit appears, assuming a shaggy material form that resembles the Nethermancer and that will last for the duration of the spell. The spirit possesses the same Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness Attribute Values as the Nethermancer. It has no magical abilities and a Spell Defense of 10. The Nethermancer can command the spirit, and the spirit loyally obeys. The magician can only command through voice commands, however, which means the spirit must be within the sound of his voice to receive the command. Once created, the spirit can travel anywhere its form allows.

FOURTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Animate Skeleton

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 8 + Rank minutes
Effect: Animates skeletons
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 5

The Nethermancer must be in a graveyard or otherwise have a supply of skeletons to use this spell. He may animate a number of skeletons up to his rank in Spellcasting, per spell. The Difficulty Number is 5, the Spell Defense of the skeletons. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the skeletons are animated. If the skeletons move beyond 100 yards of the Nethermancer, they will crumble into a heap of lifeless bones. The skeletons are usually armed with short swords fashioned from spare bones by the magic of Animate Skeleton. If the skeleton was originally buried with a better weapon, it uses that weapon. Skeletons can use magic items, but they are weak users of magic.

Skeleton

DEX: 5 **STR:** 5 **TOU:** 4
PER: 5 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 5

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 6
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: 4
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 11
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 22
Wound Threshold: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Legend Points: 20
Equipment: Short Sword or other hand weapon
Loot: Though it is usually nothing, the loot can vary. Twenty percent of the time, skeletons yield jewelry valued at 2D6x10 silver pieces.

Astral Flare

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

With this spell, the Nethermancer releases an intense flare of magic into the astral plane. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice. He compares that number to the Spell Defense of any creature in range of the spell who is looking into the astral plane. If the number is equal to or higher than the Spell Defense, the Astral Flare blinds the creature.

In subsequent rounds, any creature trying to see into the astral plane while the flare is in effect must make a Willpower Test against the result of the Nethermancer's Effect dice roll. A successful test permits it to see into the astral plane. Failure blinds the creature. This spell is also effective against characters who look into astral space.

The astral blindness lasts for the duration of the spell or until the target makes a successful Willpower Test.

Evil Eye

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: -5 steps to all tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell makes the Nethermancer's pupils shimmer with the appearance of a flickering greenish flame. The Nethermancer may target one character with the evil eye. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, subtract 5 steps from all tests made by that character. To dispel the Evil Eye, the target must roll a 12 or higher on a Willpower Test. This Willpower Test is not subject to the 5 step penalty.

Fatal Food

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer weaves 3 threads to some food. Each thread must be woven to a different piece of food, ones that are not touching or mixed together. Fatal Food cannot be cast solely on a bowl of soup, for example, because the ingredients are mixed.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the meal becomes explosive, but the explosion does not occur until the foods mix. There are three explosions; roll the Effect dice for the damage for each. Mystic Armor reduces the damage taken.

Spirit Servant

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank days
Effect: Summons spirit servant
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 9

With this spell, the Nethermancer conjures a spirit servant. First he draws a circle on the ground and inscribes it with the name he has chosen for his servant. The circle must lay undisturbed for a full night before the spell can be cast. The Spellcasting Difficulty is 9, the Spell Defense of the Spirit Servant.

If the test is successful, the Spirit Servant loyally serves the Nethermancer. These spirits usually serve as porters, scullery help, or even butlers, for they are not much good a combat. A spirit servant appears as an ethereal humanoid of a gender and race of the Nethermancer's choosing. The Spirit Servant can carry up to 60 pounds and lift up to 115 pounds. The spirits are often quiet, though intelligent and capable of speech. Many Nethermancers become attached to one Spirit Servant, summoning the same one time and again.

Spirit Servant

DEX: 4 **STR:** 4 **TOU:** 4
PER: 7 **WIL:** 7 **CHA:** 5

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 4
Damage: 4
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: NA
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 20
Wound Threshold: 5
Unconsciousness Rating: NA

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 15
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Viewpoint

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 6 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willpower + 9
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Viewpoint spell creates a one-way window through a wall or other barrier. The window can be as small as the Nethermancer wishes or as large as 3 by 3 feet. The material of the barrier is unaffected, so a stone wall is still as tough as stone. This one-way window can be used to target spells.

There is a chance of someone noticing the Viewpoint spell from the other side of the wall. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice. The result is the Difficulty Number for someone being able to spot the Viewpoint using a Perception Test.

Visions of Death

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: Immobilizes character **Fear**
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer calls upon the spirit world to present a very personal horror show to the target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target character, and only the target character, sees a detailed vision of his own death. Though the character knows he is not dying while watching the vision, the fear and horror have a mesmerizing effect. The character can do nothing but see the vision unless he can make a Fear Test against a Fear Difficulty Number of 11.

FIFTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Animate Spirit Object

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (9)

This spell allows a Nethermancer to summon a spirit to inhabit an inanimate object. Such spirits are reasonably intelligent and can follow complex commands. Although the spirits willingly obey their summoners, they are mischievous. If they can possibly create some mischief while still obeying their commands, they will usually do so.

When animating the objects, the spirits alter the form of the object to give themselves limbs and sensory organs, although the object retains much of its original shape.

If the Nethermancer succeeds in his Spellcasting Test, he summons a spirit to inhabit an inanimate object. The spirit provides the object's intelligence, but the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice to determine the physical Attributes, dividing up the dice roll result among Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness step numbers. The Gamemaster may intervene, deciding which Attributes should have the most points. For example, he could rule that a stone statue should have high Toughness and Strength but a low Dexterity. The Gamemaster may also set a limit on the object's Attribute step numbers. For example, he might limit small objects such as a brush, a comb, or dagger to an Attribute step of 3, but allow larger pieces of furniture Attribute Steps of 7.

Spirit Object
DEX: * STR: * TOU: *
PER: 7 WIL: 7 CHA: 6
* Distribute the result of the Effect Test to get the Attribute steps.

Initiative: Dexterity Step
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: Dexterity step
Damage: STR +3 steps
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 4**
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: Strength step
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 35**
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 30

Combat Movement: 30**
Full Movement: 60**

Legend Points: NA
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA
**Gamemaster may decrease or increase the values.

Astral Horror
Threads: 3
Range: 120 yards
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (12)

Weaving Difficulty: 9
Duration: 1 + Rank minutes

Illusion

This spell creates the illusion of an Astral Horror cast around a tiny bit of true spiritual essence. Nethermancers are known for conjuring abominable things from astral space or beyond, and this spell plays on that fact. The Astral Horror appears as a Fog Ghost (see p. 176), but is far more lethal. The illusion must stay within spell range of the Nethermancer or else it is dissipated. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice to generate the Disbelief Number (see p. 155) for the illusion. The illusion obeys the mental commands of the Nethermancer. The Nethermancer may perform other actions and still command the illusion.

Astral Horror
DEX: 7 STR: 8 TOU: 10
PER: 7 WIL: 9 CHA: 6

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 9
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 12
Social Defense: 14
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 6
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 32

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 200
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Circle of Astral Protection
Threads: 3
Range: Touch
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Weaving Difficulty: 11
Duration: 1 + Rank minutes

This spell increases the Mystic Armor of characters affected by the spell. The Nethermancer must walk the circle before casting the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell creates a Circle of Astral Protection with a radius of 5 yards. The circle is black with glowing yellow lines. The Nethermancer then rolls the Effect dice, using the result as the Mystic Armor Rating of any character within the circle, as long as the character was in the circle when the spell was cast.

Pass Ward
Threads: 5(6,7)
Range: Touch
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: 2

Weaving Difficulty: 13
Duration: Rank weeks (up to Rank years)

The Pass Ward spell places a ward on a specific spot. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the ward has a Spellcasting step equal to that of the Nethermancer. Whenever someone comes within 10 feet of the ward, the ward makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the approaching character. If the test succeeds, the ward places a white star on the target character and tells him or her to halt (or gives some other message chosen by the Nethermancer). Unless the character stops or backs away immediately, the ward makes another Spellcasting Test. If the test is successful, the ward rolls the Effect dice for damage to the intruder. The ward can target any number of characters in the same round; if a character enters the warded area, he can be zapped in the same round.

Pass Ward is an extremely difficult enchantment to cast. The Nethermancer must weave all threads in 7 rounds or less. If he fails, the spell fails. The minimum number of threads woven for the spell to succeed is 5. If the magician weaves 6 threads, the duration is a number of months equal to the magician's rank in Spellcasting. If he weaves 7 threads, the duration is his rank in years. If the spell fails, the Nethermancer takes 5 points of Strain.

Target Portal
Threads: 4
Range: 1,000 yards
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Weaving Difficulty: 10
Duration: Rank minutes

With this spell, the Nethermancer creates a gap in astral space — a pathway between himself and the target character. The portal allows him to cast spells at the target. For the purposes of spellcasting, the target must remain within 1,000 yards of the caster to be in line-of-sight. The Nethermancer may cast any spell with a range greater than Touch through this portal. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice. The target makes a Willpower Test against that number if he wishes to dispel Target Portal.

Wither Limb

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer points at the victim's limb and whispers "wither." If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice for damage. Mystic Armor protects against Wither Limb. If the victim suffers a Wound from the damage, his limb shrivels and shrinks to a useless vestige. The character must seek powerful healing magic, such as Reverse Withering, to regain use of the limb. The injury stays with the character until the limb is restored.

SIXTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Blessed Light

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** 15 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 3

With this spell, the Nethermancer pierces astral space to gather pure light. The Spellcasting Difficulty is only 3. If the test is successful, the globe hovers about 2 or 3 feet above the Nethermancer, but no higher. The light illuminates 15 yards to either side. The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice, and the result becomes the Difficulty Number to dispel Blessed Light. Any entity, including undead, that wishes to enter the lit area must either dispel the spell or make a successful Willpower Test against the same Difficulty Number. If the test fails, the entity cannot enter the area. A successful test extinguishes the Blessed Light spell.

Bone Shatter

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer makes cracking sounds while casting the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer gets a number of effects equal to his Spellcasting Rank, and he may target up to three against a single character. A character with Rank 7 Spellcasting, for example, could cast 1 Bone Shatter effect against 7 different characters, or 3 effects against 1 character and 1 each against 4 more characters. The Nethermancer only makes one Spellcasting Test. Compare the result to the highest Spell Defense of any target. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice for damage for each Bone Shatter effect. Despite the name, this spell does not require the target to have bones of any sort.

Mystic Armor provides protection against each effect of Bone Shatter. Characters who take Wounds from Bone Shatter make their Knockdown Tests with a 3 step penalty.

Foul Vapors

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 6 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 2 (see text)

The Nethermancer taps the uglier regions of astral space, drawing the foul vapors to the physical plane. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the vapors completely fill a sphere within a radius of 25 yards from the Nethermancer. Foul Vapors do not move once conjured. The Nethermancer is immune to the Foul Vapors. She may extend this immunity to other characters, up to a number equal to her rank in Spellcasting. Those considered immune must be declared at the time of the casting. Each round, the result of the Spellcasting Test is compared against the Spell Defense of each non-immune character in the area of effect to see which characters are susceptible to the damage. They do not have to breathe the vapors to take damage; only contact is necessary. The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice for the damage each round. Mystic Armor protects against Foul Vapors. This spell causes extreme Astral Clouding.

Friendly Darkness

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: +4 steps to rank characters
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Nethermancer draws on a bit of darkness from another dimension, then commands it to billow and expand. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the darkness fills an area with a radius of 15 yards from the target character or object. Characters who are not willing recipients of Friendly Darkness increase their Spell Defense by 5.

The darkness inhibits enemy actions in the same way as Ethereal Darkness (see p. 176) in that all characters suffer a 5 step penalty to all actions requiring sight. In addition, the Nethermancer and a number of characters in the darkness equal to his rank in Spellcasting gain a 4 step bonus to their actions. The Nethermancer can only grant the bonus to one type of action, such as Attack Tests, Spellcasting Tests, Recovery Tests, and so on. All characters benefiting from Friendly Darkness receive the 4 steps for the same type of action.

Recover

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 15
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer gives a fierce boost to the life force of the spell's target. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target makes a Recovery Test using the Recovery spell's Effect step rather than his own Recovery step. The recipient must still use 1 Recovery Test to benefit from the spell.

Soul Armor

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 15 + rank minutes
Effect: +D8 to Mystic Armor
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer touches the target of the Soul Armor spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, a glimmering set of blue chain mail seems to cover the recipient and then sink into his or her body. Soul Armor adds 1D8 to the recipient's Mystic Armor Rating for the duration of the spell.

SEVENTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Constrict Heart

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

While weaving the Spell Threads, the Nethermancer extends his hand in a grasping motion, facing the victim. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Constrict Heart surrounds the victim's heart with a squeezing layer of astral force. The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice for damage. The Nethermancer must concentrate to roll the Effect dice each round after the first. The victim is immobilized unless the spell breaks or he is able to make a successful Willpower Test against a Difficulty Number of 15 to dispel Constrict Heart.



Restrain Entity

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 14
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 12
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer casts Restrain Entity on a single creature. This spell works on undead, Horrors, or Horror constructs. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, a brilliant circle of red light, lined with gold writing, encircles the creature. The circle is rooted to the spot. Neither it nor the entity can be moved. The undead can still communicate if the Nethermancer wishes to talk to such a foul creature.

The creature may attempt to free itself through a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test. Each time the creature makes an attempt, the Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice. The creature must roll a number equal to or higher than the magician's test result to get free.

Reverse Withering

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: Touch **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Nethermancer touches a limb that has been injured by the Wither Limb spell while infusing it with energy from another plane. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer must then make an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number of 13 to cure the withering. If the Effect Test fails, the Nethermancer may maintain the spell through concentration, making Effect Tests each round of the spell's duration until successful. This spell requires the target character to spend a Recovery Test if the spell is successful. After the Recovery Test is spent, the reversal of the withering becomes permanent

The withered limb is not instantly restored to full health. The character suffers a 3 step penalty when using the limb. Once the wound associated with the withering is healed, the limb is back to full strength.

Spirit Portal

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 14
Range: Touch **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 2

Spirit Portal must be cast within a Bone Circle built by the Nethermancer. The magician punctures a small hole in astral space, continuing to widen the opening until the spell is complete. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Nethermancer has created a doorway into astral space through which spirits may enter the physical plane or characters enter astral space.

The Nethermancer has some control over who uses the Spirit Portal, but he must be within sight of the portal to contest entry. To prevent a being from crossing the portal, the magician rolls the Effect dice, comparing the result to the outcome of the being's Willpower Test. If the Nethermancer's test fails, the being can pass through. An Average success is enough to stop the being, but it will cost the Nethermancer 1 point of Strain. A Good success or better will stop the being without causing the magician any damage.

Wit Friend

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer summons a spirit, tapping the recipient's head as the spirit slowly glides into the target's mind. Anytime the recipient of this spell fails a mental Skill or Talent Test (except for Spellcasting, Willforce, or Thread Weaving), the Wit Friend spell gives him a second chance that same round. Use the Effect step as the target number for the second chance at the action.

EIGHTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Control Being

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 14
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer holds his body perfectly still, eyes closed, while casting this spell. When the last thread is woven, the Nethermancer opens his eyes and flings his arms out. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell allows the Nethermancer to control the movements of the target's body. The target is still in control of his thoughts and his speech, but the Nethermancer dictates all movement. The Nethermancer must concentrate to make the enchanted target move, but failing to concentrate does not automatically break the spell.

If the victim wishes to break free from control, he makes a Willpower Test against the result of an Effect dice roll by the magician. Success breaks the spell.

Horror Call

Threads: 6 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 16
Reattunement Difficulty: 22
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Nethermancer must first learn the Name of a Horror he wishes to call. He then inscribes a circle 10 feet in diameter, painting it white and gold. Horror Call is blood magic, costing the magician a permanent loss of 1 point of damage. In addition, the Nethermancer must permanently lose another point of damage each time he fails to weave a thread for Horror Call. If the Nethermancer breaks off the spell before completing it, the magical backlash immediately delivers Step 25 damage. Any damage caused by this spell is only healed after a year and a day has passed from the time of casting.

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Horror is summoned into the protective circle. The Nethermancer then rolls the Effect dice, recording the result. The Horror remains in the protective circle until it can make a successful Willpower Test against that number. Many Horrors will bargain with a Nethermancer, offering great treasure in return for release into this world. They have been known to offer more than 100,000 Legend Points in treasure. They often pay as promised, but they will usually return to take back the treasure at a later date.

Few Nethermancers teach this spell. A character should wonder about the motives of one who does, because Horrors often make teaching the Horror Call spell to others part of any deal they make with a Nethermancer.

Restrain Horror

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 16
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This is a quicker, more powerful version of Restrain Entity. Restrain Horror only works against a Horror, not one of its constructs. If the Nethermancer makes a successful Spellcasting Test, the spell will restrain the Horror. The Nethermancer then rolls the Effect dice, recording the result. Restrain Horror has a short duration, so the Nethermancer will also need a backup plan. The Horror may attempt to break free or dispel Restrain Horror. In either case, the Difficulty Number is the result of the Nethermancer's Effect dice roll.

Shadow Tether

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 16
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 7
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

To cast this spell, the Nethermancer must be able to see the targets and their shadows. A Nethermancer may target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting Rank. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Shadow Tether spell fixes the targets' shadows to the ground, and holds the characters to their shadows. The Nethermancer rolls the Effect dice and records the result. To break free, the targets must make a successful Strength Test against this number.

Translator Spirit

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** Rank x 10 minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Nethermancer summons a quavery spirit. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, use the Effect step as the spirit's Speak Language talent step number. The spirit automatically can speak any language the Nethermancer wants.



WIZARD SPELLS

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, often primarily concerned with the workings of magic. Their spells most often deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a target, most often living. Wizard spells often cover those areas that other types of spellcasters are not able to affect.

FIRST CIRCLE SPELLS

Astral Sense

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 6 (see text)

This spell allows a Wizard to sense presences in astral space. These can include people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on. The Spellcasting Test is made against the Spell Defense of astral space, which is normally 6, but can be higher in certain magically active areas. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell allows the Wizard to detect other presences in astral space. The Wizard then makes an Effect Test. If the result is equal to or higher than the Spell Defense of any target within range, the Wizard detects the target. The Wizard can make an Effect Test once each round, enabling him to discover one target each round. If more than one target is in range, the Wizard will detect the one with the lowest Spell Defense first. Once detected, a target stays detected as long as he remains in range of a spell.

When casting this spell, Wizards often take a minute or so to sense members of their group to verify that an astral presence is not coming from a comrade. Once all members are sensed, the Wizard knows the next detection is not coming from someone in his group.

Making an Effect Test does not prevent the Wizard from taking another action that round. A magician may attempt to cast spells on a target that he has astrally sensed, even if he cannot otherwise see the target.

Wizards use this spell for many different reasons. They use it to determine if an item or object has an astral presence, or to detect the presence of entities or Horrors within astral space.

Crushing Will

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Crushing Will spell attacks the will of a single character within range. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage. Crushing Will is a mystic attack, so Mystic Armor will reduce damage. Physical Armor has no effect against Crushing Will.

Dispel Magic

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 2

Dispel Magic disrupts the pattern and threads of a spell. If the Wizard makes a successful Spellcasting Test, he then makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number based on the spell's Circle. Unless a spell description says otherwise, consult the **Dispelling Table**, p. 153, for the Difficulty Numbers of the various spell circles. A spell can only be dispelled while the threads are being woven or during the duration of the spell.

If the result of the Wizard's Effect Test is equal to or higher than the Dispel Difficulty, the spell effect is permanently dispelled.

Divine Aura

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 5 + Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell allows the Wizard to divine changes in the aura of living beings. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard chooses what change in the aura of a living being he wishes to divine. This could be anything from anger to damage or fatigue. He must make an Effect Test with a result equal to or higher than the target's Spell Defense to determine whether he has divined the target's aura.

Flame Flash

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Flame Flash spell is a physical attack. The spell targets one character only. While casting the spell, the magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage. Physical Armor protects against the damage of Flame Flash.

Ignite

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Ignites flammable objects
Reattunement Difficulty: 11
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard snaps his fingers, and a jet of flame hovers over the target, setting it afire. The Ignite spell may be used only on small inanimate objects, such as torches, furniture, and, of course, clothing. If a character is holding or wearing the object, make the Spellcasting Test against whichever Spell Defense is higher, the character's or the object's. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target object takes fire. If clothes ignite, the fire does 1D6 damage the first round, and 1D4 - 1 damage thereafter until extinguished. If more than one Ignite spell is cast on a target, the damage will not increase beyond 1D6 for the first round. Mystic Armor protects against damage from Ignite.

Iron Hand

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: +3 steps Melee Weapons damage
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard has the spell's recipient strike another target with a melee weapon while simultaneously mimicking that character's strike. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Iron Hand spell increases the recipient's melee weapon damage by 3 steps. This effect applies to any melee weapon used by the recipient. The recipient may benefit from only one Iron Hand spell at any one time.

Mind Dagger

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 40 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 2
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The spellcaster whips her arm as if throwing a dagger. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage. Because Mind Dagger is a mystic attack, Mystic Armor reduces damage from the spell. Physical Armor provides no protection.

Wall Walker

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank in rounds
Effect: Target's Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The caster crouches, walking on all fours to mimic a spider, touching the target at the end of the spellcasting. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell's recipient now has improved climbing ability. The Effect dice are based on the target's Willforce (or Willpower) steps, not the Wizard's. The target uses the Effect dice for any Climbing Tests while under the influence of the spell.

SECOND CIRCLE SPELLS

And His Money

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: 10 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank in minutes
Effect: -4 to target's Social Defense
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell reduces a target's Social Defense when the character is trying to buy or sell items from them. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, subtract 4 from the target's Social Defense for those purposes. And His Money does not reduce the effectiveness of the target's Social Defense for any other purpose.

Astral Shield

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: +3 to Spell Defense
Reattunement Difficulty: 7
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The magician quickly pantomimes the outline of a shield, then touches his target. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell increases the target's Spell Defense by 3. The Wizard may cast this spell upon himself. Astral Shield is not cumulative with any other spell that increases Spell Defense.

Clean

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 5
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 minute
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard makes wiping motions with his hand, then sprinkles a bit of water on the object or objects to be cleaned. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice to determine the number of square yards cleaned. Four yards does a human quite nicely, three is enough for a dwarf, while six are needed for an obsidiman or a troll.

The Clean spell removes any visible stain, dirt, or foreign substance from the target objects. If the substance is not visible, the spell will miss it.

Dodge Boost

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Self **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: +3 to Physical Defense
Reattunement Difficulty: 8
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Dodge Boost grants the target the ability to dodge attacks in combat. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell adds 3 to Physical Defense. If the target of the spell uses an Aggressive Attack, then the effect is dispelled.

Rope Ladder

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** Rank minutes
Effect: Create ladder from rope
Reattunement Difficulty: 14
Casting Difficulty: 2

The Wizard uncoils the rope as he casts the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the rope moves at a rate of 20 feet per round to the location of the Wizard's choosing. The rope can hold up to 600 pounds at a time. The magician cannot control the rope precisely enough for it to tie itself off on, say, the bars of a window; it basically goes straight from point A to B. Climbers using the rope gain a magical boost of a 4 step bonus to their Climbing Tests, however.

Vines

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** 3 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 2
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Vines appear from undergrowth, grabbing at a single target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, use the Effect step for the vine's Strength step number. The Wizard rolls the Effect dice. The result is the Wound Threshold of the vines. Characters are held fast until they escape, with a penalty of 1 to their Physical Defense and Dexterity step. A character may escape the vines in one of two ways. First, a character can try to make a Strength Test equal to or higher than the vines' Wound Threshold. Second, if the character can inflict three Wounds on the vines, they will relax, releasing their victim. The writhing vines have a Physical Defense and Spell Defense of 4 each.

Wake-Up Call

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: Touch **Duration:** Up to 24 hours
Effect: Sets alarm to go off at specified time
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard imitates the clanging of a bell as he touches the recipient. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard determines when the alarm will go off. The Wizard chooses whether the alarm noise (clanging bells) is audible to all characters or only to the target character.

The success level determines how precise is the alarm. The better the success, the closer to the stated time the alarm actually goes off:

Success Level	Accuracy of Alarm
Average	+/-15 minutes
Good	+/- 5 minutes
Excellent	+/- 1 minute
Extraordinary	Exactly on time

THIRD CIRCLE SPELLS

Combat Fury

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: +4 steps to Attack and Damage Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The magician rants and gesticulates violently before touching the target of the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target adds 4 steps to all Attack and Damage Tests for the duration of the spell. The target can make only melee weapon or unarmed combat attacks while under the effect of Combat Fury. No missile weapon or throwing weapons attacks are allowed. A character cannot benefit from more than one Combat Fury spell at a time. A character cannot benefit from Combat Fury and an Aggressive Attack at the same time.

Leaps and Bounds

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Target's Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 9
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell gives the target greatly increased leaping movement. When casting the spell, the magician has the target leap to him, then he touches the character as he lands alongside. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the result of the Effect Test becomes the character's Dexterity Attribute value for purposes of movement. The leaping character has a vertical leap of 10 yards, and can clear 25 yards in a single horizontal

jump. A character may use the Leaps and Bounds spell to avoid being hit, replacing an Avoid Blow Test with a Leaps and Bounds Test, and using the Effect step of the spell.

Levitate

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 8
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 5 + Wizard's Rank minutes
Effect: Levitate up to 2,000 pounds
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Wizard raises and lowers his hands while casting this spell that can levitate a number of objects equal to the magician's Spellcasting talent. The Wizard makes his test against the highest Spell Defense of any character or object to be levitated. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Levitate spell forms a 10x10x10-foot cube in which characters and objects can be lifted. To lift unwilling characters, the Wizard must roll an Excellent success on his Spellcasting Test. A single Levitate spell can lift up to 2,000 pounds, at a rate of 1 foot/second. Levitate can only move the objects up and down; side to side movement is not possible. The Wizard may choose to switch the levitation effect to different objects or characters, but these must also be within the levitation area. Once placed, the levitation area cannot be moved.

The Wizard may "bootstrap" Levitate spells together. For example, he may levitate himself to the top of the first Levitate spell's range, then cast another Levitate spell to continue to move up. As soon as any lower-altitude Levitate spell ends or is dispelled, all higher Levitate spells immediately fail.

Quicken Pace

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: Touch **Duration:** 4 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard walks quickly in circles, then touches the recipient. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard makes an Effect Test against the target's Dexterity step number. Depending on the success level of the test, the character's walking speed increases for the duration of the spell. An Average success increases speed by 1 mile per hour, Good by 2 miles per hour, Excellent by 3 miles per hour, and Extraordinary by 4 miles per hour. The spell does not increase running (Combat or Full) movement speed.

Notice Not

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank minutes
Effect: +3 steps to tests for stealthy actions
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The spellcaster quietly touches the recipient of the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the spell adds 3 steps to any tests aimed at concealing the recipient. Silent Walk is one example. The spell enhances the effectiveness of the action to make the character less noticeable.

Seeking Sight

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank minutes
Effect: +3 steps to missile weapon attacks
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, glowing circles appear on the target, adding 3 steps to all attacks made using Missile Weapons. All characters firing with the help of Seeking Sight receive the bonus to their Missile Weapons Test. Only one Seeking Sight may affect a single target at one time.

Shatter Lock

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 6
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard makes a cracking sound and then gestures toward the door. To shatter the lock, he makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the lock. If the test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage to the locking mechanism. Most ordinary locks have a Death Rating ranging from 8 to 12. A solid wood bar might have a Death Rating of 20 or more, depending on the size (see **Barrier Rating Table** in **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 235).

Shatter Lock can be reversed. That is, the Wizard can use the spell to repair a broken lock. Casting the reverse of Shatter Lock requires weaving an extra thread.

FOURTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Ball of String

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: Variable **Duration:** 3 + Rank hours
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell allows the Wizard to conjure a ball of string made of mystical energy. The Wizard ties a glowing knot to some object, marking the return spot. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the ball can then be placed into a pouch or pocket. The Wizard rolls the Effect dice once each hour. If the result is 10 or higher, the ball of string reels out more string and remains untangled. Failure snaps the string, ending the spell.

Whenever the character wishes to head back to the return spot, he pulls the string out. As he starts "winding" the ball, a narrow beam of light 10 feet long appears from the ball. Following the "thread" leads the character back to the return spot.

Dust Devil

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 80 yards **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: -2 steps to actions requiring sight, hearing, or smell
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, a whirling dust storm emanates from the Wizard's fingertips, billowing 80 yards in every direction. The spell can affect a number of targets equal to the Wizard's rank in

Spellcasting. When making any action using sight, hearing, or smell, the target suffers a 2 penalty to the appropriate step. All Knockdown Tests also suffer a 2 penalty to the target's Strength step. The Wizard does not suffer any penalty.

Inventory

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** 1 minute
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard needs a piece of parchment to cast the Inventory spell. Inventory is cast on one room. The Wizard must be able to see into the room. The Wizard makes a Spellcasting Test, detecting all items whose Spell Defense is lower than the result of the test. Glowing yellow or orange writing appears on the parchment, listing those items among the contents of the room detected by the Spellcasting Test. The inventory is often in alphabetical order, and will not list insignificant items such as dust, bins, and crates that have no real value in themselves. The inventory takes one full minute to create, no matter how many items are in the room.

The Wizard then makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any items he may have missed. If successful, the last note on the manifest will be "inventory incomplete."

Relax

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 2
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell reduces the amount of time the spell's target must wait before making his next Recovery Test. The Wizard sits down to cast this spell. The recipient must also sit or lie down. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice. Multiply each point of the result by 5 minutes to reduce the amount of time until the target may make his next Recovery Test. A result of 12 or better earns the recipient an immediate Recovery Test if he still has a test available. Add 4 steps to the Recovery Test from the effects of the Relax spell.

Thorny Retreat

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 2
Reattunement Difficulty: 13
Casting Difficulty: 2

This spell conjures up a barrier of magical thorns. The Wizard pricks his hand with a dagger or other sharp object. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the thorny barrier appears, vibrating and humming. The Wizard then rolls the Effect dice, recording the result. The thorns cover up to 10 sections of ground or other flat surface, each 10 feet by 10 feet. Passing through each section of thorns requires a character to make a Dexterity Test against the result of the Wizard's Effect dice roll. Success lets a character through unscathed. Failure halts the character, and he takes 1D6 damage. Physical Armor reduces the damage.

The Wizard may move through the thorns without hindrance. The thorns roll around him like seaweed in water.

Trust

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: 50 yards **Duration:** Rank minutes
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell inspires trust in the target. The Wizard smiles slightly and nods toward the target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard makes an Effect Test against the target's Social Defense. If the Effect Test is successful, then for the duration of the spell the target will not deceive or harm the Wizard (or others with the Wizard) as long as the Wizard (and others with the Wizard) do not deceive or harm him (in his opinion).

FIFTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Counterspell

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 15 yards **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 11
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell allows the Wizard to increase the Spell Defense of his companions. The Spellcasting Test is made against the highest Spell Defense of all intended targets. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice. The result of that test becomes the new Spell Defense of all targets; if lower, so be it. The caster may select which targets are to benefit from the spell. He may choose to select all targets within range. As noted in **Lowering Your Spell Defense** on p. 149, a magician's Spell Defense is 2 against this spell when he is casting it upon himself.

Invigorate

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 1 + Rank hours
Effect: +5 steps to Recovery Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard touches the character on the eyebrows (or the closest equivalent) while casting the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the recipient gains 5 steps to all Recovery Tests made during the duration of the Invigorate spell. Only one Invigorate spell may affect a character at one time.

Mage Armor

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: Touch **Duration:** 7 + Rank minutes
Effect: +4 to Physical Armor Rating
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The magician slams his hand into the armor to be enhanced, while uttering a soft, thudding sound, as if an ineffectual blow had landed. The Spellcasting Test is made against the Spell Defense of either the armor or its wearer, whichever is higher. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, add 4 to the target's Physical Armor Rating. The armor has a faint violet glow that is noticeable in the dark or with astral sight. Only one piece of armor can benefit from one Mage Armor spell at a time.

Makeshift Missile

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Touch **Duration:** 2 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 6
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: See text

The Wizard enchants any small object into a wickedly sharp throwing weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before, so the Wizard is advised to keep the object small and throwable. The Wizard makes a Spellcasting Test. He may throw the weapon in the next round and may also pick up and convert another item into a missile weapon as long as the Spell Defense of the new item is less than or equal to the result of the Spellcasting Test. The Wizard can continue to create new missiles for the duration of the spell. The Wizard uses his Throwing Weapons or Dexterity steps to throw the Makeshift Missile. If the missile hits its target, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for the damage. Immediately after the missile hits, it reverts to its old form.

Slow

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: -5 steps to Dexterity Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell reduces the target's movement by one-half. The magician pantomimes casting a simple spell, taking far longer than normal to cast it. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target character's Full and Combat Movement speeds are halved. Any Dexterity-related tests, including Initiative tests, suffer a penalty of 5 to the appropriate step. The minimum Initiative step number possible is 1. A character can only suffer from one Slow spell at a time.

Solo Flight

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 7
Range: Self **Duration:** 15 + Rank minutes
Effect: Grants power of flight
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Solo Flight gives the Wizard the ability to fly. He can travel 150 yards per round, 75 yards for Combat Movement. Solo Flight requires that the Wizard be conscious to stay in the air. An unconscious Wizard drops very nicely, indeed, taking falling damage (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn,** p. 231).

SIXTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Doom Missile

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 21
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard casts Doom Missile on one opponent, causing a fiery-red ball of flame to shriek down upon the target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage the round the missile hits, and in every round thereafter for the duration of the spell. Mystic Armor reduces damage from this spell. An Armor-Defeating Hit with Doom Missile can be a very ugly death.

Displace Self

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: Self **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 5
Reattunement Difficulty: 16
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard hops frantically while casting this spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Displace Self senses incoming physical attacks and moves the wizard out of harm's way. Roll the Effect dice; if the result is higher than the attacker's attack roll, then the Wizard is displaced far enough to avoid the attack. The Wizard moves up to 4 feet in a direction of his choice. If that is not enough to evade an attack (for example, a collapsing ceiling), the Wizard must defend normally.

Displace Self can only avoid blows coming from characters acting with lower Initiative.

Karma Cancel

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 8 + Rank rounds
Effect: Prevents Karma use
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Karma Cancel is cast on a single character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard can cancel any attempt by the target to use Karma by spending 1 of his own Karma Points to do so. Neither character gets to roll Karma dice for the cancelled points. The afflicted character can dispel the effect of Karma Cancel by rolling a 14 or greater in a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test.

Makeshift Weapon

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 10
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard enchants any small object into a slim, extremely keen melee weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard uses the Effect step number for the damage of the weapon. The Wizard may cast Makeshift Weapon, then hand it to another character, but the wielding character uses their own Willpower or Willforce to determine the Damage step. When the duration expires, the item reverts to its old form.

Razor Orb

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 15
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

Razor Orb is a gleaming, spinning, powerful weapon of green light and force. The Wizard casts Razor Orb against one character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage. Razor Orb is designed to deliver one devastating Armor-Defeating hit against a tough opponent. Razor Orb can produce an Armor-Defeating hit at a success level one lower than normal. An Armor-Defeating hit will only require a Good success on a Spellcasting Test rather than the usual Excellent needed. If a creature's armor

normally does not permit an Armor-Defeating hit, an Extraordinary result will defeat the armor.

Sleep

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 9
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank Rounds
Effect: Puts rank characters asleep
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Wizard yawns widely, then casts the spell. Sleep can target a number of characters equal to the Rank of the Wizard's Spellcasting talent. The highest Spell Defense is the Difficulty Number for resisting the spell. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the target characters are put to sleep. Sleeping characters are entitled to Willpower Tests once each round (on their initiative) they are asleep. Targets wake when:

- They take damage.
- The spell expires or is dispelled.
- A sleeping character rolls a 14 or greater in a Willpower Test.

SEVENTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Blood Boil

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 4 rounds
Effect: Willforce + 9
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The caster hurls this spell onto a single opponent, making sounds as if she were pouring boiling oil onto the target. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for damage. Mystic Armor reduces damage from Blood Boil. For the next three rounds of the spell's duration, the Wizard must make a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense; if successful, Blood Boil again damages the target. The spell may not be switched to another target.

The spell cannot take effect if the target is more than 60 yards from the Wizard. Blood Boil only works against living targets who have blood. It does not work against undead, living plants, stone statues, or other such creatures.

Confusing Weave

Threads: 1 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: 60 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 3
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

Confusing Weave targets up to a number of magician characters equal to the Wizard's Spellcasting talent. The Difficulty Number for resisting the spell is the highest Spell Defense of any target character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard makes an Effect Test against the highest Thread Weaving step number of any target character. Success makes the target characters flub their efforts to weave threads into their own spells. Target characters lose all threads they are currently weaving or have woven into their spells.

Lightning Cloud

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 18
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Wizard conjures a swirling black and purple cloud above his head. The cloud begins to form with the second thread, and is completed when the last thread is woven. The Wizard draws lightning from the cloud, and hurls it at an opponent as the spell is cast. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice for the damage of the lightning strike. Each Combat Round of the spell's duration the Wizard may gather a bolt of lightning and hurl it at an opponent. This counts as the Wizard's action for each Combat Round in which he gathers a bolt of magical lightning.

Move On Through

Threads: None **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 120 yards **Duration:** 1 round
Effect: Willforce + 4
Reattunement Difficulty: 17
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard nods his head at a moving target and makes a mocking bow. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls his Effect dice against the target's Strength step. Success means the target must continue his current movement the next round in the same direction and at the same speed.

Spell Cage

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 11
Range: 100 yards **Duration:** 8 + Rank rounds
Effect: -5 steps to all Spellcasting Tests
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

While casting this spell, the Wizard makes a descending whooshing sound, followed by a "clang!" as he casts the spell. The Wizard makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the character to be caged. If the test is successful, the spell forms a cage 10 by 10 by 10 feet around the target. If the target character is longer than 10 feet in any dimension, the spell fails. The cage cannot be moved once conjured, and has no door. The cage has a Death Rating of 40 points and a Physical Armor Rating of 7. Any character caught inside suffers a penalty of 5 to the appropriate step for all Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests, including Dispel Magic. Spells entering the cage suffer no penalty.

EIGHTH CIRCLE SPELLS

Cat's Cradle

Threads: 4 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 25 yards **Duration:** Rank minutes
Effect: Shared spellcasting
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

This spell allows Wizards to share the work of casting single spells. The Wizard moves his hands as if weaving a cat's cradle pattern from a loop of string, and then passes the imaginary pattern to the target

character while casting the spell. This spell can only be used with other Wizards. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, both characters in the cradle (the Wizard and the target) add 3 steps to their Thread Weaving, Spellcasting, and Willforce talents. The Wizards now work together to cast the same spell. They must cast spells together while under the effect of Cat's Cradle. Both may weave threads or else one may weave the threads and the other make the Spellcasting Test, permitting a spell to be cast in the same round as threads were woven. Both characters may roll the Effect dice for a spell, using whichever result is higher.

Compression Bubble

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 15
Range: 75 yards **Duration:** 7 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 22
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard places his hands as if holding an invisible ball to form a compression bubble around one character. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Wizard rolls the Effect dice. Use the result as the damage the bubble does in squeezing the character. The Wizard must concentrate to do damage each round. Alternately, he may just move away and leave the character trapped in the bubble until the spell expires. The bubble may be broken from the outside by anyone who can do 10 points of damage to it in a single blow. The bubble has a Physical Defense of 7 and a Physical Armor Rating of 10. The only way to break the bubble from the inside is if the character rolls a 17 or better on a Strength Test. Weapon strikes have no effect against the interior of the bubble.

Delay Blow

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 14
Range: Touch **Duration:** 10 + Rank rounds (until used)
Effect: Willforce + 15
Reattunement Difficulty: 20
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense (see text)

The Wizard enchants a melee weapon with this spell. He makes the Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the weapon or its wielder, whichever is higher. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the effect of Delay Blow when the weapon hits is equivalent to a second blow being struck at the same time. The Wizard rolls the Effect dice for the damage of the second blow. Delay Blow always uses the Wizard's Willforce for the Effect dice. Once Delay Blow takes effect, the spell dissipates. A weapon may only have one Delay Blow spell active on it at one time.

Safe Opening

Threads: 2 **Weaving Difficulty:** 12
Range: 5 yards **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 8
Reattunement Difficulty: 19
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The Wizard mimics opening the door, chest, or whatever it is he wishes to open. He makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the object. If the test is successful, the object opens. The Wizard then makes an Effect Test against any the Difficulty of any traps or wards guarding the opening. A successful result freezes their actions for the duration of the spell. The wards and traps are not disarmed, merely inactive for the duration.

Wound Mask

Threads: 3 **Weaving Difficulty:** 13
Range: Touch **Duration:** 5 + Rank rounds
Effect: Willforce + 10
Reattunement Difficulty: 15
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

The spell target holds his face perfectly still while the Wizard pushes and prods as if fitting something onto the face. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, a thin copper mask completely covers the target's face. Although there are no eye, nose, or mouth holes in the mask, the recipient has no trouble seeing, breathing, or speaking. The Wizard then rolls the Effect dice and records the result. Use this as the Difficulty Number for any Attack Tests against the spell target. If the result of the Attack Test is less than this number, the blows hit the mask instead of the wearer.



GOODS AND SERVICES



Of course I can help you, sir. Step right up and take a look at these wondrous treasures
— Garrn Devia, dwarf Merchant of Bartertown

Your character will need the right equipment to adventure successfully. As your character survives and prospers, his adventures likely will become more demanding and he will need better equipment. In addition to gear such as weapons, armor, and clothing, your character will need to obtain money, food, lodging, and transport for nearly every adventure. This section provides descriptions of the most common goods and services available in Barsaive, their prices, any restrictions on their use, and directions for purchasing them.

PURCHASING

After players have initially outfitted their characters (see **Creating A Character**, p. 48) they must purchase any additional goods or services from merchants or other characters. To determine whether a merchant has the desired item and is willing to sell it, the gamemaster first assigns it an Availability Rating and a Difficulty Number. The Availability Ratings for **Earthdawn** goods and services are Everyday, Average, Unusual, Rare, and Very Rare. Most of the equipment listed in this section is of Average availability, though many of the magical goods, such as potions and magical clothing, are generally Unusual or Rare. Only very special items are Very Rare, including the most powerful potions. The gamemaster determines the Availability Rating of specific goods and services.

The Difficulty Number for an item of Average availability is equal to the step number of the merchant's Haggle Skill. A different Availability Rating can either raise or lower the Difficulty Number. Consult the table below to add the appropriate modifier to the Haggle step number to determine the Difficulty Number.

To determine whether a merchant has an item on hand, the gamemaster makes a Haggle Test using the Difficulty Number determined by the item's availability. A successful test result means the merchant has the item on hand and will sell it to the character.

AVAILABILITY DIFFICULTY TABLE

Availability Rating	Modifier
Everyday	-2
Average	+0
Unusual	+2
Rare	+5
Very Rare	+9

Farliv is preparing for an adventure and wants to purchase a Booster Potion. He visits Trelara, a local merchant, and asks for the potion, which the gamemaster has decided is an Unusual item. Because the potion is Unusual, he adds a +2 modifier to Trelara's Haggle Step Number of 6, yielding a Difficulty Number of 8 for the test. If the gamemaster rolls a result of 8 or higher, the merchant has the potion and will sell it to Farliv.

TAKING EXTRA TIME

Sometimes a merchant will not have an item available when a character wants to buy it, but can procure it if given time. If a character is willing to wait a day or more for an item, the Difficulty Number for the Availability Test can be lowered. Simply reduce the Difficulty Number by 1 for each day the character waits.

Farliv is not planning to leave town for a few days and is willing to wait for Trelara to obtain his Booster Potion. This makes obtaining the potion easier for Trelara. Farliv gives the merchant 2 days, reducing the Difficulty Number from 8 to 6. Trelara now has a much better chance of obtaining the potion for Farliv.

When trying to obtain Rare and Very Rare items, the Difficulty Number can be reduced by a maximum of 3, regardless of how long a character is willing to wait. This limit reflects the rarity of some items in Barsaive.

QUALITY OF GOODS

Sometimes characters will want to purchase higher-quality goods than the usual fare. Most cities have items of higher quality available, but they are often considerably more expensive. For higher-quality items, increase the price by one-half the normal price, rounded up. For items of the "best" quality, the price should be double the normal price.

Me'gana wants to buy a decorative broadsword that will impress opponents when she draws it. She visits a weapons shop and finds two broadswords she likes. The first costs 38 silver pieces, and is of "better" quality than a standard broadsword, which costs 25 silver pieces. The second sword is the best the shop has to offer and costs 50 silver pieces. Me'gana chooses the "better" quality weapon and pays 38 silver pieces.

The guidelines above also apply to services rendered. If, for example, a character wants to hire the best scribe in the city, the scribe charges twice the standard fee.

CURRENCY

Though people still barter in some remote areas of the province, the vast majority of Barsaivians use the hexagonal coins of Throal to conduct trade. The practical dwarfs of Throal have matched the weights of their coins to Theran legal tender, giving both currencies the same value. Though the moneychanger's guild complained bitterly that the equal value of the two currencies deprived them of a fair profit, moneychangers still do a steady business converting old coins reclaimed from kaers or other lost treasure stores. Moneychangers usually pay 75 percent of the value of old coins, so if your character exchanges 1,000 old Landan silver pieces, he will receive 750 Throal silver pieces in exchange. Legends of cursed coins and false gold and silver make most merchants cautious about taking coin not minted by Thera or Throal.

COMMON DENOMINATIONS

Barsaive uses an easy-to-follow decimal currency system, with each consecutive denomination worth ten times the previous denomination. Thus, ten copper pieces equal one silver piece, ten silver pieces equal one gold piece, and so on. Copper, silver, and gold pieces comprise the main currency of Barsaive, although other currencies are occasionally used. These are described later in this section.

The currency of the peasant and working classes and the most basic monetary denomination, copper coins are used in marketplaces



across Barsaive. Throal's hexagonal copper pieces bear a stylized hammer and pick on both sides and weigh half an ounce each. Thera does not mint copper pieces.

Merchants, adventurers, and travelers have made silver pieces the most common coin in Barsaive. Common laborers are often paid in silver pieces, most goods and services are priced in silver pieces, and almost all trade contracts are executed in terms of silver pieces. Theran silver pieces show the profile of a Theran guardsman, and Throalic silver pieces bear a likeness of Tav Korelsed, one of Throal's founders. Each silver piece weighs one-fifth of an ounce.

Gold pieces are the coins of wealthy merchants, well-heeled travelers, and the Throal and Theran governments. Barsaivians rarely use gold in trade, reserving it for transactions involving sums in excess of 1,000 silver pieces. Many kaers and citadels still contain gold, which was a more common currency before the Scourge. Theran gold pieces carry the profile of the First Emperor of the Theran Empire. Throal gold pieces show the Merchant King Braza overlooking the Throal Mountains. Each gold piece weighs one-tenth of an ounce.

GEMS

In some cities in Barsaive, including the cities of Throal, the inhabitants occasionally use gems to limit the volume of currency in large transactions. Rubies, emeralds, and sapphires comprise the most common gem currencies, though on rare occasions amethysts and diamonds are used. These gems can be of virtually any size and value, generally expressed in silver pieces, or sometimes in gold. The most common values of gems are denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 silver pieces, though some people use gems of lesser value.

ELEMENTAL COINS

A third type of currency, the so-called elemental coins, is rarely used for common trade. Instead, Barsaivians reserve these pieces for special uses such as sealing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, or formalizing peace treaties between nations. See **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 241, for a full description of elemental coins.

WEAPONS

Because of their small size, windlings cannot use most of the weapons listed on the following pages. For a detailed description of specialized windling weapons, see **Windling Weapons**, p. 198.

RESTRICTIONS

Because the races of Barsaive vary in size, some will be unable to wield larger weapons. An elf, for example, would be incapable of wielding a battle-axe (Size 4) with a single hand. She would, however, be able to wield the weapon by using two hands. The following table lists the weapon-wielding capabilities of each race. The first number describes the maximum size weapon members of a particular race can wield with one hand. The second describes the maximum size of a weapon they can wield with two hands. Weapon sizes are provided at the end of each weapon description and in the **Goods and Services Table** at the end of this section. For further rules on using weapons in battle, see **Combat,** p. 221.

WEAPON SIZE RESTRICTIONS TABLE

Race	One-handed Size Limit	Two-handed Size Limit
Dwarf*	3	6
Elf	3	6
Human	3	6
Obsidiman**	4	7
Ork	3	6
Troll**	4	7
T'skrang	3	6
Windling	1	2

*Dwarfs may only use up to Size 4 missile weapons, because their short stature makes firing larger weapons awkward.

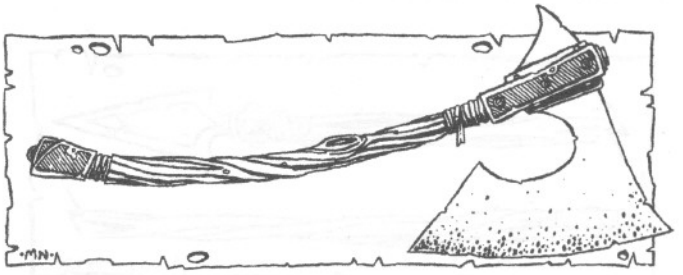
**The large hands of obsidimen and trolls prevent them from using daggers or other Size 1 weapons effectively.

MELEE WEAPONS

Any character with the use of his hands and arms may use melee weapons in hand-to-hand combat.

Battle-axe

The traditional weapon of the Throal armies, the battle-axe consists of a 2- to 4-foot handle that holds a single or double bell-shaped blade. The battle-axe can be used as a two-handed weapon. Size 4.



Broadsword

A broadsword has a blade more than 3 feet long. Typically used as a one-handed weapon, a Weaponsmith can modify the hilt of any broadsword to make it a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges. Size 3.

Club

Any short piece of hard wood or stone, usually thinner at the handle end and thicker at the business end, qualifies as a club. In some cases clubs are merely rough-hewn tree limbs. Most, however, are a bit more finished and feature leather-wrapped handles. Obsidimen, trolls, and some dwarfs prefer clubs carved out of rock. Wooden and stone clubs inflict the same amount of damage. Size 2.

Dagger

A dagger is a small, sharp-bladed weapon with a maximum length of 12 inches. A blade longer than 12 inches is considered a sword. Size 1.

Flail

A flail consists of a wooden, leather-covered handle between 2 and 4 feet long, with a hinge or a chain connected to one end. The other end of the chain connects to either a spiked metal ball, a metal-spiked wooden rod, or a plain metal rod. Size 3.

Hand-axe

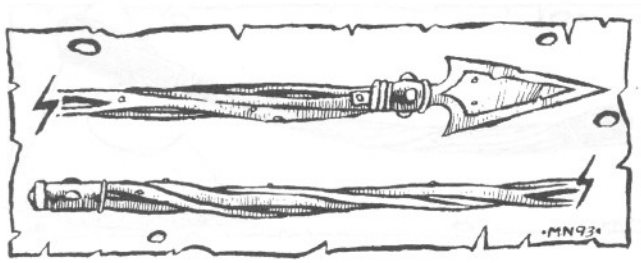
Small and easy to use, this basic chopping instrument consists of a 1- to 2-foot handle with a single, flat, square- or bell-shaped blade at one end. Size 2.

Knife

A knife is a small, sharp-bladed cutting tool. Size 1.

Lance

A specialized weapon for fighting on horseback, the lance consists of a cone-shaped shaft of wood, between 10 and 15 feet long, which is fitted with a wooden or metal handle. A brace at the end of the handle attaches the lance to the user's armor. Lance weights and lengths vary widely, so make sure your character's mount can handle the combined weight of both the rider and the lance. Because lances tend to break, the gamemaster may use the following optional rule to determine how a lance might break in combat. After the attacking character has made a successful Attack Test, the gamemaster makes a Damage Test using the Damage step of the attacker against a Difficulty Number of 25. If the test is successful, the lance shatters. When used during a charge, the Damage step of the lance increases to 8 and it may be wielded with one hand. Size 6.



Mace

A mace is a club reinforced with a shaped-metal head. Size 3.

Mace, Spiked

The spiked mace is a large club with a spiked metal head. Size 4.

Pole Arms

This catch-all term applies to any weapon with a handle more than 4 feet long. Theran slave traders use a simple, deadly 4-foot pole with a sharp metal tip on the end. Guards at the Elven Court wield pole arms tipped with various blades, hooks and points. All types of pole arms do the same amount of damage, and take two hands to wield. The price for pole arms varies according to the blade configuration; the more elaborate the blade, the more silver the weapon costs. Size 6.

Pole-axe

The pole-axe is one of the deadliest weapons available in Barsaive. The handle, usually at least 5 feet long, holds a large single or double bell-shaped or rectangular blade. This huge, heavy weapon takes two hands to use. Size 6.

Quarterstaff

Any weapon shaped like a pole and made from hardened wood qualifies as a quarterstaff. Anywhere from 3 to 7 feet long, most quarterstaffs are plainly finished. Characters with an appropriate Artisan Skill (see **Skills**, p. 130) sometimes decorate them with elaborate carvings, and sometimes attach gems and precious metals. Size 5.

Sap

A sap is a leather pouch filled with stones or metal pellets. A character can improvise a sap by filling a leather glove with pebbles. Size 1.

Spear

Most often used as a missile weapon, the spear may also serve as a short pole arm in close combat. The 4-foot long weapon requires two hands to wield, and the user can use it to stab or club an opponent. For a more detailed description of a spear, see **Throwing Weapons**. Size 4.

Sword, Short

A short sword is a bladed weapon between 2 and 3 feet long. Usually used as a one-handed weapon, some short swords feature hilts designed to allow windlings to wield them with two hands. A short sword's blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges. Size 2.

Sword, Two-handed

The largest bladed weapon available in Barsaive, a two-handed sword is just over 4 feet long and balanced specifically for two-handed use. The double-edged blade can be curved, but is most often straight. Size 5.

Trispear

This specialized weapon evolved from a pole arm. Tridents range from 4 to 6 feet long, the 6-foot version used almost exclusively by t'skrang fishermen. Unlike a conventional pole arm, the trident ends in three points instead of the typical single point. The configuration of the points varies; sometimes they form triangles, others are flat. The length and thickness of the points also vary. As with pole arms, the trident takes two hands to wield. Size 3.

Warhammer

The warhammer has an oblong, metal head with a long spike protruding from it. Any character using this weapon should keep in mind that changing the direction of the swing once he has begun is nearly impossible. Size 5.

Whip

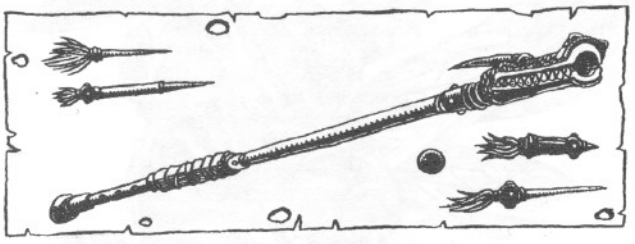
A whip is a bundle of braided leather strips, thick at the handle end and tapering at the tip. The whip handle is usually made of wood or bone. Theran slave traders favor this weapon. Size 3.

MISSILE WEAPONS

Missile and throwing weapons are used in ranged combat. For a character to use such a weapon with maximum impact, your character's opponent must be at least 2 yards away.

Blowgun

A blowgun is a hollow tube of wood or metal, 1 to 3 feet long, used to fire 2-inch needles. The needles are usually made of metal, though wood, stone, and precious gem needles also exist. The needles sometimes include fletching, and can be tipped with poison. Size 1-2.



Bow, Short

The term short bow applies to all bows less than 4 feet long. A single piece of flexible wood forms the bow, which is fitted with a bowstring that is connected to each end and pulled taught. Short bow arrows are 2 feet long, made of wood and fletched with feathers. Both stone and metal arrowheads are used in Barsaive, but the province's finest shots use metal-tipped arrows almost exclusively. Size 5.

Crossbow, Light

This weapon consists of a bow mounted horizontally on a shaft of wood or metal. A hook-and-trigger device built into the shaft holds the bowstring taut and releases it. The shaft is 1 foot long, making the weapon small enough to conceal in a heavy cloak or coat. The arrow, called a bolt, is shorter and thicker than a regular arrow. Usually made from wood with a stone or metal tip, bolts range from 6 to 8 inches in length and have feather fletching. Size 4.

Crossbow, Medium

The medium crossbow is a larger version of the light crossbow, with a 2-foot long shaft and 12-inch bolts. Size 5.

Elven Warbow

The elven warbow is similar to a longbow, but is made with three different woods. The differing tensile strength of each type of wood gives the warbow more power than a conventional longbow. Warbow arrows are between 2 and 4 feet long and fletched with feathers, and are thicker and heavier than conventional longbow arrows. Size 5.

Longbow

A variation of the short bow, the longbow ranges from 4 to 8 feet long. Longbow arrows are similar to short bow arrows, but are 2 to 4 feet long. Size 5.

Quiver

A quiver holds arrows or bolts. Most quivers are hard leather cylinders or rectangles strapped over the bowman's back like a backpack. Individuals from the taller races of Barsaive often prefer to hook their quivers to their belts. Some quivers come equipped with a cover to discourage others from stealing arrows.

Sling

This catch-all term describes any weapon that flings small objects at speeds and distances greater than the unaided arm can manage. Most slings consist of a strap of leather connected to a pouch that holds the projectile. Most sling users use rocks for ammunition, though a sling can throw any small object. Some merchants sell metal balls to use with a sling, but most customers find them a waste of good silver. Size 2.

THROWING WEAPONS

The following throwing weapons are used in missile combat. For details on missile combat, see **Missile Combat**, p. 221.

Axe, Throwing

A throwing axe is the same size as a hand-axe, but is specifically designed for throwing. It may have either a single or double blade, which is usually smaller than the blade of a hand-axe. Size 3.

Bola

A bola is a leather strap fitted with two metal or stone weights on either end. Some bolas have multiple straps, each tipped with weights and tied together in the center. The straps range from 1 to 3 feet in length. The weights can be of any shape, and many artisans carve them to look like animals. A bola can both entangle and damage the target. To entangle the target, the attacking character must make a successful Attack Test. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength Test against a Difficulty Number of 9. Size 2.

Dagger

Though technically a melee weapon, a dagger can also function as a throwing weapon. For a complete description of a conventional dagger, see **Melee Weapons**, p. 195. Size 1.

Dagger, Flight

The blade of the flight dagger is alloyed with a tiny amount of True Air, which gives the dagger lift and greater range than a throwing dagger. Size 1.

Dagger, Throwing

The throwing dagger is a flatter, thinner version of a conventional dagger, specially balanced for throwing. Size 1.

Darts

Darts are any small, balanced throwing weapons less than 6 inches long. Some are simply pointed metal rods, others are elaborate constructions of wood, stone, and precious gems tipped with needle-sharp metal that can be dipped in poison. Many darts also have feathered fletching. Size 1.

Hawk Hatchet

The hawk hatchet is a Z-shaped weapon. Blades shaped like hawk's wings form the top and bottom of the "Z," and a wooden handle forms the diagonal. The wielder throws the hatchet with an overhand snap to send it whirling toward its target, its "wings" providing lift for the flight. If the Hawk Hatchet misses its intended target, True Air forged into the weapon returns it to its thrower's hand. Size 3.

Net

Nets are used to entangle an opponent, and can be as simple as a large piece of cloth or as complex as a series of ropes tied together in elaborate patterns. A net can be square or circular, and its size depends on what your character wants to capture. A net designed to catch windlings can fit in a pocket, while the nets used by Theran slave traders can hold ten human-sized people.

To use a net in combat, the attacking character must make an Attack Test against the target's Physical Defense. A successful result entangles the target. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength Test against the result of his captor's Attack Test. Size 2-6.

Oil, Burning

Oil can be fashioned into a homemade bomb and used as a throwing weapon. To make such a weapon, a character must pour oil into a flask, stuff the flask's open end with cloth, set the cloth afire and throw the flask at the target. The container will shatter on striking the target or the ground nearby, spreading flames all around unless the attacking character rolls all ones (1s) in his Attack Test. For a detailed explanation of the Rule of One, see **Game Concepts**, p. 27. See **Throwing Objects** in **Combat**, p. 222, for specific Physical Defense and scatter rules when using oil as a throwing weapon. Unless stamped out, the oil will burn for 3 Combat Rounds. In each round that the oil burns, any characters spattered by it take Step 5 damage.

Spear

Generally used as a throwing weapon, a spear is 3 feet long and tipped with stone or metal. A spear can be thrown with one hand. Size 4.

RACIAL WEAPON DESIGNS

Name-givers come in all shapes and sizes, and to this end there is often a wide variance in what they choose to fight with and how they design their weapons. The three races most strongly affected by this are windlings, trolls and obsidimen. For these races, there is the constant frustration of living in a land where the most common items are either much too large, or are so small that you cannot use them effectively. Because of this, there is certainly a market for these races seeking weapons and items made to their tastes. Should a player wish to use a weapon made for one of these races, here are some rules below that will allow for the conversion of existing weapons.

WINDLING WEAPONS:

Windling smiths are known for their skilled use of the materials most common to their world. Weapons of bone, hardened wood and magically imbued elements are all hallmarks of the skilled craftspeople of the windling world. On rare occasions, these smiths will make weapons of common Name-giver sizes as well. These are greatly coveted items and found only rarely.

Windling weapons may be Forged to the same levels as their standard sized counterparts.

WINDLING SIZED WEAPONS

Standard weapons	x1 cost
Forged weapons	x3 cost

All of these weapons do 1/2 damage (round up) and have a weight of 1/3 the standard weight. Strength minimum of a windling weapon is 1/2 normal (round down) and the size for a windling weapon is 1/2 normal.



TROLL AND OBSIDIMEN WEAPONS:

The trolls and obsidimen fall back to what is in their hearts and bones when it comes to weapon creation. Their deft smiths are known to turn out surprisingly intricate crystal, stone and cold iron weapons. Working with the earth and perhaps sharing some inner feel of the lines of force and merit in their medium, their weapons tend to have very fluid natural looking lines and design. To one of the larger races being given one of these weapons is a rare honor as not only does it show off the skill and love their people have for the earth, but it also allows them to take advantage of their strength and power. Because of their size and heft, normal-sized and smaller Name-givers simply cannot effectively use these weapons. In some cases they cannot even lift them. Great weapons may be Forged to the same levels as their standard sized counterparts. There are no known Great versions of the Elven Warbow.

GREAT WEAPONS	
Standard Weapons	x2 cost
Forged Weapons	x4 cost

All of these weapons do one step greater damage and weigh twice as much as the standard weapons. Great Weapons have a +4 higher Strength minimum than the regular weapons and are one size class greater than the regular weapons.

ARMOR AND SHIELDS

Characters in **Earthdawn** use armor and shields to protect themselves from damage when engaged in combat. For information on the use of armor, see **Combat**, p. 220. Game statistics for armor and shields are listed in the **Goods and Services Table**, p. 211.

RESTRICTIONS

Because the races of Barsaive have different physiques, the cost and weight of armor and shields will vary for each race. Specifically, trolls, t'skrang, and windlings must add a 10 percent fitting fee to the armor and shield prices listed in the description and the **Goods and Services Table**. Multiply the standard weight of armor and shields by 1.25 to determine the weight of armor and shields tailored for trolls. Multiply the standard weight by .2 to determine the weight of armor and shields tailored for windlings.

INITIATIVE PENALTIES

Some armor and shields reduce their wearers' Initiative. An Initiative penalty reduces the Initiative step number of the character wearing the armor. For example, plate mail creates an Initiative Penalty of 4, and so any character wearing this armor must reduce her Initiative step by 4 steps. Initiative penalties are cumulative; a character wearing plate mail and sporting a footman's shield with an Initiative Penalty 2 must subtract 6 steps from her Initiative step. Initiative penalties for armor and shields are listed in the **Goods and Services Table.**

Delthrien has an Initiative Step 7, or 1D12. He wears crystal ringlet armor and carries a buckler; the armor carries an Initiative Penalty of 2, which reduces his Initiative step to Step 5, or 1D8.

The die for an Initiative step reduced to 2 is recorded as 1D4 - 1. For an Initiative step reduced to 1, the Initiative die is recorded as 1D4 - 2. A character with an Initiative step reduced to 0 by penalties can only move every other round. Note that a character cannot voluntarily reduce his or her Initiative Step to below 0.

ARMOR

The following types of armor are available in Barsaive.

Blood Pebbles

Blood pebble armor is a form of living, elemental armor. Hundreds of small elemental stones are embedded in the wearer's skin, drawing power from the magic in his blood. A character wearing this type of armor takes 4 Damage Points, which cannot be healed as long as the character wears the blood pebbles. Implanting or removing blood pebble armor requires eight hours of work by a trained Weaponsmith. Note that obsidimen can wear blood pebble armor. This armor does not come with a helm.



Cloth, Padded

Padded cloth armor comprises two layers of quilted raw cotton. It protects the wearer's entire body except for his head, forearms, and legs below the knee. Padded cloth does not come with a helm.

Crystal Plate Armor

This form of plate mail is made from living crystal rather than metal. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year, which costs 2,000 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on centuries-old armor. Crystal plate is extremely heavy, and joints sometimes grind against one another. A full set of crystal plate armor includes a helm.

Crystal Ringlet

Made from carved, interlocking rings of living crystal, this armor protects the wearer's entire body except the legs below the knee. A full set of crystal ringlet armor includes a helm.

Fernweave

Woven from deep-forest vines and herbs, fernweave is "living" armor that must be watered once every three days. If the armor is not watered, the magical properties of the herbs disappear, along with the Mystic Armor advantage this armor provides. Dormant herbs will revive if watered, even after a lapse of time. Watering fernweave consumes one day's water ration. Fernweave armor does not come with a helm.



Hide Armor

This special armor is made by sewing animal hides to leather armor. Hide armor retains the shape of the animal the hide came from, including its paws and head, which is often worn as a helm. The paws cannot be used as weapons. Common types of hide armor include bear, jaguar, lion, and gorilla armor.

Leather Armor

This armor is made from one to three layers of soft leather. The thinner parts of the armor provide freedom of movement for joints and limbs. Leather armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee. It does not come with a helm.

Leather, Hardened

Hardened leather armor has been boiled to be made harder than normal leather. This armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee. It does not come with a helm.

Leather, Padded

Padded leather armor combines padded cloth with a covering of leather armor. It protects the wearer's entire body except for the head, forearms, and legs below the knee, and does not come with a helm.

Living Crystal Armor

Living crystal armor is made up of small columns of crystal that are embedded inside the wearer's body. The magic in the character's blood causes the crystals to grow until the armor covers the wearer's skin. Implanting the crystal causes 5 points of damage that cannot be healed as long as the character wears the living crystal armor. Because the crystal is alive, the wearer can feel through the armor and move within it as if it was his skin. Portions of the armor, particularly the crystal columns, retain their hardness. Living crystal armor protects the wearer's entire body except for the head; attempting to grow crystal on the head causes fatal brain damage. Implanting or removing living crystal armor requires three days of work by a trained Weaponsmith or an Elementalist. Living crystal armor does not come with a helm.

Mail, Chain

Made from interlocking metal rings, chain mail is flexible but slow to bend, which impedes the wearer's movement. Chain mail comes with a chain hood to cover the head and protects the wearer's entire body except the legs below the knees. A full set of chain mail includes a chain hood that acts as a helm.

Mail, Plate

Plate mail is composed of carefully fitted and jointed pieces of steel plate. Though the armor moves smoothly for such a massive and ungainly-looking construct, the heaviness of the plate metal makes quick reaction almost impossible, reducing the wearer's Initiative. Plate mail protects the wearer's entire body. A full set of plate mail includes a helm.

Mail, Ring

Ring mail is leather armor reinforced with metal rings to deflect blows. It protects the wearer's entire body except the legs below the knee. A full set of ring mail includes a helm.



Obsidiman Skin

This armor is made from the skin of a slain obsidiman: the negative reactions it elicits in much of Barsaive usually outweigh its protective value. Obsidimen will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dwarfs and trolls consider the wearing of obsidiman armor an ugly and distasteful practice, and react to the wearer with loathing. Obsidiman skin armor does not come with a helm.

SHIELDS

Characters of dwarf size and larger can use shields. Obsidimen and trolls use shields modified to fit their larger arms.

Body Shield

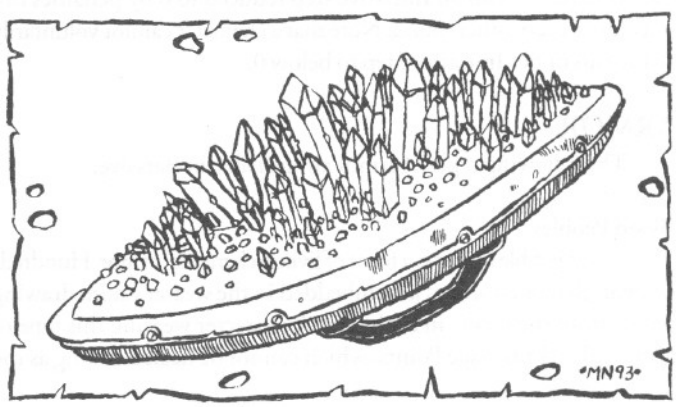
A wooden frame completely sheathed with metal, these tall shields cover the bearer from the neck to the shins.

Buckler

This small shield straps to the bearer's forearm. Your character may fire a bow while wearing a buckler, but cannot use a melee or throwing weapon with the shielded hand.

Crystal Viking Shield

A crystal viking shield is made from living crystal embedded in a wood or metal frame. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed each year at the standard cost of 25 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor Rating bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically renews the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield. Because of their small size, Crystal Viking Shields can not be made for windlings.



Ferndask

A ferndask is a buckler made from vines and herbs, similar to fernweave armor. The ferndask is alive and must be watered once every three days or its magical properties will disappear along with the shield's Mystic Armor Rating bonus. The magical herbs of a ferndask become dormant when unwatered but can be revived. Watering the ferndask consumes half a day's water ration. A ferndask shield is denser and heavier than fernweave armor and also heavier than a conventional buckler.

Footman's Shield

A footman's shield is made of wood and rimmed and reinforced with metal. Properly used, a footman's shield protects most of the bearer's upper body and can also be used to block some low blows.

Rider's Shield

A rider's shield resembles the footman's shield, but is designed to protect a rider on the back of an animal. Cavalrymen use this kind of shield exclusively. Though it protects the rider, it does not protect his mount.

CLOTHING

Each of the races of Barsaive wears its own style of clothing, and individual clothing choices can vary greatly. Several distinctive items of clothing with special properties are described in the following pages. The **Goods and Services Table**, p. 213, contains an extensive list of clothing available in Barsaive, including entire outfits packaged as a single unit. Many Barsaivians frown on those who purchase and wear Theran clothing, because it hurts local trade and strengthens the economic power of the Theran Empire.

PACKAGE DEALS

Package deals offer a simpler way of purchasing clothes for your character than sifting through the lists of clothing to find the items you want. Each package deal contains all the items listed in that package. Players are not limited to the clothing available in the package; if you want your character to have additional items, feel free to purchase those items separately.

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT

Adventuring equipment includes backpacks, bedrolls, tents, rope, and other equipment used by adventurers during their travels. Most of the adventuring equipment listed in the **Goods and Services Table** is basic gear that requires no explanation. Items with specific game functions are described below.

PACKAGE DEALS

As with clothing package deals, the adventuring equipment package deal includes basic equipment most adventurers can reasonably expect to need and use, including a backpack, a bedroll, flint and steel, a torch, a waterskin, and a large sack. The package deals offer players a simple method of buying adventuring equipment.

SPECIALIZED ITEMS

The following specialized items, though not part of the adventuring equipment package deal, are among the most useful additions that a player character can purchase.

Healing Kit

A healing kit comes in a small shoulder bag and contains bandages, salves, and herbal potions that can speed a character's recovery. When treated with a healing kit, a character adds 1 step to his Toughness Step for his next Recovery Test. Each healing kit contains enough supplies to treat three people. If a character wishes, he may buy the supplies included in the kit individually, at a lower cost.

Keesra

The windling-made contact poison called *keesra* is made from the same berries as keesris wine, and affects its victims by putting them to sleep. Targets of this poison wake up with a splitting headache and stinking like overripe berries.

Type of Poison: Sleep
Spell Defense/Step Number: 7/10
Onset Time: Instant
Duration: Effect Test in hours

Lanterns

Lanterns are used for light by the ordinary inhabitants of cities and towns as well as by adventurers. A hooded lantern lights an area roughly 30 yards in diameter. A bull's-eye lantern focuses the light into a beam that extends for 150 feet. Most lanterns burn oil, but some use light quartz.

Oil

Used as fuel for lanterns and torches, oil can also make a deadly weapon for combat. Each flask holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for 8 hours, and characters can hurl flaming flasks of oil at opponents. See **Throwing Weapons**, earlier in this section, for information on using oil as a weapon.

MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

The inherent magical energies in **Earthdawn** allow for many different types of magical equipment and services. A few of them are described below.

HEALING AIDS

Ever since the end of the Scourge, healing aids have boomed in popularity. Demand continues to outstrip supply, driving up the prices from the steady levels of past years. Occasional shortages temporarily drive prices even higher. All of the healing aids described below are potions and are sold in clay or ceramic vials. Each vial holds 1 dose of potion.

Booster Potion

A Booster Potion increases the effectiveness of a character's Recovery Test and allows a character to make one instantly. Each Booster Potion adds 8 steps to a character's Toughness step for one Recovery Test. If a character has no Recovery Tests left, the Booster Potion has no effect.

Cure Disease Potion

Cure Disease potions heal damage caused by disease and add 5 steps to a character's Toughness or talent step when making a Resistance Test against a disease. Cure Disease potions allow the character to instantly make a Recovery Test against the disease.

Healing Potion

Healing Potions instantly and automatically heal one Wound, and also add 8 steps to a character's Toughness step for one Recovery Test. A character may use a Healing Potion whether or not he has a Recovery Test available. If a character has no Recovery Tests left, the Healing Potion heals one of the character's Wounds. He then makes a Recovery Test using Step 8 (2D6) for the effect of the Healing Potion instead of his Recovery step.

Kelia's Antidote

Kelia's Antidote instantly suppresses the effects of poisons, meaning that a character takes no damage from the poison for 4 hours. The antidote also adds 4 steps to the character's Toughness or talent step when making a Resistance Test against the poison. Kelia's Antidote only suppresses the effect of one dose.

Kelix's Poultice

Kelix's Poultice instantly adds 5 steps to a character's Toughness or talent step when making Resistance Tests against poison. The poultice must be applied to the wound where the poison entered. If no wound exists – for example, if a character swallowed poison – the character must be intentionally wounded, and the poultice applied to the wound. The effects of the poultice last for 5 rounds and add 5 steps to the character's Toughness or talent step for Resistance Tests made during these rounds.

Last-chance Salve

Last-chance Salve can be given to any character who has been dead for one hour or less. The clear salve glows a gentle blue as it works its magic, a process that takes one minute. The character may then make all of his or her remaining Recovery Tests. If a character has no remaining Recovery Tests, Last-chance Salve entitles him to one extra Recovery Test. If this reduces the damage taken enough to revive the character, the character lives. If not, the character stays dead.

Resist Disease Potion

Resist Disease Potions instantly adds 3 steps to a character's Toughness or talent step when making a Resistance Test against a disease.

LIGHT QUARTZ

Enchanted with magical light, light quartz comes in a wide variety of sizes and colors. The most common pieces, roughly 3 inches in diameter, are used in lanterns. Light quartz was used extensively inside kaers during the Scourge, and these common gems still can be found in most Barsaivian towns and cities.

DISTINCTIVE ITEMS

The following items of clothing offer player characters useful magical protection against some of the hazards of adventuring.

Cloaksense Brooch

A Cloaksense Brooch infuses any cloak it is fastened to with magic. The brooch uses a character's Initiative step as a magical probe. When a character wearing a Cloaksense Brooch is in immediate danger of a surprise attack, the player makes an Initiative Test against the attacker's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the Cloaksense Brooch warns the character of the attacker's presence, foiling surprise or blindside attacks. Cloaksense only works on attackers within 5 yards of the target, however, and each use costs the wearer one point of Strain, whether or not the Cloaksense Brooch detects anything. In a situation where Cloaksense might come in handy for a character, the gamemaster should ask the player if he wants to use it or not, at which point the character makes his choice.



Dwarf Winternight Cloak

Dwarf Winternight Cloaks are made with magically treated cloth. These waterproof garments have a lining with a special ribbed design that produces enough heat when rubbed to keep a traveler warm on the coldest night. These cloaks provide 4 Armor Points against damage from cold spells and ice weapons.

Elfweave Robe

These beautiful garments display a fine, delicate craftsmanship that human and dwarf weavers envy, but cannot yet copy. Most often, elves wear Elfweave Robes, though some humans also wear them. Though the elves disclaim the rumors attributing magic properties to the robes, courtiers have long noted that the robes never sit quite right on an ork or dwarf.

Espagra-scale Cloak

Espagra-scale Cloaks, fashionable among dwarfs, are made from the hide of an espagra and provide the same protection as leather

armor. This effect does not add to the protection of any other type of armor a character may be wearing, however. Espagra-scale Cloaks are perfectly suited to those social occasions when an individual desires some protection, yet does not wish to look awkward by wearing full armor. An Espagra-scale Cloak adds 1 to the character's Mystic Armor Rating when worn.

Kratas Arrows

Designed to work with both folding bows and normal long and short bows, Kratas Arrows use Elemental Wood magic to grow from eight inches in length to the normal length for a long or short bow arrow. Kratas Arrows subtract one from Conceal Weapon test results for determining the difficulty of Detect Weapons tests. The size increase of a Kratas Arrow does not require an action. The price for Kratas Arrows is per arrow.

Kratas Folding Bow

Developed by Broacher's Brood, the Kratas Folding Bow is a short bow that uses Elemental Wood magic to fold itself into a much more compact shape, making the weapon far easier to conceal. Kratas Folding Bows subtract one from Conceal Weapon test results for determining the difficulty of Detect Weapons tests. Folding or unfolding a Kratas Folding Bow requires an action. House T'kambras has made frequent use of Kratas Folding Bows in its raids along the <blert... Coil? Servos?> River.

One-size Hat

This high-quality headgear is made with minor magics that makes the hat fit perfectly to any head. Any One-size Hat of the correct basic size tailors itself to fit the individual customer's skull shape. Any race, including obsidimen and t'skrang, can wear a One-size Hat.

Quiet Fingers

These gloves muffle the sound of the wearer's hands bouncing or bumping against someone else's property. If a character tries to spot the wearer of these gloves attempting to pick a lock or a pocket, quiet fingers add 1 to the Difficulty Number of the character's Perception Test. Quiet Fingers only works when the wearer is using his hands.

Slip Sheath Scabbard

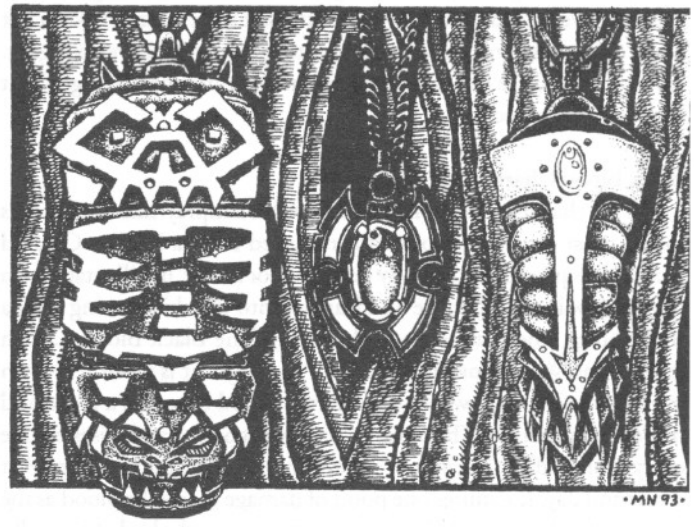
The Slip Sheath is a leather scabbard that is often made to look like it holds a dirk or large dagger. These items actually allow bladed weapons up to one size larger to be fit into them. This does not change the hilt of the blade but will allow for larger blades to be more easily concealed or to be much less encumbering to one's movements. It should be noted that this is only for bladed weapons of similar types. You could not sheath a pole arm in a short sword Slip Sheath Scabbard.

Spirit Ink

This ink looks similar to quicksilver and is always cold to the touch. When a note is written with this ink and then the special bone drying powder spread over it the words disappear. The user then must roll up the scroll and place a drop of their own blood on it as a seal saying the name of the person it is to go to. When this person, and only this person, receives the scroll and opens it, a ghostly visage of the writer will appear and speak the words. Then the scroll will crumble to dust. Should any other open this scroll, it will appear blank and any attempt, magical or otherwise, to divine its meaning will cause the scroll to burst into flames, inflicting Step 4 damage to anyone holding it or especially near it.

Water Blades

The Water Blade is a t'skrang creation. Made with True Water, they are weapons (usually broadswords) with the unusual ability to turn into liquid upon the wielders command. They have most of the properties of water. They cannot be used as actual weapons during this time. While roughly retaining their form, however, they can be poured into water skins or even carried in a mug, making them some of the easiest blades to conceal in Barsaive. This is a popular item with t'skrang who travel on river boats where weapons are commonly confiscated or will mark you as someone to be watched.



BLOOD CHARMS

Blood charms are magical items that draw on the magical power within a character's blood. Frequently used in the days before the Scourge, blood charms have remained popular and enjoy widespread use in Barsaive's burgeoning age of exploration, despite the very real cost they exact from those who wear them. All blood charms cause the wearer damage that cannot be healed until the charm is used or destroyed. Most of the time, Characters must attach blood charms directly to their skin; the charm breaks through the skin to reach the blood they need to activate. Blood charm magic often builds slowly; a character must wear a charm for at least twenty-four hours before he can use it unless otherwise stated. Because blood charms are a form of blood magic, their powers have a limited duration or peculiar aspects of how their powers function. Each blood charm has a Depatterning Rating, or DR number associated with it. This number shows the amount of stress the character's True Pattern endures. See **Depatterning** in **Workings of Magic**, p. 144, for more information on DR numbers and their effects.

Absorb Blow (DR 1)

An Absorb Blow charm causes 2 points of permanent damage to the wearer. These charms are usually quartz, veined red from the wearer's blood. Absorb blow gives a character a one-time bonus of 12 to his Physical Armor Rating; the charm absorbs 12 Damage Points of the

first blow the wearer takes after activating the charm. Using the charm destroys it, leaving only a cracked, blackened piece of stone. Armor-Defeating Hits have no effect on an Absorb Blow charm. A character cannot use the charm, however, if an attack takes him enough by surprise to prevent him activating the charm. For more information on Armor-Defeating Hits, see **Combat**, p. 219.

Astral Sensitive Eye (DR 2)

An Astral Sensitive Eye is a magically treated lump of amber, hollowed out and filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes this process relatively painless, the wearer takes 1 permanent Damage Point as the price for his ability to see through the gem. Though the character's vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, that eye has astral sight. As with the windling ability of astral sight, the character wearing an Astral Sensitive Eye takes Strain. To use the astral sight, the wearer makes a test using either his Perception or Spellcasting Step, whichever is higher. An Astral Sensitive Eye can never be removed, and the Damage Point can never be healed.

Black Blood Charm (DR 4)

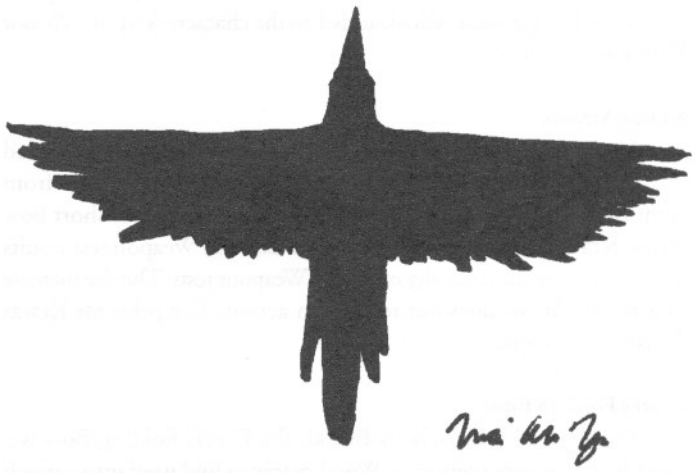
This charm is a long black worm with a lamprey-like mouth. It is found most often in Iopos and is rumored to be a Horror-Created charm. It is placed on the body near a major artery. It will attach for a cost of 4 points of damage and burrow into the skin leaving only a slight bulge where it lodges in the artery. The Black Blood Charm inflicts one Wound on the wearer for as long as it is worn. For each month this charm is worn, the wearer's blood becomes a more and more potent poison. The poison starts out at Step 1 and raises by one every month after the charm's activation. It will max out at Step 13 at a year and day. It requires one point of damage to use the blood as the wearer must draw it forth, however this damage maybe healed normally. It is important to note that while this damage can be healed, it is considered part of the total blood magic while unhealed. Once the charm has been worn for a year and a day, the wound becomes permanent. Even if the charm us removed, the user's blood will remain a step 7 poison ever after. It is rumored that once this has occurred, the healing powers of Garlen will no longer work for the wearer.

Blood Pouch Charm (DR 1)

The Blood Pouch Charm is a small charm that bonds directly to the flesh. The charm has an open face and small bendable metal prongs that can hold one coin down once it is in place. Once a coin is fitted in the charm it may be placed against the skin. For 2 points of damage, this charm will dissolve into the skin, leaving a tattoo of the coin in the area where it was placed. At a later time, the Name-giver may choose to heal this damage, and the coin will reform from the tattoo. Once used, this charm is destroyed. Many Name-givers who choose to use the ghost master ritual or take the training pledge find this a useful way to keep from losing the valuable orichalcum pledge coin.

Chameleon Cloak (DR 2)

This grayish cloak looks to be a hooded rain cloak. For 6 points of damage the wearer of this cloak gains the ability to blend into the surrounding area. While not a perfect match, this cloak can shift quickly with movement and is able to even project light when backlit. With this cloak, a Name-giver effectively has the talent of Silent Walk at Rank 3. Should the user already have Silent Walk then this will add 1 step to that ability.



Crows Sight (DR 2)

The Crows Sight charm is an amulet that looks like a crow with wings spread. It costs 1 damage point to attach the charm. Once the user has attached the charm, they will become aware of any raptor or scavenging avian within one mile of them. The wearer may then enter a contest of wills at a cost of 4 Strain per attempt to control a bird. This is a simple Willpower Test against the bird's Spell Defense. Once the bird is under control, the controller can see through its eyes. The bird will remain in bondage as long as the user is within 5 miles of it, although the control may be released at any time. Should the bird be hurt, all injuries are shared with the controller. Should the bird die, the controller will suffer permanent blindness in one eye, and the charm will shatter. Only one bird may be bound at a time.

Crystal Limbs (DR 5; 2 when replacing a lost limb)

The Empire of Thera, because of its almost constant state of war, came to discover that it was losing some of its most valuable soldiers to injuries. To combat this attrition within their ranks, the Theran charm artificers created living crystal limbs. While very rare, they do occasionally make their way into Barsaive. Should a Name-giver find themselves in the dire straits of having lost a limb, and they are lucky enough to find one of these, their best bet is to take it to a Weaponsmith. These limbs can fit a new user, as along as they are of comparable sizes. The user must place a deep narrow cut into the stump of the lost limb and firmly press the cup of the Crystal Limb over it, inflicting 8 points of damage. The Crystal Limb will begin to plumb blood through it much like the veins in a normal limb. Once this is done, it will model itself to be a near replica of the lost one with no loss of abilities or control. Indeed, a Crystal Limb grants a + 2 Strength step for purposes of determining melee or unarmed damage. Every year and a day, the limb must be taken to a Weaponsmith for recharging. This can be done by Weaponsmiths of higher than Seventh Circle. Should a Name-giver not recharge the limb, it will become stiff and slow and eventually it will move no further until recharged.

Death Cheat (DR 2)

A Death Cheat charm costs its wearer 3 Damage Points. Usually made of turquoise or tourmaline, the charms have a single red spot

drawn from the wearer's blood. Upon the wearer's death, the Death Cheat charm automatically grants the character a Recovery Test with a 5-step bonus. Once the wearer has used the charm, it becomes inert, appearing as a translucent stone drained of most of its color. Though the charm has no intrinsic value, nobles or would-be heroes often offer up to 100 silver pieces for a used Death Cheat charm, wearing them as an unearned badge of honor.

Death Feign (DR 2)

Attaching the Death Feign charm costs the user a single point of damage. This charm looks like a small, fire-blackened, silver-gilt rat skull. It will render the wearer "dead" to all but the most thorough magical inspections. The charm will make the wearer appear as dead for a number of days equal to the difference between their Current Damage and their unconsciousness rating. The charm automatically drains this much blood, effectively knocking the character out, but it is healed back at the rate of one point per day during this time. This charm must be self-activated, it cannot be forced upon a Name-giver. During this time, the character can still be damaged or killed, but, if left alone, they will awake at the end of this time. Wounds and other serious injuries taken before the activation of the charm will not heal until after the user awakens.

Desperate Blow (DR 1)

A Desperate Blow charm costs its wearer 4 Damage Points. Charm makers usually fashion Desperate Blow charms from steel and quartz. The wearer's blood infuses the quartz with red, and one drop of blood is perpetually suspended from the steel. At the wearer's discretion, the Desperate Blow charm adds 6 steps to either an Attack Test or a Damage Test. A Desperate Blow charm may be used more than once, but in order to reattach it, the wearer must first recover at least 4 points of damage in one Recovery Test.

Desperate Spell (DR 1)

A Desperate Spell charm costs its wearer 3 Damage Points. Made of silver and a small pearl, the wearer's blood leaves brilliant red speckles on the pearl. A Desperate Spell charm adds 6 steps to either a Spellcasting Test or a Effect Test (or the Effect dice) when using a spell. A Desperate Spell charm may be reused, but in order to reattach it, the wearer must first recover at least 3 points of damage in one Recovery Test

Fish Breath Charm (DR 3)

This charm allows the wearer to breath water for an unlimited amount of time at the cost of one point of strain. It appears to be a dried octopus when dormant. It must be soaked in water until it is moist. When it is fully pliable, a cut is made on the nose of the desired user, who must immerse his or her face into the water. At this time, the charm awakens and attaches to the wearer's face, wrapping around the head and inserting tubes into the nostrils, for a cost of 3 damage points. It is smooth and mimics the users skin tone. The removal of the charm involves allowing it to dry out (at least 1 week out of water), and having it pried off the face and the tubes pulled from the nose. This will cause a Wound that can then be healed normally. During the use of this charm, a user's perception and charisma out of water are reduced by one step.



Fleet Foot Charm (DR 2)

The Fleet Foot Charm is a diamond-shaped, black enamel charm that is placed directly onto the skin. For a cost of 2 damage points, this charm will bind to the users skin. Once this is done, the user may spend 4 points of Strain to raise their effective movement rate up 1 level from their normal rate for one day. This charm can be used multiple times for cumulative effects in a single 24-hour period.

Fools Charm (DR 1)

This charm can look like almost anything. It must be in contact with the user's flesh at all times. It costs 1 point of damage to attach. Once this charm is attached, the person may choose to have a slight colored glow appear to come from the profile of their body. It is also not unheard of to have glowing eyes or to leave a glow on things they have been in contact with. Other than this minor vanity, this charm seems to have no known purpose and its origin is also similarly unknown. It is called a Fools Charm for its seeming lack of purpose beyond its novelty and the danger from its unknown origins. Regardless, it is a common enough charm, and someone is making them and importing them to Barsaive.

Gilt Tongue (DR 3)

The Gilt Tongue is what appears to be a shriveled, gold-dipped Name-giver tongue that has been cut free from deep in the throat. To attach this charm the user must take 7 points of damage, as well as a permanent Wound. The user cuts their tongue and then places the charm in their mouth. It will then dissolve, the liquid passing into the cut, leaving a permanent scar. The process is said to be quite pleasurable. Once done, the damage is permanent. This charm permanently raises

the user's Charisma Attribute by 3 points. Once this charm is used, the Name-giver cannot raise their Charisma further through means magical or otherwise.

Horror Fend (DR 1)

A Horror Fend charm costs the wearer 2 Damage Points. Charm makers construct Horror Fend charms from gold and silver designed around a piece of elemental earth. Two drops of the wearer's blood travel along the gold, soak into the earth, emerge in the silver, then soak back into the earth to start the pattern again. Horror Fend charms offer protection against the Horrors or their constructs. Your character chooses when to use the Horror fend charm. Using the charm increases the wearer's Physical Defense and Spell Defense by 3 points each, and the effect lasts for 2 Combat Rounds. The character chooses when to use the charm, and after using it once may either recharge the charm or let it fall from his body, destroyed. Recharging the charm costs the wearer an additional Damage Point. Unlike the initial 2 Damage Points, a character may heal any Damage Points lost by recharging without disposing of the charm. To heal the original 2 points of damage, the wearer must first destroy the charm.

Horror Sink (DR 2)

The Horror Sink costs 1 point of damage to attach, and is a small charm that burns when a Horror of any sort is within 100 yards. This charm is not very useful in places of high astral corruption, as it will constantly burn. It is most useful where Horrors are not very common or have been cleared out, such as major cities. It is rumored that this charm will sometimes pick up nethermantic magic which has lead some to believe that it is poorly attuned to the energies of the Horrors. There are also some who point to this as further proof that nethermancy is a tool of the Horrors.

Indrisan Blood Cobra (DR 6)

The Blood Cobra is an intricate charm that looks like a small, fully articulated platinum cobra with semi precious stones for eyes. To activate the charm, the user must swallow it. The Indrisan Blood Cobra costs the wearer 7 damage points, as well as a permanent Wound. Within a few hours the charm will awaken and begins its transformation. At this time, users are often bound and gagged or heavily sedated. The reason for this is that the now animate metal snake will burrow to the base of the spine and eat its way up the spinal column. As it goes, its body expands and replaces the spine. This process can take several hours and is said to be so painful that Name-givers have been known to take their own life if not properly restrained. This pain, and the invasive nature of the charm, gives the user a permanent Wound that can never be healed, even should the charm be deactivated and removed. After a few days, the users are back on their feet and the purpose of this charm becomes readily apparent. This charm raises the user's Dexterity Attribute by 3. Once this charm has been inserted, no further raises may be made to the users Dexterity, magical or otherwise.



Kildare's Skin Map (DR 2)

Kildare's Skin Map is the creation of one Wexs Kildare of Urupa. He was a multi-Disciplined Air Sailor and Wizard. Making useful items was something that he considered a hallmark of his craft. The Skin Map is a sort tattoo which costs 3 damage points to apply and activate. Over a period of days after completion, it becomes a map of the immediate 100 miles radius around the Name-giver in very high detail. This map does not change immediately as the wearer travels but needs a few days to reset, unless the Name-giver is traveling at walking speeds or slower. These maps have been of much interest to Theran charm artificers, as they seem to be tied directly into the True Pattern of Barsaive.

Kines Charm (DR 1)

The Kines Charm costs its wearer 2 damage points. It allows the wearer to store nights of sleep at a cost of one point of strain per night of full bed rest. These nights may be added over any period of time by sleeping 8 hours and then spending one point of strain upon awakening in the morning. At a later date, the wearer may choose to spend these stored nights, however once the charm is activated, it will not deactivate and allow the strain to be healed until the total of stored nights are spent. So if a character fires it off and doesn't need it, he better have a good book handy or a pass to the Great Library of Throal.

Koriganian Armband (DR 3)

The Koriganian Armband is a twisted silver and bronze armband with living crystal knobs as ends. Once it is placed on the arm, a Name-giver may spend 4 points of damage to activate the charm. When this is done, the crystal grows together forming a solid ring. This charm raises the Strength of that limb, and that limb only, by one step. All actions that can be made with one limb only can use this addition. Should a second limb be needed at all for any amount of time for any action then it negates the effect of this charm for that action. This charm comes from Vasgothia, and its duplication has evaded both Barsaivian and Theran charm artificers.

Lasting Memory Charm (DR 2)

The Lasting Memory Charm costs its wearer 4 damage points. This charm is very popular among the Troubadours and Wizards of Thera. It looks very much like an enameled closed eye on a headband. When in use, the eye opens, looking just like a living eye identical to the user's. This charm provides a nearly perfect memory. Each use lasts

roughly one round and costs 1 Strain. This Strain should be counted towards the total for blood magic damage. This charm was the death of the famous gambler Rechia Odds Breaker, who suffered depatternization in the middle of a high-stakes dice game.

Mark Breaker Charm (DR 3)

Commonly called the Dreamers' Charm or the Drunkards' Charm, this charm was created to help Horror-marked individuals deal with the pain and to help foil the efforts of the Horrors. It is created on the concept that Horrors feed most commonly on negative emotions. For 1 point of Strain, the user may choose to have this translucent amulet make them extremely intoxicated, removing the ability to feel almost all pain, as well as bestowing upon them a profound euphoria. It is said that this limits the Horrors' power to affect the Name-giver. Whether or not this is true is debatable. Whatever the case some less sophisticated Name-givers have taken to wearing this charm for recreational purposes. This charm costs 2 points of damage to bind to a wearer.

Ska's Tear (DR 2)

This charm looks like a small amber tear with a drop of blood trapped in it. A Name-giver must eat this charm to use it. Once this is done, the Name-giver takes 4 points of permanent damage. After one week, the charm will have been dissolved and its magic takes up residence in the body of the consumer. The Name-giver will then be able to create a single tear at will that will give another Name-giver one of their Recovery Tests. This tear may be dropped onto an injury or into the mouth of the recipient. The recipient must then use the Recovery Test immediately. This tear will work on Name-givers that are beyond their Death Rating, if it is used in the same round that they are killed. The user may spend as many Recovery Tests as they have per day in tear creation. Tears not used within 10 minutes dissolve and can not be recovered.

Stepping Dead Charm (DR 5)

This charm is a necklace. It is often made of bones or teeth on a twisted wire or sinew cord. When worn, it may be attached for 8 points of damage. Once this charm is attached the Name-giver loses all sensation of pain. Damage is incurred normally, however the wearer of this charm may choose to ignore all the physical effects of Wounds and may even choose to remain conscious after they have exceeded their Unconsciousness Rating. When a Wounded character with a Stepping Dead charm makes a Recovery Test, he still reduces the amount of damage that he recovers by 1 point for each Wound. This charm is rumored to cause anyone who dies while wearing it to rise from the grave within a few hours and begin marching East.

Targeting Eye (DR 2)

A Targeting Eye is magically treated piece of quartz hollowed out, filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes this process relatively painless, the wearer takes 1 point of permanent damage. The wearer sees through the quartz, though his vision through that eye remains a little cloudy. At a cost of 1 Strain Point, the eye allows its wearer to add 2 steps to missile weapon or throwing weapon Attack Tests. A Targeting Eye cannot be removed, and the Damage Point can never be healed.

Thought Worm Charm (DR 1)

The Thought Worm Charm costs 2 damage points. The Thought Worm Charm is normally purchased in pairs or even larger numbers. This charm allows a limited form of Thought Link. It tends to transmit images and feelings more than words, although some users report the ability to use crude speech with practice. All users who are present at



the activation and pay the damage cost, may interact with the others within a range of roughly 100 meters. To activate the charms, they are placed in a small depression in the earth. The intended users then each spill their blood into this depression over the charms. Once all parties have done this, they then lay on their backs with their heads towards the hole. The Thought Worms inside the charms, which look like small golden eggs, then awaken. These worms are said to writhe together for a time, then each of them passes into the Patterns of those gathered for the ritual. The eggs are left behind intact. Should a user ever wish to deactivate the charm, they must destroy or crush the egg. It should be noted that destruction, either accidental or on purpose, deactivates the charm for the user in question, as well as all of those whom chose to bind together in the Thought Link.

Wazzneer's Gem (DR 1)

This green cut gem bonds to the flesh of the user for 3 points of damage. As long as this charm is worn, the wearer gains a +7 bonus to their spell defense whenever someone, or something, tries to track them.

Wound Store (DR 2)

The Wound Store is a small pin consisting of an enameled green leaf and three quartz berries. Once bonded to the skin, the berries turn blood red as it inflicts 3 Wounds and 4 points of damage. If the Name-giver heals these wounds naturally, with unaided bed rest, it stores one healing in it. Thereafter, a Wound of the Name-giver's choosing will be negated. Once this is done, the charm will deactivate, however it can be reloaded by taking another 3 Wounds at a later date.

PROVISIONS

Provisions include rations, food, and lodging. A variety of food and accommodations can be obtained across Barsaive in addition to the examples described below. Costs are listed in the **Goods and Services Table** beginning on p. 211. The gamemaster determines game information for any items not specifically described here.

RATIONS

Most adventurers and travelers use rations; dried food prepared to last long periods of time without spoiling. A character who eats no rations or other food for a day takes 1 Damage Point from fatigue and blood sugar loss. The character may not recover this damage until he has eaten a full meal, after which he must make a Recovery Test. The two types of rations most common in Barsaive are described below.

Dwarf Mine Rations

Dwarf mine rations consist of nuts and vegetables grown exclusively underground. Hearty and lightweight, a week's supply of these rations weighs 6 pounds. The rations have the consistency of gravel, and some claim they have a taste to match. Characters eating dwarf mine rations all day add 1 step to their Toughness step for their first Recovery Test the following day. Though undeniably healthier than other rations, dwarf mine rations often cause strife within mining groups and adventuring parties. After a week of eating such rations, each character must make a Willpower Test each morning to see if he can face eating more. Obsidimen and dwarfs must roll a test result of 2 or more to continue eating dwarf mine rations. Humans, trolls, and orks need a result of 3 or more to make a successful Willpower Test. Elves, t'skrang, and windlings need a result of 4 or more.

Trail Rations

Trail rations consist of dried fruit, dried meat, and nuts. A week's worth of trail rations weighs 8 pounds.

DAILY FOOD AND LODGING

Daily food and lodging is available at the numerous inns and taverns of Barsaive's cities, towns, and villages. The costs listed in the **Goods and Services Table** are fairly standard from city to city.

Food

All of the meals described below are full meals capable of sustaining a character for a full day. Prices are listed in the **Goods and Services Table.**

Simple Meal: A simple meal consists of cheese, bread, and fruit when in season. This type of meal emphasizes quantity over quality.

Average Meal: The average meal includes fatty meat, bread, cheese, fruit in season, and a few mugs of average ale to wash it down.

Good Meal: A good meal includes fine fish or lean meat, vegetables, three or more types of bread, a bowl of soup, and a few mugs of good ale. Dessert may or may not be included, depending on the establishment.

Sumptuous Feast: A sumptuous feast includes at least nine courses, including appetizers, soup, ale-tasting with various breads, salad, ale-tasting with different cheeses, a shared entree, a personal entree, ale-tasting with nuts, and dessert. Fine dwarf stout is served throughout the meal, a different variety for each course, with at least three varieties served during each ale-tasting.

Theran Uyglar: This rare dessert is a light, custardy parfait traditionally served without a glass. Instead, magic keeps it afloat. The taste changes into a variety of flavors as the dessert is eaten, caramel and sweetmeg being the most common.

Drinks

Ale and wine are the most common drinks in Barsaive, ranging in quality from average to fine. Prices also vary, ranging from a few copper pieces for a mug to a king's ransom for the best vintages.

Lodging

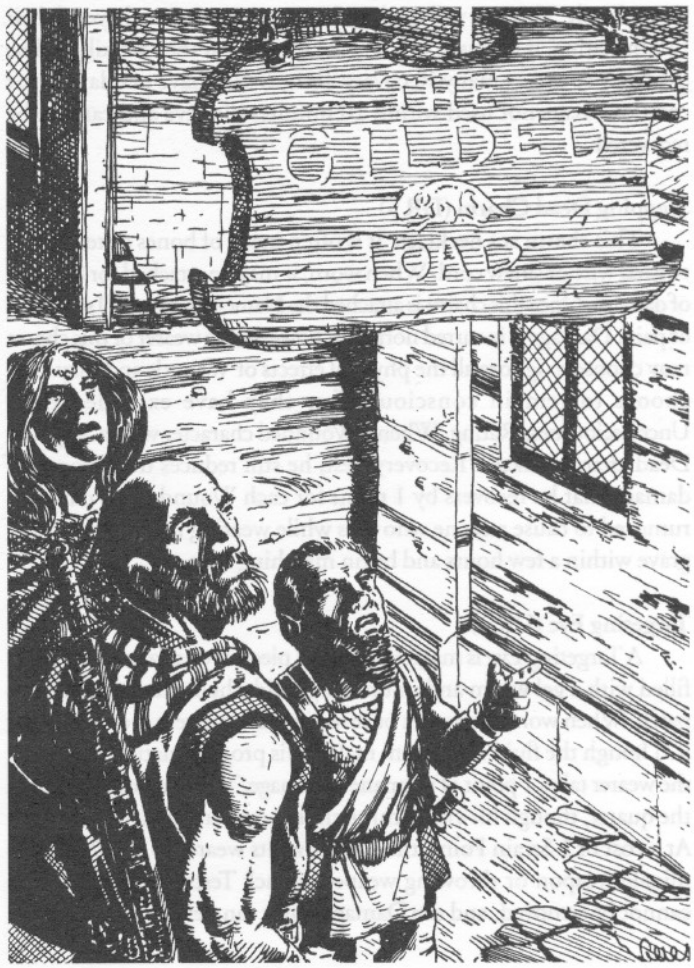
Nearly all towns and cities in Barsaive offer lodging of varying quality. The most typical lodging houses are described below. Prices are listed on the **Goods and Services Table**.

Flophouses: Flophouses are the most inexpensive lodging available in Barsaive. These facilities are basically large, common rooms where characters roll up in their own blankets and sleep on the floor. Flophouses offer no services of any kind.

Cheap Inns: Cheap inns offer both public and private rooms. Public rooms have one large bed which can accommodate several people. A private room contains a single-occupancy bed. Cheap inns usually offer simple and average meals, and average ale and wine.

Merchant Inns: These inns offer higher quality accommodations than cheap inns, but also cost more. They offer only private rooms, some of which come with private baths. Merchant inns offer all types of food and drink, from simple meals to sumptuous feasts.

Guild Inns: Guild inns are run by the dwarf guilds, who originally built these facilities to house journeyman guild members. Over the years, many have begun to serve travelers, who generally have more ready coin than the average journeyman or apprentice. Most rooms at these inns have security locks, resistant to lock picking. These magic



locks fit over the door's regular lock on both sides of the door. Picking a security lock requires a successful Lock Picking Test using a Difficulty Number of 15. A successful Dispel Magic test also defeats these locks. The locks have a Spell Defense of 12, and the Difficulty Number for the Dispel Magic Test is 7.

Luxury Inns: Luxury inns exist only in Barsaive's larger towns and cities. The staff at these establishments pay attention to details and try to fulfill any reasonable customer request. Typical magical amenities include lamps and fireplaces that ignite and douse on command, wine buckets that automatically chill wine to the right temperature, and baths that sense which muscles ache and massage them. For nervous travelers carrying valuables, luxury inns feature safes and safe deposit boxes.

SERVICES

For a price, characters can contract the services of messengers, sages, scribes, Weaponsmiths, and armorers. Brief descriptions of services most commonly available are listed below. All are generally available throughout Barsaive, but prices for these services in small towns and villages may range from 10 percent to 25 percent higher than the average cost listed in the **Goods and Services Table.**

ARMORER

Armorers repair and forge new armor and shields, and often also sell armor. Armorers will also decorate armor, for example, etching a group symbol on a breast plate or shield.



LIBRARY ACCESS

Many cities in Barsaive have libraries that characters can use to research legends and history. Library access usually includes aid from library assistants, and sometimes the services of a scribe. The most famous library in Barsaive is the Great Library of Throal.

MESSENGER

Messengers carry messages between clients. Most messengers work only within city limits or a certain area, though some carry messages to other cities and regions in Barsaive. Windlings and obsidimen specialize in messenger service, though individuals of any race can be messengers. City residents use windlings to ensure quick delivery. Obsidimen, though slower, have a better reputation for reliability.

SAGE

Sages possess immense knowledge in many scholarly areas, especially magic. They can provide characters with information on history and legends that may help them in their adventures.



SCRIBE

Skilled in writing, scribes pen letters and formal documents for a fee. A talented scribe can also translate a group's adventure log from a pile of disjointed notes into a stirring tale of heroic adventures.

WEAPONSMITHS

Weaponsmiths forge and repair all types of weapons, from swords and staffs to maces. They can also add decorative markings to a weapon. Weaponsmith Adepts who possess the Forge Blade Talent can also improve the quality of a weapon. For the cost of this procedure, see **Talents**, p. 97.

TRANSPORTATION

Many modes of transportation can be found in Barsaive. Characters can arrange for passage aboard a t'skrang riverboat, or in a caravan traveling from city to city, or even book passage on an airship, though this is difficult to arrange and costs a great deal. For detailed information about contracting transport in Barsaive, see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 237.

VEHICLES

Though not commonly available, vehicles are sold in the larger towns and cities in Barsaive. The most common vehicles for sale in Barsaive are listed below. Prices are listed on the **Goods and Services Table.**

Carts

Small wheeled vehicles used by merchants to transport goods, carts usually measure 4 to 5 feet long and 3 feet wide. Pack mules usually pull carts, but some merchants use also horses. The cost of a cart does not include the animal to draw it.

Drakkar

Drakkars are airships that measure just over 60 feet long and 10 to 15 feet wide. The crystal raiders commonly use these sleek ships, and governments and industries field them as escort and mining ships. While most wooden ships use masts and sails for propulsion, drakkars use oars. This gives the commander of the ship direct control over speed and maneuverability, making drakkars very effective in combat. Drakkars can carry up to thirty passengers or troops.

Wagons

Wagons are capable of carrying from 2 to 5 passengers. Usually a team of horses pulls a wagon, but mule teams are used with some

smaller and slower wagons. The cost of a wagon does not include the team of animals.

Canoes

Canoes are small boats capable of carrying only 1 or 2 characters safely. Propelled by their passengers, canoes are 10 to 15 feet long and 3 feet wide at the center. The ends of a canoe taper to a width of 3 to 4 inches. These craft are used most often for travel along the running streams and rivers near Barsaive's larger mountain ranges.

Rowboats

Rowboats are propelled by oars fixed onto their sides. Usually 10 to 12 feet long and 5 feet wide, these boats can carry up to 4 passengers safely. One of the passengers must also work the oars. These craft are often used as fishing boats on Barsaive's calmer streams and rivers.

Sailboats

Sailboats are used most often on the Aras Sea. These craft range from 10 to 40 feet long. The smallest sailboats carry only 2 passengers, while the largest may carry crews of up to 20 people. Merchants who travel the Aras Sea, trading at the various cities along its shoreline, use the larger sailboats.

ANIMALS

Animals are used for labor in most areas of Barsaive. The most common animals are listed below. Several of these animals are described in more detail in Creatures. Purchase costs are listed in the **Goods and Services Table.**

HORSES

Used most often as mounts and pack animals, horses also pull carts and wagons within and between Barsaive's cities. The three basic types of horses are described below.

Draft Horses

Draft horses are used as pack animals and to pull carts and wagons. They are generally stronger than riding horses, but are also slower.

Riding Horses

Riding horses are used for personal transportation. These animals are quite strong and fast, but cannot wear barding.

War Horses

The largest and strongest of Barsaive's horses, war horses can wear barding and carry a fully equipped Cavalryman. Most cavalries, including the ork scorchers, ride war horses.

DOGS

Dogs generally serve as guard and hunting animals. Some are trained specifically for use in war, but only some ork raider tribes and Theran slavers use these animals, usually called war hounds.

ELEPHANTS

In the region between the Aras Sea and the Death's Sea in Barsaive's southwest, elephants haul heavy carts and wagons overland along the trade routes that link the coastal cities. These animals are very rarely seen in the central region of Barsaive.

FALCONS

Falcons are used as hunting birds in many different areas of Barsaive. In the north, elf hunters use falcons, and in the southeast human hunters commonly use the birds. Some Beastmasters favor the falcon above all other animals for pets.

GRANLAIN

Granlains are large, strong horses that often serve as draft animals and mounts for trolls. They stand seven feet tall at the shoulder and commonly reach ten feet in length.

GRIFFINS

Some people use griffins as aerial mounts. Before a griffin can be used in this way, however, it must undergo extensive training, which keeps the cost of these animals high.

HUTTAWA

A huttawa's body resembles that of a lion or tiger, but it has an eagle-like head with a large beak and bird-like eyes. They are often used as mounts and draft animals.

KUE

The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and a cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms and facial features. They are often used as mounts by windlings.

PACK MULES

Pack mules pull carts and wagons. Slow but strong, these animals can travel through terrain that horses and other larger pack animals cannot.

THUNDRA BEASTS

Many ork Cavalrymen use these massive beasts as mounts. Resembling a cross between a dinosaur and a rhinoceros, thundra beasts are slow to get going but nearly unstoppable once running.

TROAJIN

Troajins are tiger-like animals native to Barsaive's jungle and mountain country that have been tamed and are often used as mounts.

ZOAK

The zoak looks like a cross between a large bird and a bat, with feathers on its body and head and a leathery neck, wings and tail. Zoaks are often used as mounts by windlings.

GOODS AND SERVICES TABLE

Note: All costs are expressed in silver pieces unless noted as "cp" (copper pieces). All weights are expressed in pounds unless otherwise noted.

ARMOR

	Cost	Armor Rating	Mystic Bonus	Armor Weight	Initiative Penalty
Blood Pebble	300	5	3	NA	1
Chain Mail	180	7	0	40	3
Cloth, Padded	2	2	0	3	0
Crystal Plate	12,000	7	7	90	5
Crystal Ringlet	500	4	4	45	2
Fernweave	125	2	3	15	0
Hide Armor	50	5	1	25	1
Leather	10	3	0	15	0
Leather, Hardened	40	5	0	20	1
Leather, Padded	20	4	0	20	0
Living Crystal	1,100	6	3	NA	2
Obsidiman Skin	100	3	1	20	0
Plate Mail	3,000	9	0	60	4
Ring Mail	110	6	0	30	2

SHIELDS

	Cost	Armor Rating	Mystic Armor Bonus	Weight	Initiative Penalty	Shatter Threshold (Optional)
Body	50	+5	0	15	2	21
Buckler	5	+1	0	5	0	17
Crystal Viking	150	+3	+3	15	2	18
Ferndask	22	+1	2	5	1	16
Footman's	15	+3	0	10	1	19
Rider's	20	+3	0	8	1	19

THROWING WEAPONS

			Strength			Range (in yards)		
	Cost	Damage	Minimum	Weight	Size	S	M	L
Axe, Throwing	25	3	5	3	3	2-15	16-25	26-40
Bola	10	3	4	1	2	2-15	16-25	26-35
Dagger	8 cp	2	9	1	1	2-5	6-10	11-15
Dagger, Flight	25	2	12	12 oz.	1	2-15	16-40	41-75
Dagger, Throwing	2	2	12	12 oz	1	2-10	11-20	21-30
Darts	5 cp	1	5	2 oz.	1	1-3	4-6	6-9
Hawk Hatchet	125	5	9	2	3	2-25	26-80	81-125
Net	15	NA	9	5	6	1-2	3-4	5-6
Oil, Burning Flask	6	5*	5	8 oz.	3	2-10	11-20	21-30
Spear	3	4	5	4	4	2-15	16-40	41-100
Windling Spear	3	2	2	1	2	2-14	15-36	37-90

*Use Step 5 for damage. Do not add these steps to Strength.

MELEE WEAPONS

	Cost	Damage Step	Strength Minimum	Weight	Size
Battle-axe	35	6	13	5	4
Broadsword	25	5	9	3	3
Broadsword, Great	50	6	13	6	4
Broadsword, Windling	25	3	4	1	1
Club	2	3	7	3	2
Dagger	8 cp	2	5	1	1
Flail	35	5	10	8	3
Hand-axe	12	4	10	2	2
Knife	3 cp	1	4	10 oz.	1
Lance	100	4	15	10	6
Mace	20	4	9	5	3
Mace, Spiked	40	6	13	8	4
Pole Arms	150-225	8	15	12	6
Pole-axe	150	8	15	12	6
Quarterstaff	5	2	5	4	5
Sap	1	1	2	8 oz.	1
Spear	3	4	11	4	4
Sword, Short	16	4	5	2	2
Sword, Two-handed	125	7	15	7	5
Trispear	25	5	11	7	3
Warhammer	125	7	15	7	5
Whip	10	3	7*	1	3

*Minimum Dexterity of 7 required to use a whip.

MISSILE WEAPONS

	Cost	Damage	Strength Minimum	Weight	Size	Range (in yards) S	M	L
Blowgun	2	1	1	10 oz.	1	1-2	3-4	5-6
Box of 10 needles	1	–	–	8 oz.	–	–	–	–
Bow, Short	15	3	10	3	5	2-25	26-80	81-120
20 Short Bow arrows	5	–	–	5	–	–	–	–
Bow, Windling	15	2	5	1	2	2-23	24-78	79-108
20 Windling arrows	5	-	-	8 oz.	-	-	-	-
Crossbow, Great	250	6	17	12	6	2-55	56-200	201-300
15 Great Crossbow bolts	40	–	–	6	–	–	–	–
Crossbow, Light	50	4	10	5	4	2-50	51-125	126-200
15 Light Crossbow bolts	15	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
Crossbow, Medium	125	5	13	6	5	2-50	51-175	176-275
15 Medium Crossbow bolts	20	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
Longbow	60	4	13	4	5	2-40	41-100	101-220
20 Longbow arrows	10	–	–	7	–	–	–	–
Longbow, Great	120	5	17	8	6	2-40	41-110	111-240
20 Great Bow arrows	20	–	–	14	–	–	–	–
Quiver	2	–	–	3	–	–	–	–
Sling	3	2	7	2	2	2-15	16-40	41-100
Sling, Great	6	3	11	4	3	2-17	18-44	45-110
Warbow, Elven*	200	5	13	4	5	2-40	41-200	201-300
20 Warbow arrows	25	–	–	7	–	–	–	–

*Minimum Dexterity of 15 required to use warbow.

CLOTHING

PACKAGE DEALS

	Cost
Peasant's Garb	12 cp
(shirt, belt, sandals, breeches)	
—with robe or dress instead of breeches	3
Traveler's Garb	8
(soft boots, shirt, belt, breeches, traveler's cloak)	
—with robe or dress instead of breeches	9
Wealthy Traveler's Garb	40
(riding boots, belt, three patterned shirts, guild breeches or patterned dress, fine hat, shoes, satin-lined cloak, ornamental brooch)	
—with embroidered robe instead of breeches	50



DISTINCTIVE ITEMS

Item	Cost
Belt	5 cp
Boots	
Soft	1
Riding	4
Mountain	8
Breeches	
Peasant's	4 cp
Merchant's	1
Guild member's	7
Brooch	
Plain brass	2
Ornamental	12
Silver	15
Gold	120
Cloaksense	350
Cloak	
Wool	5
Satin- or silk-lined	14
Fur-trimmed	50
Espagra-scale	120
Dwarf winternight	275
Theran	380
Dresses	
Plain	2
Patterned	7
Embroidered	22
Satin	100
Ballroom gown	250
Theran	560
Gloves	
Leather	2
Quiet fingers	140
Hats	
Felt	4 cp
Woolen cap	12 cp
Fine quality	9
Courtier quality	18
One-size	35
Hooded mask	3
Hosiery	
Plain	5 cp
Silk	20
Jackets	
Wool	12
Silk	90
Courtier's	170
Kratas	
Arrows	5
Folding Bow	500
Pin	1
Robe	
Linen	15 cp
Embroidered	15
Elfweave	80
Sandals	2 cp
Scabbards	
Regular	5
Slip Sheath	400
Scarf	5
Shirts	
Plain	2 cp
Patterned	1
Silk	45
Shoes	
Merchant's	2
Courtier's	40
Toga	6 cp
Tunic	4 cp

PROVISIONS

Item	Cost
Week worth of dwarf mine rations	25
Week worth of trail rations	10
Drinks	
Mug of average ale	5 cp
Mug of good ale	1
Mug of dwarf stout ale	2
Wine	
Glass	1 cp
Bottle	5 cp
Fine wine	
Glass	1
Bottle	5
Food	
Simple meal	3 cp
Average meal	1
Good meal	3
Sumptuous feast	50
Theran Uyglar	25
Lodging	
Flophouse (no bed)	1 cp
Cheap inn	
Public room, one large bed	5 cp
Private room, one bed	1
Merchant inn	
Private room, one bed	3
Private room with bath	5
Guild inn	
Room with bed and bath	8
Room with security locks	12
Luxury inn	
Room with bed and bath	25
Room with magical amenities	40
Room plus personal valet	55 + tips

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT

PACKAGE DEALS

	Cost	Weight
Adventure's kit (backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)	15	10
Adventurer's kit with tent	40	25

SPECIALIZED ITEMS

	Cost	Weight
Artisan tools		
Carving	15	1
Embroidery/Sewing	25	1
Sculpting	30	1
Painting	45	2

	Cost	Weight
Backpack	5	3
Bedroll	5	2
Belt pouch	8 cp	1
Blanket	15	3
Candles (2)	7 cp	8 oz.
Chain, heavy	50	10
Chain, light	10	5
Chalk (5-piece box)	3 cp	8 oz.
Fishhook	1 cp	–
Fishnet (15 sq. ft.)	15	10
Flint and steel	1	1
Forge tools	100	20
Grappling hook	10	5
Healer kit	75	5
Refill	50	–
Iron pot	20	8
Keesra (1 dose)	20	1 oz.
Lantern		
Hooded	9	6
Bull's-eye	27	6
Light quartz	75	8
Map/scroll case	8 cp	3
Musical instruments		
Whistle	2 cp	1
Flute	2	1
Drum	7	5
Lute	25	6
Horn	70	7
Oil (per flask)	6	8 oz.
Paper/Parchment (per sheet)	1	–
Piton	9 cp	2
Rope		
10-foot length	8	5
25-foot length	15	12
50-foot length	25	25
Sack		
Small	1	–
Large	2	1
Sewing kit	5	-
Tent	30	15
Thieves' picks and tools	100	1
Torch	5 cp	1
Waterskin	2	2 when full/ – when empty
Whetstone	2 cp	1
Wineskin	2	2 when full/ – when empty
Writing ink (per vial)	10	8 oz.

MAGIC EQUIPMENT

	Cost	Weight	DR
Spirit Ink	200	8 oz.	
Water Blades	x3 normal		
Healing Aids			
Booster potion	50	2	
Cure Disease potion	500	2	
Healing potion	300	2	
Kelia's Antidote	125	2	
Kelix's Poultice	50	1	
Last Chance potion	600	1	
Resist Disease potion	75	2	
Light Quartz			
Large (used in kaers)	200	20	
Mid-sized	125	6	
Small	75	2	
Blood Charms			DR
Absorb Blow	100	1	1
Astral Sensitive Eye	325	1	2
Black Blood Charm	1000	1	4
Blood Pouch Charm	250	1	1
Chameleon Cloak	1200	1	2
Crows Sight	375	1	2
Crystal Limbs	2700	1	5
Death Cheat	450	1	2
Death Feign	400	1	2
Desperate Blow	275	1	1
Desperate Spell	300	1	1
Fish Breath Charm	500	1	3
Fleet Foot Charm	600	1	2
Fools Charm	50	1	1
Gilt Tongue	1750	1	3
Horror Fend	200	1	1
Horror Sink	150	1	2
Indrisan Blood Cobra	2000	1	6
Kildare's Skin Map	800	1	2
Kines Charm	250	1	1
Koriganian Armband	600	1	3
Lasting Memory Charm	500	1	2
Mark Breaker Charm	150	1	3
Ska's Tear	450	1	2
Stepping Dead Charm	800	1	5
Targeting Eye	450	1	2
Thought Worm	400	1	1
Wazzneer's Gem	750	1	1
Wound Store	1200	1	2

SERVICES

Service	Cost
Armorer	
Armor repair	50
Armor decoration	35
Messengers	
Local	5
City-to-city	30-75
Sage	15-100
Scribe	50-75
Library access	
Major-city library	25
Throal library	20
Transportation	
Caravan	3-5 per person, per day
Riverboat	5 per person, per day
Weaponsmith	
Weapon repair	55
Weapon decoration	45

VEHICLES

Type	Cost
Boats	
Canoe	15
Rowboat	20
Small sailboat	35
Large sailboat	10,000
Cart	
Small	10
Large	25
Drakkar	30,000
Wagon	
Small	30
Large	50

ANIMALS

Type	Cost
Dogs	
Hunting/Guard dogs	30
War hounds	50
Elephants	3,000
Falcon (trained)	3,500
Granlain	2,000
Griffin (trained)	7,500
Horses	
Draft horse	150
Riding horse	125
War horse	1,500
Huttawa	175
Kue	150
Pack mule	100
Thundra beast	4,000
Troajin	200
Zoak	250

COMBAT



Listen up you scum! You are going to learn how to fight because I am going to teach you. You will learn when to attack and when to defend. You will never retreat because if you do you are running out on me and I will kill you for it.

– Tarr'a'Va Skullsplitter, troll Warrior speaking to new recruits of Throal

In the **Earthdawn** game, your characters can expect to confront any number of evil or dangerous beings in the course of their adventures. Sometimes you'll be able to get what you need without combat. Sometimes you'll have to fight for what you want. This section covers those situations in which your characters must fight to survive and those times when they join battle for the sheer pleasure of matching skills against an opponent.

Combat in **Earthdawn** happens fast and loose, allowing characters to perform a wide variety of actions. Swinging swords, casting spells, and intimidating your enemies are all just part of the action.

Most of the following rules apply to both the player and gamemaster characters. Whenever the rules apply solely to the gamemaster characters or creatures, they are so noted. While these rules do not cover combats between large forces, many of the basics of combat are the same, and it is left to the individual gamemaster to come up with the way that is best for them.

COMBAT ROUND

Combat in **Earthdawn** is conducted in a series of turns called **Combat Rounds.** Each Combat Round equals roughly ten seconds of game time. We say roughly because the exact length of each round is not important to the story; it is simply a convenient unit of measure.

During each Combat Round, your character can do a number of things: move, perform a simple task, and use one talent that requires an action. The **Actions** section, below, outlines precisely what a character can and cannot do in a Combat Round.

To see whether a character can actually perform the actions he desires or to determine how successfully he did so, a player usually rolls dice in various tests. If the dice roll succeeds, you roll additional dice to determine how the action turned out or what damage was inflicted. Typically, this involves making an Attack Test followed by a Damage Test. These and the other kinds of tests that players must make during combat are described below in the **Actions** and **Resolving Attacks** sections.

The following summary outlines the sequence of a single Combat Round. Each element is explained more in the rest of this chapter. The term **character** refers to any player characters, creatures, or gamemaster characters participating in the combat.

1. Declare Actions

All characters declare the general type of action they intend to perform in the upcoming round, such as attacking, casting a spell, and so on. Also at this time, the characters declare any special actions they have in mind, including any Combat Options.

2. Determine Initiative

All characters make an Initiative Test to determine at what point during the round they can actually perform the actions they desire. Players, of course, roll for their characters' Initiative; the gamemaster rolls for characters and creatures that he controls.

The Initiative dice for player characters and gamemaster characters is their Dexterity dice. The Initiative dice for creatures is listed with the individual descriptions in the **Creatures** chapter, p. 293. Note that some talents can increase a character's Initiative, while armor and shields can reduce a character's Initiative.

3. Resolve Actions

At the start of the round, characters stated what actions they hoped to take. Now the characters declare, in descending order of Initiative, specifically which talents, skills, or spells they intend to use and whether they plan to spend Karma Points for any actions. For example, a character may state that he or she intends to use the Melee Weapons talent or to cast the Heat Food spell.

After declaring their specific intentions, characters resolve their actions by making the appropriate tests. If the dice result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number of the test, the action succeeds. The character also determines the effect, if any, of his actions at this time.

If a character wants to change his action from what he declared at the beginning of the round, he must increase the Difficulty Number of the new action by 2. See **Actions**, below.

Declare Reserved Actions

Characters may voluntarily reduce their Initiative in order to perform their actions later in a round. Characters who want to delay their actions in this manner say so at this time.

4. Begin New Combat Round

If any combatants remain after all characters resolve all their actions, begin a new Combat Round.

INITIATIVE

At the start of each Combat Round, each player and the gamemaster makes an Initiative Test to determine in what order the characters may carry out their actions during the Combat Round. The character who rolls the highest Initiative acts first, followed by the character with the second highest result, and continuing through descending numerical order. Player characters, creatures, and gamemaster characters all take their turns according to Initiative.

We recommend that the gamemaster make one Initiative Test for groups of similar characters under his control rather than for each individual character or monster. For example, it makes more sense to roll one Initiative Test for a group of six identical orks than to keep track of the Initiative Test results for each individual ork. On the other hand, if the group consists of five orks and an ork veteran with a different Initiative step, make one Initiative Test for the five orks and then a separate test for the ork veteran.

If two or more characters get the same result on their Initiative Tests, their actions occur at the same time and are resolved in whatever order the gamemaster deems appropriate. If a player character ties his Initiative with a creature or gamemaster character, the player character always takes his action first.

ACTIONS

During each Combat Round, your character can do several things. In a single round he can move, perform a simple action, and use one talent that requires an action.

MOVEMENT

If movement is the only action your character takes during a Combat Round, a character can move up to a number of yards equal to

his Full Movement (see the **Attribute Table** in **Creating a Character**, p. 42). If the character wants to perform any other action during that round (attack an opponent, cast a spell, and so on), he can move up to a number of yards equal to his Combat Movement. Consult the **Attribute Table** for full listings of Full Movement and Combat Movement for character classes.

When a character both moves and takes another action during a Combat Round, his movement must take place all at once, either before or after his other action. For example, a character can move and then attack, or vice versa, but he cannot split up his movement during a round. That is, a character cannot move half the distance of his Combat Movement, attack an opponent, and then use the rest of his Combat Movement trying to get away.

See **Combat Options**, p. 225, for an optional rule called Splitting Movement. This special rule allows characters to move, attack, and then move again. This rule is provided for the time when gamemasters and players have become very familiar with the game. Before play begins, both players and gamemaster should have a chance to review the rule and decide whether they will include it in the game.

SIMPLE ACTIONS

During a Combat Round, a character can perform a variety of simple tasks that do not require making a test. These simple actions are relatively easy to perform, so automatic that they require little or no effort. Examples of simple actions might be anything from drawing a weapon to speaking.

It is also true that some talents do not require a character to perform an action to carry them out. Some of the talents characters can use as simple actions are Battle Shout, Cat's Paw, Eagle Eye, Flame Arrow, and Wound Balance. Talents that can be used as simple actions are indicated by the word "No" in the **Action** category of their description in the **Talents** chapter, p. 86. Some gamemasters might make use of the optional **rule of 3** in combat with regards to simple actions, such as no more than 3 simple actions in one turn. This can be used to prevent long drawn out combats where the characters have many talents that are listed as requiring no action and they try to use them all. Of course, it is up to the gamemaster on what is and is not allowed in any situation.

TALENT TESTS

Most talents in **Earthdawn** require that a character have an available action to use them. During a Combat Round, a character can use only one talent that requires an action. Talents that require an action always require a Talent Test to determine whether the character successfully uses that talent. This includes all combat talents, most interaction talents, and any use of spell magic.

The character can also use some skills that are similar to talents (see **Skills**, p. 115). If the talent requires an action, using the related skill also requires an action. See **Skills** for more explanation on skills that are similar to talents.

SPECIAL ACTIONS

At the beginning of each Combat Round, characters can declare any special actions they wish to perform. These most often take the form of Combat Options, but can also include unusual actions such as surrendering to an opponent or retreating. Special actions do not require an action to perform; they essentially change a standard action to make it more effective. Some of the various special actions available to characters appear in **Combat Options**, p. 225.

CHANGING DECLARED ACTION

A character may want to change his action to react more effectively to events happening around him. The game accommodates this with the Changing Actions rule. The rule permits a character to attempt the new action, but increases the Difficulty Number by 2. This rule applies anytime a player changes his character's action after declaring it.

During the heat of combat Armi, the Windling Scout declared that he was going to attack the raider who was going after his friend, Kos. However, as combat progressed that raider was knocked unconscious before Armi's turn in the initiative. So Armi decides to assist another companion who is not doing so well. Armi's attack is changed to a new target. Now he is at a +2 to his Difficulty Number to perform his action, which in this case would be the appropriate defense of the target.

RESOLVING ACTIONS

Beginning with the highest Initiative result, all characters attempt to perform their declared actions, one at a time, until all characters' actions are resolved.

The gamemaster calls out Initiative numbers, starting with the player who rolled the highest Initiative. Each character then takes his or her turn performing actions. Characters often make an Attack Test in combat, but an action might also consist of casting a spell, running at the Full Movement rate, or using a non-combat talent while blows and arrows fly all around. The character makes the appropriate test, announcing the result after rolling all necessary dice, including any Karma dice or Bonus dice. If the result is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number of the action, the character has successfully performed the action.

The use of some talents can affect a character's Physical or Spell Defense for an entire Comat Round (see **Talents**, p. 84). When a player declares that his character will be using one or more of these talents in a round, the player makes the Talent Test when the Combat Round reaches his Initiative.

Exzebachay, the Sky Raider, is in combat with two pirates and wishes to use his Great Leap talent this round. He rolls a 8 on his initiative. One pirate rolls a 10 and the other rolls a 5. The pirate with the initiative of 10 will attack against Exzebachay's normal Physical Defense, while the one that goes after him on 5 would go against the new Physical Defense set during the use of the talent.

Difficulty Number

The action the character wants to perform or the talent he wants to use determine a test's Difficulty Number. Tests made for combat talents use either the target's Physical Defense Rating or Spell Defense Rating as the Difficulty Number. The gamemaster decides on an appropriate Difficulty Number for tests that do not involve talents (jumping, climbing, and so on). See **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 338, for guidelines on making these judgments.

Some talents require that the player roll a certain success level for the action to be effective. Again, see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 339, for more details. After the character makes a successful Talent Test, its results also take effect.

Resolve each character's actions fully before the next character acts, unless the description for that talent specifically states otherwise, for example, if a defender had the Riposte talent and wished to use it to counter another character's attack.

Reserved Actions

A player may voluntarily lower his or her character's Initiative in the Combat Round in order to act later in the round.

A player using this option simply chooses a new, lower Initiative number and announces it. The player may find it useful to set aside a die showing the character's new Initiative number or to write it down on a scrap of paper. This helps the player remember the new Initiative and avoids confusion when the dice rolling starts. A player may lower their initiative as many times in the round as they wish. A character may even reserve an action into the next round. In such a case, the character may choose his initiative in the new round, however, the reserved action takes the place of his action for that round.

Reserving actions is the only way that characters can make attacks against opponents using charging or swooping attacks (see **Mounted Combat**, p. 223, and **Aerial Combat**, p. 224, for more details).

Our friendly Sky Raider, Exzebachay, is once more being picked on by the windling, Armi. This round the Sky Raider scored higher than the windling's initiative, but wishes to wait for the chance to swat the little thing out of the sky. He declares that he is reserving for that action and picks how long he plans to wait. As the round progresses, it gets to the last initiative phase and the windling has still not attacked. He may then reserve his action into the next round in preparation for the attacking windling.

RESOLVING ATTACKS

Because the most common action that characters take during Combat Rounds is to attack opponents, the procedure used to resolve attacks is summarized below. A complete explanation of each step of the procedure follows.

1. **Make Attack Test**
2. **Determine Success**
3. **Make Damage Test**
4. **Adjust Damage for Armor**
5. **Check for Wounds**
6. **Make Knockdown Test**
7. **Check for Unconsciousness or Death**

MAKE ATTACK TEST

Whenever a character attempts to attack a target, be it with a weapon, spell, or talent, the first thing he does is make a test for the appropriate talent or skill. If a Swordmaster, for example, is attempting to hit a foe with her sword, she makes a Melee Weapons Test. If an Archer is firing an arrow at a foe, he makes a Missile Weapons Test. If a Wizard is casting a spell at a target, he makes a Spellcasting Test.

The type of the attack determines the test's Difficulty Number. For physical attacks, such as those involving melee or missile weapons, the Difficulty Number is the target's Physical Defense. For attacks made with spells or talents, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Spell Defense, though some talents and spells use the target's Social Defense instead. Each talent and spell description gives the Difficulty Number for using it.

Unless a talent or ability specifically permits otherwise, a character can only make one Attack Test per Combat Round. Attack Tests always require an action, as described in **Actions**, p. 218.

The Difficulty Number for Attack Tests may be modified by range (for missile weapon attacks), environmental conditions (daylight, darkness), and many other factors (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 227). Many of the Combat Options also modify a character's Physical Defense Rating (see **Combat Options**, p. 225).

DETERMINE SUCCESS

If the result of an Attack Test is equal to or higher than the target's appropriate Defense Rating (Physical, Spell, or Social), the attack hits. The attacking player makes a Damage Test to determine the effect of the attack.

If the result of an Attack Test is less than the target's Defense Rating (Physical, Spell, or Social), the attack misses. Do not make a Damage Test.

Armor-Defeating Hits

Some attacks are good enough to penetrate an opponent's armor. Exceptionally well-placed attacks, lucky shots, or attacks that sufficiently focus a character's magic can bypass a defender's armor. Attacks that penetrate an opponent's armor are called Armor-Defeating Hits.

An Attack Test with an Excellent success level or better against the target's Physical Defense is an Armor-Defeating Hit. The defender takes the full amount of damage indicated by the Damage Test. His armor does not protect him in this situation.

*Armi shoots at a cadaver man, rolling a 14 on the Attack Test. The cadaver man has a Physical Defense Rating of 7. Consult the **Success Level Table** and find 7 in the Difficulty Number column. Reading across that line, we see that 14 is only a Good success. Armi would have needed to roll a 15, the number listed under the Excellent column, for the shot to be an Armor-Defeating Hit.*

Combat spells may also produce Armor-Defeating Hits. Compare the Spellcasting Test result to the target's Spell Defense Rating. If the result is higher than the Difficulty Number by an Excellent or better level of success, the attack defeats the target's appropriate armor, Mystic or Physical.

The game does provide a way for characters to better defend against this type of attack. Characters can purchase armor that requires an attacker to roll an Extraordinary success level to penetrate it. This type of armor is, of course, as expensive as it is rare.

Some creatures naturally produce such effective armor that characters will need an Extraordinary success to defeat it. And other creatures have armor that cannot be defeated at all (see **Creatures**, p. 293).

MAKE DAMAGE TEST

After making a successful Attack Test, the character makes a Damage Test. The dice used for this test depend on the weapon used. Weapons add steps to a character's Strength step to determine the Damage step of the weapon. For example, a broadsword adds 5 steps to a character's Strength step. Thom Hammerblade, for example, has a Strength of 14, or Step 6. When he makes Damage Tests using his broadsword, he uses Step 11 (D10 + D8). Some talents allow the character to add Karma to Damage Tests. Include these dice, if applicable, when making Damage Tests. Remember that Bonus dice (see **Game Concepts**, p. 26) also apply to all tests in **Earthdawn**, including Damage Tests.

When attacking an opponent with a talent or a spell, use the Effect step when making the Damage Test. Each spell description indicates the step number under Effect.

The result of the Damage Test is the number of Damage Points the target takes.

ADJUST DAMAGE FOR ARMOR

To adjust damage for armor, the defender subtracts his character's Armor Rating from the Damage Test result. Physical Armor protects from attacks that inflict physical damage. Mystic Armor protects from attacks that inflict astral or psychic damage.

The attacked character suffers the number of Damage Points remaining after subtracting his Armor Rating from the outcome of the Damage Test. The player records the damage in the space for Current Damage on his Character Record Sheet.

An Armor-Defeating Hit does exactly that-defeats the armor's protection. As a result the defender does not subtract his Armor Rating from the Damage Test result, but takes a number of Damage Points equal to the entire Damage Test result.



CHECK FOR WOUNDS

If a character suffers a number of Damage Points equal to or higher than his Wound Threshold in a single attack, he takes a Wound in addition to the Damage Points. The player records it in the space for Wounds on his Character Record Sheet. If the Damage Points that cause a Wound also render the character unconscious, the player should record the Wound. If the same Damage Points that cause a Wound kill the character (see **Character Death**, p. 221), don't bother to record the Wound. Dead men don't suffer pain.

MAKE KNOCKDOWN TEST

If a character takes damage equal to or higher than his Wound Threshold in a single attack, he can be knocked down. To determine whether the character resists being knocked down, the player must make a Knockdown Test using his Strength step. The Difficulty, or Knockdown, Number is the difference between the Damage Points taken and the character's Wound Threshold +3. If the Knockdown Test is successful, the character remains standing. If the dice result is lower than the Knockdown Number, the character is knocked down. The gamemaster makes the Knockdown Test for creatures or gamemaster characters resisting knockdown.

> *Corvis the Thief has a Wound Threshold of 10. His opponent whacks him with a wicked sword stroke for 17 points of damage. Because the number of Damage Points inflicted in one attack is higher than his Wound Threshold, Corvis takes a Wound and must make a Knockdown Test. His Knockdown Number is 10 (17 points of damage - 10 = 7. 7 + 3 = 10).*
>
> *Corvis' player makes a Strength Test for his character to avoid knockdown. The result is 9. The next thing Corvis knows, he is flat on his back.*

Knocked-down characters can act but suffer severe penalties to do so while knocked down. Subtract 3 steps from all tests made by a character while knocked down. Also, subtract 3 from the Physical Defense Rating of a knocked-down character. These penalties remain in effect until the character gets up. Standing up is a simple matter, but takes up the character's action for that Combat Round. That means a character can use no talents that require an action during the same Combat Round in which he gets back on his feet.

CHECK FOR UNCONSCIOUSNESS OR DEATH

After a character takes damage from an attack, the player checks to see if his character has been damaged enough to fall unconscious or even die.

Unconsciousness

If the total damage a character has taken (Current Damage) is equal to or greater than his Unconsciousness Rating, but less than his Death Rating, the character falls unconscious. Unconscious characters can regain their senses by making a Recovery Test (see **Recovering from Damage**, p. 228).

Character Death

If the total damage a character has taken (Current Damage) is greater than his Death Rating, the character dies. In **Earthdawn**, character death is usually permanent, but some methods of resurrection do exist. Because these methods require such powerful magic, attempts are rare. Characters who wish to purchase such magics should be warned that resurrection is very expensive.

BEGIN NEW COMBAT ROUND

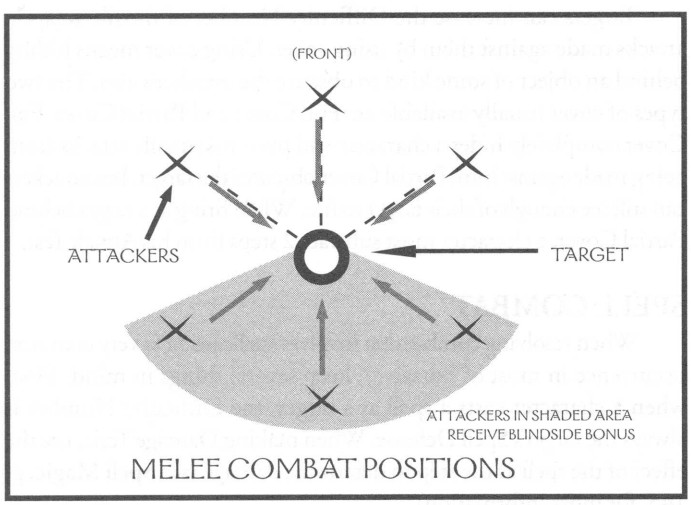
After all characters capable of acting have taken and resolved their actions, or have chosen not to act, the Combat Round ends. If some combatants wish to continue fighting, the next Combat Round begins immediately.

TYPES OF COMBAT

Though all types of combat use the same basic attack and damage procedure, some types of combat alter that procedure by taking into account the situation, the environment, the weapon itself, the distance between opponents, and so on. This section describes the aspects unique to each type of combat, including melee, missile, spell, unarmed, mounted, aerial, and creature combat.

MELEE COMBAT

In melee combat, opponents attack each other with swords, daggers, staves, clubs, and so on while in close proximity to each other. In order to use a melee weapon against an opponent, a character must be within 2 yards of the opponent. A maximum of 6 opponents can attack a character in melee combat. The possible relative positions of attacking opponents appears on the melee combat diagram below.



MELEE COMBAT POSITIONS

Any time 4 or more attackers set upon 1 target at the same time, that character is considered Harried. Harried characters suffer a penalty of -2 steps for all tests attempted while Harried. A Harried character remains Harried until fewer than 4 attackers surround him (see **Situation Modifiers**, p. 227).

Exzebachay the Sky Raider has made the mistake of upsetting a group of windlings. The windlings lay into him from all sides until he has 6 of them flying around him. At this point he is suffering the -2 harried penalty. After a few swipes of his shield, he manages to knock two of them unconscious, taking them out of the fight, but is still considered harried until he takes at least one more out. At this time he will no longer be harried, but will still have to deal with the 3 angry windlings.

MISSILE COMBAT

When characters use bows, slings, spears, and other thrown weapons in order to damage an opponent from a distance, they are engaging in missile combat using ranged weapons. In order for the attack to be effective, players must account for several factors when resolving missile combat. These include range, scatter, firing into a melee, and cover, as described below.

Range

All missile weapons have range limitations. Depending on the weapon, missiles and thrown weapons are effective only up to certain ranges. The three range categories are Short, Medium, and Long. Missile weapons cannot be fired at targets beyond long range. The complete statistics for each weapon appear in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 211. The **Missile Weapon Table**, p. 212, presents the ranges for the missile weapons available in **Earthdawn**.

With the exception of blowguns, the minimum range for missiles or thrown weapons is 2 yards. If an opponent and attacker are within two yards of one another, they cannot attack using missile weapons. The minimum range for blowguns is 1 yard.

Range Modifiers

When firing (or throwing) a ranged weapon, the distance to the target may modify a character's Attack and Damage Test steps. Step modifications related to range are called Range Modifiers. For attacks made at short range, use the character's normal Attack and Damage Test steps. When firing at targets at medium range, subtract 2 steps from the character's Attack and Damage Test steps. When firing at targets at long range, subtract 3 steps from the character's Attack and Damage Test steps.

Farliv, an elf Archer, is doing his part for his companions' defense by firing arrows at a band of ork scorchers emerging from the nearby forest. The gamemaster tells Farliv's player that the orks are currently 100 yards away from his position.

Farliv's weapon is an elven warbow, which puts the orks at medium range for his attack. Farliv has a Step 12 Missile Weapons Talent (Action dice of 2D10). If Farliv fires an arrow at the orks from medium range, he must subtract 2 steps from his Missile Weapons step number. This means that Farliv uses a Step 10 (12 - 2 steps = 10), or 1D10 + 1D6 Action dice when firing at the orks.

Farliv skillfully fires an arrow at a particularly ugly ork, easily hitting his target. The normal Damage step of Farliv's elven warbow is 10 (1D10 + 1D6 Action dice). When making his Damage Test against the ork for a hit at medium range, Farliv uses Step 8 (2D6).

Throwing Objects

As in life, fighting characters sometimes want to throw objects such as rocks, flasks of oil, or even tree trunks (ever seen a really mad troll?) that are simply not designed to fly. The throwing ranges of commonly thrown objects (i.e. oil flasks) are included on the **Throwing Weapons Table**, p. 211.

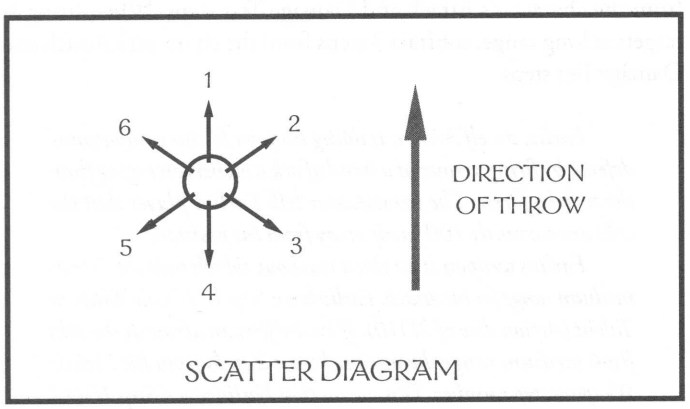
To throw an object at a target, the character makes a Throwing Weapons (or Dexterity) Test. The Difficulty Number for this test depends on the intent of the thrower. If a character throws the object at another character, make the test against the target's Physical Defense Rating. To throw an object at a specific location, use a Difficulty Number of 7. If the test succeeds, the character hits the target. If the object misses the target, it (or its component parts) may scatter.

Determining Scatter

If a character throws an object and misses (makes an unsuccessful Throwing Weapons Test), the gamemaster makes a Scatter Test for the thrown object by rolling 1D6 and consulting the Scatter Diagram, below. This determines the direction in which the object actually travels (this test does not use Action dice, so do not roll Bonus dice for results of 6). To determine exactly how far away from the target the object lands, subtract the result of the Throwing Weapons Test from the Difficulty Number, and use that as the step number. Next, consult the **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 27, and roll the indicated dice for the step to find the distance the object scattered from the target in feet.

Targ Boneslicer, troll Sky Raider, heaves a boulder at an enemy troll. Targ rolls a 6 on his Throwing Weapons Test against his opponent's Physical Defense Rating of 10. Targ fails to hit his target.

The gamemaster makes a Scatter Test to see in what direction the boulder actually went and gets a scatter direction of 1. The gamemaster then rolls 1D6 for distance (Difficulty Number of 10 - test result of 6 = Step 4), with a result of 5. The boulder lands 5 feet beyond the target. Now Targ is really upset.



Firing Into A Melee

Characters often want to use missile or throwing weapons to attack a target engaged in melee combat. This hazardous practice is known as Firing Into A Melee, and can result in a character inadvertently hitting a companion instead of his target. To resolve a missile attack fired into a melee, use the following procedure.

Determine how many other characters or creatures stand between the target and the character firing the missile weapon. Add this number to the Physical Defense Rating of the target. The attacking character then makes his Missile (or Throwing) Weapons Test against the modified Physical Defense of the target. If the dice roll is equal to or higher than the modified Physical Defense Rating, the attack is successful and hits the target. If the test result is less than the Difficulty Number, compare that number to the Physical Defense Ratings of each character between the target and the attacking character, beginning with the one closest to the attacking character. If the Attack Test result is equal to or higher than the Physical Defense Rating of any of those characters, that character takes the weapon hit instead of the target.

Farliv, elf Archer, fires an arrow at what he hopes is an opponent in the roiling mass of bodies and weapons engaged in melee combat before him. The target he chooses has a Physical Defense of 8, but 5 other characters shift back and forth between Farliv and his target, raising the Difficulty Number of the Attack Test to 13. Farliv rolls a 9 on his Missile Weapons Test, missing his target.

The gamemaster then compares the result of the Attack Test (9) with the Physical Defense Rating of each of the 5 characters between Farliv and his target, starting with the one closest to Farliv. The closest character is an enemy with a Physical Defense of 10, so the arrow does not hit him. The next character is Farliv's companion Jerreck, with a Physical Defense of only 8. Farliv's arrow strikes Jerreck instead of the original target, and Farliv suddenly wishes for the silver tongue of a Troubadour to explain his mistake to his friend.

Cover

Targets can increase the Difficulty Number of missile weapon attacks made against them by using cover. Using cover means hiding behind an object of some kind to obscure the attacker's aim. The two types of cover usually available are Full Cover and Partial Cover. Full Cover completely hides a character and prevents missile attacks from being made against him. Partial Cover obscures the target, but attackers can still see enough of their target to fire. When firing at a target behind Partial Cover, a character must subtract 2 steps from his Attack Test.

SPELL COMBAT

When resolving combat that involves spellcasting (a very common occurrence in most of Barsaive), keep several things in mind. First, when a character casts a spell at a target, the Difficulty Number is always the target's Spell Defense. When making Damage Tests, use the effect of the spell as the step to determine damage (see **Spell Magic**, p. 145, for more information).

UNARMED COMBAT

Some characters prefer to fight their battles without weapons, using their bare hands. Fighting this way is called Unarmed Combat. For this type of combat, characters use an unarmed combat talent or skill to make Attack Tests and use their Strength step for the Damage Test.

Characters battling opponents in unarmed combat may also use a special option called Grappling.

Grappling

A character can attempt to grapple an opponent rather than making his normal Attack Test. When attempting a grapple attack, the character makes an Unarmed Combat (or Dexterity) Test against the target's Physical Defense. If the player rolls a Good success or better, the character successfully grapples the target. The character making the grapple attack should record the result. As a grapple attack does no damage to the target, the attacking character makes no Damage Test.

The target of a successful grapple attack can perform no actions while grappled, except to try to break free of the attacker's hold. To break free of a grapple, the target makes a Strength / Unarmed Combat Test using the result of the Grapple Attack Test as the Difficulty Number. If the dice result is equal to or higher than that number, the target breaks free of the grappling character.

Maintaining A Grapple Hold

Once a character successfully grapples an opponent, he can maintain the hold simply by declaring that he is doing so as his action for consecutive rounds.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted combat is a common form of combat in **Earthdawn**. In addition to being the favored form of combat of Cavalrymen Adepts, large numbers of mounted ork scorchers also roam across Barsaive. This section provides guidelines for resolving mounted combat.

Charging Attack

The most common mounted combat is the charging attack. Many characters use lances to make charging attacks, though other melee weapons also work (see below). Resolve charging attacks using the standard procedure, but note the distinctions outlined below.

When making a charging attack, the character's mount makes a Full Movement towards the target, and in the same action, the character makes a Melee Weapons Test against the Physical Defense Rating of the target. If the test succeeds, the character hits his target and then makes a Damage Test. If the test is unsuccessful, the character misses his target.

The Damage Test of a charging attack benefits from the attacker's momentum. Add the higher of either the mount's Strength step or the rider's to the Damage step. When using a lance in a charge, its base damage step is an 8 for the weapon, and a spear used in a charge has a base damage step of a 5. This is due to the advantage that these types of weapons have when used in a charge.

> *Kos, a troll Cavalryman, makes a charging attack against his enemy. The target's Physical Defense Rating is 9. Kos rolls a 10 on his Attack Test, successfully pounding his opponent. Kos increases the damage of this attack by his mount's Strength step or his Strength step, whichever is higher. Kos has a Strength of 17 (Step 6), his mount has a Strength step of 9 (ever see the horse that has to carry a charging troll?), and the lance adds 8 steps to the damage test. The mount's Strength is higher, so the damage step for the charge would be 9 + 8 or Step 17 (not including Kos' bonus for the* **Charge talent,** *p. 90).*

Staying Mounted

While a successful charging attack using a lance or spear offers the character many advantages, the attacker also risks being thrown from his mount with such an attack. After making his Damage Test, the charging character makes a Charge Skill or Talent Test against the target's Toughness step number. If the dice roll is equal to or higher than the Difficulty Number, the character remains mounted. If the dice roll is lower than that number, the character is thrown, and takes Step 5 falling damage.

Mounted Melee Attacks

Characters can use melee weapons in mounted combat. Use the charging attack guidelines above for similar attacks with any type of melee weapon.

A character making a mounted attack with a melee weapon rather than a lance or spear is less likely to be knocked off his mount. Instead, the strength of the attack might force a character to drop his weapon. If the character's Mounted Attack Test is successful, he then makes a Strength Test against the Toughness step of the target. If the test succeeds, the character manages to hold on to his weapon. If the test fails, the character drops his weapon. Characters with the Charge Skill or Talent can use their Charge step instead of their Strength step for this test.

Mounted combat offers characters another advantage, in addition to increased damage. Characters making mounted attacks may also split their movement and still attack during a Combat Round. This rule is an exception to the guidelines in **Movement**, p. 217.

When attacking on a mount, a character can use part of his Combat Movement to approach and attack a target, then use the rest of his Combat Movement to ride away. This is called **Splitting Movement** (see **Combat Options**, p. 226). This rule is a double-edged sword, however. Though it allows characters to attack and then flee, it also weakens the character's defenses. When a mounted character splits his movement to attack a target, his Physical Defense Rating drops by 2 for that round. During that round all opponents attack the character at the advantage of the reduced Physical Defense, in addition to any other penalties the character might be suffering at that time.

When a mounted character splits his movement and attacks, the only characters who can attack him are those with a higher Initiative who delay their attack to the same Initiative as the mounted character.

> *Kos is charging a new enemy, after neatly killing his last one. This opponent is a ork raider on foot, and Kos decides to split his movement and attack. Kos has an Initiative of 12; the ork has an Initiative of 14. The ork declares that he is reserving his action until Kos' Initiative of 12. When Kos approaches and begins his swing, the ork can attack first, and knock Kos off his mount (he hopes).*

Setting Against A Charge

Characters on the ground face a great disadvantage against mounted opponents. They may, however, use one tactic that can be very effective against mounted attacks. This tactic is called **Setting Against A Charge**. A character who intends to use this tactic must have a weapon at least the length of a spear or a lance (approximately 7 feet), and must win Initiative against the mounted opponent. The character must also be able to close to melee combat range with the mounted opponent.

To set against a charge, the character must act at the same Initiative as the mounted opponent (see **Reserved Actions**, p. 219). The character setting against the charge makes a Melee Weapons Test before the mounted opponent makes his attack. If the test is successful, the

character setting against the charge strikes the mounted opponent before the latter can attack, and the charging opponent takes damage. If the test result is a Good success or better, the set character also knocks the mounted opponent off his mount. The Damage Test step for setting against a charge is the step bonus of the weapon, plus either the Strength step of the mount or that of the person who is braced for the charge, whichever is higher.

Kos is still charging the same ork he named as his target in the last example. The ork carries a spear and decides to set against the charge. The ork hits Kos, getting a Good success and knocking the hapless troll off his mount. The ork's player makes a Damage Test for his stalwart warrior using the step of the spear (4) plus the Strength step of the troll's horse(9) or himself (7) whichever is higher. Kos ends up taking Step 13 damage (4 for the spear + 9 for the horse).

Knockdown and Mounted Combat

Characters who fight while mounted run the risk of being knocked off their mount. When a mounted character makes a Knockdown Test and fails, he falls to the ground, taking Step 5 damage. Opponents facing mounted attackers often employ the **Attacking to Knockdown** Combat Option, as described on page 225.

If a mount fails its Knockdown Test when attacked by an opponent, the mount is knocked down and takes his rider with him. In this case, both the mount and his rider take Step 5 damage.

AERIAL COMBAT

Some creatures in **Earthdawn** are capable of flight, including windlings. The following section explains how to resolve combat between characters and flying creatures and characters.

Flying Movement

The Flying Movement Rate of creatures appears with their statistics in the **Creatures** chapter, p. 293. The Flying Movement Rate of each individual windling is determined by its Dexterity (see **Creating a Character**, p. 45).

Attacking While Flying

Creatures and characters capable of flight can attack opponents while flying. When doing so, the creature or character can either stay within melee range or make swooping attacks. Many creatures attack from within melee range because this allows them to use all their attack abilities and does not affect their defense. Many windling Warriors also employ this tactic.

Swooping Attacks

Some flying creatures and characters prefer to make swooping attacks. To make a swooping attack, a creature or character must split his movement (see **Combat Options**, p. 226). The swooping attacker flies into melee combat using a portion of his Combat Movement, makes his attack, and flies off using the rest of his Combat Movement. As with mounted characters who split their movement, creatures or characters who use swooping attacks suffer a -2 penalty to their Physical Defense for the entire round (see **Mounted Melee Attacks**, p. 223). Characters who wish to attack swooping creatures or characters must win the Initiative over their opponent that round and delay their attack until the same Initiative as the swooping attacker (see **Reserved Actions**, p. 219).

Knockdown

Flying characters can be knocked from the sky. A flying character or creature who fails a Knockdown Test is knocked down to the ground. On its next action, it can get up as usual and take to the air again. For more information on falling damage see the Adventuring in Barsaive section.



CREATURE COMBAT

Characters often encounter creatures in the course of their adventures, and more often than not must fight the creatures they encounter.

Creature Attacks

The **Creatures** chapter, p. 292, provides the descriptions, statistics, and combat abilities for many creatures from the world of **Earthdawn**. Many of these creatures can use the Combat Options and other types of combat described in this chapter. For example, thundra beasts often make charging attacks, griffins like swooping attacks, and so on. The **Creatures** chapter also describes how to use a creature's stats in the game. Use the following additional guidelines for creature combat.

Initiative

When creatures engage in combat, the gamemaster uses the Initiative step given with the creature's description.

Attack Tests

The individual creature descriptions explain how the creature attacks, including any magical attacks or spell-like powers. Many creatures can attack more than once per Combat Round. For example, a dragon may attack once with each claw and make a bite attack in the same round. A creature makes all its Attack Tests for a Combat Round at its Initiative. A creature's attacks all happen at the same time. Each potential creature attack uses a specific Damage step, also listed with the creature's statistics.

Creatures And Karma

Only the most powerful creatures in **Earthdawn** possess a reserve of Karma Points that they can spend in combat. Unless a creature's description specifically states otherwise, all creatures with available Karma Points may add Karma dice to any combat test, including Attack Tests, Damage Tests, Knockdown Tests, and so on.

COMBAT OPTIONS

Earthdawn provides characters with a number of Combat Options that allow them to fiercely attack an opponent or hang back and act more defensively. These options provide the opportunity to vary your character's fighting style: sometimes you may want your character to slug it out with an opponent, but other times it may be wiser to modify his approach. When a player wants to use one of the following Combat Options, he must declare this intention before making his Initiative Test for the round.

Remember, though, that most optional rules have a disadvantage as well as an advantage. Because they can complicate things, it's often best to wait until players and gamemasters are very familiar with the game before throwing an optional wrench into the works.

AGGRESSIVE ATTACK

In an **Aggressive Attack**, the character attacks with a fierce rush and a flurry of blows. The aggressive attack gives the attacker a significant advantage in his attacks, but makes him suffer more damage. The Strain of an aggressive attack gives the character 1 point of damage. Add 3 steps to his or her Attack and Damage Tests. Because this attack is somewhat uncontrolled, the character gives less attention to his defense, which subtracts 3 from the character's Physical Defense in that round. His opponent does not gain any advantages for the Damage Test.

Aggressive attacks must be made using melee weapons or unarmed attacks. Characters cannot make aggressive attacks with missile or throwing weapons. Characters can choose to use an aggressive attack for every attack in a round. Their Physical Defense is only reduced once. However, each aggressive attack causes one point of Strain damage.

ATTACKING TO KNOCKDOWN

Rather than attacking an opponent with the intent of causing damage, characters can attack an opponent to knock him down. This tactic is called **Attacking To Knockdown**. Such attacks follow the same procedure as any other attack, except that the Difficulty Number for the target's Knockdown Test is the result of the Damage Test, modified for the target's armor and a Good success on the attack roll is needed. Also there is no such thing as an Armor-Defeating Knockdown, if the test is made then the player is knocked down.

In his fight with a rampaging thundra beast, Targ Boneslicer decides he wants to try to knock the beast down. Targ makes a successful Attack Test, hitting the beast. He then makes his Damage Test, with a result of 18. The thundra beast has a natural Armor Rating of 7. For the creature's Knockdown Test, the gamemaster uses a Difficulty Number of 11 (18 [Damage Test result] - 7 [beast's Armor Rating] = 11).

ATTACKING TO STUN

Characters sometimes choose to make a potentially less-damaging attack on their target by declaring that they are attacking to stun an opponent. The attacking character makes the Attack Test and Damage Test as normal, with the following differences:

1. Stun damage cannot kill a character. If Stun damage sends a character's Current Damage higher than his Death Rating, the character falls into a coma. The character comes out of the coma when his Current Damage falls to less than his Unconsciousness Rating.

2. A character can recover from Stun damage more easily than from normal damage, sometimes shaking it off through sheer will. The character adds his Willpower step to the first Recovery Test he makes after taking the Stun damage (This bonus applies only to that Recovery Test). The gamemaster may disallow this bonus if the character took 5 or fewer points of Stun damage since his last Recovery Test.

CALLED SHOT

A character can make an attack against a specific point on the body of his target. Pinpointed attacks like this are known as **Called Shots**. When making a called shot, a character suffers a -3 step penalty to his Attack Test. If the Attack Test succeeds, the character struck the target where he intended. Characters still need an Armor Defeating hit to ignore opponent's armor.

DEFENSIVE STANCE

There will come a time when your character decides that living is more important than winning. When he or she makes that decision, your character can take a defensive posture that reduces his or her chance of being hit. When your character uses the **Defensive Stance**

Combat Option, increase his Physical Defense Rating by 3. Like many other options in **Earthdawn**, the Defensive Stance has a disadvantage; when using this option, reduce all your character's step numbers by 3. Defensive Stance may be used by any character in a fight.

GIVING GROUND

Skilled fighters often willingly trade ground to gain a defensive advantage. Only characters using the Unarmed Combat or Melee Weapons talents can use Giving Ground.

For every 3 yards yielded, the character giving up ground increases his Physical Defense Rating by 1. A character may yield 3 yards for each rank of his talent or skill being used, up to a maximum of the character's Combat Movement. The Strain of giving ground causes 2 points of damage.

The t'skrang Kricklen has a Rank 5 Melee Weapons talent. Being a crafty fighter, the lanky lizard reassesses his situation from moment to moment and recognizes the tactical advantage of giving ground when the time is right. Kricklen may give up to 15 yards of ground in each Combat Round, and doing so would increase his Physical Defense by 5 but he would receive 2 points of Strain from such an action.

A character giving ground must declare how many yards he plans to yield. If the character wins the Initiative over his opponent, the player chooses the location to which his character moves when he gives ground. If the opponent wins the Initiative, he decides where the yielding character goes. A character giving ground will stop moving rather than go off a cliff, step into a boiling river, or run any other obviously deadly hazard. The character will, however, move right up to the edge of the hazard.

GOING INSIDE A SHIELD

Shields increase a character's Physical Armor Rating. But shields cannot be everywhere. A character may declare that he is going inside his opponent's shield, maneuvering to strike at a point where the opponent cannot defend with his shield.

The attacker attempting to go inside an opponent's shield subtracts the shield's Armor Rating from his Initiative Test result. If the attacker still has a higher Initiative than his opponent, he has gotten inside the target's shield, and the defender loses the shield's armor benefits. If the attacker now has a lower Initiative than his target, the defender whirled the shield in place to block the attack, striking before the attacker could complete his move. The attacker may still make an attack against the defender, but suffers a 2 step penalty to his Attack Test.

SPLITTING MOVEMENT (OPTIONAL)

The gamemaster decides whether or not to use this Combat Option, and should feel free to disallow this rule as too disruptive to the game. This option allows all characters, not just mounted characters, to split their movement during a Combat Round. A character could use part of his Combat Movement to approach a target, make an attack, and then use the rest of his Combat Movement to move away, as in the Charging Attack and Swooping Attack described above.

A character who uses the splitting movement option suffers a -2 penalty to his Physical Defense Rating. This penalty remains in effect for the duration of the Combat Round in which the character split his movement, and is cumulative with any other penalties the character suffers in that round.

USING SHIELDS

Many characters use shields when engaging in melee combat. Shields add a bonus to a character's Physical Armor Rating, and make it harder for attackers to succeed at Armor-Defeating Hits (p. 227). The following section provides special rules for shield use. Note that some of the rules are optional; both players and gamemaster should review them and agree on whether to use these rules before beginning to play.

MYSTIC ARMOR BONUS

Many types of shields add bonuses to a character's Mystic Armor Rating when the character is using the shield in combat. Simply carrying the shield does not provide the bonus; the shield must be used in a defensive manner.



SHATTERING A SHIELD (OPTIONAL)

A character uses this optional rule in an attempt to shatter an opponent's shield. If the Attack Test result is equal to or higher than the

Difficulty Number, the attack hits the shield. The attacker makes a Damage Test. If the result is equal to or higher than the shield's Shatter Threshold (see **Goods and Services**, p. 211), the shield shatters. The attack must inflict the necessary amount of damage in one blow to overcome the Shatter Threshold, just as when a character suffers a Wound. An Armor-Defeating Hit aimed directly against a shield breaks the shield, making it useless.

SHIELDS VS. ARMOR-DEFEATING HITS (OPTIONAL)

In addition to increasing a character's Armor Rating, a shield can also make it more difficult for the character's opponents to strike him with Armor-Defeating Hits. Characters using this optional rule increase the Difficulty Number for an Armor-Defeating Hit by one-half the shield's Armor Bonus. Round any fractions up.

If a character successfully gets inside an opponent's shield, the defender loses all benefits of the shield, including the optional bonus of this rule. See **Going Inside A Shield**, above.

Me'gana, the elf Swordmaster, is using a buckler as a shield, which gives her an Armor Bonus of +1. Me'gana's Physical Defense is 10. According to the ***Success Level Table****, an attacker would need to roll 19 in an Attack Test to strike Me'gana with an Armor-Defeating Hit. Her buckler increases this number to 20. Using the buckler gives Me'gana a slight advantage in defending against Armor-Defeating Hits. That slim advantage might just make the difference.*

SITUATION MODIFIERS

A character most often relies on his wits, skills, and talents to make his way successfully through his life and adventures. Yet, even the best-prepared adventurer sometimes finds himself at the mercy of circumstances beyond his control.

A number of these circumstances can occur during combat and affect a character's performance. Known as **Situation Modifiers**, these conditions directly affect combatants' Attack Tests and Physical Defense Ratings. The effects of specific situations are described below, and the specific modifiers are summarized in the **Situation Modifier Table**, below.

BLINDSIDE ATTACK

When a defender cannot see his attacker in order to react to an attack, the attacker gains a Blindside Attack Bonus. This bonus adds 2 steps to the attacker's step for the Attack Test. Blindside attacks include attacking from the rear, attacking a blinded character, or attacking using surprise from an ambush (see **Surprise**, this page). The attacker must be able to see his target to use the Blindside Attack Bonus.

DARKNESS

Characters who find themselves fighting in the dark but who do not have any type of night vision must reduce the step of all their tests by 3. This penalty applies only to situations in which the disadvantage is natural darkness. Darkness caused by spells or creatures may reduce characters' step numbers even further. This step penalty does not apply to Knockdown Tests.

HARRIED

As described in **Melee Combat**, p. 221, a character under simultaneous attack by 4 or more melee opponents is considered Harried. Also considered Harried are characters being swarmed by many smaller creatures. Harried characters reduce the step of all their tests by 2. This penalty also applies to Knockdown Tests.

KNOCKED DOWN

A character who is knocked down (see **Make Knockdown Test**, p. 220) subtracts 3 from both his Physical and Spell Defense Ratings. Knocked down characters also reduce the step of all tests by 3. These penalties remain in effect until the character is back on his feet. In certain situations, the gamemaster may also consider applying this penalty to a character's Social Defense.

SURPRISE

From time to time, characters and creatures appear in unexpected places. This may be an intentional tactic, as when a group plans an ambush, or an accidental encounter, as when a creature suddenly appears from behind a tree in the forest. In either case, the characters and/or creatures caught off guard by such a situation are considered **Surprised.**

Surprised characters or creatures cannot act during the Combat Round in which they are surprised. They also suffer a penalty of -3 to their Physical and Spell Defense Ratings for the same round. The effect of surprise ends as soon as the next Combat Round begins. In certain situations, the gamemaster may also wish to apply this penalty to a character's Social Defense.

A group of adventuring companions are trudging wearily through the forest when they suddenly come face to face with Icewing the dragon! Needless to say, the characters are surprised by this unusual event. As the characters try to recover their normally fierce demeanor, Icewing casually decides to intimidate the party. The gamemaster (being the cruel fellow that he is) decides that the adventurers, in addition to suffering penalties to their Physical and Spell Defense Ratings, will also lose points of Social Defense.

To determine whether a character is surprised, use the following procedure. Each character caught off guard makes a Perception Test using a Difficulty Number based on the situation, usually the Dexterity step of the character or creature encountered. If the group is surprised by more than one character or creature, use the lowest Attribute step number in the group as the Difficulty Number.

SITUATION MODIFIER TABLE

	Attack Test Modifier	Physical Defense Modifier
Blindside	+2 steps	–
Darkness	-3 steps	–
Harried	-2 steps	–
Knocked Down	-3 steps	-3 (also to Spell Defense)
Surprise	No Test Allowed	-3 (also to Spell Defense)

EFFECTS OF INJURY

Players must expect their characters to suffer injuries during their adventures in **Earthdawn**. Some of the rules regarding injury appeared earlier in the **Combat** chapter (see **Check for Wounds**, p. 220). This section provides the details on character damage.

RECOVERING FROM DAMAGE

A character makes Recovery Tests to reduce, or "heal," the damage he takes. A character who takes no damage does not need to make a Recovery Test. Each character has a number of Recovery Tests available each day, determined by his or her Toughness Attribute (see **Creating A Character**, p. 43). A character cannot "save" Recovery Tests from one day to the next. Use 'em or lose 'em.

An injured character must make one of his Recovery Tests upon waking from a full night's rest. Characters with only 1 Recovery Test available each day can only recover damage after a full night's rest. Characters with 1 Recovery Test every 2 days must rest for 2 nights, and make the test on the second morning. Characters with more than 1 Recovery Test available per day may spend the remaining Recovery Tests as they wish if they meet the following conditions:

- At least 1 hour passes between Recovery Tests.
- The character can spend 1 minute without engaging in physical activity or taking damage. The Recovery Test can be made at the end of that minute.
- The characters must wait at least one hour after engaging in combat before they can make a Recovery Test. This hour must be spent in a state of relative rest; the character cannot undergo any strenuous physical activity during this time. The only exception to this rule regards unconscious characters.

Unconscious Characters

An unconscious character may make a Recovery Test 1 minute after he falls unconscious. Once conscious, the character must wait another hour before he can make further Recovery Tests.

Reviving Unconscious Characters

If another character attempts to revive an unconscious character, the unconscious character can make one of his available Recovery Tests at that time, even if a minute has not yet passed since he fell unconscious. Regardless of the outcome of the test, the unconscious character recovers enough Damage Points to regain consciousness. His Current Damage becomes 1 point less than his Unconsciousness Rating.

WOUNDS

Characters suffer no ill effects from Current Damage. Damage only affects a character's ability to function when it results in a Wound.

Wounds slow a character's recovery. When a Wounded character makes a Recovery Test, he reduces the amount of damage he recovers by 1 point for each Wound. For example, Farliv, the elf Archer, has taken some heavy hits. He is currently suffering 2 Wounds and 12 points of damage. Farliv makes a Recovery Test with a result of 10. Because he has 2 Wounds, Farliv can only recover 8 points.

Healing Wounds

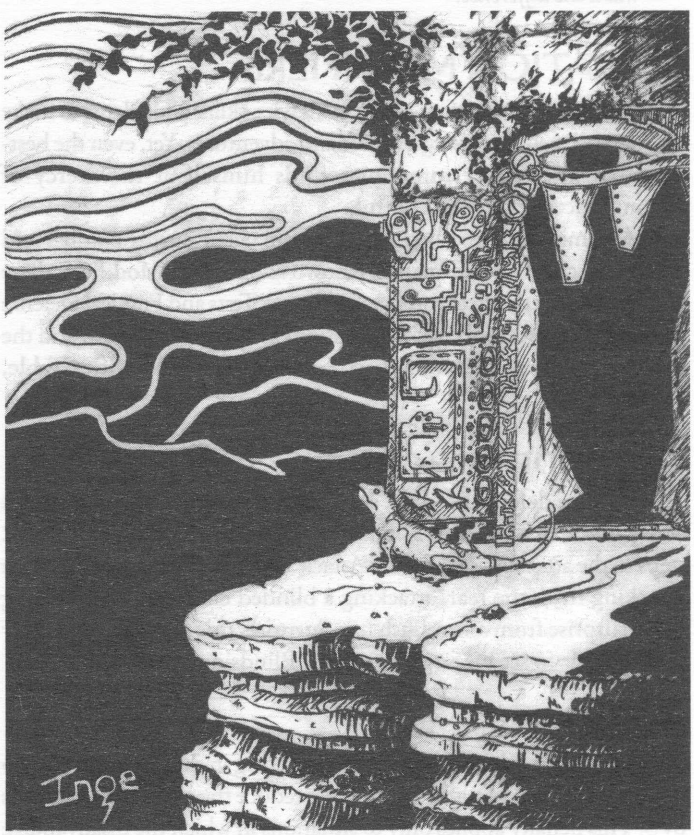
Wounds are difficult to heal. Only a Recovery Test made after a full night's rest (see **Recovering From Damage**, this page) can heal a Wound. A character naturally heals one Wound a day under the following conditions:

- The character is not suffering any Current Damage. Even 1 point of Current Damage stops a Wound from healing.
- The character uses 1 Recovery Test. Even if he has no Current Damage, the character must make a Recovery Test with a Difficulty Number of 2 to heal a Wound. Curses or other circumstances that prevent a character from making morning Recovery Tests keep Wounds from healing.

Wound Effects (Optional)

Wound Effects are best used after the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic rules of the game. This optional rule adds more realism to the game, but also requires more bookkeeping on the part of the players.

With this option, a character can take 1 Wound without suffering any immediate side effects. When a character takes a second Wound, and again for all subsequent Wounds, reduce the character's step numbers by 1. For example, if a character takes 2 Wounds, reduce all his step numbers by 1. If he takes 4 Wounds, reduce all his step numbers by 3. This penalty applies to all tests the character makes, except Recovery Tests. The character makes all Recovery Tests using his or her normal Recovery dice.



ADVENTURING IN EARTHDAWN



Of course, it's a stupid idea. Some of our best plans started with stupid ideas.
— Seethian, windling Thief

The heroes and legends of **Earthdawn** are rarely a sedentary group. Often, they go forth to pit their skills and courage against supernatural creatures, predatory packs of ork scorchers, deadly crystal raiders, and the numerous other dangers that plague the towns and villages of Barsaive. They brave the forgotten kaers and citadels left unexplored after the Scourge, looking for lost treasure, people, knowledge, and magic. These brave adventures confront their fears as a matter of course, going forth and fighting to protect their world from the Horrors that remain. They strive to reclaim their world from both the ravages of the Horrors, and to stand watch against the tyranny of the Theran Empire.

As your characters explore **Earthdawn**, they will also face many everyday dangers that bear no relation to the plotting or malice of villains and creatures. Sometimes just surviving is a challenge. Ask a college student.

This section describes many of the dangers of the adventuring life in Barsaive and provides rules and suggestions for determining whether or not a character survives them. Because this section contains many rules that affect the fate of the characters, the gamemaster may prefer that players not read this section. If your gamemaster does not object to you reading these rules, keep in mind that he still chooses the Difficulty Numbers and determines how successfully your character performs various actions. No matter what, the gamemaster has the final say.

This section offers the gamemaster guidelines for dealing with the perils of adventuring, including fire, traps, poison, curses, and so on. If the gamemaster finds dealing with all the situations outlined in this section bewildering, he should simply use the examples and guidelines presented until he feels more confident of his own judgment. These rules should help the gamemaster run his adventure, not get in his way. See **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 323, for more information about running the game.

PERILS OF ADVENTURING

Adventuring can be a dangerous business. Many hazards threaten a character's health, including climbing into a pit that conceals a kaer's entrance, dealing with a curse put on a magical item, fighting magical creatures, falling, poison, sharp sticks ... well, you get the idea.

CLIMBING

Many situations will require your character to climb. He may have to climb out of a pit he has fallen into, or climb down a mountain face to escape a band of ork cavalry, or scale a wall to make a surprise attack. Apply the climbing rules on the following pages whenever a character is forced (or chooses) to climb a surface.

CLIMBING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Surface	Difficulty Number
Tree	3
Pole	7
Wall with handholds	9
Rocky cliff	12
Sheer surface	15

Climbing Tests

A character who attempts to climb any surface must make a Climbing Test using his Dexterity step or the Climbing skill/talent. The Difficulty Numbers for Climbing Tests depend on the surface being climbed. The **Climbing Difficulty Table**, on this page, suggests Difficulty Numbers for various types of surfaces. Though far from complete, this list provides a guideline for the gamemaster to determine climbing Difficulty Numbers.

Each successful Climbing Test allows a character to climb up to 50 feet. If a character wants to climb a 200-foot cliff, he must make four separate, successful Climbing Tests.

In most circumstances, a character climbs at a rate of 1 yard per Combat Round (10 seconds). On a slick surface or under adverse conditions (in a rainstorm, while under fire), the character may climb more slowly. Characters with the Climbing skill or talent can climb much faster than 1 yard per round (see descriptions of Climbing talent and skill in the **Talents** and **Skills** chapters, pp. 91 and 121).

Climbing Gear

The Difficulty Numbers given in the **Climbing Difficulty Table** assume the character is climbing the surface freehand, that is, without using climbing gear. A character using ropes and other climbing gear adds 4 steps to his Dexterity or Climbing skill/talent step number.

Me'gana wants to climb down a cliff to reach the entrance of a long-forgotten kaer. If she attempts the climb without rope, she uses her Dexterity step to make her Climbing Test (Step 7). If she uses rope, she adds 4 steps to her Dexterity step (7 + 4 = Step 11), making the climb much easier.

Failing A Climbing Test

If the result of a Climbing Test equals or exceeds the Difficulty Number, the character succeeds in climbing the surface. But what happens if the character fails? A character who fails a Climbing Test falls and takes damage. The **Falling Damage** section, below, explains how much damage a character takes from falling.

If a character fails a Climbing Test when scaling a surface 50 feet high or less, he falls from a point approximately halfway up the surface. This means that a character attempting to climb a 30-foot wall would fall 15 feet, and would take damage from falling 15 feet rather than 30.

A character who fails when making successive Climbing Tests to scale a high surface (i.e., more than 50 feet high) falls a distance equal to half the section he is currently climbing, plus the entire distance he successfully climbed. He takes damage based on the total distance he falls.

Farliv the Archer is attempting to climb a 150-foot-high cliff. No one is attacking him, he's not in a hurry, and the weather is ideal, so Farliv climbs at the average rate of 50 feet per Climbing Test. Farliv succeeds at his first Climbing Test, but fails his second Climbing Test. The hapless Archer falls a total of 75 feet (50 + 25 = 75).

Earthdawn is a world of magic, and sometimes the magic of its heroes shine. It is possible for someone to catch themselves after they start that swan-dive, though difficult. After the first failed roll, if the

character is falling close to an edge, or still has something they can grab to stabilize themselves, they may attempt to catch themselves while falling. To see if they succeed, they must make a Climbing Test versus a harder difficulty (usually plus 5, though certain circumstances could make it easier, like climbing gear, or more difficult, like carrying a lot of weight) with a 2 step penalty. If they make it, they take half-damage from the fall, and now have a tenuous hold. If they miss again, then it is up to the gamemaster's discretion whether or not they get a third chance. More than likely, they have unfortunately picked up too much momentum to do anything other than kiss pavement.

Sir Nef the Troubadour is attempting to climb a 150-foot-high cliff, known as Farliv's Folly. No one is attacking him, he's not in a hurry, the weather is ideal, and his party has stopped kibitzing, so Sir Nef climbs the average rate of 50 feet per Climbing Test (at a difficulty of 8). Sir Nef succeeds at his first Climbing Test, but fails his second. The Troubadour begins to fall, and slides down the cliff-side a good 25 feet (the progress he made on the failed roll), before making a test to see if he can catch himself. He rolls his Dexterity + Climbing - 2 (versus a difficulty of 13) to see if he makes it. He does, catching himself in time, taking damage as if he fell from 12 feet (25 / 2, rounding down), scuffing himself up.

FALLING DAMAGE

It is a fact of life in **Earthdawn** that characters will fall, usually from high places. When a character takes a dive, use the **Falling Damage Table**, below, to determine how much damage he or she takes from falling. After finding the appropriate number of Damage steps, consult the **Step/Action Dice Table**, p. 27, to determine the number of dice to roll for Damage Tests. Armor provides no protection against falling damage. The number in parentheses in the Damage Steps column is the number of Damage Tests the player makes for his character's fall.

A character who falls from a height of 290 feet must make 3 Damage Tests using the Action dice of Step 30 to determine how much falling damage he takes. Even if he lives, he will probably suffer 3 Wounds, and is unlikely to walk away from the fall.

FALLING DAMAGE TABLE

Distance Fallen (in feet)	Damage Step
5-10	2
11-20	6
21-30	15
31-50	15 (2)
50-100	20 (2)
101-150	25 (2)
151-250	25 (3)
251-400	30 (3)
401-600	30 (4)
601 +	30 (5)

FIRE

Characters in **Earthdawn** occasionally find themselves in situations where they may take damage from fire. Smoke detectors do not exist in **Earthdawn**; in addition to the regular occurrence of fireballs and other fire-based spells, natural disaster or sabotage remain likely events. This section provides guidelines for determining how much damage fire can inflict.

The size of the fire determines the Damage step of the flames. The table below suggests Damage steps for fires of varying sizes. Like the **Climbing Difficulty Table**, this list is not exhaustive; it simply serves as an example for the gamemaster.

For obvious reasons, a character must touch the fire of a torch or campfire to take damage from that source. Lit torches, when wielded as a melee weapon, use the same Damage step as clubs (character's STR step + 3 steps), but add 4 steps of fire damage. For the larger fires, with each Combat Round that a character remains within 10 feet of the source of the fire he uses the listed Damage step number to determine the number of dice he must roll when making a Damage Test. If he touches the flames, he takes the Damage step listed after the slash.

Thom Hammerblade is fighting an ork scorcher who is wielding a lit torch. The ork manages to hit Thom with the torch. The ork wielding the torch (i.e., club) would normally make a Damage Test using Step 8 Action dice (Strength step (5) + 3 steps). The fact that the torch is burning increases the Damage step of the torch to 12.

Farliv the Archer wakes to find the once-comfortable Crakbill Inn an inferno. The gamemaster decides that the inn fire is already hotter than a house fire, and sets the Damage step number at 7/11. Based on the position of his room, it will take Farliv 4 Combat Rounds to get out of the inn. For each of those 4 rounds, Farliv's player must make a Damage Test using Step 7 Action dice. If he stumbles into the flames on his way out, he would take and additional Step 11 damage. Ouch!

FIRE DAMAGE TABLE

Size of Fire	Damage Step
Torch	4 (touch only)
Small campfire	6 (touch only)
Large campfire	8 (touch only)
House fire	6 / 10
Forest fire	8 / 12

SUFFOCATION

Sometimes in the course of adventuring, there comes an unfortunate moment where an intrepid adventurer finds himself without something fitting to breathe. Being cast into the Serpent River in full armor, breaching an old kaer with an air supply that was long ago tainted or expended, or being face-down in mud are all unfortunate occurrences that, when they happen, tend to happen to the adventurers of **Earthdawn**.

A character may hold their breath for their Toughness step in minutes when inactive, and for half that step when active. Once the character is out of air, they begin to take Step 10 damage each round,

ignoring all armor. This damage should be kept separate of the character's actual totals, for it is considered stun damage. Once the character goes unconscious, they stop taking further damage. At that point, they have half their Toughness step in minutes to be resuscitated, or the character is dead. If the character falls below their Death Rating, again, they stop taking damage. A character in this state only has a quarter of their Toughness step in minutes to be resuscitated, or they die. If the character is resuscitated before they die, they regain half the damage they took, and only keep at most 2 wounds.

Sir Nef the Troubadour awakens to find that his comfortable room in the hold of the t'skrang riverboat Jith'ra is currently underwater; which, in turn, means he's underwater. It takes him two minutes (half his Toughness step of 5, rounded down) to free himself from the wreckage of his bed, and discover that there are no convenient air pockets left. At that point, Sir Nef begins taking Step 10 damage. After five turns of trying to find his way to the surface, Sir Nef falls unconscious from the 45 points of damage and three Wounds he has accrued. Luckily, Namier the Swordmaster finds him, and hauls him aboard a small life boat, before his last two minutes (half his Toughness step of 5) are up. After pumping the water out of his lungs, Sir Nef is resuscitated. He ends up with 22 points of damage, two Wounds, and a water-logged lyre, making for a rather grumpy, but alive, Troubadour.

POISON

Several creatures in the world of **Earthdawn** use poisonous bite and sting attacks, and assassins often employ the use of poisons. The game mechanics of poison generally depend on three parameters: effect, onset time, and duration.

Effect

Poisons can have a number of different effects, and they vary from kind to kind. The most common effect for the venoms of the creatures of Barsaive is to directly inflict damage on the victim. Most other kinds of poisons have a varied and disturbing amount of debilitating effects, ranging from allergic reactions to instant death. For the sake of categorization, they break down into paralytic, debilitating, damaging, and instant death poisons.

Most poisons have a Spell Defense Rating and step number. The Spell Defense Rating measures how well the poison resists magical treatment by ability, spell, or magical item. Most poisons have a Spell Defense of 6 or more, though a good rule of thumb is that the Spell Defense of a poison equals the poison's step number.

A poison's step number is used for Effect Tests (see **Effect** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p. 153). When poison affects a character, either by injection, ingestion, or contact, the gamemaster makes an Effect Test for the poison and interprets the test result according to the poison's type of effect: paralysis, debilitation, damage, or instant death.

Onset Time

The onset time describes how quickly a poison affects a character. Most poisons affect the character immediately upon exposure. Other poisons take longer to affect a character; for example, many debilitating poisons have onset long enough to be measured in days.

Duration

Some poisons affect characters over a prolonged period, referred to as the poison's duration. For example, many poisons that cause damage affect a character for a specific number of Combat Rounds. A debilitating poison might affect a character once a day for a week. Though most death poisons affect characters immediately, some death poisons can be used to slowly kill the victim over several days. The descriptions of the four types of poisons include each type's typical duration.

Methods of Exposure

Characters can be exposed to poison in a variety of ways. The most common is through the bite or sting of a poisonous creature. There are also several ways to get the poison into the bloodstream by coating a weapon and then striking, or by means of injection with hollow needles and a poison reservoir. Some poisons work only when ingested; the poison must be mixed with a person's food or drink in order to affect him. Other poisons work on contact, taking effect when a character touches the toxin.

The table below lists the four types of poisons and suggests standard step numbers, onset times, and durations. This table is not exhaustive; it only gives the gamemaster a guideline for dealing with poison in his game.

Poison Resistance Tests

When a poison enters a character's body, the character must make a Toughness Test against the Spell Defense of the poison. If the test is successful, the character has resisted the effects of the poison. Over the next day, they will suffer a 1 step penalty to their Perception step as they work the poison out of their system, with what would feel like a mild fever and the occasional chill. If the character fails the test, the character suffers the effects of the poison. The gamemaster makes an Effect Test for the poison, interpreting the results according to the poison effect types described below. If a poison affects a character for more than 1 Combat Round, he may make a Toughness Test in each round to resist the effects of the poison. As soon as the character makes a successful Toughness Test, the poison no longer affects him. In the

POISON TABLE

Type of Poison	Step Number	Spell Defense	Onset Time	Duration
Paralysis	5-9	5-9	Instant	Effect Test result in hours
Damage	5-9	5-9	Instant/1-2 hours	1-5 Combat Rounds
Debilitation	5-7	5-7	Instant	Effect Test result in days
Death	10-13	10-13	Instant/1-2 Days	Instant

case of Debilitating poisons, a successive Toughness Test may be made each day it affects the character. However, the difficulty for each successive test increases anywhere from 3 to 8, depending on the potency of the poison.

Paralysis: For a character affected by paralytic poison, compare the poison's Effect Test result to the target's Spell Defense. On an Excellent success or better, reduces all the character's step numbers by 3 steps for the duration of the poison's effect. A Good success reduces all the character's step numbers by 2 steps for the duration of the poison's effect. An Average success reduces all the character's step numbers by 1 step.

Damage: Most poisons used in Barsaive start causing actual damage rather than creating a disadvantage for the affected character. The Effect Test result is the number of Damage Points the character takes. Mystic Armor does not usually protect against poison, although the gamemaster may allow it to protect the character against certain magical poisons. If the character fails every Toughness Test against the poison during its duration, then the character makes a final test. If this test fails as well, the poison moves on into the stages of a debilitating poison of the same step strength.

Debilitation: Debilitating poisons generally create more severe adverse effects than paralytic poisons. These effects can give the character an allergic attack, shortness of breath, symptoms like a serious disease, or simply attack the character's nervous system. For a character affected by a debilitating poison, compare the poison's Effect Test result to the character's Toughness step. As a general rule, an Average success reduces all of the character's steps by 1 step for all tests for as long as the poison affects him. A Good success reduces his steps by 2 steps, an Excellent success by 3, and an Extraordinary success by 4 steps. This reduction lasts for a number of days equal to the Effect Test result. If he wishes, the gamemaster may lengthen or shorten the duration of this effect, depending on the poison. If a debilitating poison is not treated during its duration, and if the character never succeeds in shrugging it off through a Toughness Test, then the poison kills the character at the end of that duration. The character's Current Damage is increased to one point greater than their Death Rating. The character suffers an additional number of points of damage equal to the spell defense of the poison. This damage cannot be reduced by Physical or Mystical Armor.

Death: Poisons that cause instant death must be handled in a different way than the other toxins. In this case, the Toughness Test a character makes to resist a poison determines whether the character lives or dies, rather than simply determining how severely the poison affects him. For death poisons, the character makes a Toughness Test against the poison's Spell Defense Rating. If the test fails, the character dies, receiving damage as above. If the character gets an Average success, he remains alive, but takes 2 Wounds from the poison. If the character gets a Good success, he takes 1 Wound from the poison, but otherwise remains unharmed. If the character gets an Excellent success, the poison does not affect him. Poisons that cause instant death remain rare in Barsaive.

Antidotes and Poultices

Fortunately for the characters, antidotes exist that counter the effects of many poisons. Characters usually use one of two types of concoctions to counter poisons: antidotes and poultices. Antidotes are potions that halt the effects of a specific type of poison, such as snake venom, dragon venom, and so on. Poultices work as salves to counter the effects of all types of poisons. Antidotes and poultices add steps to a character's Toughness Test for resisting the effects of poison. See the **Goods and Services** chapter, p. 201, for the effects of specific antidotes and poultices.

CREATURES AND HORRORS

One of the most common perils of adventuring in **Earthdawn** is confronting the creatures that make their homes and hunting grounds across the land. Though some creatures are evil and attack characters on sight, others only attack to protect their young or to feed. Whatever the reason, characters will often find themselves fighting off creatures.

Unlike most creatures, the Horrors and their evil servants and constructs often deliberately attack characters. The Horrors enjoy inflicting pain and suffering on those around them, and isolated, sometimes foolish adventurers make excellent targets for their powers. However, not all Horrors attack their victims directly. Some are dreadfully patient, and often use subtle means to draw more pain and agony from the victim than would result from a direct attack.

Horror-Marks

Every character who faces a Horror runs the risk of being Horror-marked. Most Horrors possess this ability and will use it in any conflict with adventurers. This ability allows a Horror to invisibly mark a victim, magically linking the victim to the Horror. This link allows the Horror to use its powers against the victim, regardless of the distance between them. All other powers the Horrors wield pale in comparison to the Horror-mark, and Horror-marked characters live with the knowledge that they may fall prey to the Horror's whims at any time or place — if they are even aware that they are marked.

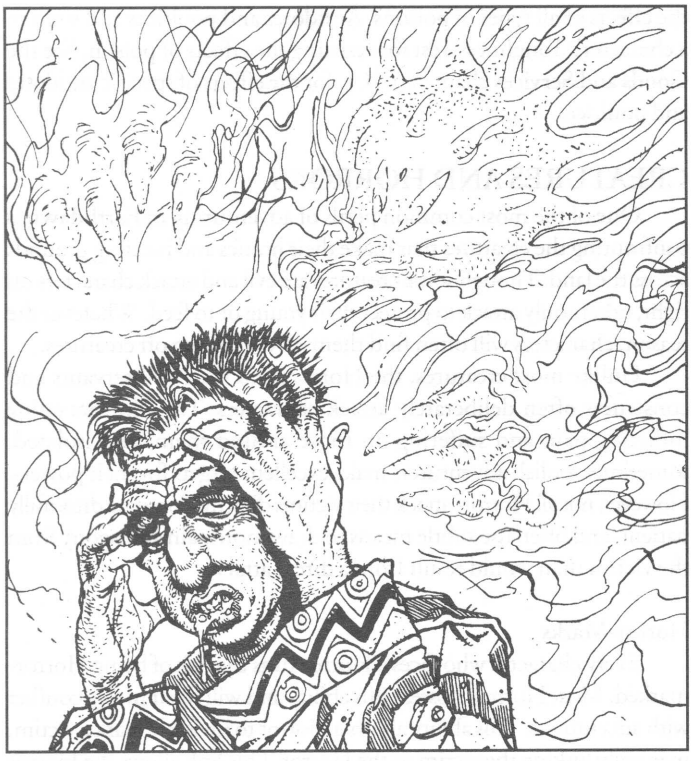
Both items and people can be Horror-marked. In some areas of Barsaive, Horror-marks are referred to as Curses. See **Curses** below for more information; also see **Horror-Mark** in the **Horror** chapter, p. 315.

CURSES

Curses are negative magical effects attached to items and places. They affect those characters who come into contact with the cursed item or place. The effects of a curse can range from sickness to a penalty when performing actions to damage. Kaers and citadels, certain rooms within them, or items found inside often carry curses. The gamemaster is free to invent the specific effects of curses, but we suggest the following guidelines for creating and implementing them.

Becoming Cursed

Items and places can become cursed through various means. The most common way is through prolonged exposure to the evil and corrupt magical powers of the Horrors. Sometimes a place becomes cursed through the efforts of a questor of the Mad Passions (see **Passions**, p. 260). Many cursed items result from a magical mishap by their creator. Some are just items with a very unfortunate history that sticks with them. The details of how an item or place became cursed often make up an important element in the background of an adventure. For example, an evil Nethermancer may once have summoned a Horror in a certain place, causing that place to become cursed and to inflict illness on all who enter or pass through it. Many believe that Blood Wood is cursed and the Blood Elves are victims of that curse.



An important difference to note about the magic of these cursed items and places is that their magic has progressed from having a passive role in the world to having an active one. Usually, for an Adept to truly be able to tap into the magic of an item, they must study and research the history of the item, and sometimes perform deeds to unlock its powers (see **Magical Treasure**, p. 279, for more details). Cursed items and places, however, do not work in the same fashion. Their magic has become a force all its own, and does not need this kind of union to affect those that enter their realm of influence. In most cases, it still takes time for the magic to begin effecting the character, and it varies from curse to curse on how to remove them.

The inhabitants of **Earthdawn** usually encounter three types of curses: Minor Curses, Major Curses, and Horror Curses.

Minor Curses

The effects of minor curses usually range from reducing a character's actions by 2 or 3 steps to affecting the character as a debilitating poison might (see **Poison**, p. 232). They may also cause minor disturbances, like making the character hear soft whispers from no particular direction, causing milk to sour quickly in their presence, or other things that could disrupt the life of the affected character. Minor curses are most often associated with magical items rather than places. The effects of a minor curse should handicap a character, but not threaten his life, and are relatively easy to be rid of. Curses whose effects prove more than a minor handicap or irritant should be considered major curses.

Major Curses

The effects of major curses should seriously impair characters who come into contact with the cursed item or place. For example, a major curse might affect a character by temporarily lowering one of his Attribute Values. If the curse affects a character's Strength Attribute Value, he might still be able to fight as skillfully, but his blows would no longer cause as much damage. Another major curse might also create a runic scar across a character's face that causes gamemaster characters to fear him. Major disturbances may begin to happen around the characters; glass may start to fracture in their presence, or animals may gain a great dislike for them, up to the point of attack. Major curses can be associated with both items and places; the curse's effect lasts as long as the character remains in contact with the cursed item or place, and the items tend to find ways of meeting back up with their unfortunate new owners. Characters affected by major curses must usually appeal to a powerful magician to help free them from the curse's effects.

Horror Curses

Horror curses represent the most powerful curses in **Earthdawn**. A Horror cursed place or item functions in the same way as a Horror-mark (see **Horror-Marks**, p. 233): a Horror establishes a link to the item or place, and can use its powers against any characters that come into contact with that item or place. However, because the Horror must work indirectly through the cursed item or place, its powers become less effective. Resolve the use of the Horror's powers as described in **Horror Powers** in the **Horrors** chapter, p. 315, keeping in mind the weakening effect of the indirect attack. A good rule of thumb is to weaken a Horror's powers by 5 to 10 steps when it uses them through a cursed item or place. The gamemaster may wish to adjust the strength of the effect higher or lower than the suggested level.

Horror curses can be powerful, and very dangerous to characters. In order to break the curse, the characters must usually kill the Horror who marked the item or place. Their desire for pain and suffering prompts most Horrors to channel their powers carefully through cursed items or places, using only those powers that will not so alarm the living that they abandon the place or object.

Horrors can, and frequently do, use Horror cursed items or places as a channel through which to Horror-mark victims. This method of Horror-marking provides the only exception to the line-of-sight restriction on the Horror-mark power (for more information, see **Horror-Mark** in the **Horrors** chapter, p. 315).

CURSE TABLE

Curse Type	Steps*	Effects
Minor Curses	7-8	Reduced steps, minor damage, minor disturbances
Major Curses	9-15	Scars, reduced Attribute Values, major disturbances
Horror Curses	Horror's Spellcasting step	Horror-marked items/characters, use of Horror powers through item

* The step number used to determine if a curse affects a character.

Curse Effects

When a character comes into contact with a cursed item or place, the gamemaster should make a Curse Test against the character's Spell Defense to see if the curse affects the character. The curse's step number for this test depends on the type of curse: minor curses use 7-8 steps, major curses use 9-15 steps, and Horror curses use the Horror's Spellcasting steps. If the test is successful, the curse affects the character.

The table below summarizes the suggested step numbers and effects for each of the three curse types. Again, the gamemaster should use this table as a guideline. Each individual curse is unique, and no two will necessarily affect a character in the same way.

Though the gamemaster may create any effect for a curse, he should be careful to make the curse work within the adventure, and avoid making the effects of the curse overwhelmingly powerful. When designing cursed items and places, the gamemaster should remember that curses are meant to challenge and hinder the player characters, and must be carefully thought out. For example, in an adventure in which the characters seek to discover the identity of a Theran spy within the city of Kratas, the gamemaster should not introduce a cursed item that affects only those who use the magical abilities taught in Thera. Such a curse would not affect the player characters, but would hinder their opponent, the Theran spy, and thus help the characters. This is the opposite of what a cursed item should do.

EXPLORING KAERS AND CITADELS

Kaers and citadels lie scattered all across Barsaive. In the aftermath of the Scourge, some kaers have opened, and their populations live in nearby towns and villages. The residents use the underground retreat as a shelter when needed or for storage. Most citadels have removed their protective domes and stand as they did before the Scourge, as castles and strongholds against attack. Adventurers should recognize that the citizens of small towns and villages may fear them simply because they are strangers. The scars of the Scourge are too fresh for people to easily accept the unknown.

Some kaers remain closed, their residents either dead or unaware that the Scourge has ended. These abandoned and dead kaers and citadels hold countless treasures and loot. Naturally, tales of these riches draw every adventurer ever to set foot outside his own community. In addition to fantastic wealth, these abandoned strongholds are also riddled with danger. Many serve as lairs for the creatures and Horrors that still lurk within, and offer other threats and challenges as well. Chief among these challenges are traps and secret doors.

BARRIER RATING TABLE

Material	Physical Armor Rating	Damage Rating
Wood,		
less than 2 inches thick	7	20
2+ inches thick	9	30
Stone wall/mortar	12	45
Stone blocks	20	85
Cave/natural wall	30	150

BARRIERS AND STRUCTURES

During most adventures, player characters will eventually find themselves outside a structure that they want to get into or inside a structure but determined to get out. Lacking a key or a handy magic word, the characters will need to break through a barrier to get in or out. To determine how successfully characters storm a barrier, the gamemaster must know the structural capacity of different types of barriers.

Every barrier has two Ratings: **Physical Armor Rating** and **Damage Rating.** A barrier's Damage Rating indicates the amount of damage it can take before it breaks, crumbles, or falls apart. The Physical Armor Rating serves the same purpose as armor worn by characters: it reduces the damage done by attacks. Unlike physical armor worn by characters, however, a character cannot make an Armor-Defeating Hit against a barrier.

Characters make Attack Tests against a barrier using a Difficulty Number of 7. If the test result is less than 7, the blow glances off the barrier and causes no damage. If the test is successful, the gamemaster makes a Damage Test for the barrier, subtracting the barrier's Physical Armor Rating from the Damage Test result.

The table, on this page, suggests Barrier Ratings for common building materials.

TRAPS

Shortly after people began to create goods worth keeping, they designed traps to protect them. Traps come in all shapes and sizes. They may lie concealed in small treasure chests, or guard the entrances to kaers and citadels. Those who built the kaers before the Scourge constructed traps that they hoped would stop those Horrors able to penetrate the magical protections guarding the entrances. Characters may still encounter many of the traps placed in those kaers that remain sealed, either abandoned or filled with people who have yet to hear that the Scourge has ended.

The information listed below describes how all traps function within the game.

Detection Difficulty: A character making a Perception or Talent Test to see or otherwise sense a trap uses the trap's Detection Difficulty Rating as the Difficulty Number. Most traps have a Detection Difficulty of 5, though some traps are so obvious that the Detection Difficulty is 0. In effect, the owner of the trapped goods or treasure is saying, "Look, stupid, this thing is trapped. So why don't you go steal someone else's stuff?"

For magical traps, use the trap's Spell Defense Rating as the Detection Difficulty Rating.

Disarm Difficulty: This figure is the Difficulty Number for disarming the trap. If a character does not have the Disarm Mechanical Trap skill or talent, he cannot disarm the trap. The best a character lacking the appropriate talent or skill can hope for is to keep from triggering the trap when he opens the door, steps on the pressure plate, or takes other action that would normally snap the trap shut. A character attempting to do so must make a Dexterity Test to avoid mechanical traps and a Thread Weaving or Perception Test to avoid magical traps. The Disarm Difficulty of the trap becomes the Difficulty Number for these tests. Most mechanical traps have a Disarm Difficulty of 7 to 9. The Disarm Difficulty of most magical traps starts at 8 or above. The only other way a character can avoid a trap is to achieve a higher result

than the triggered trap on an Initiative Test (see **Trap Initiative**, p. 111).

Trigger Condition: This entry describes the mechanism or action that triggers the trap. Stepping on a pressure plate, lifting the lid of a chest, and opening a door are common examples of trigger conditions for mechanical traps. Characters using Spellcasting or Perception steps within a certain range may trigger magical traps.

Trap Initiative: This figure is the trap's Initiative step number. Most mechanical traps have an Initiative of 8 to 10 steps. Magical traps often have a higher Initiative step. When a character triggers the trap, the gamemaster immediately makes an Initiative Test for the trap using the Trap Initiative step number. All characters within range of the trap also make Initiative Tests. Those who achieve a higher result than the trap may be able to act to get out of harm's way. Those whose Initiative Test results are lower than or equal to the trap's Initiative succumb to the trap's effect. The Trap Initiative talent (see **Talents**, p. 111) allows characters to react to traps more quickly than normal.

Trap Effect: The trap effect entry describes the type and steps of damage the trap inflicts. For example, some traps restrain their targets, others mark them with a magical stain, and still others may put a spell on the character that takes effect after a delay. A trap may have any effect conjured by the imagination and resources of the character building the trap.

The type of damage the trap inflicts determines its Damage step. For example, the trap effect of a simple pit trap might be only Damage step 4, while a trap designed to smash an intruder might have a trap effect of Damage step 10 or more.

Spell Defense: This number is the trap's Spell Defense Rating. Only magical traps have a Spell Defense Rating, which also serves as their Detection Difficulty (see **Detection Difficulty**, above). The Spell Defense of most magical traps is the Spell Defense Rating of the character who built the trap.

Pit Trap

The pit trap is a classic fantasy adventure trap. When triggered, a section of the floor drops away and dumps the characters into a deep pit, usually lined with stakes. A typical pit trap might use the following stats:

Detection Difficulty: 7
Disarm Difficulty: 7
Trigger Condition: Pressure plate
Trap Initiative: 8
Trap Effect: Damage of Step 12 (from falling and stakes)

Ward Trap

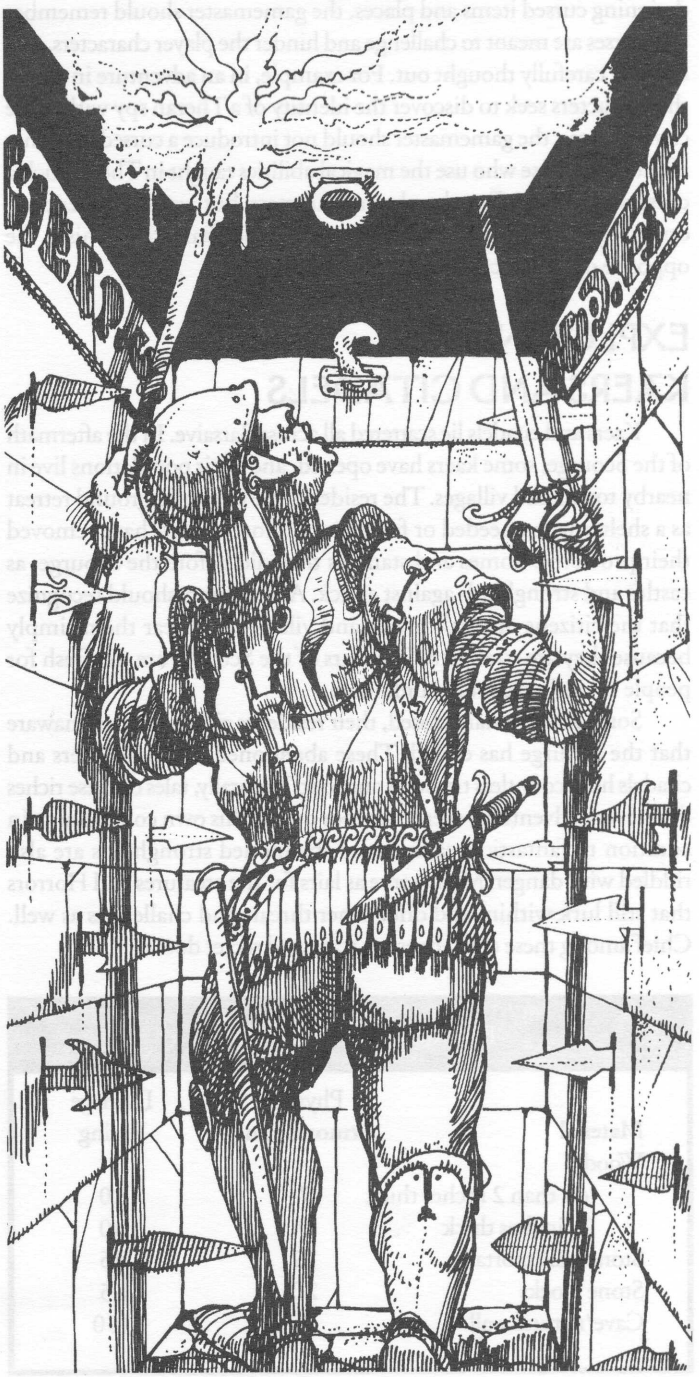
A ward is a magical trap designed to keep people from entering certain areas. A magician can set wards to detect and ignore certain beings (for example, the ward's creator), and to spring into existence if an unauthorized person attempts to pass the ward, usually exploding into a large fireball. A typical ward uses the following stats:

Detection Difficulty: 10
Spell Defense: 10
Disarm Difficulty: 12
Trigger Condition: The gamemaster makes a Spellcasting Test (Step 16) for the ward against the Spell Defense of any character passing it. If the test is successful, the trap triggers its spell effect (see **Trap Effect**, above).
Trap Initiative: 30
Trap Effect: Fireball spell, Spellcasting Step 16, Damage Step 20.

SECRET DOORS

Another challenge of exploring kaers is detecting the presence of secret or hidden doors and determining how to open them. Secret doors usually lead to areas within a kaer or citadel used as hiding places, treasure rooms, and defensive strongholds.

During the Scourge, hiding places provided bolt-holes in which the residents of the kaer could hide from an invading Horror or creature. Treasure rooms kept the kaer's valuables safe, and now offer the most tempting targets for adventurers. Defensive areas are small rooms where the kaer's residents could take prepared defensive positions against



invaders. These rooms commonly include a safe place from which bowmen could fire at creatures or Horrors that entered the kaer, or a room from which magicians could safely cast spells. Some secret doors conceal magical or alchemical laboratories, smith shops, and even temples to one or more of the Passions.

Detection

A character attempting to detect a secret door makes a Perception Test. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number for the test based on how well the door is hidden. Some suggested Difficulty Numbers for spotting secret doors appear in the **Detection Difficulty Table**, below (also see the **Success Level Table** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 340).

If the character makes a successful Perception Test, he finds the secret door. The gamemaster should vary the Difficulty Numbers of secret doors to reflect how carefully the characters are looking for them. If the players look for a secret door in every room, hoping to get lucky, use the same Difficulty Number for every door. If the characters state that they are minutely examining every inch of wall space, the gamemaster might reduce the Difficulty Number by 2 or 3 to reflect the characters' meticulous search.

DETECTING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Difficulty	Difficulty Number
Easy	5
Average	9
Hard	15
Very Hard	21
Heroic	25

Opening

Successfully spotting a secret door does not mean a character knows how to open it. Some secret doors open when pushed against. Others slide into slots carved into the walls. Still others open when a character works some type of mechanism. The gamemaster decides how a secret door opens at the same time that he determines the purpose of the door and how well it is hidden (and whether or not it's trapped). Characters may succeed in opening the door on the first try, or they may open it only after a process of trial and error.

TRAVEL

Like all adventurers, characters in **Earthdawn** will spend many days traveling from place to place and searching for new adventures across Barsaive's nearly 1,500,000 square miles. Population centers are spread out across the land, often requiring long journeys simply to get from one place to the next. The information in this section outlines modes of transport, needed supplies, and ways of dealing with the weather and other potential travel hazards.

Note: The travel rates described below are measured in "miles per day" for the convenience of players and gamemasters calculating travel times. The people of Barsaive don't use miles as a unit of distance. Instead, they measure distances in "days walking," "days riding," "days sailing" (on the Serpent River), or "days flying" (based on airship travel).

OVER LAND

Most adventurers travel through Barsaive over land, either on foot or mounted. Characters traveling on foot can cover roughly 25 miles per day, assuming that they travel for 8 hours each day and take occasional breaks for rest and eating. The rough terrain throughout most of Barsaive precludes any faster rate of travel on foot. Injured characters and those carrying encumbering loads (see **Encumbrance**, below), may travel more slowly, perhaps only 20 miles per day. Characters riding mounts can travel roughly 40 miles per day, again assuming 8 hours of travel with occasional breaks. If the mounts are carrying encumbering loads, they may only be able to cover 35 miles per day.

Characters can choose to push themselves beyond the normal 8 hour travel time limit when traveling overland, or choose to try to move faster than 25 miles within that 8 hour time limit. For every 8 hours of normal travel a day a character wishes to push himself, he must spend a Recovery Test. The character gets no damage back from this test. If the character has no Recovery Tests left, then they simply cannot keep it up, and need to rest. For characters that wish to push themselves above the usual 25 miles in 8 hours, they take damage based on how much they wish to push it. For every mile above the usual 25 miles, the character takes a cumulative Damage step of 2, to demonstrate the loss of carefully picking their route, and the strain of keeping up that pace. If the character is mounted, then instead their steed takes the damage, or must spend the Recovery Tests. If, during the extended time, the character falls unconscious from the damage, then they have only made four hours of travel at the speed they wished.

> *Horvarack has lost his mount, and wishes to make it back to camp as quickly as possible, to warn of roaming pack of cadaver men heading towards Cara Fahd lands. Usually, the trip would take three days mounted. Horvarack pushes himself to moving 38 miles in an 8 hour period, despite the wounds he's already received from the first encounter with said cadaver men. For that period of travel, Horvarack would take Step 26 damage (38 - 25 miles = 13 miles, then times a Damage step of 2). After taking 28 points of damage and 3 wounds, Horvarack spends 2 of his 3 Recovery Tests to heal, then chooses to spend his last Recovery Test on continuing. He does so, taking an additional 44 points of damage. Horvarack makes it four hours before passing out, and has traveled a total of 57 miles.*

Occasionally, characters travel with merchant or trader caravans, either as guards or as fellow travelers. Most caravans travel at a rate of 30 miles per day when mounted, or 20 miles per day on foot.

Encumbrance

Especially in the first flush of adventuring, an **Earthdawn** character may be tempted to carry excess equipment and more treasure than he can hold. In **Creating A Character**, p. 44, you noted how much weight your character could carry without overburdening himself, but what happens when your character wants, or needs, to carry more weight than his Carrying Capacity allows?

A character carrying weight that exceeds his Carrying Capacity is considered **Encumbered**. The excess weight he is carrying will tire him out and slow him down, and may get him into serious trouble later on

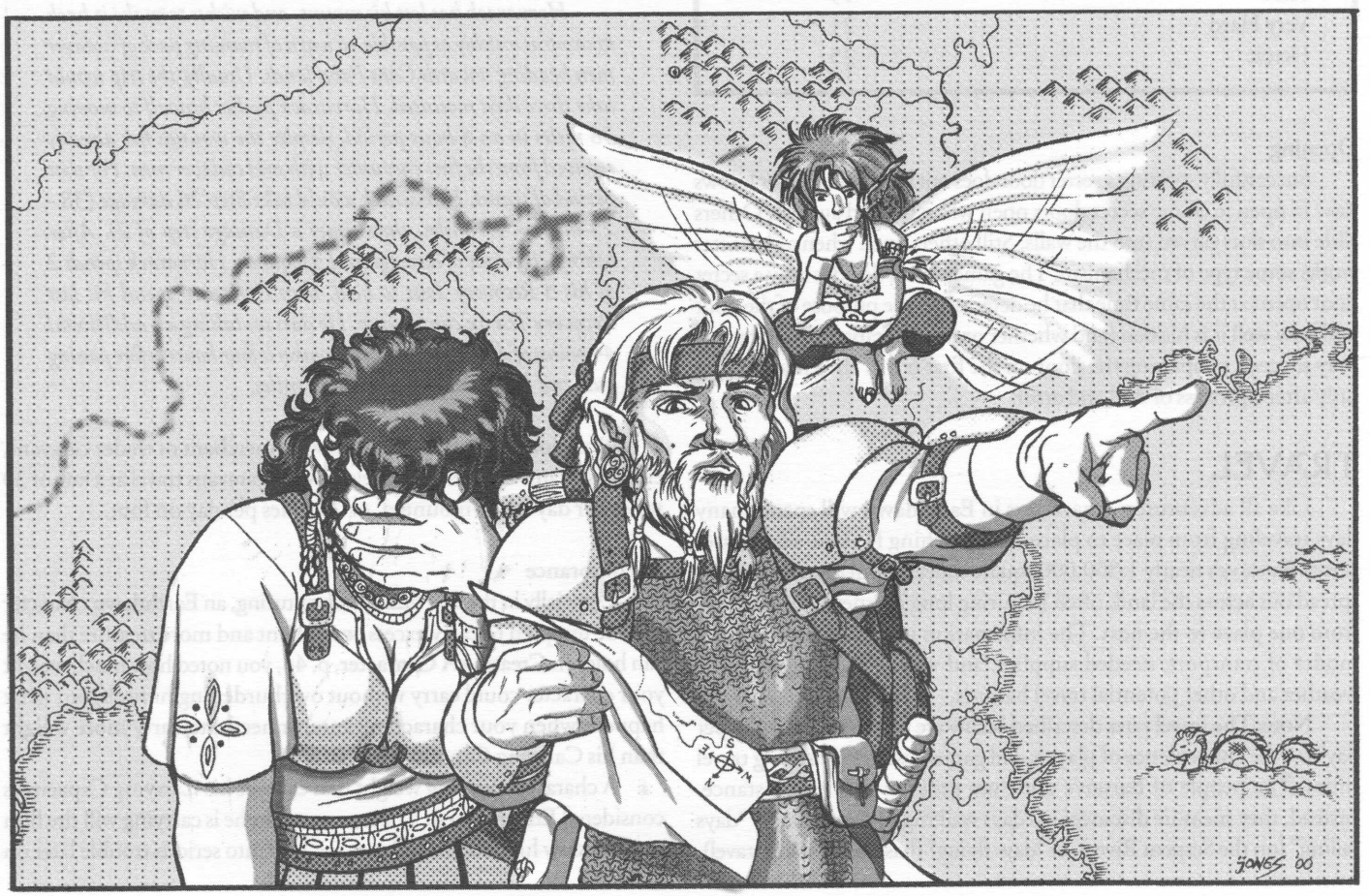
in the adventure. To determine the effect of Encumbrance, calculate how much weight the character is carrying, then consult the **Attribute Table**, p. 42, to determine the lowest Strength Attribute Value that allows a Carrying Capacity equal to or more than the amount of weight the character is carrying. Subtract the character's Strength Attribute Value from this value, and reduce your character's Dexterity Attribute Value by the result. By lowering the character's Dexterity Attribute Value, you also reduce your character's Dexterity step number and all of your character's Dexterity-related Characteristics, including Movement Rates (Running and Combat), Physical Defense, and Dexterity-based talents and skills.

Jerreck, the elf Wizard, has a Strength Attribute Value of 11, and so may carry up to 80 pounds without trouble. Unfortunately, Jerreck couldn't bear to leave behind the ancient tomes he found at the last kaer, and so he is now lugging around 135 pounds. Jerreck is Encumbered. The gamemaster consults the ***Attribute Table****, p. 42, and sees that the minimum Strength needed to carry 135 pounds is 15. This Attribute Value exceeds Jerreck's Strength of 11 by 4 points, and so as long as he carries this much weight, Jerreck's Dexterity Attribute Value is reduced by 4 points. A lower Dexterity Attribute Value reduces his Dexterity step number and his Physical Defense and Movement Ratings. Jerreck vows to not make any sudden moves and to stay out of combat until he can get his treasure safely home.*

Using Maps

To get where they want to go and avoid unsafe spots, characters traveling over land need a map. The province of Barsaive covers a vast distance, and current maps of Barsaive show many uncharted areas. The Scourge altered Barsaive's geography by obliterating many towns and cities, forcing others to relocate and destroying landmarks and geographic features. In the time since the Scourge, no one has undertaken an expedition solely to map Barsaive, and so no reliable maps of post-Scourge Barsaive exist. Most available maps only indicate the major landmarks still in existence, such as the larger mountain ranges, the ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire's former outposts at Vivane and Sky Point, the Serpent River, Death's Sea, the larger cities of Iopos, Travar, Jerris, and Kratas, and the kingdom of Throal. Some more expensive maps also show the main trade routes across the province, but most of these are commissioned by traders and are not for sale. Since the great war that removed Thera's last military outpost from Barsaive, there have been some new maps created, mainly by the merchants that rely on trade routes. It is hard to find a good, up-to-date map at the time – one with all the most recent discoveries from adventurers, as well as the changes wrought by the fall of Vivane and Sky Point – and it costs an almost prohibitive amount to acquire one.

Most map makers in Barsaive draw their maps to be used with a device called Shantaya's Sextant. Shantaya was an elf Troubadour who traveled across the province and mapped it in the years before the Scourge. As a way to standardize her work, she developed a device to chart distance and bearings using the maps she drew. By aligning the sextant with certain landmarks on the map, a traveler can determine the bearing and distance (in days walking or riding) to various places in



Barsaive. The most prominent landmarks on the Shantaya maps are Throal, Sky Point, Wyrm Wood (now Blood Wood), Death's Sea, and the Dragon Mountains.

Safe Areas

Because almost half of Barsaive remains unexplored, the law-abiding inhabitants of the land consider only the areas immediately surrounding most cities and a few established trading routes to be safe. Wandering away from these safe areas can prove hazardous to travelers.

Several smaller farming towns and villages surround most major cities within a radius of approximately 15 miles. These communities supply the city with agricultural goods in exchange for protection, usually in the form of favorable trade agreements and regular patrols by available armed forces. Their proximity to the city makes brief trips between the city and the farming communities feasible, and many towns arrange two-day journeys to trade their goods to the cities. Heavily settled and well-protected (relative to the rest of Barsaive), most of the territory within fifteen miles of a major city remains safe for travelers, but even these areas encompass desolate and dangerous spots.

Barsaive's major trade routes connect major cities and specific points along the Serpent River. These routes change occasionally, based on the most recent travelers' tales of their encounters along the established route. Well-traveled, often by caravans employing seasoned warriors, the trade routes are safe for travelers. Keep in mind, however, that every trade route crosses unexplored territories; travelers who stray as little as a thousand yards off the trade route may stumble into unmapped regions and areas unexplored even before the Scourge.

TRAVEL BY RIVER

Often, when a group of adventurers must travel long distances, they arrange transport on the Serpent River, which crosses all of Barsaive. Because few characters own their own riverboats, most adventurers traveling up or down river must buy passage on a t'skrang riverboat.

Passage on a t'skrang riverboat costs an average of 5 silver pieces per person per day. Most ship captains demand full advance payment, though some accept partial payment in advance, the remainder due on arrival at the character's destination. Some captains charge more than the average price, often bargaining with the characters to determine the fee. Characters can arrange to transport their mounts on the same craft, but must pay an additional 5 silver pieces per day for the animal.

Characters who lack ready funds may pay for their riverboat passage by working as a member of the crew during the voyage. Each day that a character works for the crew earns him an average of 3 silver pieces, though pay rates are negotiable based on the character's skills. Some captains, instead of paying out silver, simply exchange passage for the character's time and labor. A character can usually work off most or all of the cost of his trip in this manner. See **Goods and Services**, p. 209, for more information about hiring river passage.

T'skrang riverboats travel roughly 100 miles and 16 hours per day, stopping along the river to pick up and drop off goods and passengers. Most riverboats stop only during daylight, usually sailing through the night, but occasionally laying over at a port until morning.

Pirates, as well as legitimate traders, often travel on the Serpent River. Pirates routinely attack riverboats; those characters who help fight off these marauders often receive a partial refund of their passage payment, and sometimes even the good will of a t'skrang merchant house.

AIR TRAVEL

The predominant means of air travel in Barsaive is by airship. Because of the difficulty and expense of arranging airship passage, characters only travel across Barsaive by airship when speed is vital. Travel aboard airships can be unpleasant; most airships lack passenger space, and many airship captains dislike the idea of strangers aboard their vessels. The majority of airships in Barsaive belong to the troll crystal raiders, making it a tough prospect for the characters to find an airship captain and convince him to transport them. Ideally, adventurers seeking passage on airships should track down the owner of a galley, the type of ship used by the trading companies that operate across Barsaive. Dealing with a galley captain, the characters stand a better chance not only of booking passage, but of surviving it. Characters who find troll raiders willing to take on passengers should negotiate with extreme caution.

Another form of air travel, though rare, is by means of a flying carpet (see the **Flying Carpet** spell, p. 170, for more information). For the most part, the flying carpet is the sole domain of the Illusionists that can cast or maintain them, though there have been instances of magical items that perform in similar fashion. The flying carpet, when used by a city or merchant house, is most often used for quick delivery of messages. The weight limitations tend to preclude the flying carpet for being useful for anything else: it takes a decently powerful Illusionist just to create one that can carry a person and payload, and while semi-intelligent, it is unwise to leave a flying carpet to deliver important materials on its own.

The rarest form of air travel is by means of flying creatures, such as the griffons that the Theran air cavalry employs. In Barsaive, it is a rare Beastmaster or Cavalryman that has tamed such a creature, and even more rare for them to grant passage to travelers.

Air travel's greatest advantage is speed. An airship can travel up to 300 miles in 16 hours per day. Most airships do not fly throughout the night, except in battles or raids. Airships carrying passengers rarely engage in raiding unless the characters agree to help raid as part of the terms of their passage. Flying carpets are able to travel 25 miles in a single hour; however, they are additionally limited to the duration of the spell if the Illusionist has not made it permanent, and it is not a magic item in its own right.

Aside from discomfort, the greatest hazard of traveling by air is the risk of encountering crystal raiders and creatures that are airborne hunters. The crystal raiders fly drakkars, small airships built with combat and raiding specifically in mind. The crystal raiders tend to stay near their home turf in the mountains, but may range as far as 500 miles away from that area. Once, Theran slave ships were a great problem as well. After the war, is very rare to see a Theran slaving ship. They usually only hit the very southern edges of Barsaive, along the Rugarian border, though some mercenary ships travel deeper into Barsaive. The slave ships of the Theran Empire carry captives to the back to the city of Bukara.

TRAVEL HAZARDS

Adventurers face serious risks traveling across Barsaive, especially when traveling over land. The particular hazards of travel on the Serpent River and by airship have been briefly described above. The more general hazards travelers face in Barsaive follow.

SURVIVAL

Whether on foot or on horseback, traveling across Barsaive takes time. In order to survive extended periods of travel, characters must buy or otherwise acquire sufficient food and water. Though characters occasionally have the time to gather ample supplies of food and water for their trip, often circumstances force them to leave in a hurry. Taking off on an adventure or bolting out of town without sufficient food or water can quickly land a character in trouble.

In general, a character needs one quart of water per day to remain healthy; orks, dwarves, humans, trolls, and elves, for example. Obsidimen and windlings only require half that much. T'skrang also require a quart of water per day to remain healthy; however, to stay happy, most t'skrang need three or four. When rationing enough water for survival, most t'skrang get irritable, and some even suffer from a skin flaking. If a character does not get sufficient water, he begins to suffer. Each day after the first that a character goes without water, he takes 3 points of damage from fatigue and dehydration (t'skrang suffer 4). In addition, the character suffers a penalty to his Recovery Tests equal to the number of days he has gone without water.

Characters can use the Wilderness Survival Skill to find water while in the wilderness. See **Skills**, p. 130, for a description of the Wilderness Survival skill.

WEATHER

Another challenge of traveling outdoors is surviving the elements. The gamemaster should use the weather to challenge his player characters from time to time. For example, as the characters travel through a ravine, the gamemaster might whip up a heavy storm that forces the characters to seek shelter, or he might mention the possibility of flash floods.

The effects of weather may have more to do with the story than with game mechanics. For example, a thunderstorm might spook the horses, causing them to throw their riders and flee; the detour to find shelter from the storm may range so far off the path that the group gets lost. Neither circumstance is life-threatening, though the horses may run off with much-needed supplies, or the delay may allow the evil Nethermancer more time to prepare a nasty surprise for the characters. Only extreme temperatures and heavy precipitation need produce game-mechanic effects. Precipitation most often causes problems with visibility, discussed below. Extreme temperatures may cause minor damage to the characters. For example, severe arctic temperatures on top of the Throal Mountains might cause Step 4 or 5 damage to characters dressed in inadequate clothing. Extreme heat, such as that encountered near Death's Sea, might cause the same level of damage, or might damage a character in the same way as dehydration (see **Survival**, above). The gamemaster should determine the impact he wants weather to have in his game, and apply any game mechanics accordingly.

VISIBILITY

Visibility never poses a problem during the day under a bright sun. But how far and how well can characters see at night? Or in the darkened rooms of a kaer? Or during a torrential rain storm?

During daylight hours, with the sun overhead, a character can see clearly for several miles, depending on the terrain. On a bright, sunny day over clear terrain, for example, a character can see the Throal Mountains from up to 150 miles away, but would see only their outlines and virtually no details. To distinguish details, a character must be much closer to what he is looking at. Obviously, jungles and forests also limit characters' vision.

In order to be able to notice someone or something unaided, a character must be within at least 750 yards of the person or object. Beyond that distance, images begin to blur, losing distinguishing characteristics and markings. As a character approaches closer to an object or person, more details become visible. A character within 200 yards of a target can determine the identity of a person he knows or the type of creature or the race of the target. Spotting specific details requires a character to be within 20 yards of what he is looking at. As a rule of thumb, long-range visibility extends out to 750 yards, medium range to 200 yards, and short range to 20 yards from the object of a character's gaze. Note that we use the terms long, medium, and short range to simplify the discussion of visibility. These ranges do not correspond to the ranges of missile and throwing weapons given in the **Goods and Services** chapter, pp. 211-212.

The distances listed above represent visibility ranges during normal daylight hours, in clear weather; in other words, under ideal conditions. Both the weather and time of day can reduce visibility ranges. The table below suggests guidelines for determining visibility ranges under various conditions.

DARKNESS

The table, above, suggests visibility ranges for the natural darkness of night, which is often partially alleviated by a moon or stars. Characters within a cave or kaer must cope with total darkness that completely eliminates visibility. Without a light source, a character functions as if blind and suffers the moving and acting penalties described for darkness in **Combat**, p. 227.

VISIBILITY TABLE

Condition	Long Range	Medium Range	Short Range
Daylight	750	200	20
Dawn/Dusk	500	125	15
Light fog	250	75	10
Heavy fog	10	5	2
Light rain/drizzle	350	175	15
Heavy rain	100	50	10
Night with moon	200	60	15
Night with no moon	30	15	5

VISIBILITY RANGES	
Light Source	**Radius (in feet)**
Candle	10
Torch	30
Campfire	50
Lantern	100

Typical light sources include campfires, torches, and lanterns. The table below suggests effective ranges of light that these sources can provide. From these examples, the gamemaster can extrapolate the effectiveness of other light sources.

GETTING LOST

Any number of circumstances can cause characters to lose their way. A fierce storm might force a group of adventurers to travel in the wrong direction, or the adventurers might detour to avoid a band of ork scorchers and lose their bearings. Because so much of Barsaive's landscape changed during the Scourge, even travelers following maps may get lost, especially if they are wandering in areas inadequately mapped before the Scourge. Getting lost poses potentially enormous risks for the unlucky traveler. Adventurers may wander around certain areas of Barsaive for years without encountering civilized settlements, and many small towns and villages are so isolated that they may know nothing of the nearest village, let alone major landmarks or trade routes.

The gamemaster should only force the characters out of their way to move the adventure forward. Having a group get lost just to watch them survive in the wild is only fun once, and may seriously frustrate the players. If, on the other hand, the characters get lost and happen to wander into a town being terrorized by a Horror, then throwing the characters off the track served a valid purpose and advanced the story. The gamemaster should be careful of using this technique too often, as it may make players feel manipulated.

THERAN SLAVERS

Travelers in southeastern Barsaive face a danger unique to that region. While the Therans have lost control of the region, mercenary bands still roam the countryside from time to time and capture hapless townspeople from the surrounding villages, to sell as slaves in Thera. Slaving is much less pervasive since the fall of Vivane and Sky Point, but it is still a real danger for anyone traveling along the southern most edges of Barsaive.

ROAMING UNDEAD

Since the tragic end of Vivane, there have been a great deal of undead moving along the southern areas of Barsaive. Adventurers that explore the areas around Vivane and Sky Point run the risk of running into a wide variety of undead Horror-constructs that have roamed out from Vivane for whatever reasons that drive them; mostly cadaver men and ghouls. Because of this, bands of scorchers from Cara Fahd also patrol more along the young nation's southern borders.

HORROR CLOUDS

Another result of the fall of Vivane was the explosion that split the Horror Cloud that once loomed over Stormhead. A few, smaller Horror Clouds now move fitfully across Barsaive, and those unlucky enough to be caught in their path have never been heard from again. The clouds have caused no small amount of concern among the peoples of Barsaive, who worry that they could grow in power and size, or descend upon their cities and villages and repeat what happened to Vivane. The Horror Clouds do not seem to be moving in any set pattern, nor do they seem to respond with the change of wind like normal clouds should. Fortunately for the people of Barsaive, it is easy to see them coming, even at night, due to a sickly green glow that faintly emanates from them. The only time it becomes dangerous is when the clouds are swallowed by a moving storm-front; then the wary traveler must keep their eyes open, and pray to the Passions.

LOOT

During the course of an adventure, your character will discover many opportunities for gathering loot. Loot may be money or gemstones snatched from fallen enemies, precious objects found in a creature's lair, pieces of a creature brought back as trophies, or magical items. **Earthdawn** loot comes in two distinct varieties: loot worth money and treasure.

LOOT WORTH MONEY

Ancient gold pieces, precious stones, elemental coins, items that can be sold for silver, or silver pieces filched from a hidden hoard all qualify as loot worth money. Characters can gather immediately usable money from dead opponents or from the lairs of creatures and Horrors. Other forms of loot must be converted to cash.

Cash In Earthdawn

Silver is the common currency of Barsaive, and so most characters use silver coins to make purchases, bribes, and other deals. Before the Scourge, gold enjoyed wider use; today only merchants and governments use gold. A silver piece equals ten standard copper pieces, the most basic currency denomination of Barsaive, and ten silver pieces equal one gold piece. See **Goods and Services**, p. 194, for more details on the uses of currency in Barsaive.

In addition to Barsaive's common metal coins, the province's currencies include the so-called elemental coins. Elemental coins contain bits of True Elements – Earth, Water, Air, Fire – or orichalcum, the combination of these elements. These pieces are reserved for such special occasions as finalizing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, and sealing peace treaties between nations. A single Earth or Water piece is worth 100 silver pieces, and ten Earth or Water pieces equal one Air or Fire piece. Ten Air or Fire pieces, in turn, equal a single orichalcum piece.

Air pieces resemble finely crafted crystal and each contains a portion of True Air. Sharply striking an Air piece causes it to ring and then levitate a few inches; as it descends, the ringing tone fades. Throal recently began producing Air pieces with a likeness of a Sky Raider airship to commemorate the crystal raiders' aid during Thera's siege of Throal. Each Air piece weighs one-tenth of an ounce.

Earth pieces consist of soil mixed with clods of True Earth. These plain brown pieces gleam under bright light and weigh one-tenth of an ounce.

Fire pieces resemble disks of slowly swirling flame, an effect of the True Fire they contain. Though cool to the touch, Fire pieces produce

sparks of flame hot enough to light a lantern or a stove when struck. Each Fire piece weighs one-tenth of an ounce.

The plain, round Water piece contains True Water. Throalic pieces contain freshwater, and Theran pieces contain saltwater. Each piece weighs one-tenth of an ounce.

Orichalcum pieces comprise all four elements, combined through time-consuming alchemical and Elementalist procedures that remain closely guarded secrets. Gold in color, orichalcum seems to capture and amplify light. Orichalcum pieces remain rare, even among princes and kings. The handful of individuals lucky enough to possess them prefer to use orichalcum pieces for magic, rather than trade. Legends tell of ancient civilizations that once used orichalcum as currency, but most scholars question whether these legends have any factual basis.

Exchanging Gold And Gems

Because gold was used more widely before the Scourge, characters often find gold in the treasure rooms of kaers and citadels across Barsaive. Once found, the character may wish to exchange it for more usable silver currency at the most advantageous rate. Most towns and cities boast merchants more than willing to exchange gold for silver, though adventurers rarely receive the full worth of their coin in exchange. Most Throalic gold coins minted before the Scourge bring roughly 75 percent of their original value in open exchange. The rate applied to Theran gold often nets less, usually 60 percent of its original value.

The gemstones most commonly found across Barsaive include emeralds, rubies, and sapphires. The rarer diamonds are seldom found in kaers and citadels. The value of gemstones varies according to size and quality, and the gamemaster decides the value of any gems the characters find. Characters can usually exchange gemstones at 75 percent of their value, but may get a slightly higher rate of approximately 80 percent for gems of exceptional quality. This exchange rate allows the buyer to make a profit when reselling the gems.

Selling Equipment

A somewhat unorthodox method of turning loot into money is to sell equipment that belonged to deceased opponents. This required a certain amount of caution; adventurers who leave town in the morning and return later that same day carrying various bits of equipment to sell that they didn't have before tend to draw the attention of the local constabulary. However, not every town frowns on such activity. Several towns and cities in Barsaive, Kratas being the chief among them, regard the sale of used equipment as their primary local industry.

Awarding Available Loot

The gamemaster decides the amount of potential loot available in any given adventure. He must tailor the amount of money or other loot the characters find or acquire to the type of game he wants to run. As a rule of thumb, each character should get roughly three times the Legend Award (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 336) in silver pieces per adventure, though gamemasters may award more or less loot as they see fit.

Note that characters can also earn money in **Earthdawn.** A town, organization, or individual may hire the characters to perform a certain task for payment, or once they achieve higher Circles, characters can train younger Adepts for a fee.

TREASURE

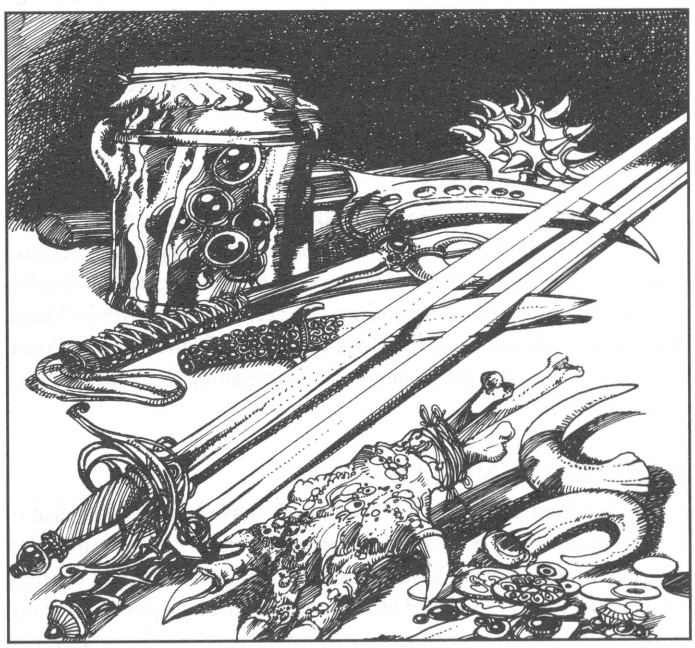
In addition to loot worth money, adventurers in **Earthdawn** can also find treasure, the objects legendary heroes acquire during their adventures. Treasure comes in two forms: magical treasure, such as magical weapons and items, and creature treasure.

Magical Treasure

Magical treasure includes the magical weapons and other items that characters seek or find during their adventures. Characters can learn to use magical items through study, and, after reaching a certain level of knowledge, can use the item to gain information during an adventure. See **Magical Treasure**, p. 279, to find out how to create and use magical treasure in your game.

Creature Treasure

Heroes of legend often take bits and pieces of the creatures they battle as proof of the encounter and of their prowess. These trophies represent a kind of treasure that increases a hero's legendary status. Because only heroes can collect bits and pieces of vanquished creatures, characters in **Earthdawn** collect such trophies to prove that they are heroes. The most common exception to this rule are trophies from Horrors and their constructs. While some do carry away trophies to display elsewhere, and even others carry them on their person, or wear them like a hat, most have little desire to carry pieces of the Horrors with them.



BUILDING YOUR LEGEND



How do you recognize a hero? Simple. When you've heard stories of his bravery, tales of his adventures, and songs of his courage, that's how you know someone is a hero.

– Geril, Troubadour

Every **Earthdawn** adventure your character completes adds to his experience and abilities, allowing him to undertake ever more dangerous and potentially rewarding adventures. Throughout your character's life, his increasingly daring exploits build his reputation across Barsaive and beyond. Legends are born through such great deeds; increasing your character's Legendary Status gives your character an edge in each **Earthdawn** game you play. This section describes how to build your character's legend in **Earthdawn.**

EARNING LEGEND POINTS

As your character survives encounters and accomplishes adventure goals, he gains experience. As in life, this experience makes him a smarter, more capable character, eventually allowing him to learn new abilities.

Character experience is measured in Legend Points. The gamemaster awards Legend Points based on a character's accomplishments and other factors during an adventure; accumulated Legend Points allow characters to increase their talents, skills, and abilities, and so on (see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 336, for more about awarding Legend Points). Your character earns Legend Points for performing the following specific types of actions.

•Achieving adventure goals. For example, if the group's goal is to uncover treachery against the Throalic throne, your character earns Legend Points as your group exposes the traitors to loyal authorities. Your character also earns Legend Points for achieving goals set during a single game session, because most session goals are stepping stones toward achieving the adventure goal. For more information about session goals, see **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 336.

•Defeating opponents in combat or other conflict. Defeating an opponent does not necessarily mean killing him. If your group removes the opponent as an obstacle to the adventure goal without resorting to violence, your character earns the same Legend Points as if he had defeated that opponent through combat.

•Gathering magical treasure or other legendary items appropriate for heroes. **Earthdawn** takes place during the Age of Legend, and the game system rewards those who act like heroes by giving them the means to become more heroic.

•Individual deeds. These can be clever ideas or deeds of valor. If your character takes or suggests an action on which the success of the adventure clearly turned, your character may receive Legend Points for that individual deed. See **Creative Roleplaying and Heroics** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 337, for more information.

•Roleplaying. Much as an actor takes on a role, a player may adopt the mannerisms, speaking habits, and attitudes of his character. Roleplaying a character well can earn your character Legend Points, but only if your roleplaying makes the game more enjoyable for others at the table, not just yourself. If your roleplaying makes it more difficult for the gamemaster to run the game, your character will not receive Legend Points for your roleplaying.

PLAYER EXPERIENCE

Players should not confuse character experience with player experience. Player experience is not measured in game terms; it simply refers to what you learn about the game by playing it. For example, you as the player may learn how your character should behave in Throal to avoid getting into trouble, or may develop more effective combat tactics against specific monsters. Lessons such as these do benefit your character by allowing him to survive longer or accomplish more, but your playing experience does not affect the attributes, talents, skills, or Circle your character uses in the game.

SPENDING LEGEND POINTS

Characters spend Legend Points to increase their attributes, talent and skill ranks, Karma Points, and threads as explained below.

IMPROVING ATTRIBUTE VALUES

For each Circle your character advances, he may spend Legend Points to improve one Attribute Value by 1 point. A character may not improve any Attribute by more than 5 points, regardless of how high a Circle he reaches. If you choose to improve one of your character's Attribute Values, you must do so before the character attains a new Circle. You cannot "save up" opportunities to increase Attribute Values from one Circle to the next. For example, Black Dog the obsidiman is currently a Second Circle character and his player chooses not to use the Legend Points Black Dog has earned so far to improve an Attribute Value. When Black Dog reaches Third Circle, his player may still only increase one Attribute Value by 1 point. Not improving an Attribute Value at Second Circle does not allow Black Dog to increase his Attribute Values by 2 points, or allow him to increase two Attribute Values at Third Circle.

The Legend Point cost for improving the same Attribute Value multiple times increases for each additional point added to that value. For example, to improve one Attribute Value by 1 point costs 800 Legend Points. To improve that same Attribute Value a second time costs 1,300 Legend Points, and so on. Consult the **Attribute Increase Table**, below, for the cost of improving Attribute Values.

Though Attributes seem expensive, they can be worth it. Improving an Attribute Value also improves the numbers associated with that Attribute. For example, increasing a character's Strength Attribute Value by 1 point also increases the character's Lifting Limit and Carrying Capacity, and may increase the Strength Attribute step.

To avoid any confusion that may arise from changing an Attribute Value, leave your character's original Attribute Value on the Character Record Sheet and note the improved Attribute Value in some other place: for example, in brackets beside the original number.

ATTRIBUTE INCREASE TABLE

Increase to Attribute	Legend Point Cost
1	800
2	1,300
3	2,100
4	3,400
5	5,500

INCREASING TALENT RANKS

Players can also spend Legend Points to add ranks to their character's talents. Because ranks add steps to Attribute steps for performing talents, a higher rank generally translates into a higher level of ability at that talent. To increase a talent's rank, a character must use

that talent successfully at least once at its current rank. You can increase your character's talent ranks by meeting the following three conditions:

1. Your character has enough available Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new rank.

2. Your character is rested and in good health. A character currently suffering any damage or Wounds may not increase the rank of his existing talents or learn new ones.

3. Your character can meditate uninterrupted for 8 hours per talent rank being purchased. Your character needs this time to remember his early training and imagine how the higher rank he wants would have altered those lessons and exercises. Through meditation, he magically extends his initial training to incorporate his experience and create new knowledge and ability within himself.

The Talent Rank Cost Table, this page, shows the Legend Point cost to increase your character's talent ranks. A character must pay for each rank increase; for example, a character who increases a talent from Rank 2 to Rank 4 must also pay Legend Points for Rank 3.

To find the Legend Point cost of increasing the rank of a talent, first consult the description of your character's Discipline (see **Disciplines**, p. 51) to determine the Circle at which your character can gain the talent. Then find the Circle column on the **Talent Rank Cost Table** that includes the Circle of the talent for your Discipline. In the left-hand Talent Rank column, find the rank you wish to purchase. Then read across that Rank row until you reach the appropriate Circle column. The number where the Circle column and the Rank row meet is the cost in Legend Points for that talent rank.

•An Archer wants to improve his Mystic Aim talent from Rank 3 to Rank 4. Because Mystic Aim is a First Circle talent for Archers, the player reads down the Circle 1-4 column until he gets to the Rank 4 row. The Legend Point cost listed for a Circle 1-4 talent at Rank 4 is 500. The player spends 500 of his Archer's Current Legend Points to gain the rank, subtracts that 500 Legend Points from his Archer's Current Legend Point total, then changes the rank of his Mystic Aim talent from 3 to 4.

*•A player wants to improve his Swordmaster's Speak Language talent from Rank 2 to Rank 4. Speak Language is a Second Circle talent for Swordmasters. Consulting the **Talent Rank Cost Table**, the player sees that it will cost him 300 Legend Points to go from Rank 2 to Rank 3, then an additional 500 Legend Points to increase from Rank 3 to Rank 4. The total Legend Point cost for the increase in ranks is 800 points. The player spends the points, subtracting them from his Current Legend Points total, then changes the Character Record Sheet to show his Speak Language talent at Rank 4.*

•A Nethermancer's player decides to improve his character's Spirit Hold talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6. Spirit Hold is a Fifth Circle talent for Nethermancers, and costs 2,100 Legend Points to improve to Rank 6. The player notices that the character has only 2,060 Current Legend Points, not quite enough to increase the talent rank from 5 to 6. The character must earn a few more Legend Points before the player can afford the increase in rank.

TALENT RANK COST TABLE

Talent Rank	Circle 1-4	Circle 5-8	Circle 9-12	Circle 13-15
1	100	200	300	500
2	200	300	500	800
3	300	500	800	1,300
4	500	800	1,300	2,100
5	800	1,300	2,100	3,400
6	1,300	2,100	3,400	5,500
7	2,100	3,400	5,500	8,900
8	3,400	5,500	8,900	14,400
9	5,500	8,900	14,400	23,300
10	8,900	14,400	23,300	37,700
11	14,400	23,300	37,700	61,000
12	23,300	37,700	61,000	98,700
13	37,700	61,000	98,700	159,700
14	61,000	98,700	159,700	258,400
15	98,700	159,700	258,400	418,100

INCREASING SKILL RANKS

Characters can also use Legend Points to buy skill ranks. Though similar to talents, gaining skill ranks differs from gaining talent ranks in the following ways:

•No character can increase a skill beyond Rank 10.

•Increasing the rank of a skill requires the character to undertake a number of days (8 hour sessions) of training equal to the rank purchased, rather than meditating as would be done with a talent. Training must be from someone who is better at the skill than the character is, and the teacher can train only up to their level in the skill. For example, improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires 4 days of training from a teacher who had the skill at least Rank 4.

•Skills take practice. A character must practice for a number of weeks equal to the number of ranks purchased. For example, improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires 4 weeks of practice after training for 4 days. The character is allowed to use the skill at the new level during their practice with it. Characters who fail to practice on a regular basis may have to be re-taught the skill. They do not have to re-spend Legend Points for it, although they may have to re-pay for an irritated teacher's time.

•In addition to Legend Points spent on the new skill rank, training to improve a character's skills costs money. An average cost of training per day is silver pieces equal to 25 x rank purchased. This cost may increase to as much has 100 x rank purchased in silver pieces if a character requires tutoring under difficult conditions, or could cost as little as 10 x rank if there is a large class with a good teacher available.

The Legend Point cost for purchasing skill ranks appears in the **Skill Rank Cost Table**, p. 246.

Dvon Runemaster wants to improve her Artisan Skill (Wood Carving) from Rank 2 to Rank 3. She must first have 500 Legend Points available. She would then have to train for 3 days with a teacher who had Woodcarving at least Rank 3. This would cost her, on average, 225 silver pieces (25 silver x rank 3

x 3 days). Finally, she would have to practice carving for the next 4 weeks. Dvon's player decides she spends time every night around the fire whittling before she goes to bed.

Aonra the Unlucky wants to improve his Melee Weapons skill from rank 4 to rank 5. He must first have the 1,300 Legend Points available. He would then have to train for 5 days. Aonra is able to find an army Sergeant who is willing to train him with the rest of his soldiers, and thus only charges him 250 silver. Unluckily for Aonra, he has both arms broken in a bar fight right after leaving training, and is unable to practice for the first few weeks. This means when he gets out of the Olzim temple of Garlan he's going to have to go back and re-train.

SKILL RANK COST TABLE

Rank of Skill	Legend Point Cost
1	200
2	300
3	500
4	800
5	1,300
6	2,100
7	3,400
8	8,900
9	14,400
10	23,300

PURCHASING KARMA POINTS

All characters can use Karma, the raw magical energy that runs through the world of **Earthdawn**. Characters can use Karma Points to enhance the possibility of success for certain actions, and can purchase Karma Points with Legend Points. To find the Legend Point cost of Karma based on your character's race, consult the **Karma Table** in **Creating A Character**, p. 44. Once per day, a character can purchase Karma Points up to a maximum equal to his Karma Ritual Rank by performing his Karma Ritual (see **Disciplines**, p. 52). As the character performs the half-hour ritual, he pays the Legend Point cost for the number of Karma Points he wants to purchase. Once he has completed the ritual, the character adds the Karma Points to his Current Karma in the **Karma** section of his Character Record Sheet.

*Seethian, a windling Thief, has a Karma Ritual Talent Rank of 2. When he begins his daily Karma Ritual, he must pay Legend Points to gain his maximum of 2 Karma Points. Consulting the **Karma Table**, p. 44, his player sees that 2 Karma Points cost Seethian 10 Legend Points. After Seethian completes the half-hour ritual, he adds 2 Karma Points to his Current Karma.*

WEAVING THREADS

Characters can also use Legend Points to weave magical threads. Characters who have put the necessary experience and effort, represented by the Legend Points, into weaving these threads can then attach them to True Patterns of people, places, or items. For an in-depth explanation of how to use Legend Points to weave magical threads, see **Workings of Magic**, p. 137.

TALLYING LEGEND POINTS

Each time the gamemaster awards your character Legend Points, record the number in the Current Legend Points space on your Character Record Sheet. You must have enough Legend Points available to pay the full cost for any of the previously described improvements. You cannot pay Legend Points in installments.

CURRENT LEGEND POINTS

As you spend the Legend Points your character earns, keep a running total of how many points remain. For example, if your character has earned 1,000 Legend Points, and spends 300 of them to increase one of your talent ranks, your character has 700 Legend Points remaining. Each time you spend Legend Points, update your character's Legend Point total by subtracting the points spent from the total. Record your character's running total of Legend Points in the **Current Legend Points** space on the Character Record Sheet.

TOTAL LEGEND POINTS

In addition to keeping a running total, which will rise and fall as you earn and spend Legend Points, you should also keep a grand total of all the Legend Points your character has ever earned. Record this number in the **Total Legend Points** space on your Character Record Sheet. Your character's Total Legend Points determine his Legendary Status.

Thom Hammerblade just returned home from his most recent successful adventure. He earned 1,200 Legend Points for this venture into the unknown. Before this adventure, Thom had a running total of 300 Current Legend Points and a grand total of 2,000 Total Legend Points. By adding the 1,200 points he just earned to both totals, Thom now has 1,500 Current Legend Points and 3,200 Total Legend Points. If Thom's player decides to spend 500 points to increase the rank of one of Thom's talents, his Current Legend Points would drop to 1,000, but his Total Legend Points would remain at 3,200.

ADVANCING TO HIGHER CIRCLES

There is only one way for a character to advance to the next higher Circle of his Discipline: he must reach a certain level of achievement in his current abilities. In other words, characters who improve the right number of talents to high enough ranks can advance to the next Circle of their Discipline. Such advancement allows characters to purchase new talents. For example, a Wizard who reaches Second Circle can spend Legend Points to purchase ranks in his Second Circle talents: Durability, Evidence Analysis, and Spell Matrix. Beginning at Fourth Circle, most Disciplines also automatically improve one or more of a character's Characteristics (see **Disciplines**, p. 53; see also **Determine Characteristics** in **Creating A Character**, p. 42).

CONDITIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT

A character must fulfill three conditions in order to advance to his next Circle. The character must have a certain number of talents, which must be at certain ranks, and at least one of those minimum-ranked talents must come from his current Circle. The **Circle Advancement Table**, below, provides the specific parameters for advancing through the Circles. The necessary elements for advancement listed on the table are described below.

Minimum Number of Talents: The character must have a certain number of talents to advance to a given Circle. The table below shows, for example, that a Third Circle character must have at least 7 talents before advancing to Fourth Circle.

Minimum Rank: The character must hold a certain rank in each talent. According to the table below, each of a Third Circle character's 7 minimum talents must be at least Rank 4 in order for that character to advance to Fourth Circle.

Single Talent from Circle Number: The character must have at least one talent from his current Circle at the minimum rank listed on the table. For example, the table shows that to go from Third Circle to Fourth Circle, at least one of the character's Rank 4 talents must be from Third Circle.

CIRCLE ADVANCEMENT TABLE

New Circle	Minimum # of Talents	Minimum Rank	Single Talent from Circle #
2	5	2	1
3	6	3	2
4	7	4	3
5	8	5	4
6	9	6	5
7	10	7	6
8	11	8	7
9	12	9	8
10	13	10	9
11	14	11	10
12	15	12	11
13	16	13	12
14	17	14	13
15	18	15	14

TRAINING

In addition to meeting the talent rank and number requirements to advance to a new Circle, characters must also seek training. Characters can train for a higher Circle in three ways: paying for training by another member of the Discipline, taking the Training Pledge, or summoning a Ghost Master.

Paying For Training

To advance one Circle, a character must train under the guidance of a member of his Discipline of a Circle equal to or higher than the Circle the character wishes to attain. For example, a character trying to become a Third Circle Troubadour must train with a Troubadour of Third Circle or higher. The character must train for 40 hours within a three-week period. If the character does not complete 40 hours of training within that time, he loses the benefits of the training and must start all over again. Naturally, he must also pay again for his trainer's time. The averages suggested in the table below offer players a guideline for determining likely training costs, though most instructors are willing to negotiate their fees. For example, a character who performed a substantial favor for an instructor might have his fee cut by 25 percent. On the other hand, an instructor who dislikes the trainee might raise his fee by 25 percent, or simply refuse to train the character.

TRAINING COST TABLE

Instructor's Circle	Cost
2	200
3	300
4	500
5	800
6	1,000
7	1,500
8	2,000
9	2,500
10	3,500
11	5,000
12	7,500
13	10,000
14	15,000
15	20,000

Note: Training Costs are in silver pieces.

The Training Pledge

A character may meet the qualifications to advance one Circle but lack the silver needed to purchase training. For example, a character who finds himself ready to advance while in the company of a qualified instructor may realize that he just cashed in his latest loot and sent the silver off to his mother. Unable to pay for training, such a character may decide to take the Training Pledge.

An oath requiring blood magic, the Training Pledge allows a character to request training from an instructor whom he pays not with money, but with commitment. The prospective trainee must ask to take the Training Pledge; no instructor may encourage a character to take the oath. A character cannot ask to take the Training Pledge with an instructor who has shown him hostility, or toward whom he has been hostile (see **Gamemaster Characters** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 329). Because the Training Pledge also requires a commitment from the instructor, and because he receives no money for his time, an instructor can ask a trainee to revoke his request, but must honor the request for the Training Pledge if the trainee persists. The character who takes the Training Pledge may continue to train with that instructor without either renewing his Pledge or paying in silver, provided that the instructor is of a sufficiently high Circle and the character meets the requirements to advance to a new Circle.

The Training Pledge uses an enchanted orichalcum piece called the Pledge Coin. The coin is created by taking a simple copper piece and placing it between teacher and student (alternatively, if the teacher has a pledge coin of their own, they may use their coin rather than a copper piece). The instructor lets 7 drops of his blood fall on the coin,

and the trainee lets fall 5 drops of blood. The two characters meditate together until the blood dries. The instructor then meditates alone for 1 hour, until the magic in the coin absorbs the blood. At the end of the hour, the instructor gives the Pledge Coin to the trainee as the trainee repeats the following oath:

"I shall see the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor sees it. I shall practice the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor practices it. I shall teach the wisdom of my Discipline as my instructor taught me."

At this point the coin glows briefly, and veins of the magical metal orichalcum become present. From this point on there is no turning back from the Training Pledge. The instructor and trainee then begin the standard training process. The Circle at which the trainee takes the pledge becomes his Pledge Circle; keep track of this Circle by noting it on the Character Record Sheet.

The character who trains for and advances to the next Circle of his Discipline by taking the Training Pledge must abide by the following three conditions:

•He must never ask a trainee to take the Training Pledge from him. Such a request must always come from the trainee.

•He must honor the Training Pledge whenever another character of his Discipline requests it. However, a character need not accept a Training Pledge from characters not of his Discipline. For example, a Weaponsmith need not accept a Training Pledge from an Archer who wishes to become a Weaponsmith.

•He may only give up his Pledge Coin by passing it on to another trainee making a Training Pledge. If the character loses the Pledge Coin, or someone steals it from him, he has 7 days to retrieve the coin before the blood enchantment invokes the penalty described below for breaking the conditions of the Pledge. If the character intentionally spends the coin or disposes of it in some other fashion, they automatically suffer the penalty described below.

A character who breaks any one of these conditions loses all talent ranks gained in Circles higher than his Pledge Circle, and is marked as an oathbreaker. For example, if a Sixth Circle Swordmaster who took the Training Pledge at Third Circle is stripped of all his possessions by a vindictive river pirate (and thus loses the Pledge Coin), he must retrieve the coin within 7 days or lose all ranks in his Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Circle talents. He keeps any talent ranks gained in First, Second, or Third Circle talents and reverts to a Third Circle character, possessing only the talents, characteristics, and so on available to that Circle. To advance to higher Circles, he must start over again from Third Circle by purchasing training, taking the Training Pledge, or training with a Ghost Master. He must also wait a year and a day to heal the oathbreaker marks.

Obviously, anyone who has trained via a Training Pledge would be eager to pass on their Pledge Coin and be free from the risk that it would be stolen or lost. Because Pledge Coins become imbued with orichalcum they are extremely valuable and make characters targets for robbery. This poses multiple problems because they cannot suggest that a trainee take the Training Pledge without breaking their oath, and even letting others know that they posses a Pledge Coin could be dangerous.

Pledge Coins contain orichalcum worth the equivalent of the training cost of the character who made the pledge to train someone else. For example: a Pledge Coin held by the Third Circle Warrior Farquin Sald is worth 300 silver, if sold and melted down for its orichalcum. If Sald passed it along to a Second Circle Warrior during training, the Pledge Coin would now be worth only 200 silver. If Sald advanced to Fourth Circle the Pledge Coin would now be worth 500 silver, regardless of whether or not Sald advanced to Fourth Circle through the Training Pledge.

Ghost Masters

Characters may also use the unusual method of training for a higher Discipline Circle through a Ghost Master. Ghost Masters are deceased Adepts who achieved a certain mastery of a Discipline before dying. In centuries past, Nethermancers learned to contact the spirits of Discipline masters who had passed on, and to bargain with these dead masters for instruction in their Discipline. Over time, the ritual of the Ghost Masters spread to other Disciplines, and now all Disciplines have access to Ghost Masters.

In order to train with a Ghost Master, a character must first learn the Name of a Ghost Master whose Circle at least equals the Circle to which the character wants to advance. Most known Names remain secret, kept so by high-ranking members of each Discipline. Other Names remain locked away in kaers and citadels, awaiting discovery by lucky adventurers. Learning a Ghost Master's Name often proves the most difficult part of training with one. Finding the Name, or a person who knows the Name, may be an adventure in itself. Characters who know a Ghost Master's Name rarely reveal such valuable information for free – and the payment they ask may not be in silver.

To train with a Ghost Master, a character must have an orichalcum coin free of any enchantments, and must learn the proper summoning ritual. The Ritual of the Ghost Master described below is a modified Nethermantic ritual available as a talent at Fifth Circle; any character of Fifth Circle or greater can learn this ritual. Each Discipline has a variant of the ritual, and a character must learn the ritual from another character.

To summon a Ghost Master, the character must perform the ritual at night. He begins by drawing a circle around himself on the ground and spends 1 hour within the circle, mimicking the use of each of his talents. At the end of the hour, the character closes his eyes and speaks the Name of the Ghost Master he wishes to summon. He then makes a Ritual of the Ghost Master Test using the Ghost Master's Spell Defense as the Difficulty Number. On a successful test result, the Ghost Master appears. If the test result is less than the Difficulty Number but equals 5 or more, the Ghost Master does not appear, but the character has opened a portal to astral space that remains for a number of rounds equal to the Ritual Test result. The character has no control over the portal; other entities or Horrors may pass through the opening in astral space. If the test result is 4 or less, the ritual has no effect.

The first time the character summons a Ghost Master, he must hand the master the orichalcum coin. After accepting the coin, the Ghost Master returns to his own world. After three or more nights have elapsed, the character resummons the Ghost Master. When the Ghost Master reappears, the character enters into a Training Pledge with him by taking back the orichalcum coin, enchanted by the master to serve as a Pledge Coin. The Ghost Master trains the character whenever summoned, but fades away at daybreak. As with any other training process, the character learning from a Ghost Master must complete 40 hours of training within three weeks of accepting the Pledge Coin. If he does not finish his training within that time, he must begin again. The character can continue to train with the same Ghost Master each time he meets the requirements to advance to a new

Circle, as long as the Ghost Master is of a sufficiently high Circle. The Training Pledge taken with a Ghost Master carries the same obligations as the standard Training Pledge, except that a character cannot train other characters as a Ghost Master.

A character may perform the Ritual of the Ghost Master as a talent only once per day. See **Talents** for an explanation of the following talent description.

Ritual of the Ghost Master

Step: Rank + Perception Step
Action: Yes **Requires Karma:** Yes
Strain: 2 **Discipline Talent:** All

REACHING THE NEXT CIRCLE

Once a character meets the talent and rank requirements and completes the necessary training, he advances to the next Circle of his Discipline. This move entitles him to use Legend Points to purchase any talents available at the new Circle. On the Character Record Sheet, the player notes any improvements to his character's Characteristics granted at the new Circle (see **Disciplines**, p. 53, for a list of improvements to Characteristics).

LEARNING NEW DISCIPLINES

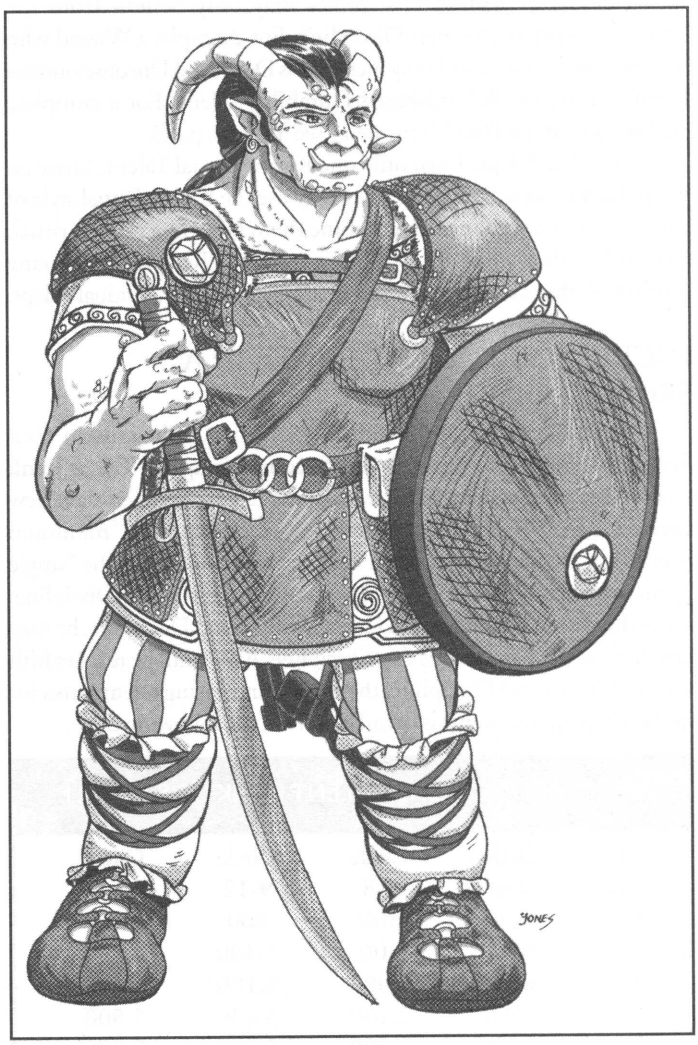
Your character can learn a second Discipline, though not easily. A character who decides to learn an additional Discipline must attempt to master the training methods of each, both usually based on two distinct philosophies. Before a character may attempt to learn another Discipline, they must be competent and well versed in their first Discipline. As a result, a character must have achieved at least Fifth Circle in their first Discipline before embarking on another.

To learn a new Discipline, a character must study that Discipline's First Circle talents with another character of that Discipline. However, a character need not relearn talents from the second Discipline that he already knows from his first Discipline. For each talent that he wishes to learn, the character must study with the teacher for 40 hours per week. A character learning two or more talents may spend considerable time training, but must study at least 80 hours per month to continue making progress. If a character fails to study for the new Discipline at least 80 hours a month, the training fails and the character must start over.

Not all combinations of teacher and student are able to successfully train a character in another Discipline. Characters who are too rigid, or who's world views do not coincide on major topics are unable to form the bond necessary to instruct a character in a second Discipline.

Farquin Sald, now a Warrior of the Fifth Circle, continues to search for the perfect understanding of combat. Having decided he must understand both himself and his weapons, he searches out a Weaponsmith to train him in that Discipline. Sald has already learned the First Circle Weaponsmith talents of Melee Weapons and Karma Ritual during his First Circle Warrior training, and he likewise learned Avoid Blow during his later training. This means he must learn the talents Forge Blade, Steel Thought, and Item History. To learn these three talents he must actively train with a Weaponsmith for 120 hours. He may then buy Forge Blade, Steel Thought, and Item History using Legend Points, at which point be becomes a First Circle Weaponsmith.

While it appears Sald possesses the right frame of mind to train in a second Discipline, he will have to find a Weaponsmith who shared his desire to understand combat. A Weaponsmith who focused on research or craftsmanship as their central goal would probably not be able to bridge the gap between Sald's Warrior understanding of the world and the ways of the Weaponsmith. Fortunately for Sald, he has met a ork scorcher who serves as her tribe's Weaponsmith and tactical leader. Sald's gamemaster determines that this would be an appropriate match of teacher and student.



A character learning a new Discipline must buy all the First Circle talents for that Discipline at Rank 1, and have enough Legend Points available to buy all the First Circle talents simultaneously. The cost of purchasing the new talents is determined as if the character was advancing to the next rank in his own Discipline, and all of the talents came from the highest possible Circle.

For Sald to go from Rank 5 to Rank Six in one of his Fifth Circle Talents (the highest rank currently available to him) would cost 2,100 Legend Points. There are three new talents he must

learn to become a Weaponsmith, for a total of 6,300 Legend Points. When he spends these Legend Points after training, he will have the three new Talents each at rank 1.

If Sald waits until he is Eight Circle to train as a Weaponsmith, each new talent would cost 8,900 Legend Points, for a total of 26,700 Legend Points. If he waited until he is Ninth Circle, each new talent would cost 23,300 Legend Points, for a total of 69,900 Legend Points. After looking at this, Sald's player decides that there's no time like the present.

DURABILITY AND KARMA RITUAL TALENTS

A character adding Disciplines may only benefit from the Durability talent of his first Discipline. For example, a Wizard who became a Sky Raider could only increase his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings using his Wizard-based Durability talent. For a complete explanation of the Durability talent, see **Talents**, p. 93.

Likewise, Adepts learn only one Karma Ritual Talent. Once an Adept learns a new Discipline, they may use the Karma Ritual style of either of their disciplines, or combine them to form a unique ritual. Remember that while all Discipline's Karma Rituals share many similarities, they also reflect the personal beliefs of the individual Adept.

INCREASING TALENT RANKS IN A SECOND DISCIPLINE

Adepts advance in their second Discipline as they did in their first, but according to the following **Second Discipline Talent Rank Cost Table**. Adepts who have overlapping talents between their new Discipline and first one may count those talents toward the "minimum number of talents" necessary for circle advancement, but the "single talent from current circle" must always come from the new Discipline. Until the character reaches fifth Circle in his second Discipline, he may not increase the Circle of his first Discipline. Also, until he reaches fifth Circle in his second Discipline, the cost for increasing talent ranks for his first Discipline talents is calculated from the following table.

SECOND DISCIPLINE TALENT RANK COST TABLE

Talent Rank	Circle 2-4	Circle 5-8	Circle 9-12	Circle 13-15
1	300	500	800	1,300
2	500	800	1,300	2,100
3	800	1,300	2,100	3,400
4	1,300	2,100	3,400	5,500
5	2,100	3,400	5,500	8,900
6	3,400	5,500	8,900	14,400
7	5,500	8,900	14,400	23,300
8	8,900	14,400	23,300	37,700
9	14,400	23,300	37,700	61,000
10	23,300	37,700	61,000	98,700
11	37,700	61,000	98,700	159,700
12	61,000	98,700	159,700	258,400
13	98,700	159,700	258,400	418,100
14	159,700	258,400	418,100	676,500
15	258,400	418,100	676,500	1,094,600

LEGENDARY STATUS

Legendary Status derives from a character's Total Legend Points, and reflects the general public awareness of that character or group of characters. Tales of a character's adventures spread across Barsaive until his Legendary Status rises so high that people recognize his Name in virtually every city. The increasing Legendary Status of an adventuring group gives the group a reputation for prowess, and cities and towns in need of heroes may ask or hire them to undertake ever more daring missions and adventures.

As characters earn Legend Points in **Earthdawn**, their heroic reputation spreads throughout Barsaive. People hear tales of their exploits and sing songs of their adventures, and remember the characters' Names. Each character's heroic deeds begin to build his Legend, allowing the characters to attain ever-higher levels of Legendary Status.

STATUS LEVELS

Each Legendary Status Level marks a substantial increase in the character's fame (or infamy) across Barsaive. The following guidelines suggest ways for gamemasters to use different levels of Legendary Status.

Level 1

Level 1 characters enjoy a reputation only in Barsaive's most heavily populated areas, or amongst a small sector of people. Most prominent people in cities regard Level 1 characters as heroic, but the general population remains oblivious to their daring exploits.

Level 2

Characters who earn a Level 2 Legendary Status are well known in most major population centers (Throal, Kratas, and Iopos) and by many people in smaller cities such as Jerris or Travar. Though many merchants and businessmen know of the character, the populace at large has not yet heard his Name. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 2 character adds 1 step to the step number of all Interaction Tests (see **Gamemaster Characters** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 329).

Level 3

Level 3 characters enjoy widespread fame in all of Barsaive's major cities as well as many of the smaller cities and towns. Even in some of the small villages that dot the countryside, a few people tell tales of these characters' exploits. Characters of Level 3 Legendary Status can use that status to their advantage. They often receive reduced prices on goods and services just for the asking, and may be able to request important favors more easily than lesser characters (see **Gamemaster Characters**, p. 329). When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 3 character adds 2 steps to the step number for all Interaction Tests.

Level 4

Everyone in Barsaive has at least heard the name of a character who gains Level 4 Legendary Status. The Kingdom of Throal often courts characters of Level 4 Status in the hope of convincing them to perform dangerous tasks for King Neden. Level 4 characters often maintain castles or strongholds in or near their favorite cities. When traveling, they often receive offers of free lodging or other services from individuals eager to boast that the famous character stayed at his inn,

ate at his table, bought boots from him, and so on. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 4 character adds 3 steps to the step number for all Interaction Tests.

Level 5

Level 5 characters are the living legends of **Earthdawn**. Virtually everyone knows of these characters and their heroic deeds, and more people claim to have known, seen or adventured with these characters than is possible by any race's standards. Some examples of Level 5 characters are Nioku, the famed troll Archer, and Naaman Y'ross, a hero who fought the Horrors before the Scourge and who some believe still lives. When using social talents or skills against a character who knows of him, a Level 5 character adds 5 steps to the step number of all Interaction Tests.

All bonuses should be modified by other character's ability to recognize the legendary character in question. If the character is intentionally trying to disguise himself (to sneak into a Theran encampment for example), his difficulty to pass himself off as someone other than who his is should be negatively modified by his Legendary Status.

As a character's Legend Point total increases, he attains higher levels of Legendary Status. The **Legendary Status Table** below shows the minimum Total Legend Points for each Legendary Status Level.

LEGENDARY STATUS TABLE

Legendary Status	Minimum Legend Points
Level 1	10,000
Level 2	40,000
Level 3	160,000
Level 4	640,000
Level 5	2,560,000

PRICE OF FAME

Though a high level of Legendary Status affords a character both minor and major benefits, fame often carries a price. People often expect heroic characters to act for the common good despite the personal risks. Consciously or unconsciously, they believe that heroes should put their own interests and needs aside and work to help the people of Barsaive, no matter what the cost. Most villages and small towns will recognize a character of Level 3 Legendary Status or better and ask him or her for help in time of trouble. Communities of this size may even seek out a hero to solve their problems. Though heroes often do act this way (most of them, too, believe in the classic definition of a hero), sometimes a character needs to act for himself. The conflict between personal interests and the interests of others can pose a dilemma for a character who has achieved Legendary Status.

Thom Hammerblade has achieved a Legendary Status of Level 3. He is traveling home to the Throal Mountains after a long, dangerous adventure. He suffered serious injuries fighting a Horror and an army of its minions, and hopes to rest for a few days in a village along the way.

The day after he arrives in the village, one of the citizens is found dead, apparently killed during the night by a fearsome beast. Thom really needs to recuperate, but the village citizens assume that, despite his weariness and wounds, a hero of Thom's status will immediately come to their aid.

Wounded and battle-weary, Thom is facing one disadvantage of his heroic status, and must make a tough decision.



BARSAIVE



The trolls raid the dwarfs,
The dwarfs dislike the elves.
The elves have no patience with humans,
and the humans war with each other.
But everyone hates the Therans.
— Old Barsaivian proverb

The following information is excerpted from the Throalic Encyclopedia, TH 1512, compiled by the Library of Throal between 1415-1512.

Barsaive is our land as well as the land of our ancestors. Wondrous discoveries and perilous dangers abound in its vast expanses, which stretch from the Death's Sea to the Blood Wood, from the Aras Sea to The Wastes. Countless legends speak of Barsaive, yet much of our province remains unexplored and unexplained. Our ancestors call to us across a gulf of centuries, from the time before the Scourge. They tell us that the time has come for the heroes of Barsaive to rediscover the land, for us to rediscover ourselves. Our time is a time of legends, a time of courage, a time of heroes.

OVERVIEW

The province of Barsaive covers a huge expanse of land. Traveling from its southern boundary to its northern boundary would take a man 40 days on foot, 25 on horseback. Traveling from Barsaive's eastern edge to its western boundary would take him 60 days on foot, 38 on horseback.

Though the exact borders of the province are not clearly defined, most Barsaivians accept the following landmarks as Barsaive's boundary markers. The northern border ends at the Blood Wood, formerly called Wyrm Wood, where the Elf Queen Alachia presides over the Elven Court. The ocean of lava known as the Death's Sea, where legend says that Death himself lies imprisoned, bounds Barsaive on the south. A blighted area known as The Wastes marks Barsaive's western border. It includes the Poison Forest, a once-lush woodland believed to have been blasted and corrupted by Horrors during the Scourge. The Aras Sea bounds Barsaive on the east, a saltwater ocean that connects Barsaive to other lands beyond the Kingdom of Throal and the Theran Empire.

Though most of Barsaive has recovered from the Scourge, many small mountain ravines and patches of land in the plains and jungles remain barren. Thriving towns and fertile farmland often surround these blighted spots, making their presence all the more peculiar.

With the most recent war between Barsaive and Thera, the lands of Barsaive have changed once again. While not as drastic a change as the Scourge, the most recent war with Thera has left a noticeable mark on the face of Barsaive, particularly along the south-western border of Death's Sea.

THE LAND

The Scourge wrought terrible changes in the land of Barsaive, leeching forests and farmland of life and destroying cities, towns, and villages. In the century or so since the Scourge ended, more have dared to explore Barsaive's vast, untamed and unexplored tracts of land, but much of the information recorded here still comes from sources that are hundreds of years old. Though much of the world has fortunately recovered from the Scourge and returned to its natural state, none yet know for certain how much of Barsaive remains altered; from the explorations that have returned, it seems there are few, if any, places that remained untouched. These ancient accounts of Barsaive, even after being tempered with knowledge culled from adventures and travelers, may not be completely accurate.

LANDSCAPE

The landscape of Barsaive contains forests and jungles, plains, hilly and mountainous regions, as well as lakes and rivers. All four kinds of terrain can be found all over Barsaive. The plains and the hills and mountains both cover roughly a quarter of Barsaive, and jungles and forests cover the remaining half. The lakes and rivers cut across Barsaive leading to the seas. The few roads that cross this rugged terrain wind up and down hills and around the province's plateaus and mountains, making travel by even these established routes a difficult prospect. Traveling cross-country, off the main roads, poses a multitude of dangers to befall the unwary. Traveling along the rivers also holds many dangers, the least of which is drowning.

Plains

The plains of Barsaive stretch between the mountain ranges and jungles that cover most of the province. Low brush and small hills dot this vast expanse of land. Cities and towns have sprung up on the plains since the Scourge, and the countryside between the cities and mountains contains countless peoples, villages, and citadels.

Hills And Mountains

The hilly uplands of Barsaive stand well above the plains and forests. Smaller mountains rise from the uplands, to be dwarfed in turn by plateaus ranging from two to four times the mountains' height. More massive mountain ranges, most notably the Throal Mountains and the Twilight Peaks, tower over the plateaus. These mountains penetrate the clouds and command an imposing view of the surrounding countryside.

Caucavic Mountains: The Caucavic Mountains lie several days travel to the north-east of the Throalic kingdom. They have the reputation of being the most savage mountains in Barsaive, both in terrain and by the creatures that live in it. Rumors also place savage tribes, supposedly survivors of the Scourge, in this treacherous range.

Delaris Mountains: The Delaris Mountains are a stretch of mountains that extend from the south-eastern tip of the Poison Forest into the lands of Cara Fahd. Reportedly, there is an atmosphere of silence that blankets the mountains, dampening all sound, and making for an eerie, though at times peaceful, silence. These reportedly are the mountains where the Martyr Scholar, Elianar Messias, went to study, when he started work on the Books of Harrow. Several troll moots also make their homes along this mountain range.

Dragon Mountains: The Dragon Mountains lie in the far south-eastern edge of Barsaive, just on the edge of the Aras Sea. They earned their Name from tales that the great dragon Mountainshadow has his lair somewhere within. Other rumors and reports surround the mountains, from signs of small, dragonlike Name-givers, to a city of Name-givers that live in the protection of Mountainshadow; however, none have been proven.

Scol Mountains: The Scol Mountains are a harsh stretch of rock in the north-western area of Barsaive, close to the city of Iopos. The terrain and predators that live there are harsh, and extremely dangerous. However, the danger they represent pales in comparison to the troll raiders that make their homes in these mountains.

Scytha Mountains: The Scytha Mountains are a small range of mountains due north of Throal. Before the Scourge, these mountains held a kingdom that predated both Throal and Barsaive. It is said their

kaers and cities riddled the mountain-side, and that there are many intricate and winding tunnels through the mountains linking them together. However, during the Scourge, Scytha was breached; it is possibly due to those same interlocking catacombs that the Horrors were able to breach them so thoroughly. Now, the mountain is home to no-one but creatures and Horrors. Recent reports say it also houses great numbers of the insect-like invae, as well. The descendants of Scytha fled to Throal, and were granted sanctuary. Many wish to return and claim their rightful home by purging the taint of the Horrors from it.

Throal Mountains: The Throal Mountains, the largest range of mountains in Barsaive, provide a sharp contrast to the kingdom they conceal. Bleak, freezing, and treacherous, they are a dangerous place for travelers who seek to cross or explore the sprawling mountain range. The creatures that make their home in the mountains are often strange, and almost always dangerous to the unwary.

Thunder Mountains: The Thunder Mountains are the range of peaks that are located to due east of Travar. Their name comes from the loud, booming thunder that is heard from the peaks during certain months. Many stories and theories are proposed as to the reason for the thunder, but no conclusive evidence has been found to support any of them. While not terribly treacherous, the creatures that inhabit the mountains still give reason for any that travel through to be appropriately weary.

Twilight Peaks: The Twilight Peaks are a stretch of mountains on the north-eastern edge of the Death Sea. They are a fairly fertile stretch of mountains, with an active volcano in the eastern regions. Several moots of trolls make their home in the Twilight Peaks, and on the lush plains that extend from it to the north.

Tylon Mountains: The Tylon Mountains are near the very heart of Barsaive, west of Throal, and just to the north of Kratas. The Tylons boast the tallest peaks in Barsaive, and were named by the orks for their towering height. Many legends circulate about what could lie at the pinnacle of the peaks, but airships and adventurers to date have found nothing of note.

Jungles And Forests

According to ancient texts, tall, broad-leafed trees covered Barsaive before the Scourge, blocking sunlight from reaching the ground and keeping the forest floors clear of underbrush. The Scourge devastated Barsaive's woodlands, but natural growth enhanced by magic since the opening of the kaers and citadels has restored many of Barsaive's forests. The land teems with tall trees and thick underbrush, whether nourished by sunlight or not. Magicians and questors have endlessly debated the precise cause of this magical growth, but no one has yet found an answer.

Today, Barsaive's jungles and forests contain a diverse range of trees. The tallest reach a height of 300 feet, rarely growing close enough together for their crowns to touch. Other trees stand 100 to 200 feet high and grow much closer together. These two tallest groups of trees form a canopy that blocks most of the province's forested regions from the view of airships.

Trees that stand 50 to 80 feet high form the most dense layer of Barsaivian forests, their trunks, branches, and foliage creating an almost solid canopy. The shortest trees, growing no higher than 40 feet from the ground, range from thin stands to impenetrable thickets. In areas with sparser growth a person can spot someone up to 160 feet away; in other locales, the foliage grows thick enough to render invisible an object only feet away from an observer. Woody-stemmed vines, many with brilliantly colored flowers that bloom year-round, twine around the trees and cover the jungle floors. Countless mosses also thrive in the forests, growing on trees and dead plants.



The forests and jungles also contain clearings, many the sites of ruined cities dating from before the Scourge. The largest and most renowned of these ruins is Parlainth, the former provincial capital of Barsaive, but legends tell of several other such ruins as well.

Blood Wood: The massive forest called the Blood Wood lies along Barsaive's northern boundary. Known as the Wyrm Wood before the Scourge, this forest holds the Elven Court ruled by the Elf Queen Alachia. Though the Elven Court was once the center of elven culture, the horrible mutilation to which the elves of the Wood subjected themselves to survive the Horrors caused many elves living outside the Blood Wood to forsake Alachia. They see her and her ilk as abominations, as monstrous as the Horrors themselves, and many scholars share this sentiment. Travelers who have visited the Blood Wood, however, often contend that the elves of the Wood remain a beautiful people, despite the horrible things they did to their bodies in order to survive the Scourge. The inhabitants of the Blood Wood remain capable of intricate magic; the Elf Queen's castle, built on a foundation of six Blood Trees, is still universally recognized as a wonder to behold.

Liaj Jungle: The Liaj Jungle is a thick mass of plant life to the east of Jerris. Just beyond the reach of the ash that rains from the Wastes upon Jerris and the Poison Forest, the Liaj is a verdant place, covering a good portion from Jerris to the Twilight Peaks. It is reported to be the

hunting grounds of the great dragon Usun; however, a more common danger is the large, predatory creatures that live under its canopy. There are also a group of Name-givers calling themselves the Tamers that have broken away from the civilization of their Barsaivan counterparts to live wild and feral in the jungle.

Poison Forest: The Poison Forest is actually a long stretch of jungle between Jerris and the Wastes. Once a place as verdant and green as the Liaj, something happened to it during the Scourge, and it now lies as a festering wound on the land of Barsaive. Everything in the forest is slowly dying. However, the Poison Forest is far from dead; while the creatures that live in it are a sad and twisted lot, slowly rotting as they die, life continues, and it is a dangerous place for any who enter it. Too much exposure to the Poison Forest and its creatures has been rumored to infect Name-givers with the same, listless, wasting disease. Many theories exist as to what exactly happened to the forest, ranging from a great curse that befell it during the Scourge, to the constant ash-fall that rains across it from the Wasteland. Whatever the reason, it is a place best avoided if possible.

Servos Jungle: The Servos Jungle is located just south of Throal, and covers a large section of the land. It is the second largest stretch of woodlands in Barsaive, next to the Blood Wood. A dark and eerie place, most of it still remains unexplored, though many t'skrang settlements run along the areas along the Serpent River, and there have been reports of some kaers that have resurfaced within the edges of the jungle. There are reports of some tribes of Name-givers that survived the Scourge simply under the canopy of the jungle; the rumors that go along with that is the price they probably paid, like the Blood Elves. There has been no proof of these tribes, however.

Lakes and Rivers

The waterways of Barsaive sustain it's people with a variety of fish and animal life for hunting as well as allows for travel and trade. However, they are not without their own dangers and their presence is some what of a mixed blessing.

Serpent River: The Serpent River passes through all of Barsaive, winding its way from the far north to the Death's Sea in the south. Four miles wide at most points, the Serpent can only be crossed by magical means or in a well-designed ship. The Serpent's banks contain the most fertile soil in Barsaive, and countless villages and towns dot the long, wide river valley.

The reptilian t'skrang, who live in underwater towns and sail the Serpent in their riverboats, control and conduct most of the trade on the river. Many t'skrang have trade agreements with the dwarf Kingdom of Throal and work to promote unity among the people along the Serpent. Other t'skrang captains turn pirate, using their ships for raiding.

Lake Ban: Lake Ban is the largest freshwater lake in Barsaive, located almost exactly midway between Throal and Urupa, and is a major crossroads in the Serpent River. It is home of the t'skrang trading House V'strimon, and has been a major economical and cultural crossroads for the people and traders of Barsaive alike.

Lake Vors: Where Lake Ban is the largest freshwater lake, Lake Vors is the deepest. It is located about midway from the Scol mountains, running along the Serpent river towards the Throal mountains. The lake is quite cold from the waters coming down the Scol mountains, and is a major source of the t'skrang trading House Ishkarat's rare freshwater fish trade. There are several small villages that have formed along its borders.

Aras Sea: The Aras Sea is a large salt-water sea that makes up Barsaive's eastern border. While Barsaive generally believes that there are places beyond the Aras Sea, no exploration has been done. Another deterrent to the exploration of the Aras Sea are the sudden and violent storms that can crop up in its waters with little to no warning; storms of such size that even airships are hard pressed to rise above them. Then there are the rumors of the giant creatures that live in its deeper waters, and their taste for Name-givers, as well as Horrors that live in the deep.

Death's Sea: The Death's Sea, an ocean of molten stone, forms Barsaive's southern border. Sand dunes line the shore, and the sea's intense heat prevents anyone except elementals, Horrors, and the magically protected from traveling over it.

According to legend, Death itself resides in the sea, where the Passions imprisoned it ages ago. These same stories warn that Death's terrible thirst will one day be quenched when enough blood has been spilled on the earth, turning the ocean of fire to water and freeing Death to roam the land.

Since the fall of Sky Point and Vivane, many rumors abound that Death has risen again. There are many veterans of the war who swore that they saw the visage of Death rise up on the battlefield, though there are as many who deny it, and more that simply refuse to speak of it. Rumors have been floating in, however, of a shifting of the heat near the borders of the Death Sea.

Scarlet Sea: The Scarlet Sea is linked to the Death's Sea by a small tributary. The sea has been claimed by a Theran airship, named the *Firespawn*, and her crew, and they protect their exclusive rights to the elemental mining that is found there.

CLIMATE

The Scourge caused Barsaive's temperatures and rainfall to shift drastically and frequently, leaving the landscape devoid of living vegetation. Once the Scourge ended, the land's flora began regenerating at a phenomenal rate, and the climate stabilized to its current temperate state. The average annual temperature in the province remains moderate, rising to somewhat uncomfortable levels during the warm season and dropping only slightly during the cool season. The higher mountain regions experience cooler temperatures than the rest of the land, though the lower hill areas experience temperatures much like those in the plains and forests.

This stable climate has caused concern and speculation among Barsaive's scholars. The lack of a true "winter" season remains a mystery, and many believe it is the last vestige of the Scourge. However, the present climate has its benefits, as it enables farmers to grow crops year-round.

The first six months of the year comprise Barsaive's rainy season. Most of the province receives moderate rainfall of 40 to 60 inches per year, though southern Barsaive receives heavy rains. Most regions experience some precipitation throughout the year, except for areas along the Death's Sea that suffer from constant drought.

POPULATION

The so-called Name-giver races are scattered across Barsaive, with some members of each race gathered in enclaves and others living in areas of mixed racial populations. With the recent tragedy of Vivane, the death toll that war entailed, as well as the growing kingdom of Twiceborn in Parlainth, there has been a slight shift in the population

distribution of Barsaive in recent times. The table below lists the approximate distribution of the races throughout Barsaive, based on estimates garnered through years of traveling, and doctored by the losses incurred in the war. As yet, there has still been no complete census of Barsaive.

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF BARSAIVE

Race	Percent of Population
Dwarf	29
Ork	19
Human	15
Troll	12
Elf	10
T'skrang	8
Undead	5
Obsidiman	1
Windling	1

Population Distribution

In terms of population distribution, the province of Barsaive comprises three broad areas. The first, the Kingdom of Throal in the Throal Mountains, includes that kingdom's recently constructed cities and contains roughly 33 percent of Barsaive's population. On the slopes of the Throal Mountains, outside the gates of Throal, nomadic tribes eke out a living hunting game. Legends contend that some of these primitive peoples worship Mad Passions and Horrors. The lowlands, which include most of the province's jungles and plains as well as the Serpent River valley, provide a home to about half the population. The highlands include all of Barsaive's mountains and plateaus, except for the Throal Mountains that make up part of the Kingdom of Throal. The mountain regions shelter approximately 17 percent of Barsaive's people, including the troll crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks who pilot magically crafted airships through Barsaive's skies in search of villages to raid and Theran airships to plunder.

Of the people living in the lowlands, about a quarter live in the cities of Haven, Kratas, Iopos, Jerris, and Travar. Outside the cities, the great lowland jungles and plains of Barsaive contain only one fourth of the province's population. Most ork scorchers have gathered together in the south-western plains of Barsaive to form Cara Fahd, though few still live as nomadic riders who roam across the plains in primitive hunting bands and in organized, mercenary ork cavalries who sell their talents and strength to the highest bidder.

The undead population of Barsaive can be mainly found at two points; Twiceborn's kingdom beneath the streets of Parlainth, and Vivane, which is now a city full of undead due to the explosion of the Horror Cloud above it in the most recent war.

Although the Scourge ended nearly one hundred years ago and people may freely travel the land, most prefer to gather in large population centers. As a result, the population distribution of Barsaive remains fairly static.

GOVERNMENT

Formerly a province of the Theran Empire, Barsaive comprises several self-governing cities and towns, many of which have increasingly come under the influence of the dwarf Kingdom of Throal. Perceived as benevolent because the Council Compact by which they govern renounces slavery and espouses individual rights, the growing dwarf influence does not trouble most Barsaivians, though some question the dwarf kingdom's motive for gathering power in the province. Despite having lost both their attempts to take over since the Scourge ended and the fact they have no military outposts left in Barsaive proper, the Therans insist that Barsaive still belongs to their empire.

Though the individual practices of governments in Barsaive's cities, towns and villages may vary, most follow the guidelines of the Throalic Council Compact. Written in 1270 TH at the height of the Scourge, the Compact set out guidelines for a just and orderly post-Scourge society in which all races could conduct fair and peaceful trade. The widespread use of Throalic currency in Barsaive also illustrates the powerful influence of the kingdom, whose traders spearheaded the recovery of Barsaive when they reopened trade routes following the Scourge. Only a few Barsaivian municipalities continue to use Theran currency.

AREAS OF INTEREST

Most adventurers will journey through the following cities, towns, and regions of Barsaive during the course of their travels.

KINGDOM OF THROAL

The dwarf Kingdom of Throal lies to the northeast in the massive Throal Mountains, Barsaive's largest mountain range. King Neden I, the current king of Throal, rules over the five completed underground cities and two still under construction that comprise the kingdom. The subterranean kaers protected Throal's inhabitants and countless refugees during the Scourge, and each of these cities can hold a population of up to 25,000 at need. A full third of Barsaive's population has accepted the dwarf kingdom's open invitation to live in Throal and resides in the cities of Bethabal, Wishon, Tirtarga, Oshane and Yistane. The cities of Hustane and Valvria remain under construction. All of these multi-leveled cities boast large bazaars, as well as some of the finest inns and taverns in Barsaive.

Royal families who have sworn fealty to King Neden I rule these multiracial settlements, which spearhead the dwarf-led Barsaivian resistance to Theran attempts at occupation. Though most Barsaivians remain as strongly allied to Throal as they did during the Theran War, in which all of Barsaive's peoples united to repel a Theran attack on the dwarf kingdom, some have become suspicious of Throal's growing power. The mountain kingdom may one day itself become the site of battles for control of Barsaive.

BARTERTOWN

Originally a bazaar, Bartertown has become a sprawling city sitting outside the gates of Throal. Bartertown was founded by merchants who wished to take advantage of Throalic trade policies without becoming a part of the dwarf kingdom. Lacking formal city government to oversee planning, these traders built shops and homes wherever

they saw fit, giving the city a haphazard layout. Barsaivians claim that travelers can buy any good or service in Bartertown, if they look long and haggle hard enough.

PARLAINTH / HAVEN

The ancient ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire's provincial capital before the Scourge, grace Barsaive's far northeast corner. Knowledge of the city's existence mysteriously disappeared from the minds of Barsaive's population during the Scourge, and the city has only recently been rediscovered. Parlainth also goes by the name of the Forgotten City, a reference to its many splendors lost to time and the Scourge. The Forgotten City has become a mecca for adventurers, who seek the mysteries and priceless treasures hidden within its ruins. Even tales of the Horrors and other dreadful creatures that dwell in the city's catacombs have done little to dissuade these treasure seekers.

The small town of Haven lies at the southern edge of Parlainth. A trading village, Haven has become a staging area for explorers seeking Parlainth's treasures, and boasts a variety of goods that almost rivals the selection available in Bartertown. Haven's shops also occasionally offer goods from the nearby Blood Wood, though such items are usually difficult to obtain.

THE WASTES

Along Barsaive's western border lie The Wastes, an area inhabited by little more than monsters, Horrors, small plants and animals. Scholars believe the Horrors breached a higher percentage of kaers and citadels here than in any other region of Barsaive during the Scourge, and the area's former population never recovered.

Many believe The Wastes contain more undiscovered kaers and citadels than any other region of Barsaive because of this lack of population. This also would seem to explain the numerous bands of adventurers who enter The Wastes in search of ancient treasures and magical artifacts, despite the fact that few ever emerge.

Low clouds of gray dust continually swirl over The Wastes and extend over the Poison Forest and the city of Jerris.

JERRIS

The wealthy trading city of Jerris lies along Barsaive's western edge, between the Liaj Jungle on the city's east and the Poison Forest on the city's west. A perpetual cloud of black-gray smoke hangs over Jerris, floating in from The Wastes that lie just west of the Poison Forest. Many Horrors reportedly roam The Wastes, and rumors claim that the city suffers under a curse.

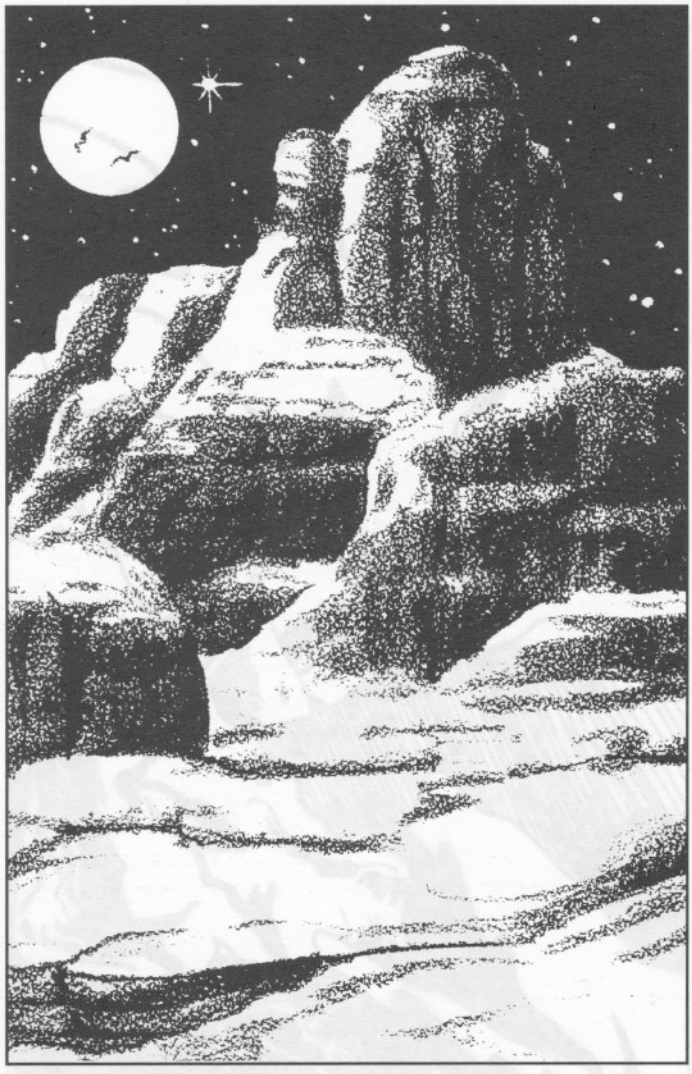
Once, the fiercely competitive group of trading houses acted as the de facto rulers of Jerris. Only issues vital to the city's livelihood motivated the magistrate to step in and take decisive action. In the most recent war, Iopos has moved into the city, and has now become the true de facto ruler. The war band that left Jerris to aid Throal in the war are now outcasts from their city, and are working to gather aid in reclaiming their home from the Iopans.

CARA FAHD

Cara Fahd is the recently reformed ork nation that seems to extend from the Delaris Mountains to the Twilight Peaks. The newly formed



nation has more than its share of problems; there is political strife within its tribes, as well as constant immigration of other orks in Barsaive or that have escaped Thera and wish to return to their ancestral home, causing more confusion and disunity. Though the Theran threat of Vivane and Sky Point have been removed, the losses incurred in the war were substantial, and could possibly affect the balance of power that Krathis Gron, the High Chief of Cara Fahd, has established. In addition to these matters, packs of undead have began to wander from the fallen city of Vivane to plague the souther border of Cara Fahd, as well as Landis.



LANDIS

Landis is a region of forest to the east of fallen Vivane that stretches to Death's Sea. Once a mighty nation before the Scourge, Landis squandered its resources fighting with Cara Fahd and in the Orichalcum Wars. Now, the people of Landis are more comprised of Name-givers that have migrated south from Barsaive or north away from the Theran tyranny than they are of native peoples. Some people of Landis trade with Thera, though their routes have been greatly harmed with the fall of Vivane, but most trade exclusively with Barsaive. Landis was the greatest buffer between Barsaive and Thera before the most recent war. However, the removal of this pressure has not helped; to take its place, Landis also suffers from the roving packs of undead that find their way from Vivane to the forests.

USTRECT

Ustrect is an area of plains and forest to the north of the Twilight Peaks. Before the Scourge, Ustrect had been a prosperous troll kingdom. However, during the Scourge, the entire kingdom sealed itself into one citadel. Exactly what the fate of the citadel was is unknown, but the kingdom is no more. There are some who seek to reclaim the land from the Horrors that have infested it, but as of yet their struggle has seen no substantial advance.

THE MIST SWAMPS

The Mist swamps are a stretch of swamps that make up the junction of where Death's Sea meets the Serpent River, at the end of the Scarlet Sea. The water in the air is extremely hot, and boils for a good mile or two, causing the ever-present, thick clouds of mist that have earned the area it's name. The Mist Swamps are a dangerous place to be; not simply from the constant heat, steam, and potentially scalding water, but from the strange creatures that are reported to live within its depths. Rumors abound that there are kaers or citadels of great wealth and knowledge within the Mist Swamps, but the expeditions that have made it back from the Mist Swamps have only had strange and harrowing tales of their experiences.

THE BADLANDS

East of the molten Death's Sea lies the blighted area known as The Badlands. Before the Scourge, this area contained some of Barsaive's richest farmlands. The Scourge turned the fertile fields into rocky hills and blasted heaths. The rugged terrain precludes all means of transportation save walking. Virtually uninhabited, the area is rumored to be the home of countless Horrors and other terrible creatures. Of the great number of heroes who enter the Badlands, few return from them alive.

KRATAS

Located almost exactly in the geographical center of Barsaive, Kratas is known as the Thieves' City. Almost all mercenary and illegal activities in Barsaive take place in Kratas, and some of Barsaive's most notable thieves and informants make their homes there. Garlthik One-Eye, the legendary ork Thief, controls the city through his gang, the Force of the Eye.

A veritable crossroads of information and stolen goods, adventurers can find almost any type of equipment or service in Kratas, though at a higher price than in any other Barsaivian city.

IOPOS

Located in the northwest corner of Barsaive, the city of Iopos is ruled by a powerful family of magicians called the Denairastas, who have held power since before the Scourge. Though their success at bringing the city through the Scourge earned the Denairastas the loyalty of most of Iopos' population, the magicians continue to rule with an iron hand, arresting and often killing dissidents. The Denairastas subject outsiders to the same drastic measures as city residents, and so visitors to Iopos are advised to keep any comments about the city's rulers to themselves.

In the years since the opening of the kaers that followed the Scourge, the Denairastas have repeatedly vowed to defeat both Thera and Throal and claim control of Barsaive. Though the magicians currently lack the power to accomplish such a feat, they continue to gather magical and mundane forces.

URUPA

Urupa is a trade city located on where the Serpent River empties into the Aras Sea. Formed from the joining of seven kaers that opened after the Scourge, Urupa is one of the newest seats of power in the lands of Barsaive, and one of the most successful. Because of its unique

founding, Urupa is also known as one of the most welcoming cities in Barsaive, not seeming to share its neighbors fears of outsiders. The city is located at the base of a sheer cliff, and maintains a standing army for its own defense, as well as to assist in guarding the merchants that sail along the river or march across the coast to make their deliveries. On rare occasions, goods from across the Aras Sea make their way into the ports of Urupa, which only serves to bolster its mercantile status.

TRAVAR

Of all of Barsaive's ancient cities, Travar alone has maintained its pre-Scourge splendor and grace. Its white marble towers and spires overlook the banks of a tributary of the Serpent River in southeast Barsaive. Travar's location provides excellent trade access to both the t'skrang and the kingdom of Throal, and ensures the city's prosperity.

Three magistrates rule Travar, each serving a three-year term. If a magistrate wishes to serve another term, he must win his position in the Founding, a tournament in which champions representing the magistrate and his would-be successors compete. The patron whose champion wins the Founding becomes a magistrate.

THE FREE CITY OF TRIUMPH

Just south of Lake Ban lies the Ayodhya Liferock. The Theran behemoth known as Triumph, while liberated from Thera, could not be removed from the Liferock. With the removal of the Therans and their magical engines, the elemental energy of the Liferock is no longer being drained, and it may eventually recover. At the signing of the T'skrang Free Trade Compact, an agreement between the t'skrang and the obsidimen of the Ayodhya Liferock was reached, naming the leader of the Liferock Rebellion, Omasu, as Overseer of the Triumph Free Port. Since then, Omasu has made the fortress the base of operations for the Overland Trading Company, and is now becoming a profitable trade city, with a growing population within the behemoth itself and beneath its shadow — an ironic sign of the newly won true independence of Barsaive.

SKY POINT

Sky Point was once of the few remaining Theran outposts in Barsaive. Now, it lies southwest of the city of the fallen city of Vivane, smashed to the ground atop the remains of the city of Vrontok. The pillars that supported Sky Point still stand, in various stages of having toppled, visibly marking for miles around the destruction caused by the most recent war. The ruins of Sky Point are still filled with the riches of the city, if they survived its explosive end. One major deterrent to looters are the Horrors and undead that have moved in with the death of Vivane.

THE UNDEAD CITY OF VIVANE

Once one of Barsaive's most beautiful cities and a testament to Theran power, Vivane now stands as a particularly harsh reminder to both sides that the Horrors have their own say in the lives and struggles of the Name-givers. With the explosion of the Horror Cloud above the city from the Theran magics summoned to power their city defenses, the entire population of the city has risen as various forms of undead. Not much else is known about the current condition of the inner city, but it is widely accepted that no one survived the fall of Vivane. The undead that now rule the streets of the city often spill out, and have become a major problem to the lands around them; Rugaria, Cara Fahd, and Landis.

THE THERAN EMPIRE

In the Selestrean Sea southwest of Barsaive lies the isle of Thera, seat of the Theran Empire that held sway over Barsaive in the years before the Scourge. The Scourge cost the Therans control of Barsaive, and the most recent war cost them the small area they had regained in the years that followed. There are now no Theran-controlled lands in Barsaive. The Theran influence now stops at the northern border of the Rugarian province, and with the struggle that the city of Bukara has undergone, has yet to try to spread further north in the southern reaches of Barsaive again. However, adventurers exploring the ruins of Sky Point and Vivane or the surrounding areas may still encounter Theran patrols and airships in these regions. The Therans rarely venture farther, but occasionally mercenaries will go beyond the ruins of Vivane into the Landis and Cara Fahd regions.

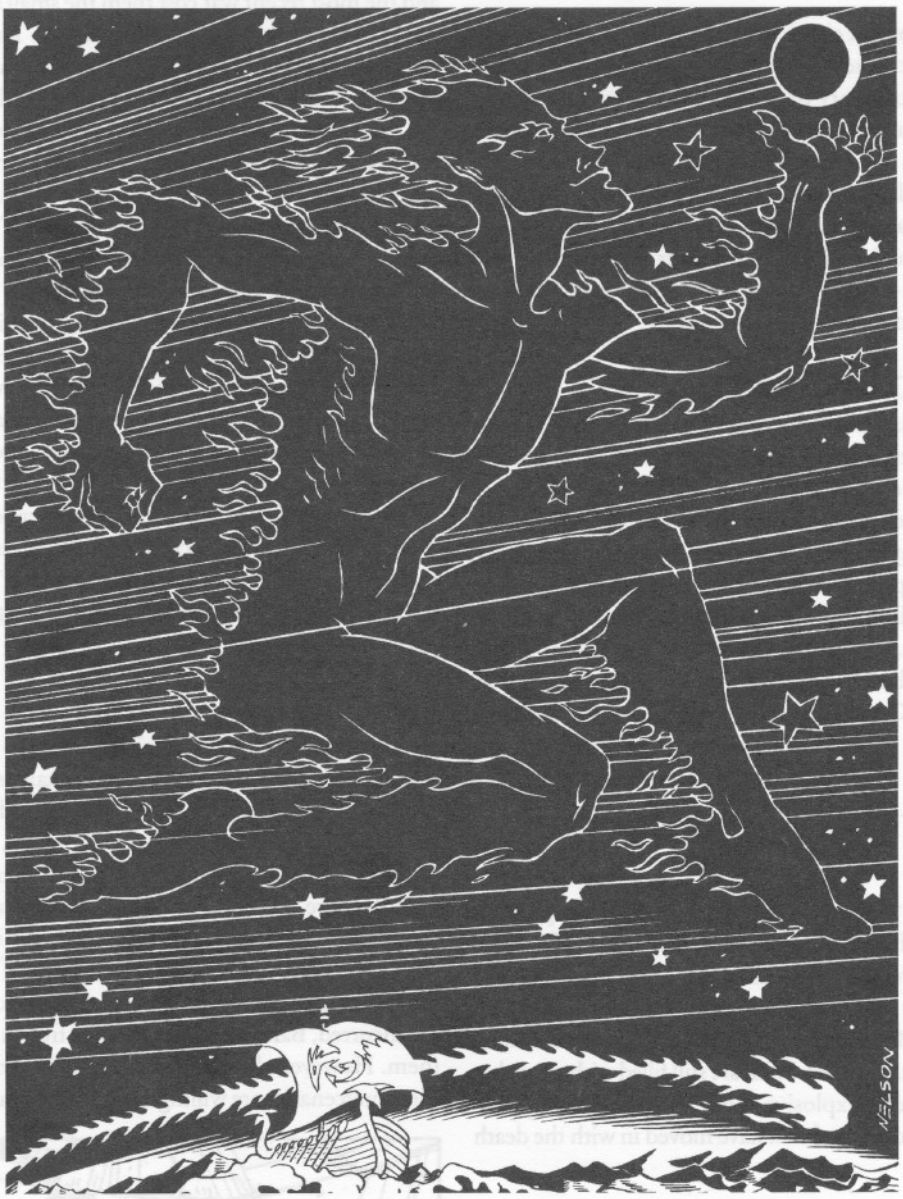
For the moment, the Therans are struggling to regain their balance after the fall of Sky Point and Vivane, and the slave uprising of Bukara. Rumors still place Theran spies in virtually every major Barsaivian city, as well as several of the larger towns and villages, but Theran activity has almost seemed to cease in the Barsaivan province. Now, the Therans pose no immediate threat to Barsaive, but the most recent war has taught the Barsaivians that Thera can never be counted as harmless. At the moment, Thera has decided that Barsaive is too expensive to attempt to retake, and has now turned its military focus in a more inward direction for the time, to make sure no other provinces attempt to take Barsaive's lead.

BUKARA

Bukara is now the closest Theran city to the province of Barsaive. Located in the Rugarian Province, Bukara is about ten days travel to the south-west of Vivane. The remainder of the Rugarian fleet stays near to, if not moored in, the city of Bukara, so that Thera can keep a military presence along the Barsaivan border. In the most recent war with Barsaive, the slaves of Bukara took advantage of the lessening of the garrison in Bukara (sent to back up Vivane and Sky Point) to attempt to rise up. Their attempt failed, and Bukara burned for three days afterwards. While the city struggles to recover from the damages it has incurred, Barsaive has little to fear from a coordinated attack from them. However, slaver merchants still hire mercenaries and some of these mercenaries are willing to go into Barsaive, seeking easy prey.



PASSIONS



Theologians assume that the power of the Passions comes directly from the will of those who hold them close to their hearts. Thus, during the war, when peoples hearts would turn to the Passions to give them support in their darkest hours, the Passions became strengthened. Although it would be possible for one Passion to become stronger than another, they share a close kinship for one another, and in previous times have tried to share the worship equally.

— Reston, human questor of Mynbruje

According to the words of sages and learned minds, the Passions exist between Name-givers and the universe. They are all the emotions, the ambition and the heart that we share with the world. The following is paraphrased from *"The Scripture of the Wind,"* a written essay undertaken by aalbot ro'ona, a troll student who dedicated his life to furthering the knowledge Name-givers have of the Passions that so often play a strong role in their lives. It also contains some references to the text which inspired him: *Men and the Passions: What Lies Beneath.*

The Passions shape the spiritual beliefs and customs of Barsaive's people. According to many of Barsaive's finest scholars, the Passions are living embodiments of the life force of the Universe, giving shape and form to the collective emotions and ideals of the world such as Love, Wealth, or Growth. As the Universe nurtures an adept to keep the energies of life alive in the world, so the Passions nourish the many people who cannot find the strength or patience to become adepts. The Passions serve as intermediaries between these common folk and the awesome power of the universe.

Most observers assume that what we know of the Passions holds true for the world outside Barsaive. With the arrival of the Earthdawn, we know this is not the case, though it is odd indeed that the Universe interacted with our world in different ways from place to place. Yet ours is an odd world, and perhaps the Universe's connection to it does change. Passions we know in Barsaive are not always recognized on the other side of the globe; other Passions as yet unknown take their place. Some maintain that men and women in distant lands know the same Passions but call them by different Names, or dress them in slightly different spheres. Whatever the truth, the reader will find in these pages an overview of all that we know of the Passions of Barsaive and beyond.

THE NATURE OF PASSIONS

Potent beings, the Passions have powers that outpace the magical talents of adepts. Though they exist on the physical plane, the Passions possess abilities that enable them to travel at incredible speeds, sometimes by traveling as winds, sometimes by taking the forms of eagles or hawks. Some can even transport themselves with a simple thought. Their abilities have often led them to comparisons with very powerful Horrors by their detractors. However, there are a very few, but supremely important differences between the nature of Horrors and those of Passions.

Unlike even the most powerful Horror counterpart, Passions seem unencumbered by the need to tie threads, though they appear to be as apt to Name things as any Name-giver. These two abilities seem paramount to the distinction between the nature of Horrors and the workings of the Passions. It suggests that Passions may be more than just an equal and opposite balance to the Horrors as some Name-givers have proposed. The Passions may very well be a collective entity, Named into existence by the hopes and fears of a community or people. The theory also exists among scholars of Thera that Passions may very well be heroes from a previous Scourge, exalted to the point of becoming more than the sum of their deeds. It is argued that this stance is taken, however, in an effort to allow certain nations to claim Passions as having national heritage (which seems to conflict with the fact that Passions seem totally disinterested in human affairs that do not involve their sphere of influence). Stories and legends hold that the Passions care nothing for Barsaive's political alliances and rivalries, and most of their documented behavior supports this belief. They champion neither the dwarf kingdom of Throal, the magical empire of Thera, nor for that matter, any Name-giver tribe or community over another because they believe that conflict generates the passions and adventures of life that the universe craves. Though they do not intercede in worldly conflicts on their own, they will eagerly support any side that calls to them for help. The Passions bring their powers to these conflicts through questors, their Name-giver agents. If a questor of a Passion sides with you, his Passion supports your cause, and the power the questor brings can make the difference between victory and defeat.

The Passions can physically exist in our world, and often interact with it directly as well as through their questors. For example, many adventurers tell stories of meeting the Passion Thystonius while traveling along the road. Sometimes a group of explorers wandering through a forest or across a dusty plain stumbles across a humble hut or a huge fortress that houses a member of Barsaive's pantheon. The Passions move these homes around with them, setting up residence for a period of time that may last anywhere from a day to a year or more. On occasion, a Passion welcomes a polite knock at his door. Other times, visitors had best keep well away.

For years, scholars and historians have debated the true appearance of the Passions. If one travels throughout Barsaive and asks people to describe the Passion Thystonius, one will receive a variety of answers. Humans describe a tall man with a flowing black beard and piercing blue eyes. Trolls tell of a troll carrying a warhammer as heavy as a boulder. Dwarfs speak of a massive dwarf, standing fifty feet tall, who makes his home in the Throal mountains. These differences in appearance are not confined to race, but encompass gender and other aspects of physical appearance. For example, many people think of the Passion Garlen as a woman, because she is depicted as female in the many statues gracing kaers and villages across Barsaive. But if Garlen comes to them in dreams, often during the deepest crises of their lives, they see the Passion as a man. Most observers believe these varied appearances occur because a Passion tailors its physical form to the individual who sees it, so that the individual can easily recognize the ideals and forces embodied by the Passion and will be receptive to its message. However, all the manifestations of a Passion contain certain identifiable, common elements, described later in this section.

Scholars continue to debate whether or not the Passions have a "true" appearance. So far no one has formulated a definitive answer, and many believe the mystery may never be solved. In addition, no one has been able to verify if Passions possess a True Pattern. While certain statues and items of great importance that have been dedicated to a specific Passion have a pattern of their own, there has been little consistency to the changes that might indicate any mirroring of a larger pattern. Most people do not care to know, believing that the true forms and patterns of the Passions remain hidden for good reason.

PASSIONS IN CONFLICT

Before the Scourge, the Passions appear to have wasted little energy fighting amongst themselves. They did not compete for followers, nor did they exhibit jealousy of each other. Instead, they focused their vast power on bringing their particular ideals to the people of the world. The variety of Name-giver nature ensured that none lacked followers, and the Passions seem to have existed in mutual harmony.

The Scourge changed this, as it altered or destroyed so much else good and beautiful in Barsaive. Those dark times apparently drove three of the twelve Passions mad, and these three now work toward the destruction of the other Passions. Although hard to qualify, the desire to destroy or corrupt a Passion or their followers seems to be the one defining characteristic of a Mad Passion. No longer content with inspiring fervor and embodying ideals for mortals, these Mad Passions selfishly desire power and influence as mortals might. Fortunately for the world, the Mad Passions also share the mortal characteristic of distrust. Though sometimes the Mad Passions work together to accomplish their goals, more often they work alone or against each other.

As far as we know, these beings prefer never to fight their crazed counterparts directly. Instead, they direct their questors, harbingers and followers against those who follow the Mad Passions. The conflict among the Passions has sown strife among their mortal followers; though they seldom fought over their differences in the past, the presence of the Mad Passions has triggered ideological skirmishes across the land that may yet lead to a full-scale war. Some t'skrang revere the Mad Passion Vestrial, even now in his madness, recalling fondly the earlier era of his sanity. Many still worship Raggok, and some have even been known to worship Death.

The danger the Mad Passions pose to the world remains uncertain. Some contend the Passions will meet in final battle and wreak destruction across the earth that will dwarf the devastation of the Scourge, pointing to unconfirmed signs at the end of the Theran conflict. Others claim the insanity that possesses the Mad Passions will render them impotent in the long run, and expect them to fade away like the many arrogant, mortal dictators before them. Only time can tell whether the Mad Passions will destroy the world, or simply depart from it.

QUESTORS

Those who channel the power of the Passions are called questors. These men and women draw their extraordinary powers from the Passions, rather than directly from the universal life force. They may be adept or non-adept, but all have been Name-givers. The life force of the universe flows through the Passions, who transmit this power to their questors. These questors, in turn, bring the Passions to the common folk across the world. Following a Passion gives a questor the same kind of focus an adept receives by following the tenets of his Discipline. The questor's life becomes a living metaphor for the ideals embodied by his chosen Passion; throughout his life, he expresses those ideals in his every word and action. Most questors fervently and vividly live out this commitment, adding as much color and energy to the world as adepts.

Most people invoke different Passions depending on their current circumstances. For example, a family hiding in their shuttered home as a pack of hungry wolves howls outside might seek the protection of Garlen, the Passion of the Hearth and Healing. If a family member ventures outside with sword in hand to slay the predators, the family might invoke Thystonius, the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor.

Questors, on the other hand, pledge themselves to one Passion. They dedicate their lives to it, trying to foster its ideals in the lives of all people. The characteristics of questors vary from Passion to Passion. Some general traits exist among most or all questors, as discussed below.

With the exception of those who follow the Mad Passions, questors with different patron Passions do not bear each other ill will. Each Passion embodies different ideals and emotions, and their questors understand that they are all equally significant parts of a whole that comprises the life of Name-givers.

Though the Passions do not directly support political factions or causes, questors can and often do. For example, many dwarf questors in Throal call Thystonius their patron Passion. Their questor order has a military nature, and they use gifts from Thystonius to give the kingdom of Throal military protection. If other questors of Thystonius chose to attack Throal, such an act would bring questors of the same Passion into direct conflict with each other. Such a development would gladden Thystonius. Though he would mourn those killed in the conflict, the bravery of his questors on both sides would bring him great joy.

Patron Passions also bestow abilities on their questors. Like adepts, questors cultivate these abilities by focusing their lives around a certain behavior – in this case, spreading their Passion's ideals across the known world. Some of these abilities, such as Healing, are shared by the questors of several Passions. Others are unique to one Passion.

Unlike adepts, questors enjoy respect throughout the land. Because adepts draw the immense power of the Universe to themselves directly, many common folk distrust them. They view adepts, especially magicians, as presumptuous and arrogant. Questors, on the other hand, receive their power by working through the Passions, in whom every inhabitant of the known world at one time placed trust. The people's warm regard for the Passions includes the questors, and they therefore enjoy the trust of most people. An old Barsaivian saying perfectly expresses these sentiments: "Hide from magicians, hire adepts, and say hello to questors."

WORSHIP OF THE PASSIONS

The people of Barsaive hold spiritual beliefs based on their faith in the Passions, but no Barsaivian race or community has established a formal religious institution around the worship of the Passions. None of the Passions of Barsaive have any organized following, though questors of a particular Passion often form small bands to achieve a common purpose. The Passions apparently have chosen to propagate their ideals through their questors rather than through institutions or written laws that are vulnerable to error and misinterpretation, a wise precaution given the madness of Vestrial.

Though the Name-givers of Barsaive do not form organized religions centered on the Passions; they do worship the Passions, appealing to whatever Passion best meets their current needs. Unlike questors, most Name-givers rarely declare a belief in only one of the Passions. Most Name-givers accept the entire pantheon of Passions and would fear losing a Passion's protection by proclaiming that they did not believe in it.

Some Name-givers worship one Passion over the others. Though they recognize the existence of other Passions, they believe the ideals of their chosen Passion are superior. These worshipers often express their beliefs by stating that they follow the ideals of their chosen Passion. For example, a farmer who worships Jaspree might say, "I follow the ideals of Jaspree." Many questors make such statements, the most common method of declaring worship.

PASSION DESCRIPTIONS

The following descriptions reflect the common understanding of the Passions. However, our knowledge of these mysterious and powerful beings is almost certainly neither complete or entirely correct.

Each entry contains a list of elements to give a greater understanding of the Passion. The **Quote** comes from one of the Passion's questors. The **Spheres** represent the universal concepts and emotions the Passion embodies; the Passion's questors focus on these qualities. **Beliefs** lists a number of ideas that revolve around the Passion. Questors hold these beliefs to be the highest law from their Passion. **Typical Appearance** describes the Passion's usual manifestation. **Common Elements** include sights, sounds, textures, and other phenomena that usually accompany any manifestation of the Passion. These common elements often appear in the dreams of an individual thinking about the Passion or the ideals it embodies, and the presence of such common elements may also indicate that the Passion is nearby or easily summoned. **Powers** refers to the unique, personal abilities each Passion possesses. **Adoption** describes the typical appearance and behavior of each Passion's questors as well as how they are brought into service. The **Symbol** is how questors identify themselves to others. Symbols are also found on sacred places of the Passion. The **Overview** offers a brief description of each Passion's nature and personality. Finally each Passion has a **Legend** that provides a story or disclosure that has been offered by, or requested, from one of the Passion's questors.

ASTENDAR

Quote

"We are the dawn behind the dawn. We are the painters of the dream, the lovers of the song and the dance of the devoted."

Spheres

Love, Art, Music, Dance, Vibrant Energy, Creativity

Beliefs

•Tapestry, art and music are the keepers of tradition and memory of the people. All Name-givers are the custodians of the sacredness of the world.

•They do not have a set of scriptures, but display their view in art and song, and tend to call other Passions 'Book Passions."

•All members should study the ways of music, poems, art and philosophy.

•The followers of Astendar do not form a single political or religious doctrine. As a result many questors follow unique interpretations of Astendar. To date, most have seemed pleasing to Astendar, who appears to enjoy being remade by new eyes with each new follower.

Typical Appearance

Astendar commonly manifests as a powerfully built male or female of any race, wearing few garments and carrying a musical instrument.

Common Elements

Light rain, music, beautiful clothing of intricate textures

Powers

Astendar can entrance listeners with music, instill lust or love, restore youth, and transform into the sound of a song and float through the air, leaving the melody in her wake.

History of Note

Many artists praise Astendar with credit for inspiring them to new heights of creativity. During the early days after the Scourge, certain political factions attempted to graft the beliefs held dear to Astendar to their own views in an attempt to cast themselves in a better light while vying for political importance. This blasphemy died out rather rapidly, and is in no way related to the post-Scourge restoration of the Passion's temples.

Adoption

Many questors of Astendar are artists. Sensual pleasures, such as gourmet food, comfortable clothing, or a lingering kiss, fascinate them. A questor tends to be adopted in a unique fashion tailored to suit applicable talents. Many have reported dedicating life's work of music or art to be pledged to the Passion. In fact, a noted Barsaive artist painted the ceiling of a temple as his adoption ritual, detailing the restoration of the land after the Scourge. Such assignments are common among the followers of Astendar. Their tendencies to indulge their desires often get them into trouble; regarding their actions as inspired by their Passion, they wrongly assume everyone sees those actions in the same light. However, others frequently view their indulgences as mere decadent enjoyment unchecked by self-control or common sense.

Symbol

Astendar's symbol is commonly a flower native to the region pinned to the left collar.

Overview

Astendar is the living muse of romance and the arts. Tales abound of artists paid a visit by Astendar who spent a feverish night alternately working at the easel and making love with the Passion. Such a gift of inspiration is not lightly given, and a visit from Astendar usually marks an individual for greatness.

Legend

Astendar takes an interest in lovers, both young and old. One well-known incident involved a widow and widower who wanted to marry. Their children, however, believed their respective parents too old for romance and discouraged the courtship. Kept locked in their houses by their children, the couple appealed to Astendar for help. The Passion heard their pleas and agreed to aid them if they created a painting together. At first, the couple had no idea how they might do this, for they could not meet or see each other. Driven by their longing to marry, they finally came up with a plan.

The couple hired a Thief adept they knew to carry a canvas back and forth between their two houses. Every night for many weeks, one of them added to the painting, and the Thief carried it off to the other house just before dawn. As the painting neared completion, the lovers found themselves waiting more and more anxiously every night to see the other's handiwork. Slowly but surely, Astendar's painting turned a solid friendship and gentle affection into excitement, anticipation, and deepening love. At long last they finished the picture, astounded by the beauty of their work.

The exquisite painting so pleased Astendar that she made the couple young once more. Bolstered by their renewed strength, they broke free of their imprisoning homes and ran away together. As for the Thief, he was rewarded with the painting, which he sold for a handsome price.

CHORROLIS

Quote

"Your leader died? So what? Pay me. Ork scorchers assaulted your caravan? So what? Pay me."

Spheres

Wealth, Trade, Competition, Desire, Lust

Beliefs

•Liberation and freedom may be obtained and measured by material wealth.

•All Name-givers are endowed with the unalienable right to pursue wealth and liberty to their own supreme satisfaction.

•Our beliefs ensure that only the strongest, smartest and most able are able to select and provide for a proper mate and suitable family.

•All professions have their own worth, and their ideals may be used to further our own no matter how small or insignificant.

Typical Appearance

Chorrolis often appears as a corpulent male of any race, either jovial or bitter and depressed. He wears fine clothes, and often carries silver and gold or beautiful and expensive objects around with him.

Common Elements

Bags of treasure, caravans, goods for sale, food

Powers

Chorrolis can incite greed, encourage cooperation in matters of trade, and travel instantaneously along any road or waterway used as a trade route.

History of Note

In the past few decades, Chorrolis has gained prominence in all of Thera, and as a whole, his following has begun to largely outdistance the other Passions there. Warfare, with its appalling consequences and vast economic costs, has stimulated financial innovations throughout Throal from the proposal of a new national standard for coinage to the foundation of the national banking system, both of which are still in developmental stages. Among the earliest and most popular design submitted for the coins was a series known as 'Swords' because on the one side was a picture of Neden's father, Varulus III, armed with a broadsword. Hence came the joke of the Currency Review Staff "We will conquer the trade of the known world with mighty Throalic Swords." While this was something of a pun, the intent was obvious.

Adoption

The questors of Chorrolis are capable, if greedy, merchants. Some work in markets, and others travel across Barsaive in trade caravans. Chorrolis frequently sends them to acquire some bauble or treasure he desires for his collection.

Symbol

Known for their bargaining skills, the questors of Chorrolis often try to hide their affiliation with the Passion by wearing nondescript clothing, in the hope of snagging bargains from the unwary. When present, the symbol for Chorrolis is a coin.

Overview

Chorrolis wanders the world, aiding those who want to strike a clever bargain or long for more wealth than they have. He inspires people to rise at dawn and work to improve their lot, and leaves them despairing if they go to bed at night without having succeeded. Despite his status as a Passion and the extraordinary powers he possesses, Chorrolis brims over with jealousy and avarice. He covets anything of value or beauty that someone else owns, and his desire to possess such items often drives him to distraction. Because he scorns simple stealing as the act of a coward, Chorrolis must resort to other methods of acquisition.

Bargaining is his method of choice. He has been known to hound the owner of a desired piece of merchandise for weeks at a time, turning up and offering a deal when the owner least expects it. Because he subtly disguises his appearance, most people do not recognize Chorrolis and eventually take the price he offers, desperate to be rid of the obsessive merchant following them around. Those who do recognize Chorrolis bide their time before selling, knowing that he will drive up his price to ridiculous heights. The patient trader can make a staggering profit by playing on Chorrolis' desperate desire.

Legend

A story taken from the lips of Ch'mod, Questor of Chorrolis. Once there lived a wolf that daily slaughtered a great many sheep. This selfish slaughter left many families hungry and many people wept. One day without warning, he felt qualms of conscience and began to repent his life. So he decided to reform and to slaughter no more.

In order to preserve his commitment, he went to a questor if Mynbruje and asked him to hold a penance service. The questor began the service and the wolf stood weeping, begging for forgiveness from those he had wronged.

The service was long, and as the questor continued, the wolf looked through an open window and saw that sheep were being walked home. They were soft, and numerous, and seemed to be without care, safe and content in the knowledge that the wolf was seeking reform. They lazily wandered from their shepherd to and fro, no longer seeking his watchful protection.

The wolf began to fidget but the priest went on and on without end. At last the wolf could contain himself no longer and shouted, "Hurry! Or the sheep will all be driven home and I shall be without supper!"

I chose this tale because it describes our place among Name givers very well. Without greed or desire, we become soft and unwary. Also we are always ready to talk about how we will sacrifice everything, but after all today's dinner is a different matter.

DIS (MAD PASSION)

Quote

"Our unswerving commitment is to a brighter world, one intolerant of that which threatens the health and prosperity of the chosen people. One that will insure that from this mayhem will come order, under Dis."

Spheres

Confusion, Unnecessary Work, Bureaucracy, Slavery, Authority

Beliefs

•Bureaucracy is their religion.

•All progress in any society is due to the manipulations of Dis.

•Persons who are not favored by Dis are of the world. They are a subspecies who share a common ancestor. They form the bottom level of Name-givers, barely above dogs.

•All culture is becoming more decadent, due to a sliding decline in the number of questors for Dis. Growing acceptance of racial and behavioral deviancy, interracial marriage, and lack of national identity can all be blamed on a growing hatred of Dis among Name-givers.

Typical Appearance

Dis manifests as a thin, sickly male or female of any race, who seems to have been deprived of sunlight and exercise for far too long.

Common Elements

Papers, papers and more papers, contracts, tomes of ritual, slaves, chains

History of Note

The history of slavery in the Theran empire is long documented. Events as varied as the killing of slaves, to the random murder of freedom speakers speckle the history of the known world. These cases are too numerous to site here, but it would not be unsafe to say that almost every land has been influenced in some way by this Passion.

Powers

Dis can remove fervor from those around her and cause confusion in their minds, make people obey her will, and teleport instantaneously to any place she has visited before.

Adoption

The questors of Dis wear heavy, gray robes and often affect the gaunt, pale face of their patron deity with make-up or illusion spells. Many of them, especially those controlling a mercantile bureaucracy or slaver operation, live comfortably off the fruits of their labor. Others are miserable people who aspire to nothing more than becoming so bored that they cease to feel. There is a Ceremony of Pledging Loyalty to Dis, which can be performed only by questors of Dis. The details of this ritual are a closely guarded secret, generally taking weeks to years and involving large amounts of paperwork.

Symbol

A black crown on a red border

Overview

Dis is a popular Passion among the Therans and those Barsaivians who make their living from the Theran slave trade. Unlike the other Passions, Dis takes her greatest pleasure in destroying people's love for life, rather than inspiring it. She bleeds away her worshipers' zest for living and they in turn demoralize those they subjugate. Eventually, the slaves and bureaucrats influenced by this Mad Passion become empty husks, devoid of dreams and feelings. Dis wants to extend this death of the soul throughout the world. In addition to the slavers, Dis also inspires bureaucrats who create paperwork merely to look busy, rather than out of a need for the records or fondness for their work. Few activities spread boredom more effectively than generating useless records and information, and Dis spends a great deal of her time encouraging people to do just that.

Legend

As a declaration of his love for his country, a young artist created a 15 foot statue, with the intent of giving it to the King. He said that the idea for the creation of the statue, initially, was the part that ork soldiers played in ending Theran oppression. However, when the statue was presented to the Throalic Minister of Foreign Affairs, he stated that the dominant view of the broken shackles would be offensive to those who fought for reasons other than slavery. The statue, it is said, was returned to its creator, unused. In a fit of rage, the acclaimed artist destroyed it, and in its place he sent them an exquisite set of marble chains with the inscription "Some slaves are never free." The sculpture now resides on the Minister's Desk, on display for everyone to see.



FLORANUUS

Quote

"We are not mediators between Floranuus and all Name-givers, but the expression of the world, directors of song and masters of ceremonies who guide and contain rites."

Spheres

Revelry, Energy, Victory, Motion

Beliefs

•Feasting as well as chanting before any major conflict can inspire the soul.

•All living things can be united under one song, energy and vibration.

Typical Appearance

Floranuus usually manifests as a humanoid shape composed of fire. However, the manifestation neither gives off heat nor burns any objects it touches.

Common Elements

Fire, parties, cheers, swift ships of both air and sea, wine, roads

Powers

Floranuus inspires stamina, alters moods from depression to exhilaration, and can travel at breathtaking speed anywhere in the world as a ball of fire.

History of Note

The following of Floranuus was transformed by Urekha Morecia, a troll of Barsaivian descent, when he saw three visions.

In one, he fell to the earth and trembled, and forgot everything he had learned as an adult. With this new outlook, he saw the world as through the eyes of a child, and began teaching in the ways of Floranuus.

In the second, he walked with Floranuus, and she whispered to him that the Passions still cared about the affairs of Name-givers.

The third, he experienced amid the strife of combat with the Therans. Suddenly, he saw swords as cutting tools and not weapons of war. He saw carts as a means of transporting young Name-givers to fairs and festivals and not filled with troops. "Now all things are the vehicles for cultivating life and virtue, not devices to needlessly throw away lives" Throughout the entire combat, he remained untouched, despite his refusal to raise his sword. Many have taken to following his teachings, though he has recently become reclusive and hard to find.

Adoption

Wildly optimistic, the questors of Floranuus strive to infuse everyone around them with their enthusiasm. These men and women see the positive side of every situation, no matter how dire or depressing. These questors see victory even in the most resounding defeat. "Next time we'll win with the knowledge we have gained," they often say. The questors of Floranuus wear colorful clothes, particularly favoring bright reds, and travel across the countryside looking for those who have lost hope. They do all they can to revive the spark of joy in souls without hope, often growing reckless in their efforts to light up the world around them as brightly as the flames of their Passion. Though many people consider these questors busybodies, none question their benevolent motives or sincerity. Floranuus has few restrictions for who can become a questor, the only true requirement being contagious optimism.

Symbol

A five pointed star surrounded by the halo of the sun

Overview

Floranuus is the perpetual optimist and the motivator of all Name-givers. He burns in the hearts of all who rise eagerly from their beds each morning to meet the new day. He inspires all people toward victory, and stands at the center of all celebrations. As the embodiment of joy, mirth, and excitement, he lacks understanding of despair. He sends his questors to help the deeply depressed, knowing that they may empathize with such feelings in a way that he cannot.

Legend

This message comes from Annalize Wintersong, elf questor of Floranuus. Not long ago, I took my youngest son to Bartertown, where the melodic notes of a classic love song brushed past the lips of a young elf Troubadour. Balroushe and I sat down on a doorstep nearby, and we listened quietly as the song whispered of lovers torn and dreaming poets. I had not realized that Sam had moved until he took my hand in his and said, "Dance with me."

Two years later, I lost him to the war that ravaged much of Barsaive. I would not have traded a dance with such a charming young gentleman if I'd been offered all the gold in Bartertown. Each month, on the anniversary of that dance, I dance with the children that are still with me and we celebrate the memory of their brother's life by each telling a tale of something he did that impacted our lives. I hope that all mothers who outlive their children can do the same as I, and cherish what they have, and remember fondly what has passed away.

GARLEN

Quote

"Garlen is a power which envelops, surrounds and flows through all living things. Be quiet like the mountain and move like the ocean."

Spheres

Hearth and Healing

Beliefs

•Everyone has certain duties in this life: Duty to Understanding, Duty of Thinking, Duty of Compassion, Duty of Conduct, Duty of Mindfulness, Duty of Concentration

Typical Appearance

Garlen usually manifests as a voluptuous woman, her arms spread wide in acceptance and invitation. On occasion, Garlen appears as a kindly, comfortable-looking man.

Common Elements

Homes, children, kaers, enclosed spaces, water

Powers

Garlen can heal the wounded, comfort the frightened, and travel instantly to any home.

History of Note

One of the most significant personalities among questors for Garlen was Koshatka, an ork from Vivane. At a relatively young age, he left his wife, family and political entanglements in an effort to seek "truth," as he phrased it. After 6 years of intensive study in temples wherever he could find them, he rejected all of the teachings of the Passions save Garlen's.

He promoted what he referred to as "The Median Way," which rejected the possible extremes of the war-like Passions and the inactivity of those he deemed "apathetic to the ways of Name-givers." He had many disciples and accumulated a large following before his death two

decades ago. Recently a council of orks have gathered out of family loyalty, and collected his teachings and oral traditions in written forms they call "Discourses."

Adoption

Some call Garlen's questors the weaklings of the world, claiming that they seek the refuge of the hearth and embrace healing because they fear conflict. Nothing could be further from the truth. Watching over someone you love, daring to love them as they lie dying – these require a quiet strength that runs deeper than the strength required to slay any beast. A traditional adoption method for questors of Garlen is an undefined period of service in a hospice or temple.

Symbol

An open hand

Overview

During the Scourge, all the kaers and citadels called on Garlen for protection, and she remains one of the most widely revered Passions in Barsaive. People of all races call her the Mother Who Cares For All, and Garlen considers all of Barsaive's Name-givers her children. Garlen and her questors offer healing to the sick and injured, and comfort to the dying. In a world filled with violence and danger, Garlen watches over those who shun adventuring for the comfort and safety of home, particularly families and children.

Legend

On an evening, the likes of which even the mountains have rarely seen, a little ork boy with hungry eyes was standing out in the cold air of a particular mountain community watching people leave an inn. The child had little in the way of shoes and his clothes were obviously hand-me-downs.

A young elf girl passing by saw the boy. Despite local political skirmishes between the two races, she immediately felt the need to help him. She took him by the hand and led him into the inn. There, she used her earnings from selling flowers, and appealed to the patrons to help buy him a meal and a complete suit of clothing. She bought him a night's stay and offered to pay for future debts until the cold snap had passed. The innkeeper agreed without hesitation, despite his own prejudices.

After all was said and done, the boy looked up, teary eyed at the girl whose years barely outnumbered his own. "Are you sure you're not Garlen?" He asked.

Flattered, she smiled down at him and replied, "No, I'm afraid not. But my mother's a questor."

The little boy then said, "Close enough for me."

As she left the boy to the quiet and walked into the cold, the girl smiled, her tears turning to snow as she walked home in the rain.

JASPREE

Quote

"Trees are the memory of the Earth, its rivers are its strength, its mountains are its spine. The true teachers are not of flesh and pounding blood, but are the wind and the breeze and the songs of the birds."

Spheres

Growth, Care of the Land, Love of the Wilderness

Beliefs

•Time, and all life is based on a repetitive cycle (Birth, Full, and Waning). All creatures exist in multiple times.

•Survival is based upon the fertility of crops, the domestication of animals and the behavior of wild animals as much as one's ability to defend one's home.

•Name-givers are not inherently more important than any animal or plant merely because they are Name-givers.

•Some followers of Jaspree believe in reincarnation.

•It is a Name-giver's duty to revere nature.

•Animals are messengers of the Passions.

Typical Appearance

Jaspree usually manifests as a male or female creature, half animal and half of any Name-giver race.

Common Elements

Trees, farms, forests, seeds

Powers

Jaspree encourages growth in plants, animals and Name-givers; animates plants; speaks with animals; and travels through dirt as if swimming through water.

History of Note

Many of the leaders in modern exploration have followed Jaspree's belief system. Flags of Jaspree dot the explored horizon of any recently explored territory. Many questors of Jaspree may be found among exploring guilds and mapping institutions. In recent decades since the Scourge, the ranks of this particular Passion have swelled, although it is nearly impossible to obtain an accurate census due to the nature of this Passion's followers.

Adoption

Many of Jaspree's questors live in solitude, taking care of small patches of forest. They protect the woodlands from those who would destroy them for they value the lives of plants far above those of animals or Name-givers. All woodsmen take care not to anger these solitary folk who will readily kill to protect the growing things they care for. Other, more social questors belong to farming communities and protect the lives of animals and Name-givers as well as the lives of plants. Though they will harm intruders who try to burn the crops of a village or town, they understand that communities of Name-givers need to sow fields in order to eat, and accept that some forests must die in the process. These questors see life as an endless cycle of death and rebirth, and accept both as having equal worth. Jaspree's questors often embark on journeys and adventures to learn more about the plant life of the world, to plant trees and flowers in barren lands, and to protect endangered lands rich in plant life.

Symbol

Two sloped pillars on either side of a larger tree

Overview

Countless Name-givers have invoked Jaspree's name during the past hundred years as people across Barsaive have revived farmlands and forests devastated during the Scourge. Moved by his deep love of all growing things, Jaspree has answered the call of his followers. He wanders under the deep shadows cast by towering trees and stops to smell the smallest wildflowers that line Barsaive's well-traveled roads. Thanks to his aid, the world has grown green and rich with life in the years since the end of the Scourge.

Legend

There was once on a time a rude and wicked woman who had a lovely daughter. The mother could not bear the presence of her daughter

and because of this, she often sent the poor girl out into the great forest in order to get rid of her, for the woman thought the young girl would lose herself and never come back again.

On one occasion, the mother got her wish and the child could not find her way out of the forest again. She walked on constantly until evening came, and then she saw a tiny light burning in the distance. She ran up towards it, and came to a little hut. She knocked, the door opened, and she found a second door, where she knocked again. A venerable old man, who had a snow-white beard, opened it for her.

He said quite kindly, "Come, dear child and seat yourself on my chair by the fire, and warm yourself. I will fetch you water if you are thirsty. But here in the forest, I have nothing for you to eat but a couple of little mushrooms, which you must scrape and boil."

The girl did as he asked, then she brought out a piece of bread that her mother had given her. She mixed everything in a pan, and cooked herself a thick soup.

When it was ready, the man asked, "I am so hungry. May I share your food?"

The child was quite willing, and gave him more than she kept for herself. Oddly enough, however, she was satisfied.

When they had eaten, the old man said, "I am weary, as I am sure you are from your travels. We should rest. I have, however, only one bed, lay yourself in it. I will lie on the ground on the cold dirt."

"No," she answered, "stay in your own bed, the ground is soft enough for me."

But the man took the child into his arms, and carried her to the little bed. There she said her prayers to Jaspree, and fell asleep.

Next morning when she awoke, she wanted to say good morning to the kind old man, but she did not see him. When she got up and looked for him, she could not find him anywhere. At last she perceived, behind the door, a bag filled with precious jewels and ores so heavy that she could barely carry it. Inscribed on the bag was the child's name.

Once the child returned safely to her mother, (thanks to a trail that seemed much easier to follow this time) she gave the woman all of the money. She took the empty bag for herself and could not help but be satisfied with it.

That night, the mother listened to her child sleep, and as the girl slept she told the story of the kind old man. The next morning the woman insisted on going out into the forest. She packed pancakes – as many as she could carry, and bread and cheese as well. In the evening she found the old man in his little hut.

When the soup was ready and the old man asked "I am so hungry. May I share some of the food?"

The mother answered, "Wait until I am done, then if there is anything left, I might let you have it." But she ate all of it, and the old man had to scrape the bowl.

Afterwards, the old man offered her his bed, and wanted to lie on the cold ground. She took it without making any opposition. Next morning when she awoke, the old man was not to be found, but she did not trouble herself about that. She looked behind the door for a money-bag and found nothing. Shouting a curse at the absent old man, she stormed out towards home. On the way, however, she was attacked by so many lizards and snakes that she was unable to even flee in terror. They stung the wicked mother to near-death, only allowing her to live because of the nobility of her child.



LOCHOST

Quote

"The children of Barsaive would never be slaves. Though we may die like chaff before the scythe and our banners be colored with the blood of a thousand generations, we will not be buried in chains."

Spheres

Rebellion, Change, Freedom

Beliefs

- All name givers have the right of free choice.
- If you own too many possessions, they will eventually own you.
- Change is growth, no matter in what form.
- Freedom for all to live in an environment of their choosing.

Typical Appearance

Lochost usually manifests as a male or female child of any race, whose body and features constantly change.

Common Elements

Strong wind, uprooted trees, open gates

Powers

Lochost inspires rebellion, comforts the imprisoned, unlocks doors and prisons, and can fly through the air by transforming into wind.

History

With what has transpired in recent events, the world has turned its eyes towards the questors of all Passions, most notably those of Lochost. Possibly inspired by the rebellion of Throal against Thera, local farming communities along the borders of both territories have begun to unify and mobilize in ways previously unseen. Members of what were considered peaceful communities have been purchasing large quantities of martial weapons from both Thoalic and Theran traders. Rumblings of potential uprisings against both Theran and Throalic presence have concerned both sides as the repercussions of war are felt heavily throughout the region, and all sides are becoming apprehensive at the thought of more bloodshed on all sides.

Adoption

As long as Lochost lives, his questors will risk their lives to foment rebellion in the world's slave camps and mining operations. Disturbed by his inspiring example, the Mad Passion Dis hunts Lochost relentlessly, and few doubt Dis' desire to be the first Passion to claim the life of another. Lochost's questors wear no one type of garment, because their calling requires them to blend in with many different groups. Many serve as political agitators within the kingdom of Throal and other communities throughout Barsaive. However, they are currently working to eradicate the smaller slaving enterprises that have sprung up in the vacuum left by Thera in Barsaive. Leftover Theran supporters still hunt down and kill Lochost's questors wherever they find them, hoping that such drastic actions will discourage people from following that Passion in wake of recent victories. For most people, such brutality only strengthens anti-Theran sentiment.

Symbol

A broken chain

Overview

Lochost is the patron Passion of slaves, rebels, and scholars. The truly educated mind seeks the inspiration to break free from the beliefs of the past and make new discoveries, and so merits the protection of Lochost as surely as any freedom fighter. The slow spread of Theran slavery across Barsaive at one time stretched Lochost's attention thinner and thinner, and he depended upon increasing numbers of questors to do his work. The Mad Passion Dis often confronted Lochost over slavery issues. However, this behavior may change since she has recently taken a critical blow due to the war, which has presumably left her in an uncertain power dynamic with her rival. Of record, the two last fought at a slave camp near the citadel of Tirthon, killing every slave and slaver in their savage combat. Wishing to avoid a repeat of the massacre, Lochost spends a great deal of time distracting Dis as his questors work to free the enslaved.

Legend

There is, among questors of Lochost, a story of baby dragons brought to earth as slaves under the grim watch of servants of Verjigorm. Ruthlessly, for the pleasure of the Horror, they were taken to a village barn yard. Kept ignorant of their majesty, they lost their sense of identity, and were scorned and ridiculed by the vultures and pigs and the overseer for being different. Constantly tortured and made to feel ugly and inferior, they lacked any confidence in themselves and were completely unable to fly.

Angered by this, Lochost sent his followers to Icewing – a dragon of doubtless power who had seen how humans suffer at the hands of slavers. Furious, Icewing had the dragons rescued.

"We are not slaves or dirt eating creatures, nor fowl that pecks and scratches at the ground for nourishment" the Great Dragon told them. "We are of a land rich in history and heritage. We are not born to walk like fools and creatures, but to brush the faces of the Passions with our wings and cast our shadow on the lands through the clouds. We are the symbols of a great and proud race, and all would be wise to whisper our names for fear of waking our anger."

"Since that day," the story ends, " dragons have been seen soaring throughout the world inspiring all name givers with the beauty, brilliance, and potential that all races can achieve if they are merely told they can."

MYNBRUJE

Quote

"Justice has fled to the maw of filth eating animals, and Name-givers have lost all reason."

Spheres

Justice, Compassion, Empathy, Truth, Mercy

Beliefs

- In the end of all things, justice will prevail.
- It isn't the power that makes the Name-giver, it's the Name-giver that makes the power.
- No mind, no ego, no self, only righteousness.
- Compassion often creates what anger would destroy.

Typical Appearance

Mynbruje usually appears as an old man or woman of any race.

Common Elements

Balanced scales, executioner's axe, stars, a comfortable place to rest

Powers

Mynbruje can read minds, ease the suffering of others, perceive obscure clues, and travel through the thoughts of Name-givers, leaping from the mind of one to any other within fifty miles.

History of Note

Within recent history, Mynbruje's cause was significantly furthered under the guiding hand of Chogam Tungpaha, whose financially unstable father was abused and disabled, under the guise of being

trained as an adept Warrior. This caused the 9-year old Chogam to be forced from his teachings into work in order to support his family. At the age of 12, he became a librarian in the Great Library of Throal and began to read endlessly of cases and debates of modern law regarding adepts and their teachings. For years, Chogam studied and detailed "The Rights of All Free Name-givers" which was partially used by the Board of Common Law in establishing regulations for commonly overlooked or thinly disguised crimes throughout Throal. He established a home for reformed vagrants, and fought for educational reforms, which are slowly taking place, in conjunction with the restructuring due to nationwide independence.

Adoption

The questors of Mynbruje wear simple garments, sometimes peasant garb, to show that they care little for status or prestige. They see truth and justice as the heart of life, and view all else as minor distractions. By asking how a man accused of a crime sees himself and how society sees him, the questors of Mynbruje seek to restore balance to such matters. If a criminal does not realize he has done something wrong, they try to make him understand the criminality of his actions. If society faults someone for something he did not do, they work to clear his name among his fellows. Mynbruje's questors often act as official judges in citadels, towns, and villages. Some travel the land, adjudicating disputes they encounter during their journey. The word of a questor of Mynbruje is considered unimpeachable, and most people will accept his judgment even though he is a stranger. Such questors often travel with adepts and magicians, who protect them from thieves seeking to evade judgment.

Symbol

Weighing scales

Overview

Mynbruje stands by the unjustly accused, those the law has passed over, and those misunderstood by their society. He is a busy Passion, for though the Name-givers occupy a special place in the universe, mere mortals are often blind to truth and understanding.

Legend

Stratego Tomoak Y'mash was hanged in Throal fifty-one days after the final declaration of the end of the war in Barsaive. The fate of this officer established something new in the annals of armed conflict. Y'mash was not sentenced for murder of Name-givers, or for directing other men to kill for him. Y'mash simply lost his life because he was in command, and the men that he commanded had done evil things. Y'mash was convicted by a military commission comprised of a panel of eight general officers, all Throalic. While previous military commissions had sentenced minor war bands and saboteurs to death, this commission was not bound by the procedural rules and safeguards established in the new civil and the court-martial systems of the independent Throalic Government.

Command responsibility is as old as war. What was different about Y'mash's trial was implied responsibility for murder tolerated, knowingly or not. Questor Nolan Clarkworthy, the King's able and articulate Defense counsel, plainly stated to the trial committee "Y'mash is not on trial for having done something or having failed to do something, but is charged for having been something. Our justice recognizes no such principle in regards to its own personnel. No man would even entertain the thought that King Neden becomes a criminal every time a citizen violates the law. No man is to be held accountable for the crime of another."



But Y'mash was. Details of the final hideous days of Theran occupation began to become public knowledge. For thirteen days the court heard unbelievable details of wholesale slaughter and rape, of Name-givers being burned alive, of wanton destruction, of the murders of women and babies and questors and prisoners of war.

The prosecution's position was simple and easily recognizable. The atrocities committed by Theran troops were so widespread that Y'mash could not have been ignorant of them. If he was, they argued, "it was obviously because he took action to remain that way." So the case was that Y'mash knew or should have known of the actions committed by his men.

Although Mynbruje's questors assisted in acquiring defense witnesses, it also advised that it was "disturbed by reports of possible early sentencing" and that the "Defense's need for more time was obvious." On the other hand, Neden's chief of public affairs announced that "proceedings need to be completed at earliest possible date, for reasons of public welfare." The military ambassador also vocalized its opposition to any delay save "for the most urgent, unavoidable and necessary of reasons."

There were also a number of things for those seeking justice to be uneasy about. None of the judges were recognized questors of Mynbruje. Throughout the hearing they were impatient with the new and admitted untested legal procedure, including some of the safeguards afforded the accused. Counsel, according to an openly adversative jury, was to question with "short, simple questions. Period."

Clarksworthy accused, "In the opinion of every just and righteous Name-giver witnessing this 'trial', the military came into the house of justice with the decision already made. This was merely a ceremony to placate the masses. The horrors of Theran occupation have warped a lot of people's views, but, justice is a matter of fact, not a slanted view or decorated opinion." Throughout Barsaive, Troubadours sang about Y'mash's brutality. They forgot, if they knew or cared, that the stratego had been ill and delirious with a fever for much of the final weeks of the war.

In closing comments, Clarksworthy was quoted as saying "Wrongful executions have a devastating impact on any society. They cast doubt on our entire system of justice. I hope that King Neden and his supporters understand this. The followers of Mynbruje will never support a government where vengeance replaces justice. That's Raggok's realm, not ours. I withdraw my support of this session, and call on my brothers to do the same."

RAGGOK (MAD PASSION)

Quote

"We are not evil. We do not seduce your children or torture your peasant wives. We are people just like you. We are not evil. We have families, jobs, hopes and dreams, just like you. We are not evil. Our devotion is not a joke. We are not what you read about in your story books or hear about in Troubadour tales. We don't want to convert you. We don't want more than what is rightfully ours. Do not cross us, and you have nothing to fear from us. We are not evil, and we are much more like you than you think."

Spheres

Vengeance, Bitterness, Jealousy, Self-Hatred

Beliefs

•They do not 'worship' Raggok as a living deity in the classical sense. They honor him through their deeds, but to actually treat any deity with reverence is an abomination.

•There is no redemption or damnation with Raggok.

•No grievance is to go unchallenged. If an opponent pulls a dagger, you are to pull a sword.

•Prayer is useless, it distracts people from useful activity.

•Existence is vital. Raggok has no tolerance for useless dreams.

•Name-givers are the most vicious animals of all.

•The only 'sins' Raggok acknowledges are: Stupidity, conformity and forgetfulness regarding past transgressions.

Typical Appearance

Raggok usually manifests as a large man with the head of a ram. Scores of open wounds continuously appear, heal, and reappear on the incarnation's bloody flesh.

Common Elements

Skeletons, the undead, swords, wounds, insects, snow and ice

Powers

Raggok can call forth painful memories, raise the dead, inspire hatred, and travel through the thoughts of Name-givers, leaping from the mind of one Name-giver to any other within fifty miles. As he travels, he evokes painful memories in the minds he passes through.

History of Note

The practice of serving Raggok has existed unchecked since the Scourge, but has only recently come into predominance when it burst into the spotlight thanks to a devout follower named Levy. Levy drew on his experience as a Beastmaster and entertainer, travelling from town to town, recruiting with a zeal the Passion had never seen. He has written several works regarding the nature of the Passion. These are essentially the only readily available written works on the Passion.

Adoption

Questors of Raggok study the undead and the Horrors. This Mad Passion's followers come from both Thera and, unfortunately, Barsaive. Raggok never lacks followers, as a sizable portion of the population always seems to enjoy terrorizing others. Masters of both mental and physical torture, these questors constantly indulge their cruel sense of humor at others' expense.

Questors of Raggok fall into two camps, divided by their interpretation of their Passion's ideals. One group, the sybaritics, surrounds itself with all the pleasures of the flesh that wealth can buy, constantly searching for more money and treasure. The other group follows an ascetic way of life, believing that bringing pain to the world should take precedence over their own comfort. Any wealth they accumulate, they use to buy poisons, hire mercenaries to raze villages, and the like. The two groups' styles of dress reflect their different outlooks. The sybaritic questors dress in expensive and luxurious clothing; the ascetics dress shabbily, preferring to spend their money on spreading pain, suffering, and fear wherever they can.

Symbol

Two daggers of uneven length, crossed at the handles, points facing upward

Overview

The most terrible of the Mad Passions, Raggok embodies all that is corrupted in the world. He causes the dead to walk the earth, he sows



the baseless hatreds that erupt between once-loving husbands and wives, he tortures the insane with disembodied voices. People say he has made countless pacts with Horrors, to aid them in their evil endeavors and receive their aid in kind. Like the Horrors he allegedly serves, Raggok loves to inflict pain and strives to satisfy this perverse desire.

Legend

There was once an elf Troubadour who lived under the name Parvess. He and his family were dispossessed landowners who had to make way for Theran troops and adventurers. This forced them to take to the woods and hills.

Filled with bitterness, Parvess set his mind upon vengeance to those who had taken away what had been rightfully his. Equipped with a fast horse and some marginal skill with a sword, he raged over all of the land. In addition to the constant robbing of trade routes through his former lands, he raided the houses of lords and other wealthy people who frequented their new owners social events. On one occasion, he raided the home of a particularly hated lord named Killraser, and in addition to taking all his silver and other valuables, he forced him, at sword point, to eat debt notices he had prepared for a dozen of his tenants.

After some escapes from armed guards, Parvess's luck finally ran out. He was spending a quiet evening recovering from a chest wound in a friend's house in the country. A jealous neighbor of his host, one of the tenants who had previously owed money to Killraser in fact, sent Killraser a message that Parvess was wounded and unable to fight in a house beside his own.

With a force of nearly two hundred men, Killraser surrounded the house. In order to save his host and his family, Parvess surrendered without resistance. He was sentenced, without trial, to be hanged. Questioned, as the noose was placed around his neck, Parvess asserted that Killraser's belongings, as well as other ill-gotten gains were hidden in a cave near his home, behind a large rock. Hearing this, Killraser hastily carried out the execution and then dashed towards the woods with a number of handpicked helpers.

Visions of newfound wealth spurred Killraser on. When they reached the place Parvess described they found to their dismay not the few rocks they had envisioned but countless thousands of rocks of all shapes and sizes. After several days of searching, they found what was believed to have been the goal of Parvess's admission. A broken kaer, still inhabited by a wormskull. No one survived.

THYSTONIUS

Quote

"I have never felt Thystonius in a temple. The people seemed nice, and the temple was very pretty, but I never felt at ease there. I've never seen him in the face of a questor. Though they were all brave men, I've never heard his voice mixed with theirs. I've never seen him in the pages of a book, or heard him in the words of a song. I've never found him in quiet fields or in village squares. But I know he's there. I've felt him when my own blood flowed down my arms like rain pouring off a slate roof. I've felt his hands resting on my shoulders when I collected the pieces of a Ginova for burial after the battle near Lake Ban. I don't know if Thystonius goes to temple, but I know he goes to war."

Spheres

Physical Conflict, Valor

Beliefs

•Death holds no fear for one who has lived life well.

•History is written by the pens of conquerors.

•Immortality is only truly obtained when all Name-givers know your Name and you are unable to meet a stranger.

•The only true virtues are: Courage, Perseverance, Resolve and Vitality.

•Weapons of war are tools and not toys. There is no valor in murder, only war.

Typical Appearance

Thystonius usually appears as a tall, muscular man or woman of any race.

Common Elements

Weapons, banners and pennants, armor, battlefields

Powers

Thystonius can increase martial abilities and strength, overcome pain, and travel instantaneously within a mile of any physical conflict.

History of Note

At its peak, the reverence of Thystonius dotted the landscape. During times of war however, numerous counts of adherents were hopelessly unreliable, but a routine estimate indicated that 40% of an average battlefield would pledge itself to Thystonius over the period of a three month campaign. This, along with Thystonius' apparent distaste for political guidance, has lead to variations too numerous to speak of in exactly how one should interpret Thystonius' will. While he has often been reported to have personally been involved in battle, he has never been present when the field was cleared. It has almost become routine that both sides of any given battle will claim to have Thystonius on their side, and with Vestrial as an ever present threat, both may well have seen a Passion on their side that resembled the accepted presence of Thystonius.

Adoption

The questors of Thystonius tend to be good athletes, and often make excellent warriors. They continually seek challenges and enemies to test themselves against and believe that diving headfirst into physical danger is the only way to fully experience life. They believe that their Passion wants them to challenge other people to do the same, whether their potential opponents are willing or not. Though few would call Thystonius' questors thugs, they seem incapable of contemplation or introspection. They "think" with their muscles far more than with their brains, preferring to follow their physical impulses rather than their minds.

Symbol

An axe crossed with a sword against a red background

Overview

Thystonius is the Passion of Physical Conflict and Valor. Most soldiers mistakenly believe him a Passion of War and try to claim him for their own, but Thystonius cares little for killing. He resides in living bones and muscles, not in the corpses of the fallen. He loves the flexing and exertion of bodies competing against the odds – a foot race, an arm wrestle, or a man swimming for his life against the impossible currents of the Serpent River give him infinitely more pleasure than the carnage of battle. In addition to those who embrace him wholeheartedly, Thystonius rushes to aid those who feel daunted by a physical challenge. The epic poem "The War of Tears," recounts two camps of opposing warriors, both fearful of taking the battlefield the next day. Thystonius entered both camps during the night and spoke to each army, extolling the glories of war and promising the warriors they would all emerge heroes. Inspired by the Passion's words, both sides joined in vigorous combat the following morning. The Passion kept his promise – the warriors' heroic deeds were immortalized in "The War of Tears." Nevertheless, Thystonius' habit of encouraging people to throw themselves at each other makes many people uncomfortable.

Legend

When asked regarding Thystonius and his legends, Bathin (a troll questor of Thystonius, who had been in long standing when most of his moot were young), simply replied. "See this dusty path? We can walk it in mere minutes. However, it took almost every brave Name-giver drawing breath a month to walk it. A whole kingdom, unified as one entity with held breath watched as their heroes walked very slowly forward, dying in waves in the front and pushing in columns from behind. And the other camp, with the weight of the world's eyes watching, eased very slowly backwards – leaving the dead carelessly in their wake, their blood churning dirt to mud in bloody tides. No generation will ever make this sacrifice again. The young may think they would be willing to do so, but their mothers know better. They could fight off the mountain that bristled and hacked death once, but never again. This tremendous bloodshed and loss took years of slavery and abuse to create. You had to have a full-willed commitment to death and freedom further than you could remember. It had to be so harsh you could taste it. You had to remember the love of a woman, and the anger of a Crowned Prince at the loss of his father. We like to think we invented this kind of battle, but we didn't. We just gave it a name, war.

"This kind of warfare was invented long ago, by Troubadours and minstrels and men of reason, not Warriors with swords wearing the blood of men who had no Names.

"This was not a battle, but a love affair with war, and I am sad to say, I will never see its like again. Here lies your legend. Bother me no more."

UPANDAL

Quote

"Stone and wood withstand the passage of time and rigors of the elements. It is our measure and pride that we can mold them to our will, to house our young and contain our history. There is no greater satisfaction than that of having constructed something that will outlive yourself and your children, to house many generations to come."

Spheres

Building, Construction, Planning

Beliefs

•Forethought can often make up for a lack of knowledge.

•The body is a building, much like ones' home.

•Shelter and comfort are rights to all Name-givers, who should be allowed to construct their own home without limits as long as it imposes on no other.

•History will teach us only half of what the future will need to know.

Typical Appearance

Upandal generally manifests as a craftsman of any race, clad in dirty work clothes.

Common Elements

Hammer, building plans, compass, smith's forge

Powers

Upandal can make tools quickly; fortify buildings, fortresses and city walls; create temporary bridges and towers; and travel instantaneously between cities or any other large, ornate construction.

History of Note

Upandal's name was common place in the days of the Scourge and for some time thereafter. After the war, the rebuilding process has once again taken precedence and Upandal is experiencing a new surge of followers dedicated to his way above all others. Orks have begun to comprise more and more of this Passion's followers, more so than any other point in history, and off-shoots and variant interpretations of the Passion's teachings are common.

Adoption

Happy only when involved in a project, Upandal's questors are usually either building something or collecting money to build something. They view everything they build as an offering to Upandal and believe that each structure enriches the world. In addition to buildings, these questors enjoy tinkering with objects. They question Thief adepts about the nature of traps and secret doors, or pester Archer adepts for instructions on how to make the best bows. Easily distracted by any mechanical object that lies along their path, they frequently must be dragged away from any item of interest that they cannot take with them. Their analytical minds give Upandal's questors a penchant for devising war plans and other strategies. Unfortunately, their love of the complex and ornate tends to produce strategies that are aesthetically pleasing on paper, but impractical for battle.

Symbol

A hammer and a sickle, crossed in a vertical/perpendicular fashion

Overview

Upandal is the Passion of Construction. He reinforces the need to build shared by all the Name-giver races of Barsaive, helping them to create order and beauty by building structures as well as giving names. Upandal gives aid where he can, inspiring architects and craftsmen and protecting beautiful cities and towers. On occasion, he presents enchanted tools to craftsmen he deems particularly worthy of his patronage.

Legend

An elderly carpenter was past ready to retire. He had served his master for many years and had built homes and gardens that would long outlive himself, his children and their children. He told his master of his plans to leave the carpentry business for the leisurely life of retirement. The carpenter would miss the experience of building, but he needed to rest.

The master was sorry to see him go, for they had long been dear friends and he asked if the carpenter could build just one last house, as a tribute; a punctuation to a lifelong career. The master would pay for whatever the carpenter needed. No excess was too great.

The carpenter agreed, but his heart had lost it's passion. He no longer enjoyed the feel of metal and wood in his hands. He slacked off and resorted to shoddy workmanship. He used inferior materials that would have been unacceptable to him only days before. He held his head in shame. It was an acceptable house. However, it was less than the majesty he had come to expect from himself. It was adequate, nothing more.

When he finished his work, the master came to the house, supposedly to inspect the property. With a frown, the carpenter opened the front door for his master, showing him the mediocre interior and less than worthy construction. Without a glance, the master smiled unknowingly and stated, "This is your home," he said, "It is my gift to you, for decades of service. I hope it is worthy of you."

VESTRIAL (MAD PASSION)

Quote

Accurate information about this Passion is simply not available. However a recent tragedy in Barsaive appears to accurately portray the attitude of this Passion and its followers. The event claimed the lives of 924 members of this cult, including families and even small children, all burned beyond recognition in an intentionally set fire that gutted a major temple in Barsaive. Before the tragedy, Klibtree (the proposed leader of the temple and admitted questor of Vestrial) allegedly stated that he overheard a conversation between his Passion and another, whom reports left unnamed. Vestrial stated that the "world would end with the war of two powers, unless every Name-giver sold all their worldly possessions, slaughtered three virginal calves with wooden swords and then set fire to themselves to prove their devotion. Only those who were truly worthy to serve would be spared." No member of record survived.

Spheres

Manipulation, Deceit, Madness

Beliefs

•Followers of Vestrial are as fractured and diverse as could be thought possible. Certain groups resemble other Passions in their practices, others practice rituals as deviant as cannibalism and blood sacrifice. It is our concerted opinion that this difference in structure and belief and constant infighting has kept Vestrial's followers impossible to count. We can only say that no two followers of Vestrial have the same objectives, unless they do.

Typical Appearance

Vestrial usually manifests as a humanoid form, wearing a dark hood and cloak.

Common Elements

An assassin's dagger, blood, ambush

Powers

Vestrial can confuse listeners; beguile people with lies, discover a person's true desire; and travel instantaneously within a mile of any place where someone has just uttered a lie.

History of Note

In the worship of the Mad Passion Vestrial the apocalyptic world views of his questors usually surface in, not surprisingly, a wide variety. The most popular of these views is based upon the belief that, for a 1,000 year and a day period of time after a great conflict all yearnings for peace, freedom from evil, and the rule of righteousness upon the earth, will finally be abolished. The belief also holds that all Name-givers will come to this insanity through the power of a divine Vestrial presence. At the end of the period Vestrial will be loosed for a time to unify the nations of the world under a single mad government, before being ultimately defeated by his own devices. In the climax of the grand opera the dead, including Vestrial, will then be gathered for final judgment by a senseless, blind and unnamed executioner.

Consistent in its inconsistencies, many different interpretations of this view have been given. Some believe that the recent war has begun the 1,000 year and a day period until Vestrial's total triumph. Others don't believe in the 1,000 year and a day number at all, and believe the

insane dance has already begun. Regardless of the variations, in a surprising number of views, the time is coming in which all Name-givers will suffer in insanity, Mad Passions will walk upon the land, the dead will be resurrected, and the world will face final judgment at the hands of Vestrial.

All forms of this belief hold dear the thought that the inevitable conclusion of Vestrial's scheming will result in an apocalyptic final conflict, which will engulf the entire world. What makes these beliefs dangerous is the fact that believers see themselves as the harbingers or catalysts of this final conflict. There is a real danger that these people will take steps to set off the cataclysm, which they believe is necessary to bring about the will of Vestrial. Some adherents hope to be martyrs who will, by their deaths, set off the battle of the zealots of all Passions. In addition, questors of Vestrial the world over tend to view either their own government, or the governments of other nations as evil empires which are predisposed to attempt to stop them, regardless of national history or circumstance. This fact alone makes their numbers problematic to calculate, their agendas questionable and their motives highly suspect.

Adoption

The questors of Vestrial scurry about the world dressed in the black cloaks of their Passion, carrying out the Mad Passion's schemes. They often have no idea what they are doing or why. Frequently, different groups of questors unknowingly work at cross-purposes, and Vestrial reveals his true intentions only after the efforts of both groups have gone to waste. Despite this seeming disorganization, the questors of Vestrial should not be taken lightly. For every ten mindless rabble among them, one intelligent questor can be found guiding his fellows through brilliant plans. Ten years ago, one such questor almost assassinated the heir to the throne of Throal. In fact, the precision, subtlety, and effectiveness of such plots have led some to suggest that the buffoonery and incompetence of the most visible questors actually hides countless unrecognized and frighteningly brilliant questors of Vestrial within society at large. If true, such questors might masquerade as village leaders, judges, kings, and traders for years, waiting for the right moment to strike and take control of all Barsaive.

Symbol

Vestrial's variety of symbols are too numerous to mention, but most involve the color red and a circle dissected by a semicircle.

Overview

Before the Scourge, Vestrial was the prankster Passion, blending good humor with trickery to puncture the overblown egos of the arrogant. Insanity took hold of him during the Scourge, making him as arrogant as the former butts of his jokes. Seeing himself as the sole inheritor of all the world's Passion-worshipers, he creates elaborate plans for world conquest that his questors enthusiastically carry out. He uses his vast intelligence to spin webs of intrigue that no one save himself can understand. Some believe that Vestrial has woven so many plots and deceits that even he has lost track of the ends he originally desired.

Legend: Once, before green life came to Earth, the Passions worked their wills. Yet as each Passion began to create a new world, Death exercised her power and ended it. The other Passions gathered in a small corner of the universe and decided that if their work was to continue, Death must be weakened. They knew they could not kill Death, however, they reasoned that she could be weakened. Each Passion spoke of their plan, but all feared Death. Perhaps she could slay even the Passions themselves.

"I will create a place to hold her," Vestrial spoke up, "It will house Death, because it is a grave."

"What is a grave?" They asked.

"A resting place for the dead. If I seal away Death, we will have eons to try our hand at creation. Who knows? Given enough time, even Death may die."

So Vestrial fashioned a bubble in the molten world, and he called out to sister Death.

"I have created a place of honor for you, dear sister. It is a bed, a resting place within the earth unlike the possession of any other Passion. It can hold all your dead things so that they may be close to you. I call it a grave."

Death sobbed loudly, and held her brother close. "Oh Brother, you alone understand me. What I kill, I value as treasure. I only kill what I love. Thank you for this."

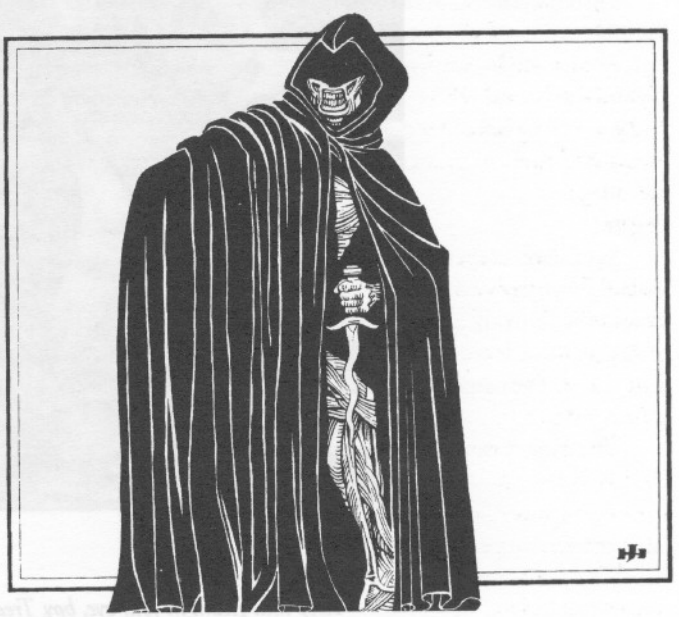
Vestrial chimed in, "But, dear sister, my creation has two concerns that vex me. One, I must get the other Passions to agree that graves house the dead. Help me gain their say on this."

So Death petitioned the other Passions, along with her beloved brother. They agreed that graves should hold the dead, and what the Passions agree on becomes law.

Then Death inquired, "What of your second problem, brother?"

Vestrial replied, "I have no dead for the enclosure, sister." He pondered a moment. "Would you mind lying in its damp enclosure, so I know that it has been fashioned correctly?"

With eager eyes Death did so. Then Vestrial said as he closed the lid quietly, "You are Death; therefore, you belong to yourself. What belongs to you is dead. Graves house the dead, therefore my enclosure holds you." That said, he sealed the grave.



MAGICAL TREASURE



Keep that gleam in your eye, boy. Treasure such as I have seen gleams even more. See what I have seen, and you too will risk death to hold it, to call it yours.
— **Garlthik One-Eye, ork Thief**

The world of **Earthdawn** is filled with fantastic magical treasures. These treasures are precious not only for their uniqueness, but because they hold within them the history of Barsaive. These treasures hold the key to the past, and allow the heroes of today to become the legends of tomorrow.

The quest for magical treasure is an important **Earthdawn** adventure goal. Though the characters will often seek out and destroy Horrors that remain in their world, the search for magical weapons to use against the Horrors is an equally important goal. The characters' heroic status makes them perfect candidates for researching and learning about magical items, and through these items, rediscovering the history of Barsaive and its people. This section provides specific rules for using Thread Magic to learn about and use magical weapons and items. Players and gamemasters may find it useful to reread the explanation of Thread Magic in **Workings of Magic**. That information, together with **Using the Treasures**, below, allows characters to successfully research magical items and power them with magic – continuously activating more of each item's unique powers and properties. We have left much of the information about individual items vague enough to allow the gamemaster to flesh out the details as appropriate to his group of players and current campaign.

THE NATURE OF TREASURE

Most of the treasures described here are one-of-a-kind items. These items never appear on the open market; they must be found, not bought. For this reason, your characters will never find just any old magic battle-axe. Instead, they might discover Lorm's Axe, once wielded by Lorm the troll, and used by him to blood the Horror that claimed Kaer Jalendale. Lorm's Axe, like all treasures, has a history. The events that compose an item's history are a part of what makes the item unique. Each item's magical abilities also make it unique. It is unlikely that another magical battle-axe in all the world has the same powers as Lorm's Axe. By carefully creating descriptions of their history and abilities, all treasures in **Earthdawn** can be made individual and distinctive.

USING THE TREASURES

Characters must have the Thread Weaving talent to use the magical treasures described below. Using this talent, a character must create a thread and attach it to the item, as explained in **Workings of Magic**, p. 137. Without the thread to power these items with magical energy, these treasures often appear rather ordinary. Once powered, however, the items become extraordinary.

PATTERN KNOWLEDGE

All magical treasures have a history integral to their properties. Without the knowledge of this history, a character is wasting his time attaching a thread to the item. He ends up pouring magical energy into the wrong places; the item continues to function as an ordinary example of that item. Through studying an item's history, a character can learn the Pattern Knowledge of the item, which represents the events of its history and its True Pattern. Pattern Knowledge includes the item's Name and the significant events in its history. Learning this knowledge allows the character to bring the item's magic alive and make it work for him.

An item's Pattern Knowledge is made up several parts, known as Key Knowledges. An item may have any number of Key Knowledges. In order to learn the complete Pattern Knowledge of an item, a character must learn all the item's Key Knowledges. Most items have Key Knowledges at various thread ranks, and the character must learn the knowledge at each rank before he can increase the thread to that rank. For example, a character must learn the Rank 3 Key Knowledge before he can increase his item thread to Rank 3. See the **Workings of Magic** section for more information regarding Pattern Knowledge and Key Knowledges.

KEY KNOWLEDGES

Characters can learn an item's Key Knowledges through special talents such as Item History and by researching legends, libraries, tavern lore, and other sources to find the information they need. The Key Knowledges of the treasures described in this section can only be obtained through research and adventuring.

Each Key Knowledge of magical items has two distinct elements: the general type of information the Key Knowledge represents, called Test Knowledge, and the specific details of that information, called Research Knowledge.

The Test Knowledge of a Key Knowledge is the general information that can be learned only by making an Item History Test. Test Knowledge tells the character what Key Knowledge he needs to discover in order to use the item. For example:

- The Name of the fire elemental that helped to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The Name of the mountain that produced the iron ore used to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The last event in which Kegel's Sword was wielded.

The Research Knowledge of a Key Knowledge represents the specifics of the Test Knowledge that can be learned only through research or adventuring. For example:

- The Name of the fire elemental that helped forge Kegel's Sword is Nogul.
- The ore used to forge Kegel's Sword came from Mount Frost, in the Thunder Peaks
- Kegel's Sword was last used in the Battle of Fornn during the last days of the First Theran War, when Kegel used it to kill General Timyo, leader of the Theran forces.

LEARNING KEY KNOWLEDGES

In order to learn Key Knowledges, characters must first learn the Test Knowledges by making Item History Tests.

A character can learn only a limited amount of information with each use of the Item History talent. A character can only learn item Key Knowledges of thread ranks equal to his or her rank in Item History.

Thom Hammerblade has a Rank 3 Item History talent. After finding a spell sword, he spends a week studying it, then makes his Item History Test. He gets an Extraordinary success, which should allow him to learn four Key Knowledges. Because he has only a Item History Rank 3, he only learns the Key Knowledges up to Thread Rank 3.

First Key Knowledge

The first Key Knowledge of an item is always listed at Thread Rank 1. This Key Knowledge contains the information that will give the character a starting place from which to learn the rest of the item's Key Knowledges. This first Key Knowledge always contains the following:

Test Knowledge:

1. How many thread ranks the item has
2. Whether or not the item has any Deeds associated with it

Research Knowledge:

3. The Name of the item

A successful Item History Test reveals the number of thread ranks the item has, and whether or not the character can perform a Deed in order to attach a thread to the item or increase the rank of a thread. The character must learn the Name of the item through research and adventuring.

Research Knowledge

The Key Knowledges given in the treasure descriptions are the Test Knowledges for each item. A character learns these using the Item History talent and/or through research. Once a character learns the Test Knowledge, he can then decide how to find the Research Knowledge.

The Research Knowledge must be learned through either research or adventuring. Characters cannot use the Item History talent to learn this information. The characters must obtain it by researching legends, seeking lost kaers or citadels, finding historical tomes that contain the information they need, and so on. Exactly how this takes place in the game is up to the gamemaster.

When a gamemaster introduces a magical treasure into his game, he must determine the Research Knowledges of each of its Key Knowledges. Each Research Knowledge can serve as the objective of a short adventure, and these adventures may make up a campaign to fully understand a weapon and wield it at its fullest power – probably to kill that pesky Horror that keeps getting in the characters' way. The gamemaster can set up such adventures in any way he finds appropriate, but the following guidelines may also be helpful.

Creating Key Knowledges

•Finding the Research Knowledge of a Key Knowledge should require effort on the part of the characters seeking the knowledge. The characters should not get something for nothing. For example, a character should have to undertake a journey of some distance to find a tome that has the information he seeks, rather than merely walking to the nearest collection of books and flipping through the pages for a few minutes. Once he arrives at his destination, he might also have to persuade the caretaker of the collection to allow him to look through the tome. To accomplish that, he may have to agree to do a favor (see **Favors,** in **Gamemastering Earthdawn**, p. 334).

•The character must understand how the Key Knowledge fits into the history of the item. If, for example, a character must learn the Name of the jungle that produced the wood used to create a staff, it isn't enough for him to guess the name of the jungle, even if he manages to guess correctly. The character may research different kinds of wood to pinpoint the type used to make the staff, in the process learning about where different types of trees grow, then discovering important stands or forests of those trees. Through this process, he will understand the significance of the wood used to make the staff.

•Make finding the Research Knowledge a challenge, but don't make it impossible. For example, asking a character to learn whether the person who created an item was left- or right-handed is probably an impossible task. Another impossible task might be to learn the Name of an elemental or other powerful entity. If the gamemaster wants to use information of this type as Research Knowledges, he or she must take care to create a way for the characters to obtain it through clever roleplaying or unusual plans of action. The key is to create information that is difficult, but not impossible, to obtain.

•The risk or cost of obtaining the information must be worth the new ability of the item. For example, having to enter the lair of a dragon to earn the Key Knowledge for a Rank 2 thread is probably too high a cost. A good guideline is to base the Legend Point award for the adventure on the number of Legend Points it takes to purchase the next thread rank. For example, if it costs 2,100 Legend Points to purchase the next thread rank for an item, the adventure to obtain the Key Knowledge should award the character approximately that many Legend Points.

The table below lists typical Key Knowledges for items, with a suggested thread rank for each. The gamemaster can alter both the Key Knowledges and the thread Ranks as needed or desired. These suggestions may not match the Key Knowledges and ranks for the magical treasures described in this section.

KEY KNOWLEDGE TABLE

Key Knowledge Thread Rank	Type of Knowledge
1	The Name of the item
2-3	The Name of the person who created the item, or the item's specific magical abilities
4-5	The source of the material from which the item was constructed, or the Name of the creature that aided in the item's construction
6-7	The Name of the last known owner/wielder of the item
8+	The last known event in which the item was used

Learning Magical Effects

When a character weaves a thread to a magical item, the item's powers become available to him. The exact effect discovered is determined by the rank of the thread the character weaves. When a character learns the Test Knowledge of an item's Key Knowledge, he also learns the type of magical effect granted at that thread rank. For example, the character might know that, "The sword will inflict even greater damage than normal on those struck by it." When a character learns the Research Knowledge of a Key Knowledge by adventuring, he learns the specific effect. In the case of the sword, the Research

Knowledge would tell the character that at Thread Rank 3, the sword increases its Damage step by 3.

A character may also research the legend of an item to gain general knowledge of what abilities have been attributed to the item during its history. Information gained in this way is rarely completely accurate, for legends often exaggerate events in favor of heroes.

Me'gana is researching the legend of Kegel's Sword. In a book contained in the Great Library of Throal, she learns that during a battle, "a bolt of flame leapt from the blade's tip." Now Me'gana knows that the sword has some kind of flame ability, though perhaps not exactly the one described in the legend.

WEAVING THREADS TO AN ITEM

Once a character learns the Research Knowledge of the item's Key Knowledge, he may weave a thread to the item. Characters weave threads by spending Legend Points and then using the Thread Weaving talent to attach the thread to the item. Additional thread ranks also are purchased by spending Legend Points.

The Legend Point cost for the thread rank is determined by the item and provided in each item's description. For example, the cost for a Rank 1 thread for a Counterspell Staff is 200 Legend Points. The cost for a Rank 5 thread for Nioku's Bow is 3,400 Legend Points!

The Difficulty Number for attaching the thread to the item with the Thread Weaving talent is determined by the rank of the thread being woven. For more information on attaching threads to an item see **Thread Magic** in **Workings of Magic**, p. 137.

Deeds

Some treasures allow characters to perform Deeds in order to earn Legend Points to weave threads to items. This Deed usually relates to the history of the item, requiring a character to undertake a task similar to a task for which the item was once used, or else complete a task left undone by a former wielder of the item.

Any Deeds of a magical item must be learned in the same way as Key Knowledges; a Deed listed at a thread rank is the Key Knowledge for that thread rank. When a character makes the Item History Test, he learns that the Key Knowledge for a thread rank is a Deed, and the nature and objective of the Deed. Performing the Deed provides the Research Knowledge.

Performing the Deeds associated with an item is not always mandatory. In some cases, the Deed must be performed in order for the character to increase the item's thread rank. In some cases, the character makes the choice. However, the character always earns Legend Points for completing the Deed.

Any Legend Points earned by performing a Deed must be used to increase the thread rank of the magic item. Until the character increases the item's thread rank to its maximum, the player cannot use any excess Legend Points earned by performing a Deed for any other purpose. Once the character increases the item's thread rank to its maximum, he can use excess Deed Legend Points to increase his character's talents or other abilities.

Before undertaking a Deed, a character must have learned all the Key Knowledges for thread ranks up to and including the thread rank at which the Deed is listed. If a Deed is listed at Thread Rank 4, then the character must have learned all Key Knowledges from Thread Ranks 1 through 4 before trying the Deed.

CUSTOMIZING TREASURES

The treasures listed in this section represent a small percentage of the magical items in the world of **Earthdawn**, a sampling of the treasures to be found during a campaign. Though the gamemaster can use them exactly as described, we encourage the gamemaster to customize the items to suit his or her campaign. To that end, we offer the following suggestions.

Our first suggestion: yes, customize! Tinker with the items. Change the Key Knowledge descriptions, the Deeds, even the effects of the items to suit events and characters from your campaign. Most players will enjoy finding truly mysterious treasure and then unraveling that mystery. Customizing the treasures also lets you tie them into events and to characters that already mean something to your players. A treasure is not just an item of power, it is a link to the past. Using treasures to tie characters to the history of your campaign helps make the world more real for them.

Our second suggestion: resist the urge to make the items more powerful. By giving them more effects, or increasing the step of the effects they have, you could inadvertently create an item that will unbalance your game. The items have been created with an eye toward game balance. Many are quite powerful as they stand.

CREATING NEW TREASURES

The following section describes eighteen treasures. Though this amount should last any gaming group a while, most gamemasters will want to create their own unique magical treasures.

Go right ahead. Use the items given here as a model. But first, a word of caution: make the treasures truly unusual rather than simply powerful. If you absolutely cannot resist creating an item more powerful than those described here, extend the thread ranks beyond that of any item listed. For example, if a player needs to weave a Rank 12 thread before getting the "kill dragon" power of a magical sword, you have some time to see how the item works and consider changes you might want to make before your campaign goes up in a puff of magical smoke.

If you create an item that turns out to be too powerful, the best way to deal with it is to just say "Oops!" Explain to the players that the treasure is out of game balance. Take it away from the characters, modify it, then let them have it back. If the item is simply too grossly unbalanced to fix, swallow hard and remove the item from play. You will be spending too much time running **Earthdawn** to let one magical treasure ruin the game for you.

THE TREASURES

The treasures described below are grouped into two categories. The first contains items which represent a general type of item (i.e., staffs with common properties). The second category contains unique, "only one like it ever" items.

Each treasure description provides the item's game information and history. The following information explains the terms used in each item description. See also **Key Knowledges** and **Deeds** in this chapter.

Maximum Threads: A character may only weave one thread to a magic item. However, most items will hold more than one thread, so they may act magically for more than one character. If more than one character attaches a thread to an item, the character touching the item

gets to use it. If an item already has the maximum number of threads woven to it and another character attaches a new thread, the thread of the lowest rank is replaced.

For example, Monturk's Carpet can have, at most, two threads woven to it. If it already has two threads attached to it, one at Rank 4, the other at Rank 2 and someone weaves a new thread to the Carpet, the new thread would displace the Rank 2 thread.

Spell Defense: The Spell Defense of the item is the Difficulty Number used by a character attempting to use talents (such as Item History or Weapon History) to learn an item's history. It also serves as the Difficulty Number for spells or talents used against the item.

Thread Ranks: This lists the thread rank, the Costs, Key Knowledges, Deeds, and effects the treasure has at each thread rank. Each item has a maximum number of thread ranks. A character cannot increase the rank of the thread he weaves to an item beyond the maximum listed rank. For example, a character with a Counterspell Staff may only increase the rank of the thread attached to the staff to Rank 6. It is simply not possible to weave a Rank 7 thread to a Counterspell Staff. Any attempt to weave a thread with a rank higher than the maximum automatically fails.

New effects are listed at each thread rank. If a higher rank does not list a new effect, assume it is the same as at the previous thread rank. Newer, more potent effects replace lesser abilities of the same type. The effects are not cumulative. For example, an item with Spell Defense +1 adds 1 to the wielder's Spell Defense. If the item provides Spell Defense +2 at a higher rank, the character's Spell Defense is increased by 2, not by 3. Note that all step notations are referred to in shorthand; for example, "Willforce + 10" means "Willforce step + 10 steps."

Cost: This is the cost in Legend Points to weave a thread to an item or increase a thread's rank.

GENERAL TREASURE

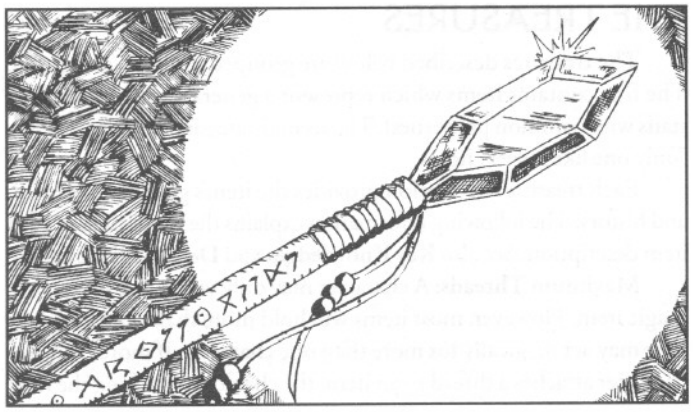
This section describes magical items of general types. More than one item of a type may exist that exhibits the same magical properties.

COUNTERSPELL STAFF

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 13

A Counterspell Staff is usually 6 feet long, topped with a finely carved crystal. The crystal is carved into any number of shapes or figures, depending on the whim of the staff's creator. Counterspell Staffs are made of wood, usually mahogany, but also on occasion maple, oak, or ebony.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Counterspell Staff.

Effect: Allows the wielder to cast Counterspell, a Circle 5 wizard spell. If a character does not have the Spellcasting Talent, he uses his Perception step to cast the spell. The effect of the spell is Willforce + 5. When used as a melee weapon, the damage of the staff is STR + 3 steps.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: Counterspell Staffs are designed to work against more and more magic as the thread rank increases. Initially they only protect against the spells of one Discipline. The wielder must know which Discipline the staff affects.

Effect: Spell Defense + 1.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Effect: The effect of the Counterspell is Willforce + 6. The staff affects the spells of a second Discipline.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Deed: The wielder may bind his or her magical energy to that of the staff, using blood magic to increase the staff's effectiveness. The wielder permanently sacrifices 2 Damage Points. The ritual leaves a scar that occasionally oozes a drop of blood. The drop of blood is magically drawn to a notch in the staff; the notch glistens red for three hours after the drop hits it. As soon as the glisten fades, another drop of blood falls from the scar. This Deed must be performed in the jungle or forest where the wood of the staff originated. The Deed is worth 1,300 Legend Points.

Effect: The effect of the Counterspell is Willforce + 8; the damage of the staff is STR + 4 steps.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the magician who created the staff.

Effect: Spell Defense +2; the effect of the Counterspell is Willforce + 9.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

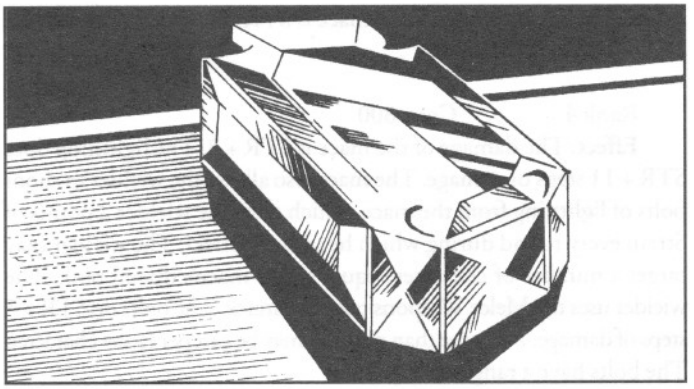
Effect: Spell Defense + 3; the effect of the Counterspell is Willforce + 10; the damage of the staff is STR + 5 steps.

CRYSTAL SPELL BOX

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 12

A Crystal Spell Box is a small box made of crystal and metal. The sides, top, and bottom are all solid pieces of crystal, with the seams between the pieces made of precious metals, most often silver or gold. The boxes are not designed to be opened. The crystal used in these boxes is usually deep amber in color, though clear and blackened crystal is used occasionally. A Crystal Spell Box measures roughly 8 inches long by 5 inches wide by 3 inches high. When such a box contains a spell, it radiates a faint glow, which intensifies as more and more spells are captured within it.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: The wielder must know the Name of the item.

Crystal Spell Boxes were designed by the great mage Masym. The spell boxes capture spells cast by enemies, and store them for later release. Whenever the box contains the maximum number of spells, a spell currently in the box must be released before another spell can be captured.

To capture a spell, the wielder of the box makes a Spellcasting Test using the Spellcasting Test result of the cast spell as the Difficulty Number. For example, if the caster of the spell gets a result of 5 on his Spellcasting Test, the character wielding the spell box must achieve a result of 5 or better on his Spellcasting Test in order to capture the spell. Success places the spell in the box. All the Spellcasting bonuses given below apply only when the wielder uses the box to capture a spell. The wielder may not capture his own spell.

To release a spell, the wielder must make the usual tests using his Spellcasting and Willforce talents. The spell may be from a Circle higher than the wielder's. No thread weaving is necessary when releasing spells from a Crystal Spell Box.

Effect: Spellcasting + 1 step; box holds 1 spell.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: Spellcasting + 2 steps; the box can hold 1 spell.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Deed: Masym did not personally build every box. Apprentices worked for hundreds of hours to build the rudiments of a single box; Masym chose to complete only the best of those boxes. Discovering the Name of an apprentice and then taking the box to the grave (or final resting place) of the apprentice and leaving an offering of thanks is worth 5,500 Legend Points.

Effect: Spellcasting + 2 steps; the box can hold up to 2 spells.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The wielder must know the Name of the mountain from which the crystal originated.

Effect: Spellcasting + 3 steps; the box can hold up to 2 spells.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Effect: Spellcasting + 3 steps; the box can hold up to 3 spells.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the last person to have owned or used the box.

Effect: Spellcasting + 4 steps; the box can hold up to 4 spells.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 3,400

Effect: Spellcasting + 5 steps; the box can hold up to 5 spells.

FROST POUCH

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 13

These are small pouches, usually 3 by 5 inches in size and made of white or blue cloth. The pouches always feel cool to the touch. Air elementals are essential for making a frost pouch.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the pouch.

Effect: The pouch allows the character to use bits of frost as throwing weapons. The user takes 1 point of Strain. He then reaches into the pouch and grabs some bits of frost. Using his Throwing Weapons or Dexterity steps, he hurls the frost at a target. The damage of the frost is the attacking character's Willforce (or Willpower) + 5 steps. The range (in yards) of the frost is short 2-5; medium 6-10; long 11-15.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: The range of the frost becomes short 2-10; medium 11-20; long 21-30.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

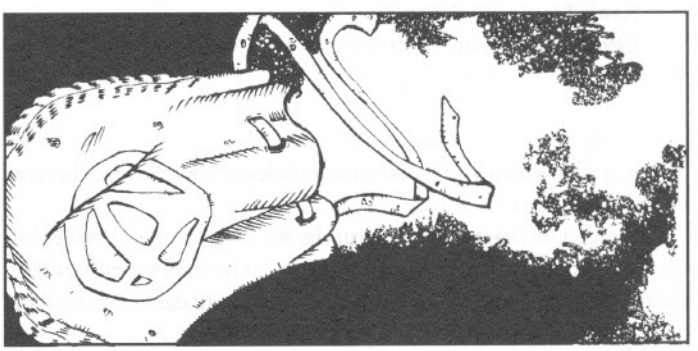
Key Knowledge: The frost in the pouch originally came from mountain snow or glacier ice. The character must learn the Name of the mountain or glacier.

Deed: Return to the mountain or glacier of origin, and fill the pouch with snow or ice. The Deed is worth 1,300 Legend Points.

Effect: The damage of the frost is Willforce + 6 steps.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: The frost becomes more powerful. It now has a power called Freezing Frost. If frost of this thread rank hits a target, compare the Damage Test result to the Spell Defense of the target. If the Damage Test is successful, the target takes no damage, but is locked into position as if frozen. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the thread rank, or until the victim makes a successful Willpower Test against the



Spell Defense of the pouch wielder. A successful Dispel Magic spell cast against the Spell Defense of the pouch wielder also frees the target.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the air elemental who lent its power to the pouch.

Effect: The damage of the frost is now Willforce + 7 steps.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

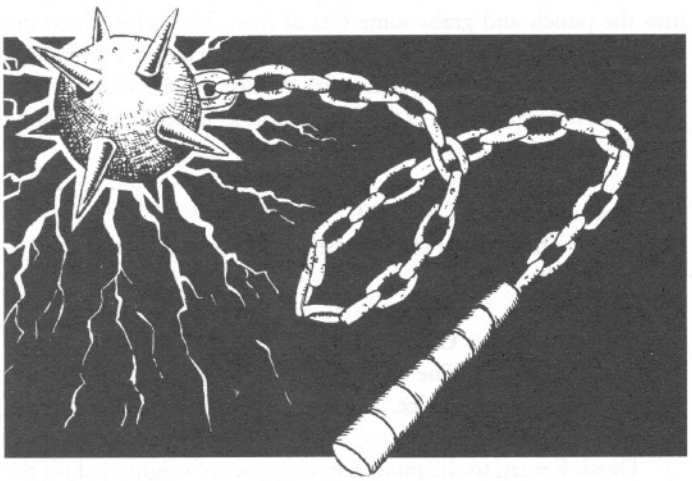
Effect: The damage of the frost is now Willforce + 8 steps.

LIGHTNING MACE

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 14

Lightning Maces can be of as many different shapes and sizes as normal maces. The head of a Lightning Mace is always made of metal and often shows many small burn marks. When a character wielding a Lightning Mace activates its magic by taking Strain, the head of the mace crackles with small bolts of lightning.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: Every Lightning Mace is Named by its creator. The wielder must learn the Name of the individual mace.

Effect: The damage of the mace is STR + 5 steps. For the cost of 1 point of Strain the mace crackles with lightning, resulting in damage of STR + 8 steps. The lightning effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the thread rank.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: The damage of the mace is STR + 6 steps. The lightning does damage of STR + 9 steps.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The character must learn how the mace became separated from its last wielder.

Deed: The character must visit the site where the last wielder lost the weapon. The character must pledge that he shall never part with the mace, using blood magic (1 point of permanent damage) to seal the oath. The Deed is worth 1,300 Legend Points.

Effect: The damage of the mace is STR + 7. The lightning does STR + 10 steps of damage.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: The damage of the mace is STR + 8. The lightning does STR + 11 steps of damage. The mace also allows the wielder to shoot bolts of lightning from the mace, which costs the wielder 2 points of Strain every round during which he uses the effect. The wielder may target a number of characters equal to the mace's thread rank. The wielder uses the Melee Weapons talent to attack. The bolts do STR + 5 steps of damage. No more than one bolt may be cast per target character. The bolts have a range of 80 yards.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the person who created the mace.

Effect: The lightning bolts now do STR + 7 steps of damage.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: The mace can now produce flashes of lightning that deflect attacks. The Physical Defense and Spell Defense of the wielder both increase by 1.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the last wielder of the mace. If that individual died, the character must also learn how he died. If the previous wielder is still alive, the character must learn where he is currently living.

Effect: The damage of the mace is now STR + 10 steps. The lightning now does STR + 13 steps. Lightning bolts do STR + 7 steps damage.

Rank 8 **Cost:** 5,500

Deed: The character must pledge to complete the last wielder's unfinished task. Upon completing the mission, the character earns 5,500 Legend Points. If the last wielder left no unfinished task, this Deed cannot be performed.

Effect: The Physical Defense and Spell Defense of the wielder now increase by 2.

POTION OF LIFE

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 8

Potions of Life vary greatly in color and consistency, depending on the alchemists who create them. The containers holding these potions are most often porcelain, but sometimes glass or metal.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 100

Key Knowledge: A Potion of Life is stored in a magical flask. The flask refills itself once the potion has been drunk. The character tosses a silver coin over his shoulder, proposing a toast to the alchemist; a flare of green fire consumes the coin, and the flask fills with the Potion of Life. The character must learn the Name of the flask and potion.

Effect: When drunk by a character, the potion adds 6 steps to one of the character's Recovery Tests. When using the Potion of Life, the character may use no other potion or magic to enhance the Recovery Test.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 200

Effect: The potion adds 8 steps to one of the character's Recovery Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the alchemist who created the potion.

Effect: The potion adds 8 steps to one of the character's Recovery Tests. It also adds 4 steps to any tests made to resist the effects of poison.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 500

Effect: The potion adds 9 steps to one of the character's Recovery Tests. It also adds 6 steps to any tests made to resist the effects of poison.

SILVERED SHIELD

Maximum Threads: 4

Spell Defense: 13

A Silvered Shield can appear as a shield of any size. All have fine silver lines decorating their edges, making them appear of more than average worth. Many of these shields have sigils and designs outlined in silver.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: Crafted from elementally charged earth, the shield gains some of its power from an earth elemental. The wielder must learn the Name of the shield.

Effect: Add 2 to the shield's Armor Rating. Add 2 to its Mystic Armor Rating. The shield's Initiative Penalty is -1 (see **Goods and Services**, p. 199, for an explanation of Initiative Penalty).

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: Add 3 to the shield's Armor Rating. Add +2 to its Mystic Armor Rating.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the person who created the shield.

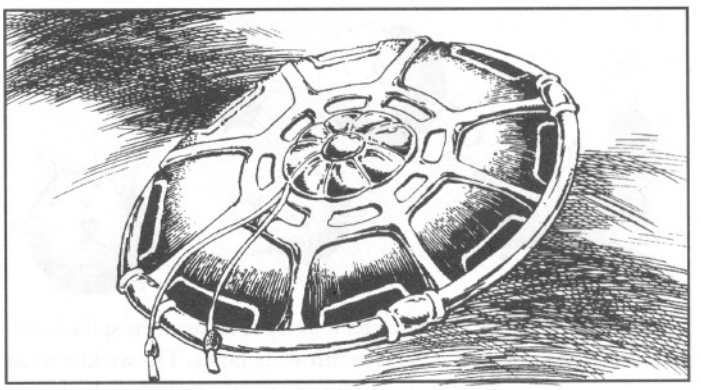
Effect: Add 3 to the shield's Armor Rating. Add 3 to its Mystic Armor Rating. The wielder may use his action to make a Perception or Spellcasting Test to repel a spell. The Difficulty Number is equal to the result from the caster's Spellcasting Test. The test is successful if the result is at least equal to the caster's Spell Defense, sending the spell back to affect its caster. Using a Silvered Shield to repel a spell costs 1 point of Strain.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: Remove the penalty to the Initiative step.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must determine the source of the elemental earth used in the creation of the shield.



Effect: The shield adds 1 step to the Repel Test.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: The shield adds 2 steps to the Repel Test. The shield also grants elemental fortitude to the wielder, adding 1 to Recovery Tests.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the earth elemental who helped create the shield.

Effect: Add 4 to the shield's Armor Rating. Add 4 to its Mystic Armor Rating.

Rank 8 **Cost:** 5,500

Deed: The wielder must find the earth elemental who imbued the shield with a fraction of its own power. The wielder pledges to defend the elemental against all enemies and to help protect elemental earth from those who would steal its power without permission, such as wildcat miners and Therans. The wielder makes a blood magic oath to seal the pact (at a cost of 3 points of permanent damage). The deed is worth 8,900 Legend Points. If the wielder ever breaks the oath, the shield immediately shatters, destroyed beyond repair.

Effect: The blood magic improves the quality of the wielder's armor. For an additional, one-time cost of 1 point of permanent damage, the character's armor can only be defeated by an Extraordinary success.

SPIKE BOMBS

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 8

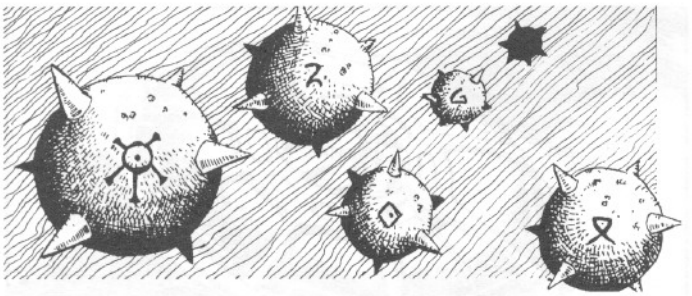
Spike Bombs are small (four inches in diameter) metal balls covered with magical symbols. These symbols are usually arcane markings of no particular significance.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 100

Key Knowledge: Spike bombs were first invented by the t'skrang alchemist Vreesfyr, but the technique eventually spread throughout Barsaive.

Spike bombs are throwing weapons. Throwing a spike bomb costs 1 point of Strain. A spike bomb with low-rank threads can affect only one target. A spike bomb is destroyed as soon as it is used, but the wielder can recreate a bomb to which he has threads attached. The character makes a Willforce or Willpower Test against the Spell Defense of the target character (or the highest Spell Defense Rating among multiple target characters). Success re-forms the spike bomb and returns



it to the thrower's hand. A character may try to recreate the spike bomb whenever the target character is in throwing range. The wielder must learn the Name of the alchemist who created the spike bomb.

Effect: Add 6 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests. The range in yards is short 2-10; medium 11-20; long 21-30. The spike bomb affects the closest character within 3 yards of the blast.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 200

Effect: Add 8 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the name of the battle in which this alchemist's spike bombs had the greatest impact. For most living alchemists, this battle was the Siege of Throal, the Siege of Triumph, or the Fall of Sky Point.

Effect: Add 8 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests. The spike bomb now affects all characters within 3 yards of the blast.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 500

Effect: Add 8 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests. The range in yards is increased to short 2-15; medium 16-40; large 41-100.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 800

Deed: The wielder must wound a Horror or Horror construct with the spike bomb. Spike bombs were first invented during the previous Scourge to help battle the Horrors. Wounding a Horror is worth 800 Legend Points; killing one is worth 1,300 Legend Points.

Effect: Add 9 steps to the character's Willforce for Damage Tests.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 1,300

Effect: Add 10 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: Add 11 steps to the character's Willforce step for Damage Tests.

SPIKE GAUNTLETS

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 14

Spike Gauntlets are metal gauntlets bristling with many small, slender, steel spikes. These spikes are usually highly polished and sharply pointed.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: Spike gauntlets are made from metal mined in the Caucavik Mountains, despite earth elemental objections to the mining activities. The gauntlets draw power from the mountains themselves. The wielder must learn the Name of the gauntlets.

Effect: Add +1 to the character's Physical Defense Rating.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: Add +1 to the character's Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the person who created the gauntlets.

Effect: Add +2 each to the character's Physical Defense and Spell Defense Ratings.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: For a cost of 1 point of Strain, the gauntlets increase the length of the spikes for one attack. Add 6 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The character may try to increase his chance of making an Armor-Defeating Hit by taking more Strain. Each point of Strain taken adds 1 step to the Attack Test. The maximum amount of Strain that a character can take for the spikes is equal to the gauntlets' thread rank. For example, at Thread Rank 4, a character could take a maximum of 4 points of Strain to use the gauntlets. One point allows the wielder to project the spikes, the other 3 add steps to the character's Unarmed Combat talent or skill for the Attack Test.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the previous owner of the gauntlets.

Effect: Add +3 to the character's Physical Defense and Spell Defense Ratings.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: Add +8 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the mountain that produced the metal used to create the gauntlets.

Effect: Add +4 to the character's Spell Defense Rating, +1 to his Social Defense Rating.



Rank 8 **Cost:** 5,500

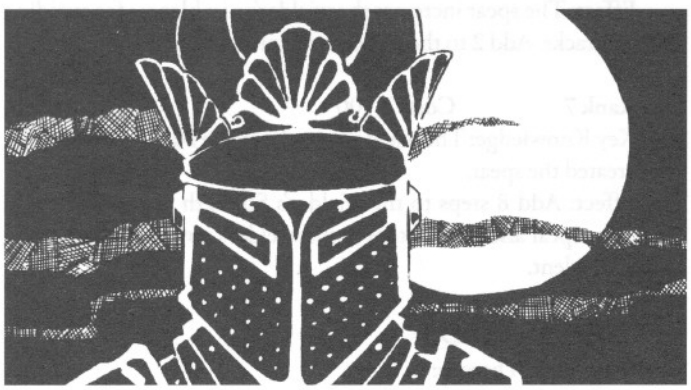
Effect: Add +4 to the character's Physical Defense Rating, +2 to his Social Defense Rating.

WAR HELM OF LANDIS

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 9

The War Helm of Landis is a metal helmet adorned with the symbol of the ancient human kingdom of Landis. The helm has a faceplate that can swing down or up, depending on whether the wearer wants to protect his face or wishes to see better.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 100

Key Knowledge: Mages and Weaponsmiths worked together to provide this protection to important military commanders of the kingdom of Landis. Many of these helmets were lost in the battles against the mindless ravagers who were the forerunners of the Horrors and marked the beginning of the Scourge. The wearer must learn the Name of the helmet.

Deed: The character must polish and repair the helmet. Replacing the unit insignia on the helmet reactivates the magic within the helmet. The Deed is worth 800 Legend Points.

Effect: Add +1 to the character's Armor Rating. The helmet's magic also increases the wearer's Social Defense Rating by +1 and adds +1 step to his Charisma step.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 200

Effect: Add +2 to the character's Social Defense Rating and add +2 steps to his Charisma step.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The character must know what military unit was under the command of the helmet's original owner.

Effect: The helmet adds +1 to the wearer's Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 500

Effect: Add +2 to the character's Physical Armor Rating.

WHIP OF DEFENSE

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 13

A Whip of Defense can be made from a variety of different materials. The most common is leather, but some are made of espagra skin, lizard skin, and very infrequently, dragon skin. The main cord of the whip is 12 feet long, composed of several strands of skin braided together. On certain rare whips, each strand is of a different skin, giving the whipcord an unusual appearance.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the whip.

Effect: The whip produces a number of cords of vibrant magical energy equal to its thread rank. Each energy cord can help the wielder deflect or block one attack while he or she is using the whip. These cords add +1 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating. This increase protects against only 1 attack per Combat Round. Add +4 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: The energy cords add +2 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating. This increase protects against 2 attacks per Combat Round.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the person who created the whip.

Effect: The energy cords add +1 to the character's Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: Add +5 to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The energy cords add +3 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating. This increase protects against 3 attacks per Combat Round.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The character must know all the types of skins used to make the whip.

Effect: The energy cords add +4 to the wielder's Physical Defense. This increase protects against 4 attacks per Combat Round. The whip also adds +2 to the wielder's Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: The energy cords add +5 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating. This increase protects against 5 attacks per Combat Round. The whip also adds +3 to the wielder's Spell Defense Rating.

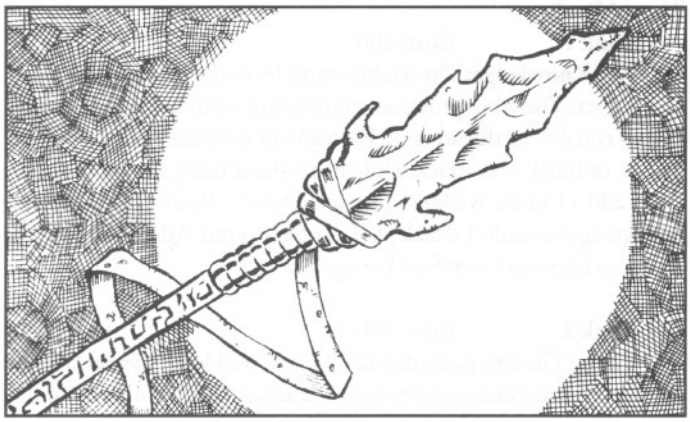
UNIQUE TREASURE

This section describes magical items that are unique in the world. Only one of each item exists; if one of these items is destroyed, it will never exist in this world again (unless magic spontaneously reproduces its True Pattern to answer a threat that only this item can destroy). If a thread rank provides only a Deed, the character must perform the Deed.

DEVASTATOR SPEAR

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 8

Frightening in appearance, this spear is an eight-foot length of dark brown wood lined with runes that depict its origins. Rumor claims that the spear was constructed using the blood of a Horror as the source of its enchantment. The tip of the spear is made of chiseled obsidian, polished to a blinding sheen. The magic of the spear maintains the shine of its tip, which never dulls.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 100

Key Knowledge: The wielder must know that this spear is the Devastator Spear.

Effect: Add 4 steps to the wielder's Strength step for Damage Tests. When thrown, the spear splits into a number of spears equal to its thread rank. The wielder may choose to throw fewer than the maximum number of spears. These spears may be targeted against one character or against different characters.

The thrower makes only one Attack Test against the highest Physical Defense of any target. The result of this test applies to all the image-spears. All the spears either hit or miss. After the attack, all the image-spears disappear, and the Devastator returns to the hand of its wielder. Throwing the Devastator Spear costs a character 1 point of Strain for each spear thrown. For example, a character must take 3 points of Strain if he or she throws the Devastator and has it split into 3 spears.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 200

Effect: Add 5 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must know the Name of the first victim slain by the spear.

Effect: Add 6 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 500

Effect: Add 6 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The spear also adds 1 to the wielder's Throwing Weapons talent step.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 800

Deed: The wielder must defeat a monster in single combat. The wielder may throw the Devastator Spear only once, and that attack must either kill or knock the creature unconscious. Accomplishing the Deed earns the character the Legend Points for the creature as well as the same number of points for the Deed. In effect, he or she earns double the Legend Points for defeating the creature.

Effect: Add 7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 1,300

Effect: The spear increases the wielder's nimbleness for avoiding missile attacks. Add 2 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 2,100

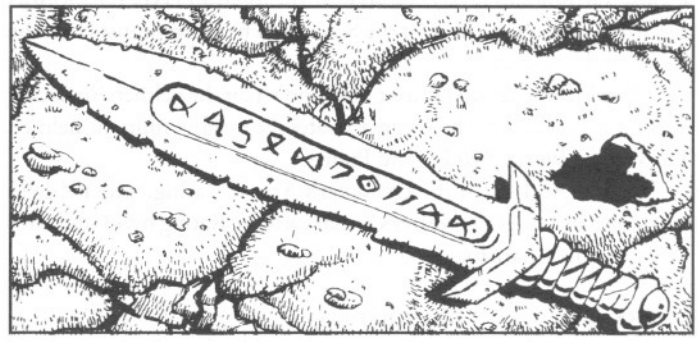
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the person who created the spear.

Effect: Add 8 steps to the wielder's Strength step for Damage Tests. The spear also adds 2 steps to the wielder's rank in the Throwing Weapons talent.

KEGEL'S SWORD

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 13

Kegel's Sword is a broadsword of shorter-than-average length. The sword's hilt contains a small ruby that glows when the sword's magic is activated. The blade is a dull steel-gray, with fine runes carved along it. These runes describe some of Kegel's adventures. The tip of this sword is blackened, as if by long exposure to soot and ash.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: The dwarf warrior Kegel used this sword for nearly 20 years. It was buried with him when he died, but stolen by tomb robbers. Rumors of its subsequent appearances and disappearances still make the rounds of tavern gossip. The character must know that the sword is Kegel's and must also know the name of Kegel's beloved, to whom he pledged the sword.

Effect: Kegel's Sword is a broadsword. It adds 7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: The tip of the sword can blaze into flame as if it were a torch. This ability costs the wielder 1 point of Strain. Each use of this

effect lasts up to an hour or until the flame is extinguished. Add 8 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Weaponsmith who created the sword.

Effect: For a cost of 1 point of Strain, the character can more firmly attach himself to the earth. Add 6 steps to the wielder's next Knockdown Test. This attachment lasts an hour or until used, whichever comes first. The sword also adds 1 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: At a cost of 1 point of Strain, the character may take on a more fluid form. Though retaining his basic shape, the character can flow around an attacker's blow. The character chooses when to flow; flowing reduces the damage taken from the blow by 6 points. The form lasts for an hour or until used, whichever comes first. The sword also adds 2 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the elementals with whom Kegel bargained to empower his sword. Kegel undertook a quest for a fire elemental, an earth elemental, a water elemental, and an air elemental. The wielder must learn the names of all four elementals.

Effect: Add 9 to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The power of the winds can chill the blade edge to bone-freezing cold. This costs the wielder a point of Strain. When used against targets affected by cold, add 6 steps to the Damage Test. The chilled edge lasts an hour or until used, whichever comes first.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 2,100

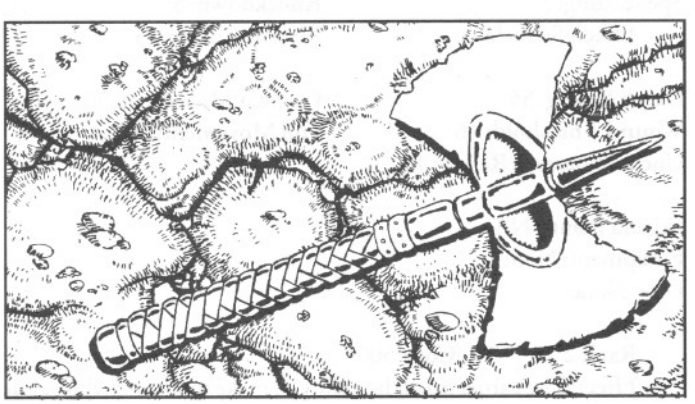
Effect: Add 2 to the wielder's Spell Defense Rating.

LORM'S AXE

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 7

Lorm's Axe is a large battle-axe that weighs more than 15 pounds. The handle is made of light-colored oak. The blade has large black stains on both edges.



Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 100

Key Knowledge: This axe is known as Lorm's Axe, and belonged to Lorm, a fledgling troll hero who died in Kaer Jalendale. The wielder must learn that the axe is Named Lorm's Axe.

Effect: Add 7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 200

Deed: The axe is destined to blood Horrors and their constructs. A character should inscribe his own name on the haft of the axe. The character then hunts down a Horror construct, or a Horror itself, invokes Lorm's name, and strikes the opponent in combat. If he damages the opponent, he earns Legend Points that he can use to raise the thread rank of Lorm's Axe. For striking a construct, the character earns 300 Legend Points. For striking a Horror, the character earns 1,200 Legend Points. For striking the Wormskull that killed Lorm, the character earns 3,400 Legend Points.

Effect: Add 8 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Weaponsmith who created the axe.

Effect: Add 8 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The axe also adds 1 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 500

Effect: Add +9 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The axe also adds +1 to the wielder's Physical Defense and Spell Defense Ratings.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the trollmoot to which Lorm belonged.

Effect: Add +9 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The axe also adds +1 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating, and +2 to his Spell Defense Rating.

MASK OF OLTION

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 13

The Mask of Oltion is a fine silken mask with eye and mouth slits. When affixed properly, it covers a person's entire face. The mask is a deep royal blue, and the eye and mouth slits are embroidered in pale blue.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 200

Key Knowledge: Oltion was a Wizard known for his intricate devices and peculiar sense of humor. He created dozens of items, most of them utilitarian, most not meant for use in combat. The character must always think of the mask as the "Mask of Oltion," but never refer to it as the "Mask of Oltion." In game terms, the player must always use



the exact phrase when telling the gamemaster that his character is using the Mask of Oltion. If he fails to say "Mask of Oltion," the item will not work. On the other hand, if the player character ever refers to the mask in conversation or explanation as the Mask of Oltion, the mask freezes its magic for a period of 1D4 hours. The wearer must know that the mask is Named the Mask of Oltion.

Effect: Boost all Recovery Tests by +2 steps.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 300

Effect: The mask will mimic the face of any character the wearer can remember. It adds +3 steps to the wearer's Charisma step when attempting to deceive others into believing he is the person whose face he wears.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn Oltion's race.

Effect: The mask grants the wearer Astral Sight (per the windling ability, see **Creating a Character,** p. 45) with a range of 20 yards. Add +2 steps to the Perception Test to use this ability. Using this ability costs the character 1 point of Strain.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 800

Effect: Add +1 to the wearer's Spell Defense and Social Defense Ratings.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wearer must learn the Name of the adventuring group to which Oltion belonged.

Effect: The mask can create a giant column of flame that erupts essentially on top of a target. The wearer makes a Spellcasting (or Perception) Test against the target's Spell Defense Rating. If successful, he hits the target with the flame. Add +30 steps to the character's Willforce step for the Damage Test. The range is 60 yards. Using this ability costs the character 5 points of Strain.

Oltion built this last effect into the mask primarily because no one else had figured out how to build such a big effect into a device with so many other innocuous effects. He also apparently grew weary of all those fighter-types asking, "When are you going to build something useful?"

MONTURK'S CARPET

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 19

Monturk's Carpet is a small, 6-by-4-foot carpet, its edges fringed in fine golden silk. The multi-colored designs and patterns on the carpet are of Theran origin, set against a striped background of blue, red, and yellow. Woven into these stripes are threads of gold and luminescent elemental air.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: Monturk was a Theran Wizard, a dwarf killed for throwing his lot in with the wrong Theran faction. Though he failed in his attempt to create a permanent flying carpet, he ended up creating a far more unusual object than just a flying rug. The character must know that the carpet is Named Monturk's Carpet.

Effect: The carpet is alive, but remains dormant until a thread is attached to it. The mystical energy from the thread revives the carpet. Monturk's Carpet can fly, but is not really strong enough to carry anyone. In addition, its temperament is ill-suited for flying-carpethood. Monturk's Carpet generally refuses to carry other living beings. The carpet is sometimes willing to carry letters or small packages that weigh no more than five pounds.

Monturk's Carpet will serve its master in other ways. It can scout ahead, fight alongside its master, and use other abilities as the thread rank increases.

See **Creatures,** p. 293, for an explanation of the following game statistics.

Monturk's Carpet

DEX: 5	**STR:** 2	**TOU:** 13
PER: 5	**WIL:** 4	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 5
Damage: 4
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 7
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 3
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 13

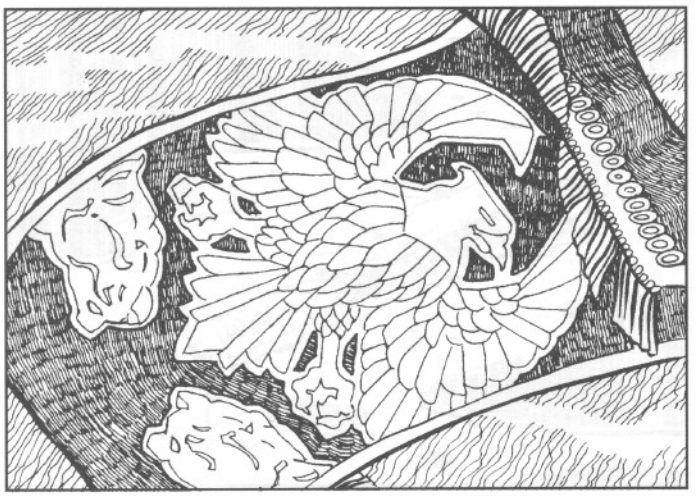
Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: 45

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: NA
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Rank 2 **Cost:** 500

Effect: The carpet gains the ability to make tones and whistles. It cannot speak words, but will try to communicate through sound. The carpet's Initiative increases to Step 10.



Rank 3 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The character must learn how and in what year Monturk was killed.

Effect: The carpet may transfer 1 Recovery Test to its master. The carpet makes a Spellcasting Test against the master-character's Spell Defense Rating. A successful result transfers one of the carpet's Recovery Tests to the character. The character makes that Recovery Test using the carpet's Step 13, rather than the character's Recovery Test step. The carpet may transfer a number of Recovery Tests per day up to its thread rank.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 1,300

Deed: The carpet was worked with threads of gold and elemental air, worth 2,500 silver pieces (500 for the gold, 2,000 for the elemental air). Neglect and a harrowing escape from Monturk's enemies have damaged these threads. Having the rug rewoven strengthens the magic in the carpet. The Deed is worth 6,800 Legend Points.

Effect: The carpet's Initiative increases to Step 12 and its Spellcasting to Step 8. The Combat Movement is increased to 75 yards, and its Full Movement is increased to 150 yards.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 2,100

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the carpet's last owner.

Effect: The carpet forms a telepathic link with its master through which both can transmit speech-like thoughts. The link has a range of 250 yards, and does not require an action to use. Increase the carpet's Combat Movement to 100 yards, and its Full Movement to 200 yards.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 3,400

Effect: The carpet gains an ability similar to the Circle 3 Wizard spell of Levitate covering a 10-by-20-foot area behind the carpet. The levitation ability lifts up to 2,000 pounds, but can only lift objects up to 10 yards above the levitation area. Unlike the Levitate spell, the levitation area moves along with the carpet, permitting characters to levitate behind the carpet as it flies. The carpet enjoys performing acrobatics, and will zoom, climb, twist, and roll when dragging passengers along.

NIOKU'S BOW

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 24

Nioku's Bow is a longer-than-average longbow, made of dark oak with small grooves along its sides lined with fine red crystal. The bowstring is made of catgut lined with elemental air.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: Nioku was a troll Archer, a female hero of an earlier time. She is one of the very few heroes who could truthfully claim to have killed a dragon in one-on-one combat. The wielder must know that the bow is Named Nioku's Bow.

Effect: Add +5 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 800

Effect: The range of the bow, in yards, increases to short 2-60; medium 61-250; large 251-400. The bow adds +1 step to the wielder's Missile Weapons talent step.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: Nioku made arrowheads from the bones of slain enemies. The wielder must know the Name of one of Nioku's enemies.

Deed: The character must carve twelve arrowheads from the bones of one of his enemies. He or she receives 1,300 Legend Points for this Deed.

Effect: Add +7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: Add +8 to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The bow adds +1 to the wielder's Spell Defense Rating.

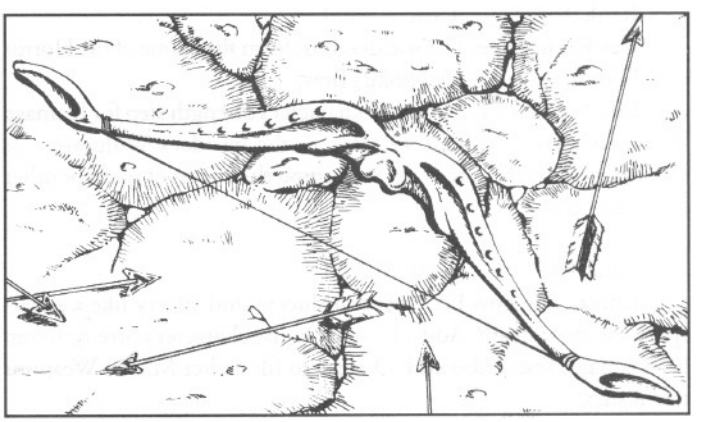
Rank 5 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the last person killed by the bow.

Effect: The range of the bow, in yards, increases to short 2-100; medium 101-300; large 300-500. The bow adds +2 to the wielder's Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 5,500

Effect: Add +10 to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.



Rank 7 **Cost:** 8,900

Key Knowledge: Legends tell of a long-running competition between Nioku and an elf Archer named Talondel. Talondel had been corrupted by a Horror, though he did not fall under its control. He and Nioku crossed paths and competed in feats of archery, which always ended in a tie, for more than seven years. Nioku finally defeated Talondel, who was shortly thereafter captured and held in rune chains in a dwarf prison. Several months after she defeated Talondel, Nioku uncovered the lair of a Horror that had been terrorizing Sky Raiders, including members of her trollmoot. Nioku could not defeat the Horror's magic because the creature knew too much about her. Soon after her failed attack, the Horror ravaged another Sky Raider camp, killing Nioku's uncle and younger brother.

Nioku traveled to the dwarf prison where Talondel lay chained and asked the elf to slay the Horror that was killing her kinsmen. In exchange, she would convince the dwarfs to pardon the elf. Talondel laughed at her proposal, asking how he could kill a Horror that Nioku and her mighty bow had not been able to touch.

Nioku swore a blood oath and offered Talondel her bow to use against the Horror, and to keep if he killed it. Impressed by her willing sacrifice, Talondel accepted the offer. The power of the oath somehow allowed Talondel to use the bow while it still drew power from Nioku's thread.

Talondel slew the Horror, then disappeared. Nearly fourteen months later, he returned and gave the bow back to Nioku, saying that from this day forward he must use his own magic. As Nioku touched her bow, it began to glow, then became translucent with a silvery sheen. The bow had taken its most powerful form. The wielder must know the story of how the bow came into its most powerful form,

Deed: The character must give the bow to a previously defeated enemy. The enemy will perform a Deed with the bow, and is then entitled to keep the bow. Whether or not the enemy character ever returns the bow is up to him or her. The wielder may not accompany the other character, nor send anyone else along with him, either to help or keep an eye on the enemy. The former enemy is on his own. The bow continues to draw power from the wielder's thread. If the enemy character returns the bow, the character receives 61,000 Legend Points.

Effect: Add +1 to the wielder's Physical Defense Rating and +3 to his Spell Defense Rating.

Rank 8 **Cost:** 14,400

Effect: Add +12 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

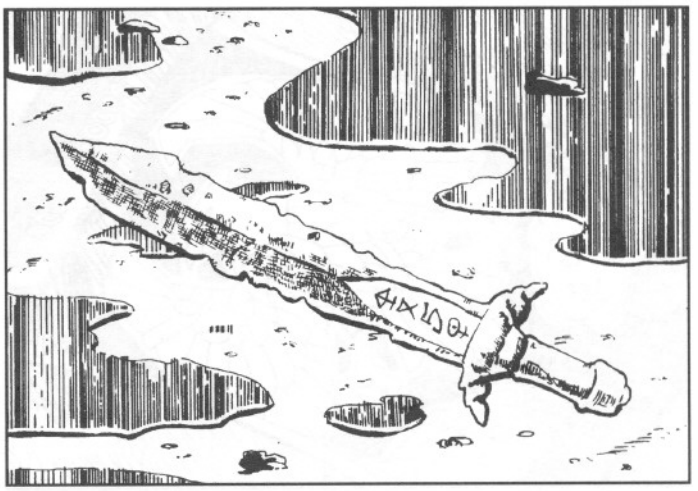
Rank 9 **Cost:** 23,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Horror that Talondel killed using Nioku's Bow.

Effect: Add +14 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. The bow also adds +2 steps to the wielder's Willpower (or Willforce) step when he or she is resisting the effects of spells or other magical effects.

Rank 10 **Cost:** 37,700

Effect: The bow becomes translucent and silvery like a silver-speckled moonbeam. Add +15 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. Also add +3 steps to his or her Missile Weapons talent step.



PURIFIER

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 18

Purifier appears as a worn, rusty broadsword, damaged from several years' use by many different heroes. Carved along the blade's flat side are runes bearing the symbols of the Kingdom of Throal and of King Valurus I.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 500

Key Knowledge: Purifier was created at the direction of King Valurus I of Throal when the Horrors first began to enter the world, and was used by many of the heroes of the pre-Scourge world. According to legend, a powerful Wizard cast a spell on the sword to make it look old and rusted.

Before a character can weave any threads to Purifier, he must first remove the spell that changes its appearance. The spell resists any Dispel Magic attempts using the same steps as a Circle 11 spell. Having removed the spell, the character can weave threads to Purifier.

The wielder must know that the sword's name is Purifier.

Effect: The sword can be wielded by anyone, regardless of size or strength. Add +6 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 800

Effect: When used against Horrors and Horror constructs, the blade glows red hot. Add +7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 1,300

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Names of the Weaponsmiths who created the sword.

Effect: Add +7 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests. Against Horrors and Horror constructs, add +8 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 2,100

Effect: When used against Horrors and Horror constructs, add +9 steps to the character's Strength step for Damage Tests.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the last wielder of the sword.

Effect: The sword can detect those who have been corrupted by a Horror. The wielder makes a Spellcasting (or Perception) Test against the Spell Defense Rating of the Horror. A successful result alerts the wielder to the Horror's presence.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 5,500

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the Wizard who cast the illusion spell on the sword.

Effect: For a cost of 4 points of permanent damage, the wielder can use blood magic to use Purifier to slay a Horror with one blow. When the wielder invokes this power, he takes the 4 points of Damage and the blade becomes searing hot. The Damage against Horrors and Horror constructs when using this effect is the character's Strength step + 35 steps. A successful attack against a Horror automatically inflicts 10 Wounds to the Horror.

VENNA'S ARMOR

Maximum Threads: 2

Spell Defense: 18

Venna's Armor is a set of finely wrought plate mail armor with runes etched on its surfaces. The construction of this armor is somewhat different than the plate mail found in Barsaive. Though the armor looks old, it does not appear worn or damaged.

Thread Ranks

Rank 1 **Cost:** 300

Key Knowledge: The armor was worn by a female hero named Venna nearly five millennia ago. Lost records makes it uncertain whether she was human or elf. The character must know that the armor is Venna's Armor.

Effect: This finely crafted plate mail provides an Armor Rating of 9 and a Mystic Armor Rating of 3. The Initiative Penalty is -3.

Rank 2 **Cost:** 500

Effect: Reduce the Initiative Penalty to -2.

Rank 3 **Cost:** 800

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the Horror who slew Venna.

Effect: Reduce the Initiative Penalty to -1.

Rank 4 **Cost:** 1,300

Effect: Increase the Mystic Armor Rating to 5. Blood magic may be used to increase the quality of the armor at a cost of 2 permanent Damage Points. Only Extraordinary successes can defeat the improved armor.

Rank 5 **Cost:** 2,100

Deed: The character must learn the fate, or the location, of the Horror who killed Venna. Having discovered the Horror's fate or its whereabouts, the character earns 14,400 Legend Points.

Effect: A character may use blood magic to store Karma Points within the armor. This costs him 2 permanent Damage Points. The character may store Karma Points up to a number equal to the armor's thread rank. These Karma Points do not count as part of a character's maximum Karma. The character stores Karma in the armor by using his or her Karma Ritual. Karma Points stored in the armor can be spent in the same manner as normal Karma Points.

Rank 6 **Cost:** 3,400

Key Knowledge: The character must find out whether Venna was a human or an elf.

Effect: Increase the character's Armor Rating to 10 and his Mystic Armor Rating to 6.

Rank 7 **Cost:** 5,500

Effect: The Initiative penalty is eliminated. Increase the character's Armor Rating to 11.

Rank 8 **Cost:** 8,900

Key Knowledge: Before her defeat, Venna won many battles. The character must learn the legend of her greatest battle. Who did she defeat and how did she do it?

Deed: Travel to the spot of Venna's greatest victory and build a memorial to her. The character must personally help build the memorial. The memorial need not be flashy or large, but it must be durable. The character must write an inscription declaring the memorial's purpose. The Deed is worth 23,300 Legend Points.

Effect: The character may spend 1 Karma Point from the armor, in addition to any Karma Points he is normally entitled to spend.

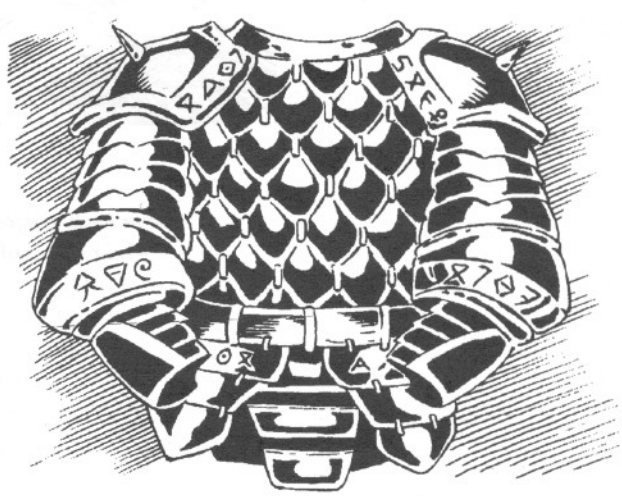
Rank 9 **Cost:** 14,400

Effect: Increase the character's Armor Rating to 12. Increase the Mystic Armor to 9. The armor also adds +1 to the character's Physical Defense and Spell Defense Ratings.

Rank 10 **Cost:** 23,300

Key Knowledge: The character must learn the Name of the armor's previous owner.

Effect: The character may unleash all the Karma stored in the armor to perform a single action. Each Karma Point used costs him 1 point of Strain. A character may fall unconscious or even die from using so much Karma. The character may complete the action before the effects of Strain take their toll



CREATURES



Come back, you fools! It's only one cadaver man!
–Last words of Telak of Haven, Adventurer

An endless variety of magical and mundane creatures inhabit the world of **Earthdawn**. The animals of the forests and jungles, the creatures of legends, and the Horrors all roam the lands of Barsaive. Many of these beasts pose real dangers to the unwary traveler or adventurer.

This section is primarily intended for the gamemaster, because he controls the creatures in every **Earthdawn** adventure. The entries in this section describe the average specimens of **Earthdawn's** creatures, so feel free to modify the information given to suit your campaigns.

Each entry includes a physical description of the creature, its habitat and behavior, and any unique abilities or magical effects the creature possesses. This section also provides descriptions and game statistics for common opponents other than creatures, such as guards. Each entry also includes the creature's game statistics, defined below. Most statistics are expressed in step numbers, used when making tests for the creature. A notation of NA indicates a statistic does not apply to a creature.

GAME TERMS

Attributes: Each creature has a step number for the following attributes: Dexterity (DEX), Strength (STR), Toughness (TOU), Perception (PER), Willpower (WIL), and Charisma (CHA). Use the Action dice for the step number indicated when making tests based on Attributes.

Initiative: Use the Action dice for this step number to make the creature's Initiative Tests.

Number of Attacks: This number describes how many attacks the creature may make in each Combat Round. A number in parentheses means that the gamemaster must subtract other actions the creature takes in that Combat Round from the **Number of Attacks**. For example, if a creature with Number of Attacks: (1) wants to cast a spell, it must give up its attack for that round to do so.

Attack: Use the Action dice for this step number to make the creature's Attack Tests. More than one entry means the creature can mount more than one type of attack.

Damage: Use this step number to make Damage Tests resulting from the creature's physical attacks. Separate Damage step numbers are provided for each type of attack a creature can make.

Number of Spells: This number describes how many spells the creature can cast in one Combat Round. A creature may sacrifice one of its spells to weave Spell Threads required by another spell.

Spellcasting: Use this step number to make tests whenever the creature attempts to cast a spell or create a magical effect. Creatures also use their Spellcasting talent to weave any Spell Threads they need for a spell or magic effect. A number in parentheses means that the gamemaster must subtract an action to use Spellcasting from the number of attacks or other actions the creature may take in a round (a round is 10 seconds of game time). For example, a creature with **Spellcasting:** (1) must give up an attack to cast a spell. Note that many magical creatures must choose between a physical attack or a magical effect in combat.

Effect: This is the step number of any of the creature's magical effects or spells. This category describes the spell or effect that results from the creature's successful Spellcasting Tests. Characters will most often be instructed to roll the Effect dice to determine a value such as the amount of damage inflicted by an attack, the duration of the effect of the spell, and so on. See **Spell Magic**, p. 153, for more on Effect.

Physical Defense: This is the creature's Physical Defense Rating.

Spell Defense: This is the creature's Spell Defense Rating.

Social Defense: This is the creature's Social Defense Rating. Characters must be able to communicate to use social talents against a creature. Taunts and other, non-verbal talents work on most creatures.

Armor: This is the creature's natural Physical Armor Rating.

Mystic Armor: This is the creature's Mystic Armor Rating.

Knockdown: The creature uses this step number to resist knockdown. A notation of "Immune" means the creature cannot be knocked down. A notation of "NA," or "Not Applicable," means the creature cannot resist knockdown; it is knocked down any time the gamemaster makes a Knockdown Test.

Death Rating: This number represents the creature's Death Rating.

Wound Threshold: This is the creature's Wound Threshold. A notation of "Immune" means the creature cannot be Wounded.

Unconsciousness Rating: This represents the creature's Unconsciousness Rating. A notation of "Immune" means that accumulated damage does not render the creature unconscious.

Recovery Tests: This represents the number of Recovery Tests the creature may make each day. Most creatures use their Toughness step for Recovery Tests. If the creature uses steps other than its Toughness step to make Recovery Tests, that step number appears in parentheses.

Creature Durability (5/4): Like the Durability talent, Creature Durability is the power that makes certain magical creatures tougher by increasing its Death and Unconsciousness ratings. Creatures are given a range for their Creature Durability Rank, indicating the different power levels of different creatures of a specific type.

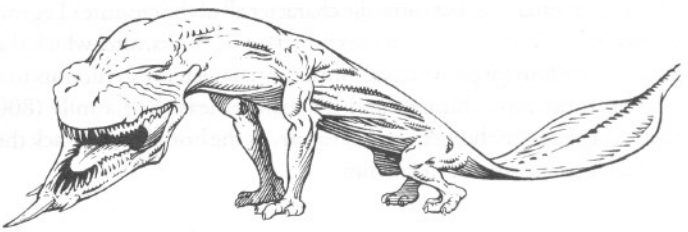
Combat Movement: This number describes how many yards the creature can move in a Combat Round and make an attack or take other action.

Full Movement: This number describes a creature's running or other fastest movement. A creature that uses its Full Movement in a Combat Round can take no other action that round.

Legend Points: A character receives this number of Legend Points for defeating a creature. Keep in mind that characters can defeat creatures by ways other than combat, and do not have to kill a creature in order to defeat it.

Equipment: This notation refers to the equipment, such as weapons, chain mail, and the like, that a creature usually carries. A creature may have other equipment than that listed; the gamemaster may add whatever additional equipment he sees fit. Most animals carry no equipment.

Loot: This notation lists the valuable items the creature carries, including treasure worth Legend Points. For more information on treasure and Legend Points, see **Earning Legend Points** in **Building Your Legend**, p. 244.



EARTHDAWN CREATURES



BRITHAN

Attributes

DEX: 5	STR: 6	TOU: 7
PER: 3	WIL: 5	CHA: 4

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1 (2)
Attack: 7 (10)
Damage: 13 (17)
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 12
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 54
Wound Threshold: 14
Unconsciousness Rating: 48
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 125
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Dwarf hunters have described the brithan as a cross between a bear and an elemental having a bad day. Luminescent flecks color these animals' eyes, and their large heads sit atop ursine bodies covered with shaggy, deep brown or blue-black fur.

Brithans are territorial and will stand on their hind legs and roar a challenge to anything that enters their domain. If a single character answers the challenge, the brithan enters into ritual combat with him, and the two fight until one submits. Brithans submit after taking their first Wound; battering a brithan to unconsciousness is also a victory. A character need not kill the brithan in order to win the combat. Defeating a brithan in ritual combat earns the character all of the creature's Legend Points. A brithan's submission lasts for about 72 hours, after which the creature tends to forget who beat him. Any character who submits to a brithan must move himself and his team at least half a mile (800 meters) away from the victorious creature, or the brithan will attack the character in an attempt to kill him.

If more than one character attacks a brithan, the animal fights back savagely, gaining an extra attack in each round of the encounter, adding 3 steps to its Attack step for each Attack Test and adding 4 steps to its Damage step for each Damage Test.

CADAVER MAN

Attributes

DEX: 4	STR: 6	TOU: 7
PER: 3	WIL: 6	CHA: 4

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1 (4)
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 5
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 11
Armor: NA
Mystic Armor: NA
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Legend Points: 110
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

During the Scourge, some residents of citadels infested by Horrors chose death rather than face such evil beings. From these suicide victims, some of the more intelligent Horrors created the animated corpses known as "cadaver men," undead beings capable of feeling only pain. Although most cadaver men retain their human intelligence, their miserable existences have filled them with hatred of the living and driven most insane. As a result, social contact with cadaver men, though



possible, is unsettling for living beings. Cadaver men are also cannibals, but contrary to popular myth do not require sentient flesh for survival.

Cadaver men fly into attacking furies if they experience significant pain, such as suffering a Wound. An enraged cadaver man may make 4 attacks per round until it has killed the character who caused it pain or 10 rounds have passed, whichever comes first. If a cadaver man cannot determine who caused its pain, it kills any characters who happen to be within its striking range.

Cadaver men are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.



CAVE TROLL

Attributes

DEX: 8	STR: 13	TOU: 8
PER: 3	WIL: 6	CHA: 5

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 11
Damage: 20 (with cave axe)
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 32
Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Legend Points: 275
Equipment: Cave axe, chain mail
Loot: 1D4 silver pieces per troll

Commentary

Cave trolls descended from tribes of trolls who took to the deep places of the Earth when the Horrors came. Their isolation from the rest of the world led to cultural stagnation, and in some cases, degeneration among these tribes. Elemental magic has raised the strength of these cave trolls beyond that of civilized trolls, however, and in recent years they have emerged from their tunnels to explore the world above. Rude and often violent, the cave trolls' habit of mixing trade with raiding has made them unwelcome visitors in most of Barsaive.

Cave trolls use large stone weapons called cave axes, little more than crude stone axes bolstered with elemental magic. Wielding a cave axe requires a Strength Value of 17 (7 steps). Cave axes add 7 steps to the troll's Strength step when making Damage Tests. Because demand for these weapons is low, cave axes are undervalued at 50 silver pieces each. Cave trolls take offense at anyone other than a fellow cave troll using one of their axes.

CHAKTA BIRDS

Attributes

DEX: 8	STR: 3	TOU: 4
PER: 6	WIL: 7	CHA: 8

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 10
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: 12

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 3
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 30
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 21
Creature Durability: 0-5

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

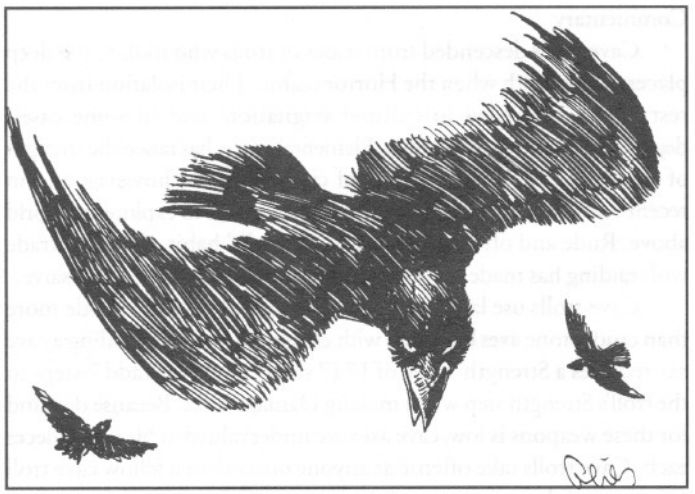
Legend Points: 200
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Chakta birds resemble large ravens with red-tipped wings and gold-flecked feathers. These social animals usually travel in flocks of 15-25 birds, and can use their limited telepathy to communicate with intelligent beings within a 60-yard radius. They often approach travelers to share news of the air (or road) ahead, an example of the "civilized" behavior that has prompted some scholars to speculate about their origins.

Courteous animals, chakta birds expect courtesy in return. Any rude behavior or omission of simple road courtesies, such as sharing of bread or hunting catch, proper introductions, or offering of places at a fire, enrages chakta birds.

When angered, most chakta birds attack the offending character, and some almost always attack the offender's companions. Chaktas begin an attack by flying around their targets in a whirling circle, cawing and screeching madly. The whirling birds then use their magic to paralyze the offending character. Make a Spellcasting Test for the



chakta bird against the Social Defense of the target character. If the test is successful, roll the Effect dice to determine the number of rounds the target remains paralyzed by the chakta's magic. The paralysis effect reduces the target's Physical Defense to 3. After paralyzing a target, chakta birds swoop in to physically attack the paralyzed character. The character can break the paralysis before the rounds have expired if he apologizes profusely to the bird (through stiffened, rigid lips), or makes a successful Charisma Test against the bird's Social Defense.

CHANGELING

Attributes

DEX: 9	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 5
PER: 8	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 6

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: By Weapon
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 10
Effect: Boneshaping (see below)

Physical Defense: 11
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 10
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 40
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 33
Creature Durability: 0-5

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50
Flight: 55/110

Legend Points: 150
Equipment: Sculpted bone weapon (Str + 3)
Loot: A changeling kaer may contain beautiful bone sculptures worth more than 1,000 silver pieces each.

Commentary

A changeling is a windling who has been corrupted and tainted by the Horrors. They are completely corrupt, and beyond redemption having very little in common any more with their untainted brethren. Common wisdom holds that changelings originated in either one or a handful of windling kaers that were overrun by the Horrors during the Scourge.

Physically, the changelings is at its weakest. Even using the largest weapon they can carry, their hand to hand damage cannot exceed Step 8. They simply are not strong enough to wield anything larger. But what they lack in physical strength, their Horror masters have compensated for in a terrible magical effect known as bone-shaping.

Boneshaping is a vicious and unnatural attack that anyone should rightly fear. To use the power, the changeling makes a Spellcasting test against the target's Spell Defense. If the target is Horror-marked add a 2-step bonus to its Spellcasting step for this test, courtesy of its kinship and its understanding of the intricacies of Horror magic. If the test is successful, the changeling may begin reshaping the victim's bones. To reshape an entire limb takes approximately five rounds. This agonizing process inflicts Step 13 damage in each of the five rounds that is lasts. For each round during which a victim's bones are shaped by this power, the victim suffers a -5 step penalty on all tests.

Against an extremely dangerous or hated opponent, changelings will usually fold the victim's skull backward into the brain. This type of bone shaping causes Step 25 damage and takes only 3 rounds to complete. After three rounds of this torture the victim is almost always dead. Such is the Horror-induced sadism of the changeling that given a chance, rather than simply kill a victim they will reshape a victim's limbs each in turn and cause him the most unimaginable and terrible pain before death.

It is said that in the kaer of the changelings, they keep and display beautiful and ornate bone sculptures. It is evidence that even the twisting influence of the Horrors has not completely destroyed the windling's love of art.

Changelings are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

CRAKBILL

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 7	**TOU:** 5
PER: 2	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 3

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 6
Effect: 10

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 28
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 20

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: None
Loot: Neck cord worth 1D6 x 10 silver pieces, that also counts as treasure worth Legend Points

Commentary

Crakbills are 75-pound, 5-foot-tall carnivorous birds with necks extending to just over half their height. They travel in gaggles of 3-18 birds. Using their heavy bills like stone hatchets, the birds crack open the skulls of recent kills or paralyzed prey and feast on the brains of

their victims. The bills are less useful against mobile targets than their fearsome appearance suggests. Though crakbills have skulls and body and leg bones, their necks contain no vertebrae. Instead, a crakbill's neck is a thin tube of interwoven muscle. A flexible spiral of magical material that looks like burnished copper connects the skull to the body and reinforces the neck muscles. This neck cord, worth 1D6 x 10 silver pieces, counts as treasure that can earn a character Legend Points.

The crakbill's most potent weapon is its paralyzing breath, which the bird spews in an orange, gaseous stream around a single victim. The crakbill makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense to determine if the paralyzing breath takes effect. If the test is successful, the gamemaster rolls the Effect dice to find out how much damage the breath weapon does. The damage caused by the paralyzing breath is reduced by the target's Mystic Armor Rating. A character Wounded by the breath weapon is paralyzed, and must make a Willpower Test with a result of 10 or better to break the paralysis. The victim may make only one Willpower Test per Combat Round. Successful use of the breath weapon stains a character orange for 72 hours after the attack, when vigorous bathing removes the stain.

Crakbills combine the breath weapon attack with a special running attack in which they run full speed past the intended victim and hiss orange vapor at him in passing. Crakbills continue these running attacks until at least one or two victims succumb to paralysis. This attack is similar to the Splitting Movement Combat Option (see **Combat**). Once the crakbills have dropped a victim, some of the birds try to feed on the paralyzed body.

DEMIWRAITH

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 6	**WIL:** 8	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: Chilling Touch
* see below

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9 (14*)
Social Defense: 13
Armor: 6
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 225
Equipment: None
Loot: 1D4 small gems, worth 1D12 x 10 silver pieces each, or a total of 5D6 x 10 silver pieces

Commentary

Demiwraiths are an unusual type of animated dead. Not true undead, such as vampires or ghosts, these hateful spirits possessed victims during the long years of the Scourge and eventually merged with the host body. Some of these spirits could not separate themselves from their hosts when the hosts died, and became demiwraiths. The demiwraiths animate the dead flesh that imprisons them, and revel in destroying the living. A black, foggy, astral substance often shrouds a demiwraith's body, giving these beings an appearance similar to that of a true wraith.

Because demiwraiths are not true undead, their Spell Defense is increased by 5 against spells specifically designed to target undead beings.

Demiwraiths use a magical effect called Chilling Touch. To inflict Chilling Touch, the demiwraith must touch the target and make a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the afflicted character takes 1 point of damage per Combat Round until the effect is dispelled or the character makes a successful Willpower Test. Chilling Touch manifests as severe cold, freezing the victim in his tracks. The victim can take no action until the Chilling Touch effect is dispelled or the character overcomes the effect by making a Willpower Test with a result of 9 or better. To dispel Chilling Touch, treat it as a Circle 2 spell.

Demiwraiths are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

DYRE

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 14	**TOU:** 14
PER: 5	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 10
Damage:
Horn: 14
Hooves: 16
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 5
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 3
Knockdown: 13
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 70
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 64

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 75

Legend Points: 300
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Dyres are large hairy herd animals preferred by orks as mounts due to their great strength, vast resilience, and irritable temper. A large and rough beast, the Dyre looks like a combination of wooly mammoth, bear and bull. Two great tusk-like horns emerge from its ugly features. A large crested hump covered with matted fur rises as high as twelve feet tall.

Dyres are herbivores eating no meat and roaming the open plains in herds. However, anyone mistaking them for a docile herdbeast is in for a rude awakening. Dyres are renowned for their short temper and irritable demeanor. And the males in particular are likely to charge anyone whom they view as a threat to the herd.

If they do charge, they can be fearsome foes indeed. When battling a foe human-sized or smaller, the dyre will sweep its horns towards him or her, causing step 14 damage if the horns connect. It will then throw its enemy anywhere from ten to twenty feet into the air. Use the falling rules in **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 231, to determine damage. Once the unfortunate has landed, the dyre will try to trample them for Step 16 damage.

Note that despite their unpleasant temperament, Beastmasters can train dyres using the Animal Training talent.

ESPAGRA

Attributes

DEX: 9 **STR:** 6 **TOU:** 8
PER: 6 **WIL:** 10 **CHA:** 4

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 12
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 11
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 50
Creature Durability: 0-4

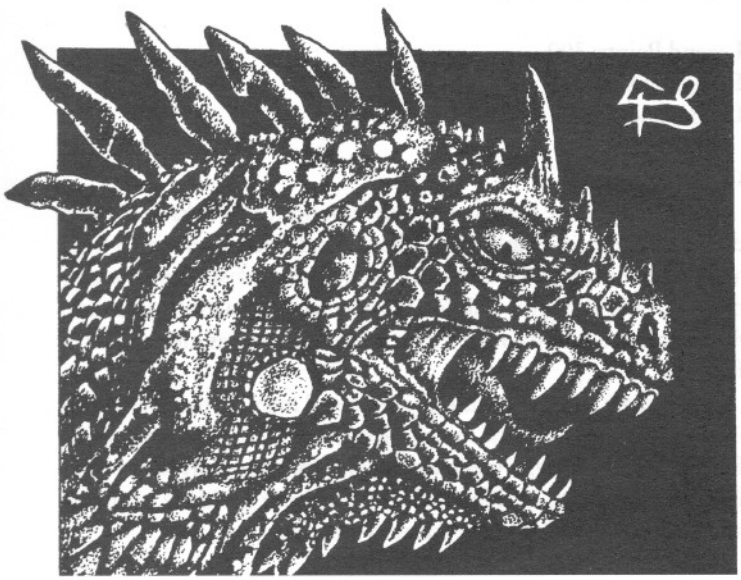
Combat Movement: 100
Full Movement: 200

Legend Points: 125
Equipment: None
Loot: Magical scales worth 1D20 x 10 silver pieces per espagra. These items count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Flying predators colored a brilliant shade of blue, espagras resemble small dragons except for their iguana-like heads. An espagra's wingspan often reaches 12 feet. Though quick and agile flyers, espagras do not strike opponents while in flight, preferring to swoop down upon an enemy, knock him down, and continue the struggle on the ground. This swooping attack adds 7 steps to a character's Damage Test if the creature hits the character, but a swooping espagra sacrifices the remaining two of its customary three attacks in that Combat Round. An espagra may make a swooping attack after it has used its Full (flying) Movement of 200 yards in a round, and may follow up with three non-swooping attacks starting in the following round. An agile beast, the espagra can strike three different targets with a single attack, as long as the targets stand within ten yards of each other.

Some of an espagra's scales exude elemental air magic. These scales add luster and brilliance to the other scales, making the creature shimmer in a way that other espagra–and many races – find appealing. Master clothiers can tailor garments using espagra scales; such clothes look richer than other fine garments, even those decorated with precious jewels. Cloaks made from espagra scales protect the wearer much like leather armor, but also add to the wearer's Mystic Armor Rating (see **Goods and Services**, p. 202).



FIREBIRD

Attributes

DEX: 7 **STR:** 4 **TOU:** 5
PER: 4 **WIL:** 5 **CHA:** 6

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 9
Damage:
Bite: 6
Claws (x2): 4
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 9
Effect: Color Changing

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 30
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 25
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 95
Equipment: None
Loot: Feathers worth D6 x 10 silver pieces; eggs worth 3D6 x 10 silver pieces; Hatchlings worth 300 silver pieces. All of these count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

These magnificent birds resemble eagles to some degree, reaching wingspans of as much as ten feet. The firebird is native to the fiery Death's Sea. It does not live in the lava itself, rather roosting among the rocks and crags of the surrounding areas. While they are greatly resistant to fire, firebirds will burn. If it were to plunge into the lava flow of the Death's Sea it would die immediately. However, its innate resistance to fire means that it is completely immune to mundange fire attacks, and only suffers a quarter damage from magical or elemental instances of the same.

Furthermore, the firebird has acquired the remarkable ability to change its feathers color at will. To accomplish this, the bird must make a successful Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number of 5.

The most common color they adapted is a bright silver that aids them in reflecting the intense heat of the Death's Sea. In this form, potential observers gain a +3 step bonus to all Perception Tests to spot the creature. However, when the bird attempts to camouflage itself, potential observers suffer a -3 step penalty to all such Perception Tests.

In combat, the firebird generates a tremendous amount of heat. If the firebird merely passes within ten feet of a target, the target automatically suffers Step 6 fire damage. This heat will also set highly combustible material ablaze in a matter of seconds.

GARGOYLE

Attributes

DEX: 8	**STR:** 18	**TOU:** 12
PER: 4	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 11
Damage: 22
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 11
Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 6
Knockdown: 18
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 48
Creature Durability: 0-7

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Legend Points: 500
Equipment: None
Loot: Horns, 5D6 x 10 silver pieces. These items count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Enchanted creatures of elemental earth and stone, gargoyles stand about 5 feet 6 inches tall and weigh an impressive 900 pounds. Their heads are elongated and distorted. Their hands end in long claws that they use to rake opponents, often in fly-by attacks.



Despite their nasty dispositions, gargoyles usually attack only to defend their territory or to protect other elemental earth. Though they gather in groups of 6-10 gargoyles, similar to lion prides, gargoyles are not social creatures. Individual gargoyles sometimes leave the pride for months, wandering the skies alone or in pairs. Because many of these wandering gargoyles are staking a claim to new territory, they act more aggressively than full prides. Occasionally an entire pride of gargoyles migrates, for unknown reasons.

Note that magical talents and spells that affect entities work against gargoyles.

GHOUL



Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 4	**TOU:** 6
PER: 3	**WIL:** 3	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 8
Effect: Poison (see below)

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 1 (7)

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 90
Equipment: None
Loot: 3D6 silver pieces per ghoul, taken from both tombs and victims. Approximately 75 percent of ghoul leaders carry jewelry worth 1D8 x 25 silver pieces. Jewelry counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Ghouls are undead creatures created by the Horrors' arcane magics. To sustain themselves, ghouls must eat the vital organs of the living or recently dead. They live along trade routes where they ambush passing travelers, in cemeteries where they feed on the newly dead, or in city sewers, crawling out at night to hunt their victims. Ghouls react badly

to sunlight, reducing their Attack and Damage step numbers by 2 if forced to fight in full sunlight or its equivalent. Ghouls travel in groups ranging from 6-25 individuals. Though some travelers have reported seeing ghoul hordes comprised of as many as 100 members, such huge bands have become rare since the departure of the Horrors.

Ghouls produce a magical toxin called cacofian that remains inert until activated by a ghoul's Spellcasting ability. The ghoul must strike the target with a successful Attack Test to release the toxin, then make a successful Spellcasting Test in the same round to activate the cacofian. The poison takes effect for 6 rounds, or until dispelled or resisted. To dispel the toxin, treat it as a Circle 2 spell. Resisting the toxin requires the affected character to make a Toughness Test with a result of 10 or greater. This Toughness Test counts as the resisting character's action for that Combat Round. The poison does progressive damage that armor cannot reduce, increasing in every round in which it remains active. In the first round, it does 1 point of damage. In the successive 5 rounds it does 4, 5, 10, 15, and 20 points of damage, respectively. When a ghoul dies, its cacofian becomes inert. Many Nethermancers have attempted to use this toxin, but none have succeeded.

Ghouls are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

GRANLAIN

Attributes

DEX: 5	STR: 10	TOU: 8
PER: 4	WIL: 6	CHA: 5

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 6
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 5
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 10
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 46
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 39

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Legend Points: 55
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

Granlains are unusually large, strong horses that often serve as draft animals. They stand seven feet tall at the shoulder and commonly reach ten feet in length. Granlains are stubborn animals, and trolls are often the only Name-givers strong enough to deal with these massive, willful beasts. Granlains are not common; wild ones live only in the plains and foothills near the Twilight Peaks.

GRIFFIN

Attributes

DEX: 5	STR: 7	TOU: 9
PER: 6	WIL: 4	CHA: 5

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 8
Damage: 12
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 8
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 50
Wound Threshold: 14
Unconsciousness Rating: 43

Combat Movement: 29
Full Movement: 57
Flight: 60/120*
*Second value applies when flying during combat

Legend Points: 200
Equipment: None
Loot: Beak and feathers, 3D6 x 10 silver pieces. These items count as treasure worth Legend Points.



Commentary

These strange, four-legged creatures combine a lion's body with the head, legs, and wings of a large eagle. Like an eagle's, a griffin's front legs are covered in feathers and end in sharp talons; its hind legs resemble those of a lion, covered in soft fur and ending in a paw. A typical griffin stands 4 feet tall at the shoulder, and is 5 to 6 feet long with an average wingspan of 7 to 9 feet. The head of a griffin resembles that of an eagle,

with large, keen eyes and a sharp beak. Its wings are covered with bright feathers, usually yellow and white, but sometimes red and orange.

Griffins gather in nests of up to 10 individuals, but more commonly live in flocks of 4 or 5. They nest in mountainous regions, and rarely venture into the jungles or forests of Barsaive.

Griffins seldom attack travelers on foot, unless their territory is threatened. Their strong taste for horse meat occasionally leads them to attack travelers on horseback, in order to feed on the horse. An attacking griffin swoops down on an opponent and strikes out with its talons. Such a swooping attack adds 3 steps to a griffin's Damage Test, but also limits the griffin to one attack per round. After a swooping attack, a griffin remains on the ground, and can attack its prey with its talons and hind claws.

Humanoids of average human size and smaller, except for windlings, can use griffins as aerial mounts. Though difficult to train, tame griffins make excellent steeds.

HORSE, RIDING

Attributes

DEX: 6 STR: 8 TOU: 8
PER: 3 WIL: 4 CHA: 4

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 6
Damage: 9
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Armor: None
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 44
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 36

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 55
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

The most common horses in Barsaive, riding horses make strong mounts, but cannot wear barding or armor. A riding horse can carry a rider and up to 250 pounds of equipment without suffering encumbrance penalties (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 237).

HORSE, WAR

Attributes

DEX: 7 STR: 9 TOU: 8
PER: 6 WIL: 7 CHA: 5

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 14
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 8
Armor: As outfitted
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 48
Wound Threshold: 14
Unconsciousness Rating: 40

Combat Movement: 80
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 90
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

Larger and stronger than riding horses, war horses are bred to carry heavy loads while remaining able to canter and gallop. War horses can wear barding, and can carry their riders and up 350 pounds of equipment without suffering encumbrance penalties (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 237). War horses are often used by armies and cavalry units, particularly the ork scorcher cavalries that roam the lands of Barsaive.

HUTTAWA

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 9 TOU: 8
PER: 2 WIL: 4 CHA: 5

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 45
Wound Threshold: 132
Unconsciousness Rating: 35

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

A huttawa's body resembles that of a lion or tiger, but it has an eagle-like head with a large beak and bird-like eyes. Four feet tall at the shoulder and six feet long, huttawas are a favored mount of dwarf Cavalrymen, and also help pull caravan wagons belonging to trading companies based in Throal and Bartertown. Though not overly bright, huttawas are easy to train.

JEHUTHRA

Attributes

DEX: 5 STR: 5 TOU: 7
PER: 8 WIL: 9 CHA: 5

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 13
Damage: 11
Number of Spells: (1)

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 13
Social Defense: 9
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 4

Spellcasting: 11
Effect: See below

Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 55
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 50
Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Legend Points: 250
Equipment: NA
Loot: Thorax web worth 1D12 x 10 silver pieces. This item counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

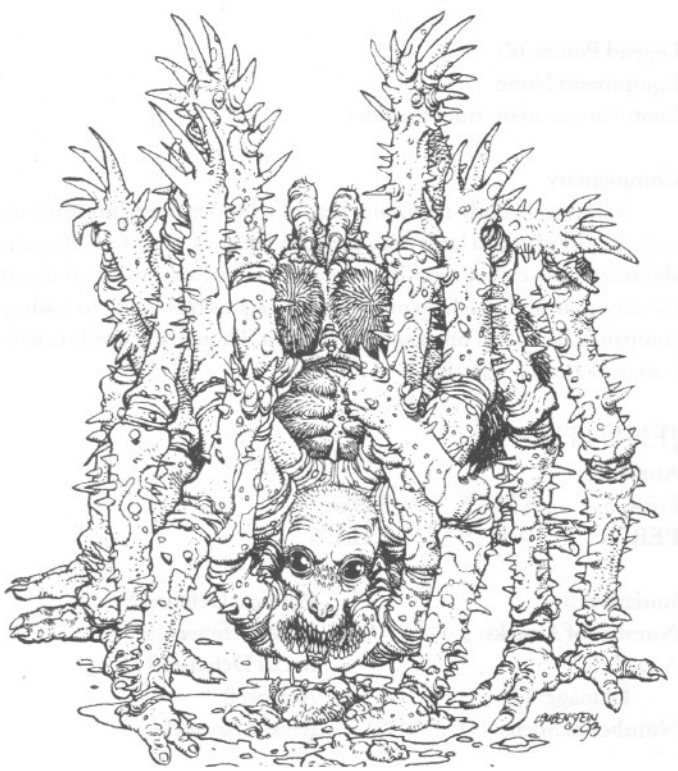
Commentary

Jehuthra are constructs of the Horrors, first formed during the early years of the Horrors' manifestation. These seven-foot-long spider like beings have eight legs, each 10 feet long, and their bristly bodies begin with humanoid faces. Though their eyes look vacant, jehuthras possess considerable cunning and intelligence. They prefer traps and ambushes to a straight confrontation, and an overmatched jehuthra will flee rather than fight. Only if flight looks difficult or impossible does a jehuthra defend itself with its magical powers. The metallic deposits on a jehuthra's chest form a thorax web, which the monsters use to create the web effects described below.

A jehuthra can create three magical effects: Lacerators, Frost Web, and Iron Web. Lacerators are cold, icy spikes that form on two of the jehuthra's legs. They take a single Combat Round to form, last for 3D10 rounds, and add 4 steps to the jehuthra's Damage step if it makes a successful attack. Frost web takes one round to cast against a single character, who must be within 100 yards of the jehuthra. The jehuthra rubs its thorax web and points at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. A successful result entangles the victim in an icy, barbed web, and the extreme cold does 10 steps of damage to the target. Physical armor can reduce the damage, but metal armor offers no more than 3 points of protection. The web holds the victim fast for three rounds, unless he shatters it by making a Strength Test with a result of at least 12.

Iron Web is a defensive effect that allows a jehuthra to form an iron maze with any part of its existing web, requiring one spell thread with a Thread Weaving Difficulty Number of 10. The jehuthra uses its Spellcasting step to make the Thread Weaving Test. After tracing a pattern upon its thorax web, it makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of all the characters within 25 yards of the jehuthra. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, Iron Web creates a maze 10 feet high, consisting of eight independent paths that lead to the maze's center. The web maze extends for 25 yards around the jehuthra, closing over the top of the maze walls. The Iron Web isolates each character, placing him on a separate path from his fellow travelers. If a group has more than eight characters, the Iron Web distributes them as evenly as possible. The paths lead only to the center of the maze, and do not intersect. Characters moving faster than a slow walk (10 yards per round) must make a Dexterity Test with a result of 6 or better in order to move through the maze. A result of less than 6 inflicts 7 steps of damage on the character, as the web's magical barbs tear at him. Physical armor reduces this damage by the affected character's Armor Rating. The web lasts for 3D10 rounds, or until dispelled. Dispelling a single path has a Difficulty Number of 12; dispelling the entire web has a Difficulty Number of 21. Rather than wait in the center, the jehuthra usually scurries down a path either to escape or to attack a character. If it wishes, the jehuthra can use its Spellcasting step to dispel a single path or the entire web.

Jehuthras are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.



KRILWORM

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 5
PER: 6	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 1

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 5
Damage: 6
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 8
Effect: Locate target

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 30
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 25

Combat Movement: 75
Full Movement: 150

Legend Points: 75
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Krilworms are nocturnal flyers, traveling in swarms ranging from 8-80 members and feeding off large insects and small mammals. Their

needle-like teeth drip a foul-smelling substance that many believe to be toxic. They have segmented bodies about 18 inches long, with bat-like wings sprouting near the front. Eyeless, they "see" through divination magic organs that look like six open, running sores. To locate a target, a krilworm swarm makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the krilworms locate the target. This ability also works on invisible or hidden targets. The powerful divination organs can so far only be used by krilworms, and are worthless on the open market.

On occasion, swarms of krilworms attack large animals and humanoids, but a determined character can easily drive off these swarms. For each krilworm that dies fighting large animals, the swarm makes a Willpower Test, using the Willpower step of any krilworm in the swarm. On a result of 4 or better, the swarm continues its attack on the target; on a result of less than 4, the swarm leaves to find easier pickings.

Krilworms have a peculiar affinity for Nethermancers, and Nethermancers in turn often harbor a soft spot for these loathsome creatures. This unusual affinity allows Nethermancers to add 2 steps to all tests made against a krilworm's Social Defense.

KUE

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 6
PER: 5	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 7
Damage: 7
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 36
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 28

Combat Movement: 40
Full Movement: 80

Legend Points: 60
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and a cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms and facial features. Like cats, kues possess excellent night vision, and sometimes serve windling communities as watch animals. A kue has long, slender legs rather than the short, squat legs typical of most lizards. They are about two feet tall at the shoulder and three to four feet long, and have horns on their heads and tails. Kues are native to Barsaive's jungles and forests, and make ideal mounts for *harresa-tis*, the windling Cavalrymen and Warrior Adepts who protect windling communities and villages.

LIGHTNING LIZARDS

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 5
PER: 9	**WIL:** 12	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 6
Damage: 7
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 12
Effect: see below

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 30
Creature Durability: 0-5

Combat Movement: 65
Full Movement: 130

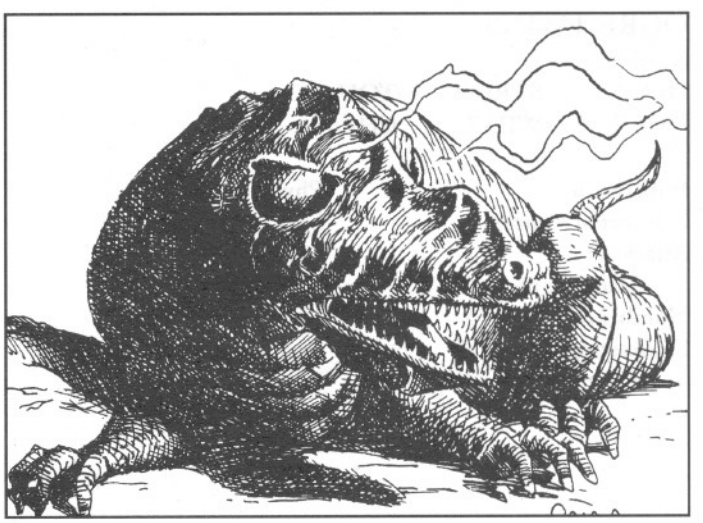
Legend Points: 150
Equipment: None
Loot: Eyes worth 150 silver pieces each. The eyes count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Traveling in prides of 3-13 individuals, lightning lizards are 4 feet long with 3-foot tails and weigh roughly 200 pounds. When dry, their yellow-and-green skin glistens as though oiled. Lizards bloated from feeding within the past 48 hours (in which they eat one-third of their body weight), are docile unless provoked. Hungry lizards, by contrast, show remarkable aggression.

Lightning lizards use their Spellcasting abilities to produce two magical effects, Crackling Armor and Twinbolts. Crackling Armor takes one round to cast, and requires the lightning lizard to make a Spellcasting Test with a result of 2 or better. If the test is successful, Crackling Armor surrounds the lizard with bolts of lightning, crackling a mere inch from its skin. Crackling Armor increases a lightning lizard's Physical Armor Rating to 6. Anytime a character physically strikes a lightning lizard under the influence of Crackling Armor, with his hand or foot, a weapon, or some other object, the lizard makes a Spellcasting Test against the striker's Spell Defense. A result equal to or greater than the Difficulty Number sends lightning into the striker. The lightning does Step 8 damage, though non-metal physical armor reduces this damage.

Twinbolts sends two streaks of lightning toward a target from the lizard's eyes. The lizard using this ability makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the lightning



hits the target. Twinbolts does Step 22 damage at a range of 120 yards. Only non-metal physical armor provides protection against this attack.

OGRE

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 11	**TOU:** 9
PER: 4	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 3

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 12
Damage: 16
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 6
Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 50
Wound Threshold: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: 45
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 70

Legend Points: 110
Equipment: Ogre club, chain mail
Loot: 1D6 x 10 silver pieces per ogre

Commentary

Orks claim that ogres look like overgrown dwarfs; dwarfs think ogres look like overlarge orks. Everyone agrees that ogres are big and ugly. They stand 7 feet 6 inches tall, weigh 400 pounds, and can use elemental magic to detect certain metals and wield powerful weapons. Ogres can smell silver and other precious metals, and often dig makeshift mines to locate the ore. Once dug up, they trade the ore to greedy dwarfs in exchange for chain mail, plate armor, and (occasionally) weapons.

Ogres believe the crude lengths of wood they wield are magical weapons. Though the weapons are nearly impossible to break, the magic that reinforces them lies in the ogre, not in his club. In the hands of an ogre, the club adds 5 steps to its user's Strength step. An ogre club untouched by an ogre for more than 24 hours becomes an ordinary hunk of wood, similar to an ordinary club.

OGRE TWINS

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 11	**TOU:** 9
PER: 7	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 4
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 11
Damage: 16
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 8
Effect: 9 (for healing only)

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 4
Knockdown: 10
Recovery Tests: 2



Death Rating: 60
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: 55
Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 70

Legend Points: 450 (for the pair)
Equipment: Ogre club, chain mail
Loot: 1D6 x 10 silver pieces, 1D4 small gems worth 50 silver pieces each for each twin. Gems count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Ogre twins are two identical ogres, only one of whom can inhabit the material plane at a time. Like conventional ogres, ogre twins can sense precious metals and magically harden their clubs. Ogre twins are indistinguishable from their single counterparts, unless a character can sense connections between a twin and the astral plane. If a character makes a successful Astral Sight (or Sense) Test against the ogre twin's Spell Defense, he can see a pair of faint, white lines trailing from the ogre twin's head and disappearing into astral space.

Ogre twins can switch places with a thought. Each twin's physical possessions remain on the material plane; the second twin's body appears in the same spot occupied by the first twin, in the same position, even in mid-action if the twins so desire. The displaced twin inhabits a small, dimensional pocket between the astral and material planes. The white lines magically connect the displaced twin with the thoughts of the material twin, and also provide the displaced twin with air.

Either twin can use his Spellcasting step to heal himself. Ogre twins usually heal in the dimensional pocket, switching places when the other twin needs healing. The injured twin spends one round in the dimensional pocket, and in that round makes a Spellcasting Test against his own Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the ogre then makes a Recovery Test of Step 9, reducing his Current Damage by the Recovery Test result.

If one of the ogres is killed, the other immediately appears on the physical plane to avenge its twin's death. Killing both twins in quick succession is the only way to defeat them.

SHADOWMANTS

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 6
PER: 4	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 7
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 6
Effect: 9 (Poison)

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 35
Wound Threshold: 9
Unconsciousness Rating: 27
Creature Durability: 0-3

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90 (Flight)

Legend Points: 100
Equipment: None
Loot: Stingers worth 1D10 x 10 silver pieces. The stingers count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Eight feet wide with a 5-foot tail, shadowmants resemble large, flying stingrays. A shadowmant's outer side is black, its underside dark gray, and its tail ends in a crystalline stinger. A shadowmant has two eyes and a small mouth lined with rows of tiny, needle-sharp teeth. Nocturnal creatures, shadowmants roam at night, spending daylight hours underground.

A shadowmant uses its tail to sting its victims. The stinger contains a poison powerful enough to kill a troll within 10 Combat Rounds. Once the poison has killed its prey, the shadowmant eats its victim. The shadowmant's virulent poison resists the healing effects of talents or poultices with a Spell Defense of 8. Alchemists prize shadowmant poison and stingers, using them to brew magical potions.

SPECTRAL DANCER

Attributes

DEX: 13	**STR:** 7	**TOU:** 14
PER: 16	**WIL:** 20	**CHA:** 12

Initiative: 14
Number of Attacks: NA
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 20
Effect: 23

Physical Defense: 20
Spell Defense: 15
Social Defense: 12
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 8
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 90
Wound Threshold: 16
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune
Creature Durability: 0-12

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Legend Points: 3,400
Equipment: None
Loot: Usually none

Commentary

Undead creations of the Horrors, spectral dancers are individuals who possessed considerable charisma and social skill in life. They appear as phantoms of the bodies they once inhabited. To make a spectral dancer, the Horror severs the dancer's spirit from his body in a grisly ritual, so that the dancer loses almost all ability to communicate with other sentient beings. He can occasionally see, hear, smell, and taste the world of the living, but cannot make contact with his fellows. The spectral dancer can only speak in garbled howls, and loses all ability to write, draw, or communicate in any way. The desire to communicate and the need for companionship remain, heightened by the ritual to the point of torment.

Their utter isolation drives spectral dancers insane. The spirits flit in and out of humanity, moving in a chaotic, frenzied dance. Desperate to communicate, a spectral dancer approaches a character and dances for one to three rounds, waiting for the character to join it. If the character turns down the "invitation," the spectral dancer attacks with desperate fury, using its Spellcasting step. The creature makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the spectral dancer rolls the Effect dice to determine damage. It continues to attack until the character dies or the dancer is destroyed. Keep in mind that these devastating magical attacks can kill even a stout troll within a few rounds.

The spectral dancer's almost incorporeal form gives it its high Physical Defense Rating, reflecting the Difficulty of finding a solid spot to hit amid the swirling, pulsing light and fog. Though not an easy task, a determined (and lucky) character can find and attack such a spot. A character may also attempt to defend himself by joining the spectral dancer in the dance, but this carries its own danger. The character and the dancer remain locked in the dance until the character either dies or manages to assuage the dancer's terrible loneliness for a brief moment. Once joined, the character must see the dance through to its conclusion.

During each round that the dance continues, the dancer's movements cause a number of steps of damage to the character equal to the number of rounds the dance has lasted. For example, on round 5 of the dance, the dancer does Step 5 damage, Step 6 damage on round 6, and so on. No armor can reduce this damage.

During any round of the dance, the character can try to make contact with the dancer in order to ease its loneliness. To do this, the character makes a Charisma Test against the spectral dancer's Social Defense; at the gamemaster's discretion the character may use another Charisma-based talent for the test. To ease the spirit's loneliness and escape its clutches, the character must achieve an Extraordinary success against the dancer's Social Defense. Each lesser success level adds to the character's empathy with and understanding of the spectral dancer, and increases the character's Charisma step by 1 for the duration of the dance. As the dance nears its end, the character often sees or relives the dancer's memories. Once the character achieves an Extraordinary success, the spectral dancer's motions slow, then stop. The dancer thanks the character for giving it brief companionship, then fades away.

Spectral dancers are immune to talents, spells, and skills with fear based effects.

STORM WOLF

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 5
PER: 5	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 5

Initiative: 9
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 12
Number of Spells: (1)
Spellcasting: 9
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 5
Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 1

Death Rating: 32
Wound Threshold: 8
Unconsciousness Rating: 28
Creature Durability: 0-4

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 125
Equipment: None
Loot: Pelt worth 75 silver pieces. The pelt counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

An excellent hunter, the handsome storm wolf stands taller and is a little stronger than a normal wolf. Storm wolves travel in packs of 8-24 animals, and hunt travelers only if desperately hungry or if they sense evil emanating from the traveling party. Though not "good" in a moral sense, a storm wolf's pure, elemental spirit detests impurities commonly found in evil spirits, and the wolves go out of their way to destroy such impurities. Legends say storm wolves have hunted undead creatures across hundreds of leagues.

Storm wolves have an ability called Storm Call, an eerie, whistling howl that summons a storm. To call a storm, the leader of the pack makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number of 20. Each Spellcasting Test does 2 points of damage to the leader, and each additional wolf in the pack adds 1 step to the leader's Spellcasting step. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the storm arrives in 1D6 rounds. It disperses after one hour, unless the leader's command dispels it earlier. Should the leader die, another wolf takes his place and inherits control of the storm. During the round after the pack leader calls the storm, the storm wolves leap into action. When the storm arrives, the fury of the elements reduces, by 3, the appropriate step used by any of the wolves' opponents to take any action that requires a test. The storm adds 3 steps to the wolves' Attack and Spellcasting steps when making Attack and Effect Tests. Injured wolves who make no tests during a Combat Round have their wounds cleansed by the rains, reducing their Current Damage by 3 points for each round that the storm lasts. Though they heal injuries, the rains do not revive dead wolves.

In the same way that they sense evil, storm wolves can also often sense good within a party. In the past, storm wolves have led "good" parties to sites of evil they wish to see destroyed, creating a storm to let a party approach safely. The leader of the storm wolf pack can also heal a wounded character by placing his muzzle in the character's lap, thereby transferring the healing power of the storm to the character.

A storm wolf pelt is worth 75 silver pieces, and counts as treasure worth Legend Points. Elementalists are forbidden by their Discipline to take storm wolf pelts. A character who has skinned a storm wolf for its pelt can never receive aid from another storm wolf, because every wolf's spirit can sense the character's desecration of its fellow wolf.

THORN MEN

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 5	**TOU:** 6
PER: 5	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 12
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 15
Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: 5
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 40
Wound Threshold: 11
Unconsciousness Rating: 32

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 70

Legend Points: 100
Equipment: Spears
Loot: None

Commentary

Thorn men are creations of the blood warders, the magicians who serve Queen Alachia of the Blood Wood. These animated, human-shaped bundles of thorns stand roughly 6 feet tall, weigh 60 pounds, and possess rudimentary intelligence.



They patrol the Blood Wood, searching for intruders to bring before Queen Alachia. They carry wooden spears tipped with polished stone. In the hands of a thorn man, these spears become magical weapons; when wielded by anyone else, the spear remains ordinary until a spell thread is attached to it.

THUNDRA BEAST

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 11	**TOU:** 12
PER: 5	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 15 (19; see below)
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 1
Knockdown: 11
Recovery Tests: 7

Death Rating: 66
Wound Threshold: 19
Unconsciousness Rating: 59

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Legend Points: 200
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from rider

Commentary

This large, four-legged animal looks like a cross between a rhinoceros and a dinosaur, with a tough, rock-like skin covering its entire body. Thundra beasts stand 7 feet tall at the shoulder, are 10 to 12 feet long, and weigh nearly 1,000 pounds. Each thundra beast has a large horn in the center of its forehead, which it uses to attack opponents. Ork cavalry groups and others frequently ride thundra beasts; adventurers rarely encounter a thundra beast in the wild.

Thundra beasts attack by charging their targets and goring them or trampling them. Any charging attack, whether using the horn or not, does Step 19 damage.

TROAJIN

Attributes

DEX: 5	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 6
PER: 4	**WIL:** 5	**CHA:** 3

Initiative: 6
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 4
Armor: None
Mystic Armor: 0
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 2

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 29

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 100

Legend Points: 45
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

Troajins are tiger-like animals native to Barsaive's jungle and mountain country. An average troujin stands approximately four feet at the shoulder and is eight feet long, a combination of a five-foot body and a three-foot tail. Wild troajins are fiercely territorial and defend themselves with sharp claws and teeth. In addition to serving as mounts, tame troajins also often become animal companions of Beastmaster Adepts.

UNICORN

Attributes

DEX: 7	**STR:** 10	**TOU:** 9
PER: 7	**WIL:** 7	**CHA:** 10

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 9
Damage: 20
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 7
Effect: Soothe Others

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Armor: none
Mystic Armor: 7
Knockdown: 9
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 50
Wound Threshold: 15
Unconsciousness Rating: 42
Creature Durability: 0-6

Combat Movement: 50
Full Movement: 120

Legend Points: 300
Equipment: None
Loot: Horn worth at least 2,000 silver pieces. Note that in most areas of Barsaive, possession of a unicorn horn is a criminal offense.

Commentary

Appearing like a large white horse with a single prominent spiraled horn atop its head, the unicorn is a subject of uncountable legends and songs. Legends speak of unicorns only being approachable by maidens of virtue, and that their horn can kill Horrors in a single strike. Some scholars even speak of a time before the Scourge when the unicorn was a blood-thirsty beast, hunting the flesh of Name-givers in packs. The truth of these legends is often very hard to discern.

Regardless, these days the unicorn is much more shy. It would much rather flee than have any contact at all with Name-givers. However, if cornered they can be dangerous opponents, goring with their horn for Step 20 damage.

One true legend regarding the unicorn is that its horn can detect poison. If the horn is dipped in a poison, it will turn dark. The darker the color it turns, the more toxic the poison. Ground unicorn horn will also neutralize any known poison, when added to the toxic substance

Many unicorns also possess a spell-like ability that allows them to calm opponents, removing any desire to harm the unicorn. To use this ability, the unicorn makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of every target within fifty yards. If the test is

successful, the power dispels both normal and magically induced fear, and also relaxes the target. The affected creature is incapable of taking any violent action while affected. To shrug off the effects, a target must make a successful Willpower Test against the result of the unicorn's Spellcasting Test.

ZOAK

Attributes

DEX: 6 **STR:** 5 **TOU:** 6
PER: 6 **WIL:** 6 **CHA:** 5

Initiative: 7
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 8
Damage: 7
Number of Spells: NA
Spellcasting: NA
Effect: NA

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 38
Wound Threshold: 10
Unconsciousness Rating: 29

Combat Movement: 35
Full Movement: 70
Flight: 75/150

Legend Points: 55
Equipment: None
Loot: Various items from the rider

Commentary

The zoak looks like a cross between a large bird and a bat, with feathers on its body and head and a leathery neck, wings, and tail. The creature's feathered legs each end in four eagle-like talons. Zoak's measure roughly four feet from beak to tail-tip. The zoak's neck is long and flexible, similar in appearance to the crakbill's, but with vertebrae instead of pure muscle. These jungle and forest animals are favored by windling air cavalries, and often serve as companions for Beastmaster Adepts.

DRAGONS

"Wise heroes leave dragons alone, yet the hero's destiny always crosses the dragon's path. The trick is discerning whether the hero is on the path to greatness or simply on today's menu."
–Guyak Fairtongue, ork Cavalryman

For as long as any race can remember, dragons have existed. Every culture in Barsaive has stories about dragons, many of them millennia old. Some scholars of the ancient races teach that dragons were the first of the world's living creatures, though little support exists for this theory. The dragons, who know the truth, generally decline to answer questions about their past.

All dragons are dangerous. Few tolerate other races meddling in their affairs, unless the dragon initiates the contact. Though some, such as the great dragon Icewing, have established a protocol by which the races of Barsaive may talk to them, most dragons prefer to be left alone.

Dragon Powers

All dragons possess at least a few of the powers listed below, though not every dragon has all the dragon powers. Individual dragons may have or lack whatever powers from the following list the gamemaster deems appropriate.

Armored Scales: A dragon's armored skin provides superb physical and magical protection against attack. Only hits or Spellcasting Tests with an Extraordinary success level can defeat a dragon's natural armor. According to legend, some dragons have armor that no assault can breach.

Astral Sight: Much like windlings, dragons possess Astral Sight. To use this power the dragon makes a Spellcasting Test. The gamemaster then compares the test result to the Spell Defense of any being or object within 60 yards of the dragon's line of sight. If the test is successful, the dragon can see the astral image of all targets within the 60-yard limit.

Dispel Magic: A dragon using this power makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the magician who cast the target spell. If the test is successful, the dragon then makes a Dispel Magic Test against the spell's Disbelief or Dispel Difficulty Number. A successful Dispel Magic Test breaks the spell.

Disrupt Fate: Dragons with this power can alter the fate of other creatures. To use this ability the dragon spends a Karma Point, which entitles the dragon to make an immediate Disrupt Fate Test against the Spell Defense of a single target character. If the test is successful, the target must immediately repeat the most recent test he made. The new result of this test stands, and cannot be disrupted a second time. Disrupt Fate counts as simple action; use of this power does not use up one of the dragon's attacks or Spellcasting actions. As long as the dragon has Karma Points, it may make as many Disrupt Fate Tests as there are targets.

Note that the Karma Point expenditure entitles the dragon to use its Disrupt Fate ability, but does not mean that the dragon uses Karma dice to make its Disrupt Fate Test.

Dragon Breath: According to every dragon legend, angry dragons punish transgressors with flaming breath. Every culture has horrific legends of the destruction of villages, towns, and cities by furious dragons. Dragon Breath targets everything within a 90-degree arc, using the dragon's mouth as the arc's center. The distance the arc extends depends on how much Strain the dragon is willing to take, as noted below.

Strain Points	Range
1 Strain Point	25 yards
5 Strain Points	50 yards
15 Strain Points	100 yards
60 Strain Points	200 yards

Dragon Breath engulfs every target within the arc. Each arc of Dragon Breath requires one action. If he has enough actions available, a dragon may lay down more than one fiery arc per round. To find the number of targets damaged by Dragon Breath, the dragon makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of each target within the arc. If the test result exceeds the target's Spell Defense,

that target catches fire, taking damage. As long as the dragon stands within 1,000 yards of the flames, they cannot be extinguished by normal means. Only a successful Willpower or Dispel Magic Test can put out the Dragon Breath fire. The affected character makes the appropriate test against the dragon's Spell Defense; if the test is successful, the flames stop burning.

A burning target takes damage during each Combat Round that the fire burns. If the Dragon Breath attack inflicted an Armor-Defeating Hit (see **Combat**, p. 219), even normally non-combustible objects burn. Dragon fire can burn everything, including weapons, boulders, bricks, and metal or crystal armor. Burning armor degrades at a rate of 2 Armor Points per Combat Round. Weapons degrade at the rate of 2 steps per round. These losses are spread evenly among whatever steps or Armor Ratings the object has. For example, a ferndask shield would lose 1 point each from its Armor and Mystic Armor Ratings per round when burning, rather than losing both Armor Points from either the shield's Armor or Mystic Armor Rating. Once the object's steps or points reach 0, the object is reduced to slag.

Dragon Durability (7/6): Like Creature Durability and the Durability talent, Dragon Durability is the power that makes a Dragon tougher by increasing its Death and Unconsciousness ratings. All Dragons have Dragon Durability. The Dragons listed are given a range for their Dragon Durability Rank, indicating the different power levels of different Dragons of a specific type.

Fear: Dragons radiate an aura of fear. Many heroes who try to confront a dragon flee in terror upon seeing the beast. To use its Fear power, the dragon makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of all characters within 100 yards of the dragon. Within this distance the dragon's bellow rattles the ground, enough to make the most dauntless character nervous. A successful test means that the dragon's Fear power affects the target characters; the victims tremble, sweat, stammer, and exhibit other hallmarks of extreme fright. Having afflicted his victims, the dragon rolls the Fear dice. The result becomes the Difficulty Number for any attempts to resist the dragon's Fear power. Before an affected character can take any action requiring a test, he must resist the effect of the Fear power by making a successful Willpower Test against that Difficulty Number. While under the influence of Fear, however, he can move, talk, or perform other actions that do not require tests.

Karma Points: All dragons have Karma Points that they may use to augment any test they wish. A dragon may spend only 1 Karma Point per test. A dragon regains spent Karma Points at a rate of 1 or 2 points a day, until it reaches its listed maximum. Cathay and common dragons regain 1 Karma Point a day; the more powerful great dragons regain 2 Karma Points a day.

Lair Sense: A dragon makes its lair an extension of itself, and can use Lair Sense to notice characters anywhere within its lair. Whenever a character rolls Action dice within the confines of the dragon's lair, he triggers the dragon's Lair Sense. Simple movement and quiet conversation tend not to activate this power, though they can on occasion. To use this ability, the dragon makes a Lair Sense Test against the Spell Defense of the character whose action activated the Lair Sense power. If the test succeeds, the dragon detects the character and his location within the lair. Dragons often booby-trap their lairs to take advantage of this power, forcing characters to beat the traps by performing an action that reveals their presence.

Regeneration: Dragons can regenerate damage done to them by opponents. To use the Regeneration ability, the dragon must make a Recovery Test. The power works for 10 rounds or until it heals all the dragon's Current Damage, whichever is shorter. While using this power, the dragon reduces its Current Damage by the result of the test.

Spells: Many dragons learn spells, and can cast every spell available to their particular Discipline. Dragons who can cast spells acquire the spells and Spell Matrices from a Discipline, but none of the Discipline's other talents. They do not use grimoires, and therefore cannot cast spells from them. Like other spellcasters, dragons must attune Spell Matrices. All of a dragon's Spell Matrices have the same rank as the dragon's Spellcasting Circle. For example, the Spell Matrices of a dragon able to cast a Circle 7 Wizard spell would all have a Rank of 7. Use the dragon's Willpower step number to determine the effect of dragon-cast spells. Note that dragons do not have Willforce.

Suppress Magic: Most dragons can suppress magic used by other creatures. To use the Suppress Magic ability, the dragon makes a Spellcasting Test against the target character's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the dragon then rolls the Suppress Magic dice, reducing the target character's use of magic a number of steps equal to the result. In addition to reducing spells, Suppress Magic reduces the steps of all talents, the damage from all magical weapons, and any other magic use. Suppress Magic lasts for a number of Combat Rounds equal to the result of the Suppress Magic Test.

Venom: Dragons have poisonous teeth and claws, and any tooth or claw attack that causes damage to a character also poisons him. The attacking dragon rolls the Venom dice for each of 10 Combat Rounds, and in each round the victim takes poison damage equal to the result of that round's Venom dice roll in addition to the physical damage caused by the attack. A poisoned character must make a Poison Resistance Test against the step number of the Venom power. (For more information about poison damage, see **Adventuring In Earthdawn**, p. 232. A character can resist the effects of Venom by making a successful Toughness Test against the dragon's Spell Defense. After 10 rounds, the poison ceases to damage the character.

Wingbeat: Dragons can use their wings to knock over their opponents. The dragon using Wingbeat makes an Attack Test, then compares the result to the Physical Defense of every character within a 60-yard range directly in front of the dragon. If the test result exceeds a character's Physical Defense, the dragon's wing hits the character. To determine whether or not the wing actually knocks down a character, the dragon rolls the Wingbeat dice, the result of which becomes the Difficulty Number for the Knockdown Tests that all characters struck by the wing must perform. Any character who makes an unsuccessful Knockdown Test is knocked down and thrown backward a number of yards equal to the difference between the Difficulty Number and the result of the Knockdown Test. For example, a character whose Knockdown Test result is 11 less than the Difficulty Number resulting from the Wingbeat dice roll would be knocked backward 11 yards.

CATHAY DRAGON

Attributes

DEX: 14	**STR:** 27	**TOU:** 24
PER: 28	**WIL:** 28	**CHA:** 25

Initiative: 26
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 20
Damage:
Claws(x2): 35
Bite: 38
Number of Spells: 4
Spellcasting: 35
Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 24
Spell Defense: 30
Social Defense: 28
Armor: 22
Mystic Armor: 16
Knockdown: 27
Recovery Tests: 20

Death Rating: 200
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 175

Combat Movement: 125
Full Movement: 250

Karma Points: 40

Karma Steps: 15

Powers: Armored Scales, Astral Sight 30, Dispel Magic 30, Disrupt Fate 25, Dragon Breath 30, Dragon Durability 25-30, Fear 25, Regeneration, Spells (see below), Suppress Magic 10.

Legend Points: 340,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Scrolls, books, gems, artwork, and precious metals lie within the dragon's lair. A dragon's hoard usually has a value of around 300,000 silver pieces, and it counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Cathay dragons come from a land beyond the reach of the Theran Empire. Some legends, allegedly told by Cathay dragons and recorded by sages, claim that these dragons descended from the stars.

A Cathay dragon's head and body measure 50 feet long, and its tail adds another 50 feet to the dragon's total length. The legs end in dextrous paws, each with four fingers. The broad head is half again as wide as the dragon's body. Horns rise behind the deep and mysterious eyes that seem to contain the wisdom learned over centuries. Cathay dragons tend toward iridescent green or yellow, their base shades often augmented with streaks or splashes of other colors. Though wingless, Cathay dragons can fly by tucking their legs into their sides and "swimming" through the air as an eel swims through water.

The most sociable breed of dragon, Cathay dragons occasionally hire servants and keep slaves. They sometimes invite travelers to dine with them, to tell tales of other places and exciting times. Though sufficiently skilled entreaties can entice them to show off their treasures, Cathay dragons allow no one to touch or take any of their truly valuable possessions.



Ninety percent of Cathay dragons are spellcasters, choosing the Discipline of Illusionist (40 percent), Elementalist (40 percent), or both (20 percent). Most Cathay dragons have mastered the spells and matrices of their Disciplines up to Circle 8.

COMMON DRAGON

Attributes
DEX: 18 **STR:** 25 **TOU:** 27
PER: 19 **WIL:** 22 **CHA:** 20

Initiative: 21
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 23
Damage:
Claws (x2) : 30
Bite: 32
Number of Spells: (2)
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: See Below

Physical Defense: 25
Spell Defense: 22
Social Defense: 20
Armor: 29
Mystic Armor: 14
Knockdown: 27
Recovery Tests: 12

Death Rating: 240
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 220

Combat Movement: 80
Full Movement: 200

Karma Points: 25

Karma Steps: 10

Powers: Armored Scales, Dragon Breath 25, Dragon Durability 10-25, Fear 25, Lair Sense 20, Regeneration, Suppress Magic 8, Venom 25, Wingbeat 30.

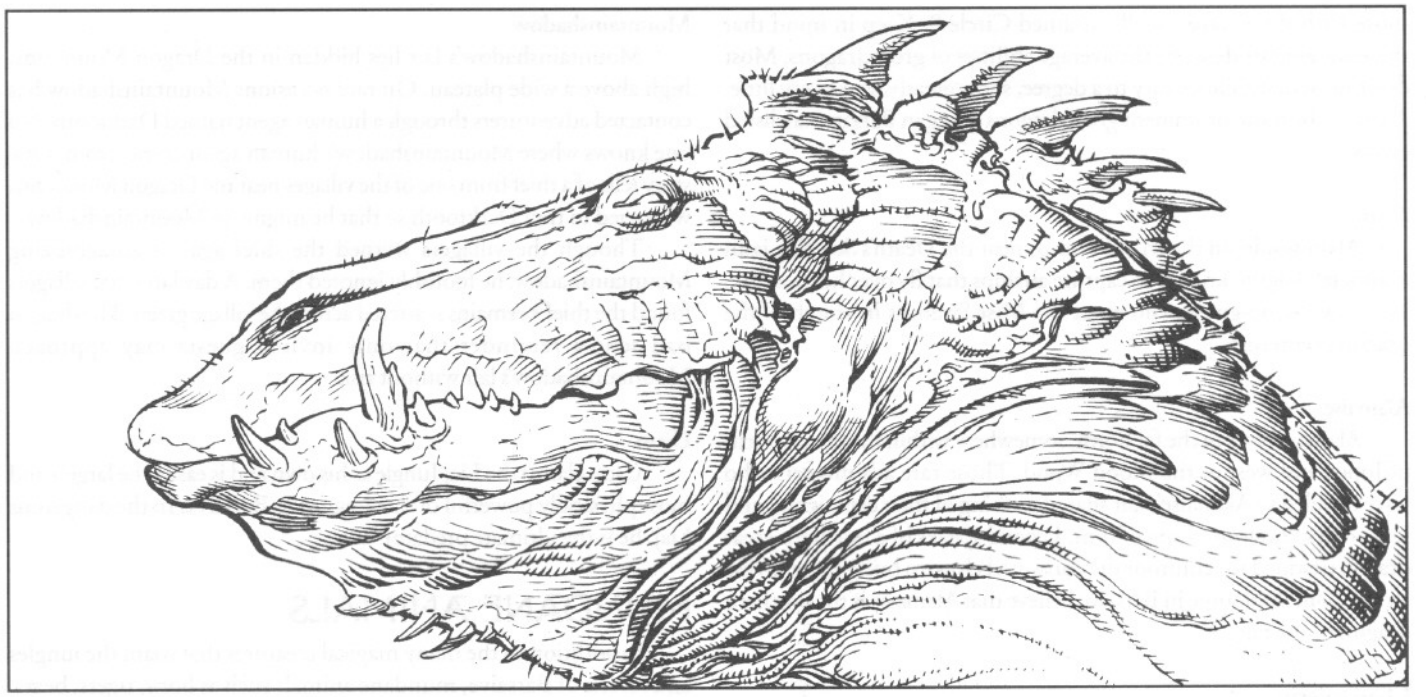
Legend Points: 230,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Magical items and piles of coins and gems. This treasure usually has a value of 300,000 silver pieces, and counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

One of the quickest ways to die in Barsaive is to call a common dragon by that name. Like most dragon kind, common dragons take fierce pride in their heritage and accomplishments. Boastful, deceitful, sly, often gifted with a malicious sense of humor, these dragons fortunately take little interest in Barsaive's affairs.

The name "common dragon" is a misnomer. Though the people of Barsaive use this term because nearly all the dragons they know of have the size, shape, and general appearance described below, these beasts are not common. In fact, few people in Barsaive have ever seen a dragon.





The common dragon's body is 65 feet long, with a tail that adds another 55 feet to the dragon's total length. The dragon's massive wings span 100 feet. Horns protrude from its forehead, and it has teeth sharper than newly whetted steel. Common dragons are usually one color with a lighter shade of the same coloration on their bellies; their scales have a dull gleam, like a cloudy lacquer. Though common dragons of almost every conceivable shade exist in stories, most common dragons in Barsaive are green, blue, and dun yellow.

Too covetous to let anyone close to their hoards, common dragons rarely meet with characters in their lairs. If common dragons deign to interact with what they call the "two-legs", they usually do so at a place at least two hours' flight from their lair. At a flat-out flight speed of nearly 125 miles per hour, two hours covers a lot of ground.

GREAT DRAGON

Attributes

DEX: 19	**STR:** 33	**TOU:** 28
PER: 27	**WIL:** 26	**CHA:** 26

Initiative: 24
Number of Attacks: 5
Attack: 28
Damage:
Claws (x4): 38
Bite: 40
Number of Spells: 5
Spellcasting: 37
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 26
Spell Defense: 33
Social Defense: 29
Armor: 32
Mystic Armor: 30
Knockdown: 25
Recovery Tests: 30

Death Rating: 280
Wound Threshold: 30
Unconsciousness Rating: 240

Combat Movement: 120
Full Movement: 360

Karma Points: 50

Karma Steps: 18

Powers: Armored Scales, Astral Sight 26, Dispel Magic 26, Disrupt Fate 26, Dragon Breath 30, Dragon Durability 25-30, Fear 26, Lair Sense 26, Regeneration, Spells (see below), Suppress Magic 15, Venom 30, Wingbeat 22.

Legend Points: 450,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Magical items and piles of coins and gems, artifacts from previous ages. The value of the treasure is usually around 500,000 silver pieces, and it counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Legend says that great dragons, the mightiest of their kind, are immortal. These shrewd, highly intelligent creatures spend their endless lives hatching and nurturing their plans for the world. Great dragons often interact with the world around them, but usually work through a web of contacts and agents rather than acting directly. Believing that the world holds powerful enemies, these great creatures apparently prefer to use discretion in their dealings.

Not a true subspecies of dragon, great dragons are larger, more powerful specimens of the other types of dragons known to inhabit Barsaive. Even more physically imposing than their common brethren, great dragons move with a grace and speed that defies their immense physical size and shape. Though lacking proof, scholars have theorized that dragons use magical means to enhance their physical might.

Great dragons rarely become involved in the activities and behaviors of the other Name-giver races. The ancient great dragons known to exist in and around Barsaive hold themselves aloof from the concerns of mankind, and seem content to play their power games with each other.

All great dragons can cast spells. Twenty percent concentrate on one Discipline, fifty percent have studied two Disciplines, and thirty percent have studied three Disciplines. Those with only one Discipline have attained Circle 12, those with two have attained Circle 10, and

those with three have usually attained Circle 9. Keep in mind that these statements describe the average abilities of great dragons. Most dragons' actual abilities vary to a degree, some greatly, some very little. A few of the more prominent great dragons living in Barsaive are listed below.

Aban

Aban resides in the Mist Swamps near the Death's Sea. She is an antisocial dragon, known to capture airships that fly over her domain. Very few Name-givers who enter the Mist Swamps in search of the dragon ever return.

Alamaise

Alamaise lives in the far north, somewhere within the forests north of Iopos and west of the Blood Wood. Those rare adventurers who have traveled to Alamaise's lair shared nothing of their experience, and few others know anything of him. Legend speaks of a northern great dragon destined to "confront the corrupted elves, to bring them divine retribution," and some in Barsaive believe that Alamaise is the northern dragon of the tale.

Charcoalgrin

Not considered a Great Dragon, Charcoalgrin is still, like most of her kind, arrogant to a fault. By sequestering herself in the moldering ruins of Parlainth, this dragon has assured that she will forever be the biggest fish in a very small pond.

Dvilgaynon

Dvilgaynon is perhaps the greatest dragon ritualist and spellcaster currently alive. Her magical powers are beyond easy categorization. Due to the threat of the Horror Clouds of Vivane, she has decided to remain in Cara Fahd rather than return to her native Cathay.

Earthroot

Earthroot lairs beneath the Throal Mountains worshiped by The Pale Ones – primitive t'skrang who live out their lives in darkness. Earthroot can see far into the future and routinely lays plans that will not bear fruit for centuries.

Icewing

Of all the great dragons, only Icewing commonly meets directly with other races. Icewing's lair lies a few day's march from Bartertown, nestled above the snowline on Mount Vapor. A meeting with Icewing requires a gift worth at least 1,000 silver pieces. Those who bring no gift must return with one within a month or risk giving Icewing offense, a mistake no sane person cares to commit.

Mountainshadow

Mountainshadow's lair lies hidden in the Dragon Mountains, high above a wide plateau. On rare occasions Mountainshadow has contacted adventurers through a human agent named Darktooth. No one knows where Mountainshadow's human agent comes from. One story tells of a thief from one of the villages near the Dragon Mountains who tried to trail Darktooth so that he might see Mountainshadow.

Though the villagers warned the thief against antagonizing Mountainshadow, he foolishly ignored them. A day later, the villagers found the thief's remains scattered across the village green. The dragon had sent a reminder that only invited guests may approach Mountainshadow's lair without risk.

Usun

Usun claims the Liaj Jungle as his own and is easily the largest and most physically powerful of the dragons in Barsaive. In the dangerous Liaj, he is the ultimate predator.

MUNDANE ANIMALS

In addition to the many magical creatures that roam the jungles and forests of Barsaive, mundane animals such as lions, tigers, bears, snakes, and so on fill Barsaive's wilderness. Despite their lack of magical ability, these creatures can pose their own dangers to the unwary traveler.

The following table lists the Attribute step numbers for many of these animals. Using these numbers as a guide, the gamemaster should consult the **Attribute Table** in **Creating a Character**, p. 42, to assign each creature's remaining statistics. As with all creatures, the statistics listed in the table below represent the average for the animals described. The gamemaster should feel free to alter any game statistics as the situation requires.

When determining an animal's Attack and Damage step numbers, the gamemaster should add 1, 2, or 3 steps to the animal's appropriate Attribute step number. For example, say the gamemaster needs to find a elephant's Attack step. Because most animals' Attack steps are based on their Dexterity steps, the gamemaster can simply add 1, 2, or 3 to the average elephant's Dexterity step number of 4 as he deems fit. If the gamemaster decides to add 3 steps, he gives the elephant an Attack step number of 7. This means that the gamemaster rolls 1D12 (Step 7) when making Attack Tests for the elephant. For more information regarding step numbers and dice rolls, consult the **Step/Action Dice Table** in **Game Concepts**, p. 27.

The Notes column on the following table indicates an animal's special abilities. As with all statistics, the gamemaster may alter the information listed as he sees fit.



MUNDANE ANIMAL TABLE

Animal	DEX	STR	TOU	PER	WIL	CHA	Move	Notes	Legend Points
Alligator	5	7	9	4	3	5	40/30		35
Bat	8	1	2	8	3	3	120/60	Flight,Sonar	20
Bear	5	8	9	5	3	5	120/60		75
Cat	6	2	3	7	4	4	60/30		20
Cheetah	9	7	5	8	3	5	300/150		40
Crocodile	5	5	9	4	4	5	40/30		35
Deer	6	6	6	7	3	4	150/75		30
Dog	5	5	4	7	3	3	70/35		25
Donkey	5	7	6	3	4	3	100/50		25
Eagle	7	5	4	8	5	5	150/75	Flight	25
Elephant	4	11	10	4	4	4	100/50		50
Ferret	6	1	2	6	4	3	60/30		25
Giraffe	4	7	7	6	3	5	200/100		30
Gorilla	5	8	8	5	5	5	60/30		40
Hippopotamus	3	9	9	4	4	5	40/20	Swim	35
Jaguar	8	7	6	7	5	5	200/100		35
Lion	7	8	7	7	5	5	150/75		50
Lizard	5	4	4	4	3	5	70/35		30
Monkey	7	5	4	5	4	3	50/25		20
Moose	4	9	9	5	4	5	120/60		35
Nessy	8	11	11	7	7	8	120/60	Swim, Stealthy	100
Ox	4	9	9	4	4	3	100/50		30
Raccoon	6	3	3	6	3	4	60/30		15
Rhinoceros	4	10	10	3	4	5	130/65		50
Scorpion	7	1	1	3	4	4	30/15	Poison*	15
Snake	5	2	3	4	4	5	70/35	Poison*	25
Tiger	7	8	7	7	5	5	150/75		50
Tortoise	1	2	4	3	4	5	25/13		10
Wolf	6	6	7	7	4	4	80/40		30
Yeti	5	9	9	7	8	5	70/35	Stealthy	40
Zebra	6	8	6	6	4	4	150/75		25

*adds 5 steps poison damage



HORRORS



What I have seen can not be described to anyone who hasn't been plagued with nightmares.
When they descended on us, I would have sold my soul to wake up screaming.
They took my soul, but I didn't wake up.
–Unknown cadaver man. Former citizen of Vivane

Not much is known about the Horrors. Some scholars say that merely possessing knowledge of the Horrors will attract their attention and give them power over any Name-giver that might seek to study them. No one knows how many Horrors exist. They do not have races in the same way that dwarfs and humans and other Name-givers have different races. Despite the fact that there are resemblances between some of the Horrors, there are no relations that are comprehensible by Name-givers. The Horrors included in this section are known to exist in Barsaive. There are surely other, unknown Horrors wandering Barsaive's and other lands. No one knows how many Horrors remain, or whether or not new ones enter the physical world from the polluted wastes of astral space.

HORROR POWERS

All of the Horrors demonstrate powerful magical abilities. It is unknown if the Horrors utilize the magical energies of the world, as with spells and talents, or if the Horrors have their abilities because they are actual manifestations of astral energy.

Every Horror, as with the dragons, does not have every Horror power. The powers listed are those that have been most extensively documented. As far as anyone knows, there may be any number of other fearsome abilities also possessed by the Horrors.

Animate Dead: In order to animate a corpse, the Horror must touch a portion of the deceased body. To use this power, the Horror makes a Animate Dead Test against the Spell Defense of the deceased; a successful result raises the dead man for three days, turning him into a cadaver man (see cadaver man in **Creatures**, p. 294) under the Horror's control. The Horror may use blood magic to extend the animation beyond the three-day limit. By taking 1 point of damage the Horror can cause the cadaver man to exist for a year and a day, at which time the cadaver man collapses into dust unless the Horror continues the blood magic. The Horror controls the cadaver man at a range of 150 to 400 yards. Though the Horror must concentrate to control the dead, it need not make any tests to give it orders. Because the cadaver men are telepathically linked to the Horror, its orders to them do not depend on speech or line of sight.

Corrupt Karma: This power allows the Horror to alter another being's use of Karma. The Horror first makes a Spellcasting Test against the target character's Spell Defense. If the Spellcasting Test is successful, the Horror then makes a Corrupt Karma Test against the target's Karma step. A successful result allows the Horror to override the character's use of Karma, preventing the character from spending a Karma Point on tests made against the Horror. If the Horror achieves an Excellent or better success on the Corrupt Karma Test, it can prevent the character from using Karma on any test.

Cursed Luck: Many of the Horrors can bring bad luck to opponents. Use of this power reduces the results of at least one die a target rolls for any action to 1. The Horror makes a Cursed Luck Test against the target's Spell Defense. The success level of the test determines how many of the target's dice that he rolled for a particular action have their results reduced to 1. An Average result reduces one die, a Good result reduces two dice, an Excellent result reduces three, and an Extraordinary result reduces the result of four die rolls to 1. Note that Cursed Luck automatically reduces the highest numbers that the target character rolls. For example, if a character rolls a 2 and a 6, the Cursed Luck power reduces the 6 to a 1. If the success level achieved by the Horror allows it to reduce more dice than the target character has rolled, the power affects all the target's dice and gives the character an automatic result of 1, meaning that his action fails. For an explanation of the Rule of One, see **Game Concepts**, p. 27. A character may not use cursed dice as Bonus dice, because the curse has already reduced any result from such dice to 1 before the character can gain the benefit of Bonus dice. Cursed Luck only affects the results of one test.

Damage Shift: This power allows a Horror to shift damage that it has taken onto a target character. Though the Horror spends a Karma Point to accomplish this, it rolls no Karma dice; the Karma Point simply enables the Horror to make the necessary Damage Shift Test to use its power. Damage Shift is a simple action, and does not use up one of the Horror's attacks or Spell actions available in a Combat Round. The Horror may use Damage Shift whenever it takes damage by making a Damage Shift Test against the target's Spell Defense. A successful result shifts all damage the Horror has just taken to the target character. Each use of Damage Shift lasts for five Combat Rounds. The Horror may make a new Damage Shift Test in any of those rounds, transferring the damage it takes in each round to the target. Damage Shift works by line of sight, meaning that the Horror must be able to see its chosen target.

Horror Durability (6/5): Like Creature Durability and the Durability talent, Horror Durability is the power that makes a Horror tougher by increasing its Death and Unconsciousness ratings. All Horrors have Horror Durability. The Horrors listed that are not unique are given a range for their Horror Durability Rank, indicating the different power levels of different Horrors of a specific type. The unique Horrors listed will have their adjusted Death and Unconsciousness ratings in parentheses next to their base ratings.

Horror-Mark: This terrible ability allows Horrors to mark victims, thereby linking the Horror and the target character. To use Horror-mark, the target character must be in the Horror's line of sight. The Horror makes a Horror-mark Test against the target character's Spell Defense. If the target character has used raw magic, use the Horror-mark Test method given in Spell Magic rather than the Horror-mark Test. Any character who has used raw magic may use only his original Spell Defense to resist the Horror-mark. If a character has not used raw magic, he may increase his Spell Defense by using magical items or spells.

The Horror-mark links the Horror to the target over vast distances and allows the Horror to use any of its abilities against the target character when the character is within 10 miles of the Horror. For a range up to 100 miles, the Horror-mark power allows the Horror to take actions against the character that do not directly cause damage, and communications between the Horror and the target extends for 5,000 miles.

Horror-marks last a year and a day. The Horror may renew the Horror-mark whenever the target character is within 100 miles of the Horror.

Immunity to Fear: All Horrors and their constructs are immune to fear and any talents, spells, or skills with fear effects.

Karma Points: All major Horrors have Karma Points. Every Horror may use Karma Points on any test, though they may spend only 1 Karma Point per test. Horrors regain Karma Points at a rate of 1 to 5 points a day, until they reach the maximum listed for each Horror.

Karma Tap: This ability allows a Horror to suggest actions to characters. The Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the target character's Spell Defense; if the test is successful, the Horror forms a



telepathic link with the character. If a character is Horror-marked by that Horror, the Horror adds 3 steps to its Spellcasting step. The Horror then makes a Karma Tap Test. The result is the number of days the link lasts. If the character accepts a suggestion, the Horror substitutes its Karma step, and accompanying use restriction, for the character's when the character embarks on the suggested course of action. Though the influenced character must still spend his own Karma Point, he may spend it on any action, and use the Horror's Karma step rather than his own to carry it out. The telepathic link extends for 1,000 miles.

Skin Shift: This gruesome ability allows the Horror to mutilate a target's body. The Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense; if the test is successful, the Horror then rolls the Skin Shift dice to determine damage. The target takes Damage Points equal to the result of the Skin Shift dice roll; his skin tears loose from muscles and ligaments, twisting and rotating about his body. During the first round in which the Horror uses this power, Skin Shift inflicts 7 Wounds on the target in addition to the damage of the Skin Shift dice roll result. Skin Shift lasts for 3 rounds, causing additional damage in each round.

Spells: Horrors often learn spells from sentient captives who follow a particular spellcasting Discipline. Horrors can learn every spell from their captives' listed Disciplines and Circles, except for those spells that affect entities. Though Horrors may learn the spells from a Discipline, they acquire none of that Discipline's other talents. Though Horrors cast all spells as raw magic (see **Spell Magic**, p. 151), they take no damage, and tend to ignore raw magic spells cast by other Horrors. Also, Horrors do not use Spell Matrices, though they must weave Spell Threads where required. To determine the effect of Horror-cast spells, use the Horror's Willpower step. Note that Horrors do not have Willforce.

Terror: Terror allows Horrors to instill intense fear into their targets. Each use of Terror costs the Horror 5 Strain Points. The Horror using its Terror ability makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result to the Spell Defense of all characters within 50 yards of the Horror. If the test is successful against any character, the Horror makes a Terror Test. The result becomes the Difficulty Number against which an affected character must make a successful Willpower Test before he or she can perform any action against the Horror. An affected character must make a successful Willpower Test against that number before he or she can perform any action against the Horror. Until the character makes a successful Willpower Test, he can take no other action. His speech becomes a piteous wail, and any movements become random twitches.

Thought Worm: This ability allows a Horror to create a telepathic link between itself and a target. The target character must be within the Horror's line of sight for the Horror to place a Thought Worm within the character's mind. The Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the intended victim's Spell Defense. If the target has been previously Horror-marked by the Horror creating the Thought Worm, it gains a +3 step bonus to its Spellcasting Test. A successful result places the Thought Worm within the mind of a victim. A Thought Worm lasts for a year and a day, and the Horror may renew it at the price of 1 permanent point of damage for each year of renewal. If the target character dies, the Horror regains the spent Damage Points.

A Thought Worm allows the Horror to make telepathic suggestions to a target when he or she is within 1,000 miles of the Horror. If the target resists the suggestion, the Horror makes a Thought Worm Test and the character takes Damage Points equivalent to the result. This damage is extremely painful. When a character resists, the gamemaster records a number of Legend Points for the Thought Worm equal to the target's Circle Number x 100. For example, when a Fifth Circle character resists the Thought Worm, the gamemaster records 500 Legend Points. Because Horrors enjoy rewarding their faithful servants, each resistance adds to the total Legend Points. If the character subsequently acts upon a suggestion, he gains all of the Legend Points from the Thought Worm previously accumulated by his resistance. Unfortunately, in addition to the Legend Points, the character also automatically gains a Horror-mark. For more information, see **Horror-Mark**, above.

Unnatural Life: This ability allows a Horror to give a corpse the "gift" of unnatural life. This ability only works on corpses dead for less than a year and a day. To use this power, the Horror touches the dead body and makes a Unnatural Life Test against its Spell Defense. If the Unnatural Life Test is successful, Unnatural Life revives the corpse. Though not as dreadful to behold as a zombie or a ghoul, the corpse remains visibly decayed, and retains the distinctive odor of rotting flesh. Aside from a horrific appearance and smell, the animated character can function as he did in life. Unnatural Life revives him with all of his Attributes and talents intact.

Characters animated by Unnatural Life are hard to destroy. They may make a Recovery Test during any Combat Round, which counts as their action for that round. Beyond that, the unnaturally living may make unlimited Recovery Tests in the course of a day.

The Horror loses 1 Damage Point when it uses this power, and regains it when the Unnatural Life ends. The Horror may stop the effects of Unnatural Life any time the unnaturally alive character is within 100 yards of the Horror.

NAMED HORRORS

Across Barsaive there are rumors, seldom spoken, and when done so only in hushed or subtler tones, of unique, powerful Horrors known by specific Names. It is doubtless that there are many of these Named Horrors in existence, but the majority of them remain even further in obscurity. This is due largely to the obvious danger involved in seeking out information on the Horrors, even their Names, for it is known that even learning the true Name of a Horror can be as dangerous as confronting it. Because of this, labels or pseudonyms rather than true Names are often used to refer to these Horrors. Listed here are a few examples of Named Horrors that have gained some level of notoriety.

Artificer

Artificer is the nightmare of every explorer who ventures underground. Whenever you creep through a passageway, open a door or drop through a hole, a part of you fears that one of Artificer's cruel traps is waiting for you, hungry to rend your flesh and taste your blood.

Bone Crown the Usurper

Bone Crown the Usurper cloaks its identity in deceit, passing among Name-givers as one of their own. The more Name-givers who follow its commands, the more mystical power it gains, whether the name-givers in question obey it wittingly or unwittingly, directly or indirectly.

Druistadt

Druistadt is the Name given by the t'skrang to a particular Horror that is said to inhabit the Serpent River. Its true Name is unknown as knowledge of it is shunned from being spoken or even recorded. Tales have been told of a Horror that strikes at groups along the river. Though little is known of how the Horror operates, one traveler once reported a riverboat whose crew had been found with their hearts ripped out. She was told that it was the work of Druistadt.

Nebis

It is debated as to whether Nebis is more of a danger than it is an annoyance. This is because, of the many Adepts that have faced Nebis, several of the stronger parties have survived the encounter. While this may indicate that Nebis is not as potent as most of the other Named Horrors, it in no way means that Nebis should be taken lightly. This Horror has been reported to have caused the destruction of a number of kaers and villages, in addition to having wreaked havoc in the form of vile plots, insidious murders, and cases of incurable insanity.

Nemesis

Nemesis is a very unique Named Horror. It is said that Nemesis not only walks amongst Name-givers, but has also acquired a considerable amount of wealth and is even an established slaver. To those who have had dealings with Nemesis, it is unclear what this Horror's true motives are. Nemesis has approached numerous Adepts with offers to help them in their fight against other Horrors. Whether it is weapons or information that they need, Nemesis is more than willing to provide. Some Adepts have taken Nemesis up on these offers; others have not, not trusting what the price may turn out to be.

Ristul

Scholars who have studied Ristul claim that this Horror does not have a single form or shape. It appears as the inky substance that corrupts astral space. Other manifestations appear throughout Barsaive, one of the better known is the Abyss of Aras Nehem. Because of this wide spread presence, the Horror is even thought by some to be the whole sum of corruption found in astral space.

Ubyr

Ubyr is a unique, gargantuan Horror that haunted the Serpent River during the Scourge, preying on the crew covenants of the t'skrang and on coastal villages of other races. A leach-like creature of staggering size, it seems to feed both on blood and on the pure vital energy of its victims.

BLOATFORMS

Attributes

DEX: 17	**STR:** 12	**TOU:** 18
PER: 20	**WIL:** 20	**CHA:** 22

Initiative: 20
Number of Attacks: (2)
Attack: 20
Damage: 15
Number of Spells: 3
Spellcasting: 22
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 16
Spell Defense: 19
Social Defense: 18
Armor: 32
Mystic Armor: 30
Knockdown: 1
Recovery Tests: 7

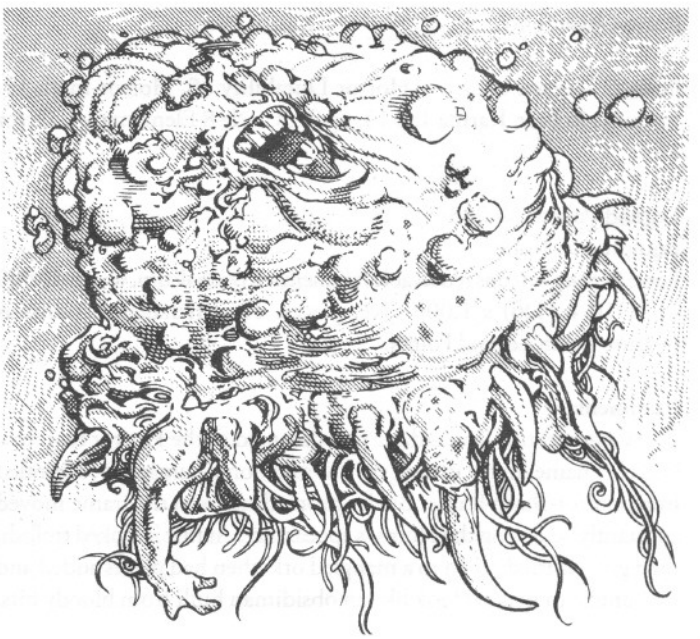
Death Rating: 110
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 25
Full Movement: 50

Karma Points: 30

Karma Steps: 12

Powers: Corrupt Karma 12, Horror Durability 9-14, Horror-mark 12, Immune to Fear, Spells: Circle 7 Wizard, Terror 12, Thought Worm 12



Legend Points: 25,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Usually none

Commentary

A catchall name for a diverse class of Horrors, bloatforms often look like slugs or jellyfish. Other bloatforms appear as impossibly bloated, bubbling corpses.

Bloatforms rarely kill their victims directly, preferring to encourage suicide or murder. They especially enjoy insinuating themselves into small settlements and manipulating a community into self-destruction. Bloatforms enjoy chatting with victims they have marked. They cajole, threaten, taunt, and negotiate with the victim, all with the aim of getting the victim to destroy himself.

Some bloatforms have other talents from a variety of Disciplines as well as the average bloatform's powers and spells. Often, they lie dormant until a delicious whiff of pain crosses their path and rouses them. Horribly patient, bloatforms can wait years for the destruction of a particularly succulent victim.

CHANTREL'S HORROR

Attributes

DEX: 20	**STR:** 22	**TOU:** 18
PER: 20	**WIL:** 23	**CHA:** 19

Initiative: 22
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 23
Damage: 30
Number of Spells: 2
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 20
Spell Defense: 21
Social Defense: 21
Armor: 32
Mystic Armor: 30
Knockdown: 22
Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 220(328)
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: 200(290)

Combat Movement: 100
Full Movement: 200

Karma Points: 40

Karma Steps: 15

Powers: Cursed Luck 19, Horror Durability 18, Horror-mark 19, Immune to Fear, Karma Tap 15, Spells: Circle 8 Elementalist, Terror 15

Legend Points: 50,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Frame contains retrievable fragments of orichalcum, worth 40,000 + (1D10 + 1D6) x 1,000 silver pieces. The orichalcum counts as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Chantrel the Troubadour first dreamed of the Horror that now bears her name. In her dream, she saw a demonic humanoid suspended from a razor-sharp frame. Blades protruding from the frame moved constantly, sculpting the Horror's appearance. At first it looked trollish, then got whittled down to a mangled ork, then had pieces added and rearranged to make it look like an obsidiman built from bloody bits.



For having such a dream, Chantrel's kaer threw her outside. She is the only citizen to survive the Horror's appearance, and from her stories, tales of the Horror spread across Barsaive.

No one knows what this Horror wants, or how it operates. Chantrel remains the only living person who has seen it, and she had only a brief glimpse in a nightmare. No one else has seen it and survived.

CRYSTAL ENTITY

Attributes

DEX: 4	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 7
PER: 3	**WIL:** 6	**CHA:** 4

Initiative: 5
Number of Attacks: NA
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Number of Spells: 2
Spellcasting: 16
Effect: 16

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 12
Armor: 13
Mystic Armor: 5
Knockdown: Immune
Recovery Tests: 4 (13)

Death Rating: 80
Wound Threshold: 18
Unconsciousness Rating: 70

Combat Movement: NA
Full Movement: NA

Karma Points: 20

Karma Steps: 10

Powers: Horror Durability 5-18, Horror-mark 19, Immune to Fear, Karma Tap 20, Spells (see below)

Legend Points: 600
Equipment: None
Loot: Blood as treasure, 1D6 elemental earth coins worth 100 silver pieces each. These items count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Commentary

Crystal entities drop into the world from the astral plane. They must inhabit an object or structure at least the size of a coffin, and commonly infest huts, garden sheds, or similar small structures. The infested structure looks built of glass, quartz, or ice. When an entity is

wounded, its rock-hard skin ruptures and oozes an oily liquid. When killed, its skin shatters and its blood coagulates into 1D6 elemental earth coins, worth 100 silver pieces each. These count as treasure worth Legend Points.

Crystal entities attack opponents and defend themselves by using spells. Though a crystal entity can make no direct physical attack, it can cast the following spells: Astral Sense, Counterspell, Death Spikes (see below), Dispel Magic, and Mind Dagger. When casting spells at a target, a crystal entity makes the Spellcasting Test required by the spell's description (see **Spell Magic**, p. 149). If the test is successful, the crystal entity then makes the applicable Effect Test or rolls the Effect dice to determine damage. For details on Effect Tests and dice, see **Spell Magic**, p. 153.

Death Spikes

Threads: 0 **Weaving Difficulty:** NA
Range: 150 yards **Duration:** 24 hours
Effect: 16 steps damage
Reattunement Difficulty: NA
Casting Difficulty: Target's Spell Defense

To use the Death Spikes spell, the entity makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, the spell alters the joints and bones of a victim within the spell's 1,000-yard range, forming crystalline spikes that pierce the skin from the inside out. To determine damage, the entity rolls the Effect dice. Neither Physical Armor nor Mystic Armor can protect a character against the effects of this spell. In addition to other damage done, Death Spikes cause 1 Wound. The spikes remain for a day, or until dispelled. For dispelling purposes, treat Death Spikes as a Circle 5 spell. During each round of the spell's duration, it can cause damage, but determining the actual damage caused requires the crystal entity to make an Effect Test against the victim's Spell Defense. The crystal entity may cast Death Spikes on up to three different characters in three different rounds, causing damage to one character in each round as long as that character stays within the spell's 1,000-yard range.

DESPAIRTHOUGHT

Attributes

DEX: 6 **STR:** 13 **TOU:** 12
PER: 8 **WIL:** 12 **CHA:** 8

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 10
Damage: 15
Number of Spells: Special
Spellcasting: Special
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 10
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 7
Knockdown: 13
Recovery Tests: 12

Death Rating: 80
Wound Threshold: 18
Unconsciousness Rating: 73

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 20

Karma Steps: 10

Powers: Horror Durability 10-15, Horror-mark 10-15, Immune to Fear, Corrupt Karma 15, Spells (See Below)

Legend Points: 1,500
Equipment: NA
Loot: 1D6 x 100 Silver pieces

Commentary

The despairthought resembles a giant, white larva, ranging from the size of a sheep to the size of several horses. It has white, sightless eyes and a huge maw tipped with large fangs. Along its body are child-sized arms, on which it scrambles about.

Although a formidable foe in physical combat, the Horror prefers psychic attack. The despairthought usually hides in a cavern or within ruins, far from civilization, and travels through the astral plane seeking victims. It can roam a limitless range in astral space, keeping its attention on both the physical and astral planes simultaneously.

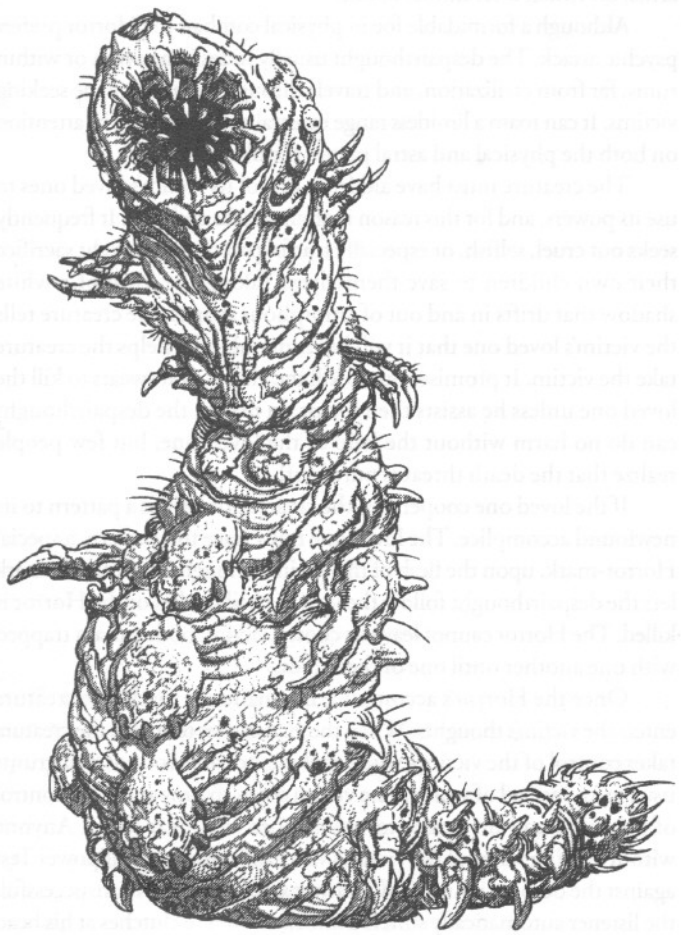
The creature must have aid from one of its victim's loved ones to use its powers, and for this reason it often attacks children. It frequently seeks out cruel, selfish, or especially fearful parents who might sacrifice their own children to save themselves. Taking the form of a white shadow that drifts in and out of amorphous shapes, the creature tells the victim's loved one that it will kill him unless he helps the creature take the victim. It promises not to kill the victim, but swears to kill the loved one unless he assists the Horror. In reality, the despairthought can do no harm without the help of the loved one, but few people realize that the death threat is pure bluff.

If the loved one cooperates, the creature describes a pattern to its newfound accomplice. The loved one must trace this pattern, a special Horror-mark, upon the flesh of the victim. Though invisible, the mark lets the despairthought follow the victim until he dies or the Horror is killed. The Horror cannot leave its chosen victim; both remain trapped with one another until one of them dies.

Once the Horror's accomplice has made the mark, the creature enters the victim's thoughts. When the victim tries to speak, the creature takes control of the victim's voice, making horrible sounds and grunts issue forth instead of words. The victim often spasms and loses control of his body, and his noises torment those who hear them. Anyone within hearing range of the victim's voice must make a Willpower Test against the despairthought's Willpower step. If the test is unsuccessful, the listener automatically suffers a knockdown. He clutches at his head as his consciousness drowns in agony for all the painful actions, large or small, that he has ever committed against anyone. The horrible sounds amplify these memories to such a degree that the listener is rendered incapable of taking any action. Some listeners cry, howl, or roll back and forth on the floor in agonizing pain. The effects of the Horror's terrible voice last until the listener makes a successful Willpower Test, or against the despairthought's Willpower step.

The despairthought also renders its victim suicidal. Inside the victim's mind, the Horror constantly feeds him bleak ideas, cynical notions, and hopeless views of the world. To reflect this process, once a day the creature can make a Willpower Test against the victim's Willpower step. The Horror can make this roll at any time, and usually does so when the victim is in danger. If the test is successful, the victim can take no action of any kind. He cannot fall to the floor, take shelter, or do anything potentially useful. Most despairthoughts affect their victims this way to get the victim killed, though some despairthoughts simply enjoy causing the victim inconvenience, embarrassment, or trouble. The creature's influence lasts a number of rounds equal to the Willpower Test result.

Also, once a year the Horror can attempt to force the victim to commit suicide. In this case, the Horror and the victim each make three sets of Willpower Tests against each other's Willpower step, and compare the results of the tests. If the Horror's results exceed the victim's for each of the three tests, the victim commits suicide within 24 hours. The Horror usually does not invoke this power for at least a full year after invading the victim, preferring to wallow in the pain that it can cause the victim during that time.



HATE

Attributes

DEX: 16	**STR:** 19	**TOU:** 20
PER: 19	**WIL:** 22	**CHA:** 18

Initiative: 19
Number of Attacks: (3)
Attack: 20
Damage: 26
Number of Spells: 4
Spellcasting: 23
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 24
Spell Defense: 24
Social Defense: 20
Armor: 20
Mystic Armor: 20
Knockdown: 19
Recovery Tests: 10

Death Rating: 140(290)
Wound Threshold: 25
Unconsciousness Rating: Immune

Combat Movement: 100
Full Movement: 100

Karma Points: 40

Karma Steps: 15

Powers: Animate Dead 19, Cursed Luck 19, Damage Shift 19, Horror Durability 25, Horror-mark 21, Immune to Fear, Skin Shift 30, Spells: Circle 8 Illusionist, Terror 18

Legend Points: 125,000
Equipment: None known
Loot: None known

Commentary

Hate destroyed at least two kaers during the Scourge. He also penetrated two others, Coppertail and Menkin Town, but left those intact. To this day, most Barsaive citizens harbor deep suspicions of residents from Coppertail and Menkin Town, assuming that the Horror left the kaers alone because the residents promised him something better. No one can guess what they might have promised, and few care to try.

Hate appears as a glowing, well-proportioned male human. From the top of his back sprout twelve multi-jointed limbs. As Hate speaks the limbs move, each limb producing grating speech in a different tone. The limbs can extend in front of Hate, and the Horror uses them to strike opponents. When Hate attacks traveling parties, he horribly mutilates some members of the party and leaves others virtually unscathed. Most residents of Barsaive treat survivors of such attacks with even more suspicion than people from Coppertail and Menkin Town.

KREESCRA

Attributes

DEX: 9	**STR:** 10	**TOU:** 9
PER: 9	**WIL:** 11	**CHA:** 6

Initiative: 10
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 11
Damage: 12
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 10
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 7
Knockdown: 7
Recovery Tests: 4

Death Rating: 47
Wound Threshold: 13
Unconsciousness Rating: 40

Combat Movement: 30
Full Movement: 60

Karma Points: 15

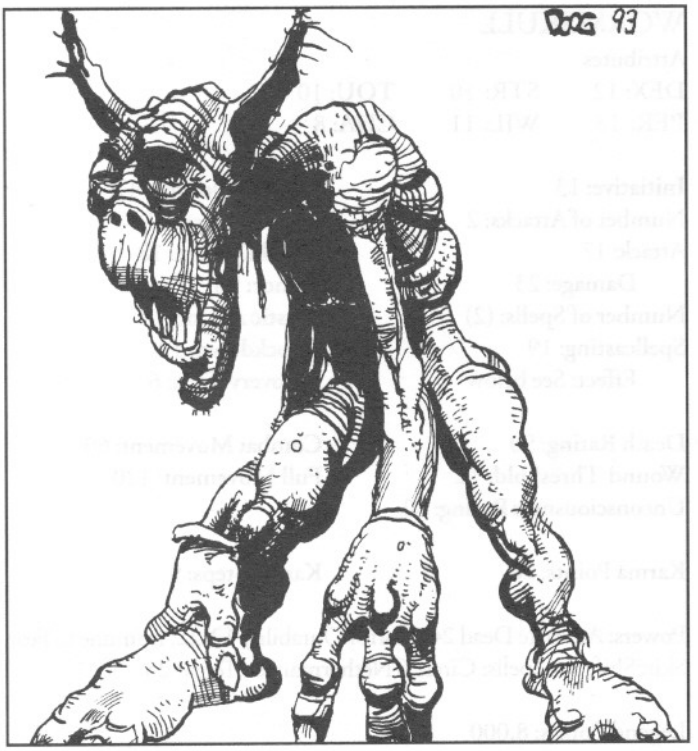
Karma Steps: 12

Powers: Cursed Luck 13, Horror Durability 8-12, Immune to Fear, Talents (see below)

Legend Points: 400
Equipment: NA
Loot: NA

Commentary

Most kreescra stand 3 feet tall, a few as tall as 4 feet. Their bodies are misshapen travesties, all twisted limbs and jaws and faces that seem about to slide off their heads. Despite their crippled appearance, kreescra are surprisingly nimble and difficult to catch or strike.



Kreescra usually attack by approaching wounded individuals deep in slumber. Finding such a victim, the Horror places its hands on the victim's head and makes a Spellcasting Test against the victim's Spell Defense. If the test is successful, nightmares of horrible events from the victim's past overwhelm the dreamer and disrupt his sleep. The victim does not wake from these terrors; he stays asleep, sweating and tossing and turning. The kreescra can use this power at a range of up to 100 yards, keeping the victim under its influence for at least one hour each night. During the day, the kreescra hides near the victim's sleeping place. When the victim travels, the kreescra trails him, keeping out of sight and only using its powers while the victim slumbers.

During the horrible nightmares, the victim makes a Willpower Test against the kreescra's Willpower step. If the Willpower Test is unsuccessful, the victim receives no Recovery Tests the next day despite his full night of sleep. For every continuous week that the kreescra haunts the victim, whether or not it successfully keeps the victim from making daily Recovery Tests, the victim takes 7 Damage Points. If possible, the kreescra stays with the same victim until the victim dies, slowly killing him with nightmares and the effects of unhealed wounds. If the victim gets an Extraordinary success on one of his Willpower Tests against the kreescra, he has forced the Horror from his mind. Once a victim recovers from the damage done by the kreescra, the creature seeks out another victim.

To help it claim victims, the Horror can use the magical abilities of Climbing, Lock Pick, and Silent Walk. To use these talents, the Horror substitutes its Spellcasting step for the talent step. For more information on the kreescra's magical talents, see the descriptions in **Talents**.

MINDSLUGS

Attributes

DEX: 6	**STR:** 6	**TOU:** 8
PER: 7	**WIL:** 10	**CHA:** 6

Initiative: 8
Number of Attacks: 1
Attack: 7
Damage: 8
Number of Spells: 1
Spellcasting: 10
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 7
Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 6
Knockdown: 6
Recovery Tests: 3

Death Rating: 43
Wound Threshold: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: 35

Combat Movement: 45
Full Movement: 90

Karma Points: 10

Karma Steps: 7

Powers: Corrupt Karma 13, Horror Durability 5-8, Immune to Fear, Spells (see below)

Legend Points: 100
Equipment: None
Loot: None

Commentary

Mindslugs feed off the pain caused by their attacks on a victim's skull and brain. These mindless creatures usually travel in groups of 3, seeking out victims as a poisonous spider might. Six inches long and black in color, mindslugs have no sensory organs typical of Earth creatures, such as eyes or a nose. Instead, each possesses several tentacles that it uses to crawl along the ground, walls and ceilings. The tentacles are lined with small, silvery hooks that give the slug sensory information.

The mindslug hides in dark places where a potential victim might rest, and attacks as the victim sleeps. Piercing the victim's skull, the mindslug worms its way into the victim's brain and begins to feed. The Horror has two magical abilities that give it an advantage over its prey: Gain Surprise, which allows the creature to sneak up on its victim by crawling up his back or dropping down from the ceiling, and Lacerators, which adds 4 steps to the mindslug's Damage step. To use Gain Surprise, the Horror makes a Spellcasting Test against the victim's Perception step; if the test is successful, the creature has surprised the victim.

Once the mindslug's attack has succeeded, the creature makes a Damage Test in every round without needing to make an additional attack. The mindslug continues these Damage Tests until the victim removes the slug or dies, at which point the mindslug leaves the corpse and seeks out a new victim.

Removing the creature is no easy task. The mindslug's body is slippery, and it uses the small hooks along its tentacles to grip the inside of its victim's skull. Both of these characteristics make these creatures difficult to dislodge, assuming that a character can catch one. To catch the creature with fingers, tweezers or some similar tool, the character doing the catching must make a successful Dexterity Test against the creature's Physical Defense Rating. Once he has grabbed the slug, the character must make a Willpower Test against the mindslug's Willpower

step. If the test is successful, the victim can remove the mindslug, causing 6 steps of damage and 1 Wound to the character. If the Willpower Test is unsuccessful, the mindslug continues to worm its way into the victim's brain.

Starting with the second round in which the mindslug inhabits the victim's skull, each round that the creature remains in the victim's head raises its Physical Defense Rating by 2. For example, by the third round after a successful attack the creature's Physical Defense is 8 + 2 + 2 = 12. Also, each round that the mindslug remains in the victim's head increases the Difficulty Number for removing it (its Willpower step) by 2. Once plucked out of the victim's skull, the creature attempts to wriggle away and escape.

VERJIGORM

Attributes

DEX: 31 **STR:** 33 **TOU:** 28
PER: 35 **WIL:** 40 **CHA:** 29

Initiative: 35
Number of Attacks: 3
Attack: 38
Damage: 40
Number of Spells: 3
Spellcasting: 40
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 34
Spell Defense: 36
Social Defense: 30
Armor: 40
Mystic Armor: 40
Knockdown: 33
Recovery Tests: 20

Death Rating: 400(610)
Wound Threshold: 30
Unconsciousness Rating: 375(550)

Combat Movement: 150
Full Movement: 300

Karma Points: 50

Karma Steps: 20

Powers: Animate Dead 40, Corrupt Karma 40, Cursed Luck 40, Damage Shift 40, Horror Durability 35, Horror-mark 25, Very Immune to Fear, Spells: Circle 8 Wizard, Thought Worm 20, Unnatural Life 20

Legend Points: 2,000,000
Equipment: None
Loot: None known

Commentary

To see Verjigorm is to behold the true nature of the Horrors. Verjigorm stands 15 feet at the shoulder. The face of this hideous creature features six eyes, three-inch fangs, and spiked horns. Its horrifying head is connected to its torso by a flexible, 10-foot-long neck. Its skin gleams with a metallic sheen, and razor-sharp spikes protrude from its body. Each of the creature's four legs ends in three sharp talons, and though it most often stands on all four legs, Verjigorm can stand on its rear legs to fight.

The scholars of Throal heard of Verjigorm only through tales told by the great dragons that it hunted during the last Scourge. No one knows whether this hideous creature came into the world during this Scourge but if it did, it hunted no dragons this time around. Verjigorm's goals and whereabouts remain a mystery.

WORMSKULL

Attributes

DEX: 12 **STR:** 10 **TOU:** 10
PER: 13 **WIL:** 11 **CHA:** 8

Initiative: 13
Number of Attacks: 2
Attack: 17
Damage: 23
Number of Spells: (2)
Spellcasting: 19
Effect: See below

Physical Defense: 17
Spell Defense: 17
Social Defense: 18
Armor: 18
Mystic Armor: 18
Knockdown: 12
Recovery Tests: 6

Death Rating: 90
Wound Threshold: 12
Unconsciousness Rating: 60

Combat Movement: 60
Full Movement: 120

Karma Points: 20

Karma Steps: 9

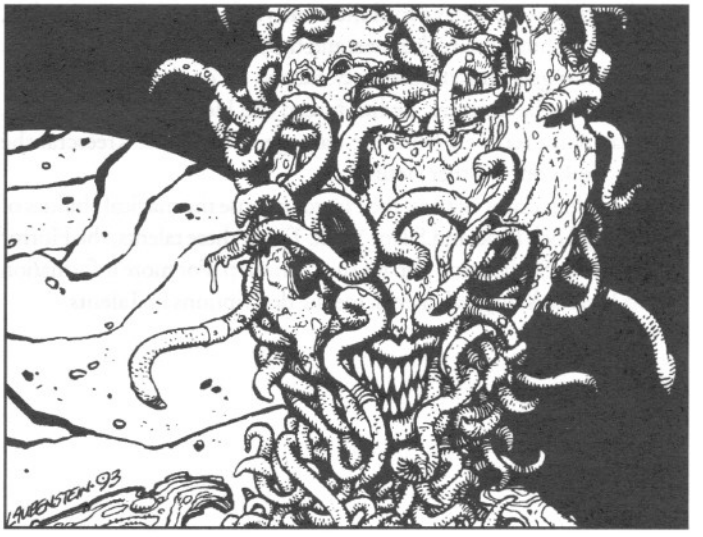
Powers: Animate Dead 24, Horror Durability 12-22, Immune to Fear, Skin Shift 24, Spells: Circle 6 Nethermancer, Terror 25

Legend Points: 8,000
Equipment: None
Loot: Breastplate pieces made of elemental earth. Characters can pry out pieces of armor worth (1D20 + 1D8 + 1D6) x 100 silver pieces, which count as treasure worth Legend Points.

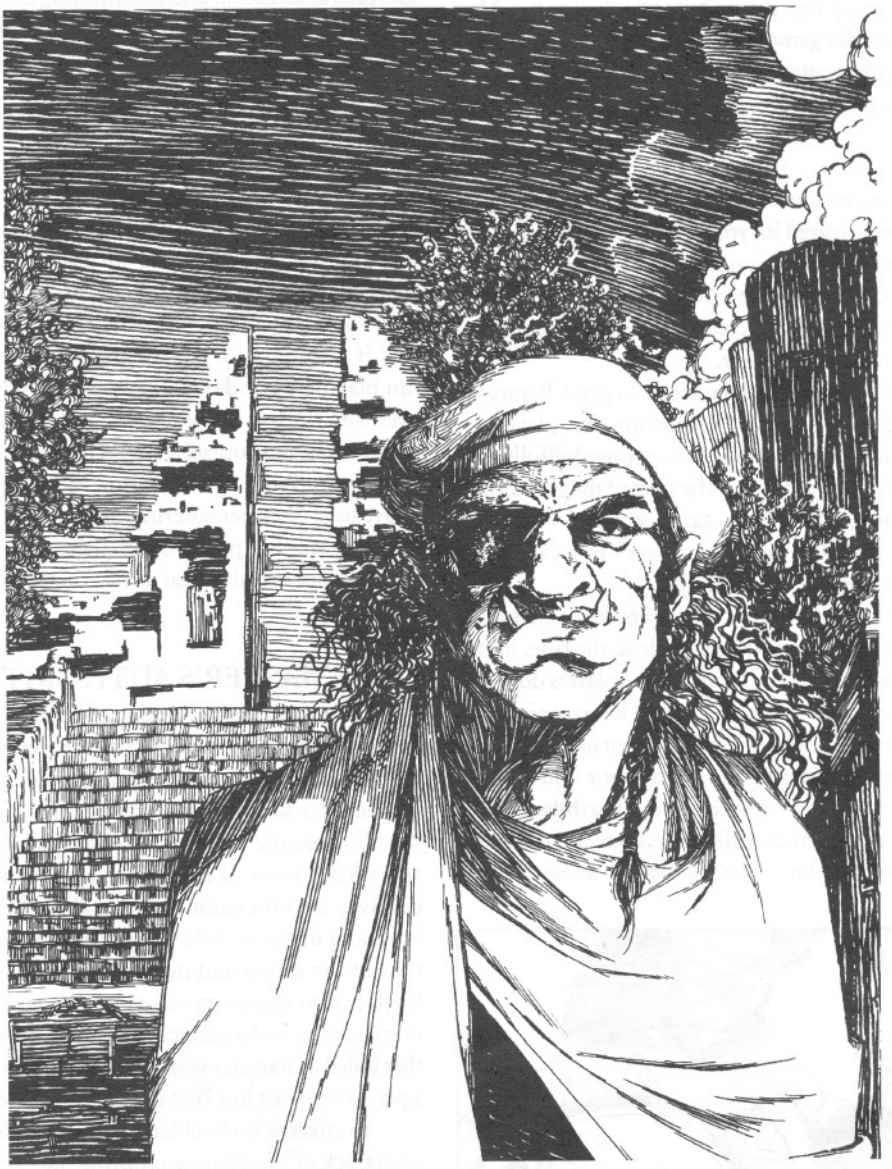
Commentary

Wormskulls are a class of Horrors that vary in appearance but have one feature in common: their skulls look like masses of writhing worms. Often, their hands and feet also end in worm-like appendages. Wormskulls range in height from 5 to 8 feet tall. Their bodies are partly made of armor, and pieces of this armor count as treasure worth Legend Points. Because wormskulls prefer dry environments, their presence tends to remove moisture from an area 1,000 yards in circumference around them. Occasionally, wormskulls will serve other Horrors.

A wormskull may move into or out of astral space by making a successful Spellcasting Test, using the wormskull's Spell Defense as the Difficulty Number.



GAMEMASTERING EARTHDAWN



Rules are meant to be broken, or at least twisted into a more pleasing shape.
But the Passions protect their rules. Those you had best obey, lad, as courteously as you can.
— Garlthik One-Eye, ork Thief

Among a group of people who get together to play roleplaying games, one of the players does not play a permanent role. Instead, this player moderates the game, keeping in mind and enforcing the game's limits and rules. This person, called the gamemaster, determines the effects of the player characters' actions and what the response to those actions will be. The gamemaster also plays all the bit parts; bystanders, creatures, villains, and other characters who are not central to the action but who interact with the player characters in some way. Very often, the gamemaster gets the group together to try out a new game. After playing a game for a while, the gamemaster and another player may want to trade places; the gamemaster then becomes a player and creates his own character, and a player takes on the responsibilities of the gamemaster.

As the gamemaster, you run the game. You create or adapt the story told during a game session. You create the situations and scenes your players' characters get involved in, you determine whether or not a character succeeds at an attempted action, and you roleplay all the people and creatures the characters meet. You decide what creatures the characters encounter, how those creatures react to the player characters, and who gets to hit whom first.

The gamemaster also awards the characters Legend Points for successfully completing an adventure, rewarding the player for roleplaying and the character for meeting goals, acting skillfully, and surviving. The gamemaster determines how the rules of the game work, and makes sure everyone follows the same ground rules and interpretations. Though not easy, the gamemaster's role can be the most enjoyable part of playing roleplaying games.

The information in this section mostly benefits the gamemaster, but players may find it interesting as well. As with all the rules in this book, treat the following as guidelines. If you and the players don't like the way a rule works or feels, feel free to change it. This game is yours. You spent your own money for it, and no one, not even us, can tell you how to use it. Besides, no one is going to stop by your house in the middle of the night to check on how you're playing **Earthdawn**.

Before we delve into the down-and-dirty methods and tactics for gamemastering **Earthdawn**, we would like to point out a few things to keep in mind while running **Earthdawn**, or any roleplaying game. Remembering these few ideas may make running the game a whole lot easier.



GROUND RULES

All roleplaying games have rules. Without them, the gamemaster would have a difficult time figuring out whether or not a character succeeds at an action and determining the outcome of a multitude of other events and situations. In addition to the rules specific to each different game, all roleplaying games share the following ground rules.

MAKE IT FUN

Roleplaying games are first and foremost a form of entertainment. Think about it. Why do you play roleplaying games? To get together with some friends and have a good time. But it's easy, in the heat of the moment, to forget that you are playing the game to enjoy yourself. Some players pout when the adventure doesn't go the way they want it to. Some players get mad when their characters are injured or killed.

If at some point you discover that the group is no longer having fun playing **Earthdawn** (we hope this never happens), stop. Talk it over with the rest of the players, and try to figure out why you are no longer enjoying yourselves. Maybe you just need a break. There's no harm in stopping a game session early to go out for pizza. Or maybe you're tired of gamemastering, and want to try playing instead. As well as giving another player the chance to be the gamemaster, this gives you a chance to learn what it's like on the other side of the gamemaster screen.

GAMEMASTER'S AUTHORITY

We guarantee that during the course of a game, the players will disagree with a decision made by the gamemaster. Don't worry about it. Just remember that the gamemaster is the final authority. The gamemaster accepted the responsibility for running the game, and therefore has the right to make the final decisions about what works and what doesn't. If the players are uncomfortable with a decision, discuss it after the game session ends, or before the next game session. Stopping in the middle of a game to discuss the rules interrupts the flow of the action and makes it difficult to resume play at the same level. It also makes more sense to discuss rules disagreements after everyone has had a chance to calm down-explaining how the device that killed a character works may not make much of an impression on a player who just lost Barsaive's most legendary obsidiman Illusionist.

To effectively shoulder his responsibilities, the gamemaster must keep track of what happens during the game. If the gamemaster does not know that a character is taking an action, he may decide that action didn't happen. For example, if a character wants to visit the marketplace to purchase new equipment, the player must tell the gamemaster what his character intends to do. He cannot simply say, "I went to the marketplace and bought some new equipment." The gamemaster may simply reply, "No, you didn't," and his decision stands whether the player likes it or not. Keep in mind that this rule does not exist to allow the gamemaster to micro-manage each player's character, or to ignore actions that throw off his plans. It simply prompts players to inform the gamemaster of any and all actions they want their characters to take. After all, the gamemaster cannot keep track of events unless he knows they are occurring.

INTERPRETING RULES

We also guarantee that two people playing **Earthdawn**, whether player and gamemaster, two players, or two gamemasters, will read the same rule in this book and interpret it two different ways. For example, a player might declare that his character intends to resolve a situation using a talent that you, the gamemaster, consider inappropriate to the task at hand. You reread the talent description, and tell the player, "The description doesn't say that you can do that with this talent." The player may retort, "Well, it doesn't say I can't."

Who's right? Both of you, in a sense. More than 150 individual talents create a lot of rules to keep track of, and so questions of interpretation will arise. In most cases, the gamemaster decides how the rule works. As a rule of thumb, the **Earthdawn** rules describe what your character can do, rather than what he cannot, and so in the example above, the gamemaster's interpretation of the rule would be correct.

Before you write to us listing all the exceptions to what we just said that made it into print, remember that this rule should serve as a general guideline for the gamemaster to follow. We've tried to deal individually with most of the rules that we feel may pose problems, but we cannot anticipate every possible question. We recommend resolving disputes over rule interpretations as they arise, on a case-by-case basis. Because of the vast array of possibilities presented in these rules, no single rule of thumb covers everything. Sorry.

PLAY FAIR

Needless to say, everyone playing the game should play fair. Players should be honest (and good-natured) about lousy dice rolls, and admit it when a character falls unconscious. Cheating at a roleplaying game is like cheating at solitaire. Any victory won by cheating is an empty one.

Gamemasters and players should play by the rules, so that everyone works with the same set of assumptions. If the gamemaster and players really hate something written here, change it; but if you do change rules, make sure everyone knows the new version.

Remember that the gamemaster knows far more about what is happening than the gamemaster characters he plays. The gamemaster knows the player characters' skills, weapons, spells, and so on, but the band of ork scorchers waiting in ambush on the edge of the forest should not. Allowing the gamemaster characters to respond to the player characters and make plans based on the gamemaster's knowledge is unfair to the players, and makes for a frustrating game.

MISTAKES

Everyone makes mistakes – players, gamemasters, even the diligent folks here at Living Room Games. As you play **Earthdawn**, you may misinterpret how we intended some of the rules to work. By using the rules, playing the game, and comparing notes with other players and gamemasters, you may discover these mistakes. Don't agonize over goof-ups, but do explain the mistake to the players, especially if changing the use of a rule drastically affects the game universe or mechanics as your players know them.

Mistakes don't have to be a big deal. If you make a mistake, don't waste your time trying to figure out how it happened. Just admit the error, apologize to the players, and correct it if you can.

GAMEMASTERING GUIDELINES

The following gamemaster guidelines advise the gamemaster how best to handle his position of authority. These guidelines will help the gamemaster to create an effective adventure and run a challenging, exciting game.

BE AWARE!

The gamemaster has a lot to keep in mind when running a game. He must listen to what the players say and keep track of both the player and gamemaster characters: their whereabouts, plans, and so on. Keep a pad handy for jotting down notes on these things as the adventure moves along.

BE KNOWLEDGEABLE!

The gamemaster must be familiar with the whole game. This does not mean memorizing the rulebook word for word, but he should know it well enough to be able to find a particular rule or rules quickly when needed. The gamemaster should also have a solid working knowledge of the basic game mechanics.

Keep a written outline of the adventure handy for quick reference. Experienced gamemasters usually improvise quite a bit as situations arise, but gamemasters working through their first adventures usually find it best to think the entire story through in advance and keep the plot relatively simple. This technique also helps gamemasters avoid those deadly lulls when the characters come face to face with a monstrous Horror, turn as one to look at the gamemaster to see what the creature does, and hear, "Um-I just had it right here." Because anything can happen in a roleplaying game session (and often does), gamemasters may want to outline several possible outcomes for each adventure. Some of the most complex plots have been assembled by stringing common elements in seemingly simple plots back towards a linear storyline. Treat each adventure as a complete being, but, if you're up to it, as part of a larger whole.

Tips:

•Be comfortable with your world. Don't allow yourself to be pigeonholed by player information.

•Only tell the players what they know. It's more fun if a player gets to that startling revelation at the same time the character does.

BE REALISTIC!

Remember that the gamemaster characters are people, too, with their own fears, needs, hopes, and desires. By giving the gamemaster characters lives and personalities, the stories of the game have more depth and become more memorable for everyone involved.

In the same way, play creatures as real creatures. Many gamemasters ignore the fact that most animals do not kill for pleasure. They fight only when they need to eat, protect their young, or save their hides.

Tips:

•Ask the players for one of the characters main goals and attempt to tie that in to the overall campaign, in an effort to make it more personal.



•Keep tabs on the relationships characters are neglecting while they are out building their legends. Not everyone will be happy if the player only communicates to them once every few years, especially with things as dangerous as they are. Refer to family or friends whenever the chance becomes available.

BE FLEXIBLE!

If a player wants to do something not explicitly covered in the rules, don't refuse to allow it on principle; instead, find a creative way to resolve the attempted action. Decide what talent, skill or Attribute applies to the situation and inform the player that his chances are good, indifferent, or terrible. Don't reveal the precise Difficulty Number, just hint at whether or not the intended action or move is possible and how tough it might be to pull off.

If you create a new rule to resolve a specific situation that arises during a game, decide later whether or not you want to keep using it. You might decide to make it a "house rule" that will always apply in the future, or a one-shot solution that only applies in a similar situation. As with disputes over rules or decisions, wait until the game session ends to talk about the new rule. The middle of an adventure is no place to discuss the fine points of game mechanics.

Tip:

•If a rules argument begins to break down, end it quickly and concisely. Arguments are never conductive to fun.

BE TOUGH!

Challenge the players. Give them obstacles and threats they can't defeat with one hand tied behind their backs. For example, two orks armed with short swords would not be the only guards at a city's gate, and few Horrors retreat from battle after taking only one Wound. If the player characters haven't worked hard for their Legend Points, they haven't earned them. Always keep in mind that Durability can turn seemingly weak opponents into stout adversaries without affecting their wound penalties, and Damage Shift can make a wimpy Horror a true terror, using the heroes own devastating damage against them.

Once everyone becomes comfortable with the way the rules work, the gamemaster can fine-tune the "threat level" of an adventure to suit his particular group of players. On a really rough adventure, the player characters should succeed by the skin of their teeth, and may not achieve all their goals exactly as they intended. However, the gamemaster shouldn't make the adventure so tough that only one or two characters survive. The gamemaster needs to challenge the players, but not overwhelm them.

A gamemaster can kill off a character anytime. He can continue to throw enormous risks at the player characters until their luck runs out and they fail a test. But only cheap bullies do that. Gamemasters who measure their success in trashed characters soon find themselves without players. Better to be too easy on the characters than too rough.

As a failsafe option, when the player characters get in over their heads, remember that bad guys like to take prisoners (or at least they do until your heroes reach respectable levels of ability). Prisoners can be made to talk. Prisoners make great hostages. Prisoners can also pay ransom to enrich their captors. Most important, prisoners may escape and live to fight another day. Fictional villains like to gloat, and they can act stupid; if villains were smart enough to kill off the heroes at the first opportunity, then every adventure movie ever made would end after the first ten minutes.

CREATING ADVENTURES

The denizens of **Earthdawn** live in an exciting, dangerous time filled with opportunity for adventure. The player characters live for adventure; the prospect of journeying into danger and triumphing over it lures them like the song of a siren. Whether searching for a forgotten kaer, guarding the new warrior king from his enemies or confronting a Horror in its lair, the player characters prove themselves the heroes of this age. A gamemaster must create adventures that challenge the players' wits even more than their characters' swords and spells, and should reward good roleplaying as generously or more so than lucky dice-rolling.

As soon as a gamemaster assembles a group of players, he should determine their interests so that he can tailor adventures to appeal to them. A gamemaster who creates adventures solely for his own enjoyment may find that his adventures flop. But because the players probably know less about the game universe than the gamemaster, they may have only vague ideas about what they want to do – don't expect complexity and depth at first. Your carefully crafted adventure may lead the characters on a wild goose chase, but if they would rather go straight for the treasure than explore the world of Barsaive and they find a way to do so, you as the gamemaster must let them play it their way. Once they get a few adventures under their belts, and their characters' life stories take shape, the players will gradually develop

better-defined goals and ideas. Rather than just looking for treasure, taking on a Horror, or dealing with the Blood Elves, they may want to hunt down a particular enemy, find a lost love, take revenge on a troll clan that did them dirty, or find a specific teacher or special piece of equipment. The gamemaster can and should build his players' ideas about and goals for their characters into major themes in his adventures.

Encourage the players to write out their characters' histories, including background on each character's family and friends. In addition to using other sources, the gamemaster can draw on those histories to develop adventures that get everyone involved.

Though experience is by far the best way to learn how to write a good adventure, the following suggestions and tips may help the gamemaster take care of certain vital story elements. The main elements of an adventure include objectives, motivations, and opposition.

OBJECTIVES

The most basic goal of every character in any adventure is survival. Beyond that, the team usually accepts a specific task: find a lost artifact, rescue a kidnap victim, pay off a debt, kill or capture a villain, or foil a villain's plan. The stated objective or objectives may differ from the real objective; in fact, the group often changes its goal in mid-adventure. For example, the adventuring group may believe they were hired to accompany an emissary from Throal to a troll clan in the Twilight Peaks, until they discover that the emissary plans to betray the clan. If one of the characters belongs to that clan, and perhaps even if not, the team adopts a new objective: foil the emissary's plan.

When writing an adventure, keep track of the group's objectives and give characters a chance to meet them. Offer them assignments or let them find clues that reveal the objectives. Characters who accomplish their objectives earn Legend Points, and so fulfilling objectives becomes an important aspect of the game.

MOTIVATION

Suppose the gamemaster creates an adventure and sends a messenger to the group with an offer that will catapult them right into the middle of it all. After listening to the messenger, the characters say, "Thank you for the intriguing offer, but we cannot accept it at this time."

If this happens, the gamemaster needs to ask the players why they don't want to tackle the adventure. Is it too dangerous? Does it offer too little reward? Some characters might prefer a different sort of payment to silver. Magicians may ask for teachers or supplies; Adepts may want training; a Weaponsmith might bargain for the use of a smith shop, and so on. If the whole premise of the adventure bores the players silly, it may be better to scrap the game in favor of a bull session on the kinds of adventures the players want their characters to get involved in.

The more information players give the gamemaster about their characters' lives, beliefs, and psychology, the more material the gamemaster can work with to build motivation into the adventures. As the players get more involved in the game, their characters will acquire friends, enemies, and obligations, and probably develop quirks. All these factors make good motivators for the adventurers, and the gamemaster should keep them in mind.



OPPOSITION

Most adventures involve opposition, and the world of **Earthdawn** provides a wide array. In some adventures, the opposition may be as impersonal as an impenetrable forest, a curmudgeonly innkeeper, or an obscure magical effect; these obstacles may have nothing to do with the goal the adventurers strive for, but simply exist to make their lives difficult. In other adventures, the team may need to face and defeat a personal enemy in order to achieve their objectives.

Opposition from individuals or small groups roughly equal in size and power to the adventuring group can get personal very quickly, and a good enemy becomes a valuable resource for the gamemaster in writing future adventures. Depending on how thoroughly the adventurers trounced him, such a foe may want to repeatedly oppose the team simply to get revenge. A personal enemy can turn adventures into a series of duels between the player characters and their relentless foe, building up to a final showdown. The same enemy may also show up in unrelated adventures, just to strike at the characters any way he can.

Gamemasters may find the following descriptions of typical opposition useful.

The Horrors

The most obvious, and probably most frequent opposition in **Earthdawn** are the Horrors. These dreadful, other-dimensional beings ravaged the world during the Scourge, and many of them managed to remain behind after the world's magic ebbed. Though most Horrors have a bestial shape and nature, they possess great intelligence and cunning. They create schemes, lure victims into danger, and perpetrate a multitude of evil acts. The Horrors know no bounds, and with the feeding frenzy that the war provided them, you can bet that the scope of the Horror landscape has changed.

The Theran Empire

The Therans no longer have free rein to force their rule, customs, and desires on the people of Barsaive. The threat they once were has been greatly diminished in scope, but, also become more brutal in nature. Theran patriots, mercenaries made rogue by the war and leaderless battalions still haunt former battle fields and raid small towns for supplies. The Therans wanted to regain total political control over

Barsaive, and would attempt any action that might advance their goal of domination. Now after years of cold war, followed by tours of actual conflict, the survivors have only their memories and their hate to console their losses.

The Mad Passions

Though your player characters would stand no chance against the Mad Passions themselves, they may meet and battle questors of the Mad Passions who work toward wicked ends. The questors of Dis, Raggok, Vestrial or others willingly use whatever methods necessary to promote worship of their patron Passions. Though not a common situation, some questors of the Mad Passions serve Horrors. Some of these individuals have been corrupted by a Horror, and some simply follow their own misguided ambitions. There is also the threat of a misguided questor for a sane passion who is overzealous in his duty.

Foul Folk and Undead

Tragically, a number of people all across Barsaive have felt the Horrors' touch and some have succumbed to these corrupt masters. These foul folk act toward ends no one understands, and often their seemingly innocent behavior lures adventurers to their doom. Also with the amount of raw materials for cadaver men left in the wake of War, it's hard to turn over a rock and not find a undead being of some sort. These undead can be anything from peasants with farming tools to gestalts of multiple undead mercenaries operating in unison with multiple limbs and weapons. Be creative.

DEATH AND EARTHDAWN

Death is a touchy subject in any roleplaying game. Nobody likes it when their favorite character pushes up daisies. In **Earthdawn**, flowers can spring up almost anytime and anyplace. Characters can die before they even figure out what is happening. Despite all the special rules designed to guard against dying, and despite the advantages of magic, player characters will die during an adventure.

If necessary, the gamemaster may cheat to keep characters alive, though this has gotten harder. If the gamemaster believes that a character did everything right and the player just had bad luck rolling dice, the character need not die. Knock the character out! Break one of his limbs! Wound him until his player sobs for his mother! Whatever! Don't let a well-developed character die just because the player rolled a 4 when the character needed a 5. The gamemaster can and should decide that such a character survives long enough to get medical aid. Lowering attributes and destroying equipment can also be alternatives to killing a character.

The same goes for the best gamemaster characters. If a villain you spent hours designing gets hit by a lucky blow, bury the body under a collapsing building or make it suffer some other disaster that "no one could possibly survive." Then bring the villain back a few months later, ready to wreak revenge against the player characters. Another alternative is to have the villain brought back as an undead, or perhaps even through a Horror using the Unnatural Life power (see **Horrors**, p. 316).

FLESHING OUT THE STORY

Now that you've written out the basic building blocks of your adventure, you need to bring it to life. Adding color, controlling the characters' preparation time, creating gamemaster characters to fit various situations that may come up, and deciding how much to tell the characters about what's really going on will help turn your story outline into an exciting roleplaying adventure.

Adding Color

A good roleplaying adventure must engage the players' imaginations. Players need to see the scenery, hear the thwack of an arrow striking near their heads, feel the sweat trickling down their necks. Some players embrace this part of the game and end up doing most of the work. Other players refuse to play along, and make the gamemaster want to tear out his hair. Most players fall somewhere between these two extremes. A wise old gamemaster once said, "Don't tell them what's happening, show them!" Avoid reciting descriptions in a dull monotone. Overact! Ham it up. Stereotypes rule.

When possible, illustrate the characters' surroundings using a display with miniatures or a map. It takes much less effort to draw a wall with a door in it than to explain the layout verbally. Visual aids will help the players keep track of where they are, and cuts down on the arguments about who is standing where, who gets trapped by the Fire Wall when the magician casts it, and so on.

Use props to add a realistic feel to the game. For example, when the group finds a scroll outlining an evil Nethermancer's plans, don't just read it to them. Write it out before the adventure and hand it to them. If it suits your own plans or allows a character to use a skill, make parts of it illegible or missing. Every such prop speeds up play and adds color.

Make the gamemaster characters as colorful as possible. A lot of gamemasters act out their gamemaster characters, complete with funny voices. Being a ham helps. Steal material, attitudes, and speaking styles wholeheartedly from comic books, movies, television, and fiction. If you want to play one of a character's supporters as Groucho Marx, go ahead.

The way the players roleplay their characters should also add color to the game. Players should try to create a distinct character and stay in it. Adventures can also incorporate subplots to advance the adventurers' life stories when they are not fighting Horrors or researching magical items. Does a certain character have a love life? If not, does he want one? Who do the characters hang around with? How do they spend their spare time? Try to develop a few of these details in each adventure to add color and depth to your story.

Masterminds And Equalizers

The gamemaster can create two specific types of gamemaster characters: masterminds, to add complexity to the story, and equalizers, to give himself options for getting players out of a tough jam.

Consider making every adventure you write, even the small ones, part of some vast conspiracy. The mastermind behind the conspiracy could be an individual or an organization. Drop occasional clues for the player characters that hint at such conspiracies, even if a particular adventure has nothing to do with any far-reaching dastardly scheme. As ideas for the mastermind(s) present themselves, make notes. Eventually, the group may encounter the mastermind directly, and will be more than a little surprised to find that their latest opponent already hates their guts because they have unknowingly spent months foiling his plans.

Sometimes the characters get into more trouble than they can handle alone. If the gamemaster wants to bail them out, he can add an equalizer to the adventure. An equalizer can be a friendly member of an angry mob, a wandering Swordmaster, a former enemy turned traitor, a henchmen the bad guys didn't pay enough, and so on. The gamemaster should have a set of pre-generated characters able to step in and tip the balance in favor of the player characters should an emergency situation arise.

The equalizer can also cover for missing players in a pinch. Say the player who runs the group's magician is sick and does not show up. If the team stands to land in serious trouble without a magician, the gamemaster can substitute a handy gamemaster character magician to work with the group.

The gamemaster may try letting a player run the equalizer, but should be ready to take control of the equalizer's actions if the player does not remain in character.

Preparation Time

Once the characters receive the message (or see the injustice, or meet the maiden in distress) and accept the objective, the players will want time to prepare for the adventure. By this time, of course, the gamemaster should have finished all his preparation. Most players want to spend a lot of time getting ready to take on anything that looks like a tough job. If allowed, they may easily spend a whole game session just getting ready. Don't let them.

In the world of roleplaying games, player characters rarely book adventures in advance. Most adventures take place in response to a message of distress or some urgent matter. In these cases, the gamemaster should limit the players' preparation time to make the game more realistic. But even for adventures that the characters plan for their own benefit, shortening the actual time spent preparing makes the game more immediate and therefore more exciting to play. Unless the players really enjoy the research-and-report process, and you don't mind giving them that opportunity, have a certain amount of information available for them. Rather than letting them spend time hunting for it, pass it on through a supporter or a friend. If the characters want to double-check what they hear or do their own research, compress the time in which this occurs. Have a character who wants to conduct research or talk to supporters make an appropriate test and use the result to decide how much info he or she finds. Then cast some doubt on the credibility of the information. Like most people, characters must guess at whether or not what they've seen or learned represents the truth. If characters want to acquire special equipment to deal with a potential problem, send them to the shops and decide for them whether or not they find the desired equipment in the time available.

Ideally, you should give the team a little prep time, but don't let them keep the curtain from rising. If they're working under a time limit, let them know. After all, how long will it take the hypothetical evil Nethermancer to complete his summoning ritual? The characters can't wait too long to stop him. If they're not moving fast enough, turn up the heat. Give them an overriding reason to get the heck out of town. Perhaps they are one jump ahead of arrest and execution for a crime they can't prove they didn't commit, or perhaps some deadly enemy has discovered their whereabouts and is closing in. Whatever the reason, make the team want to get going as fast as possible.

Secrecy

Many situations in an **Earthdawn** game benefit from a bit of secrecy. Sometimes simply announcing a Difficulty Number for a particular test tells the players an important piece of information that they shouldn't know. One way to avoid revealing the gamemaster's secrets in such a case is to have the player roll the appropriate dice for the test and announce the results. Without disclosing the Difficulty Number, the gamemaster then determines if the test is successful and describes what happens.

However, even asking a player to make a dice roll can give away information. For example, if the gamemaster only asks for a Perception Test when the characters are about to trigger a trap or ambush, the players will soon figure out that connection and will know what to expect the next time the gamemaster asks for the test. To keep the players guessing, it doesn't hurt to occasionally ask every player to roll dice for no reason at all: nod sagely at the results, or say "Hunh, I thought so." Also, rolling a few extra Perception Tests before game starts can also hedge things in your favor. A little secrecy can be a powerful tool for helping a gamemaster stay ahead of his players.

You can also keep the players guessing by avoiding too much detail in describing important people or things. A wealth of detail about an object, person, or place tips off the players that the gamemaster spent a lot of time designing him, her, or it, and may let them know what to watch for before the gamemaster wants them to know. For example, when the team meets three gamemaster characters of whom one is the villain and the other two are just his goons, refrain from saying, "You meet three fighters from the troll clan. The one on the left is wearing expensive, well-made clothes and an opal ring on his left ring finger, and is carrying a large battle-axe. The other two? Oh, uh, they're obviously fighters, too." This kind of description immediately tells the characters to watch out for the troll on the left. Either describe all three in relative detail, not revealing which character to watch, or introduce all three as "troll fighters, you've seen one, you've seen them all," and let the players ask for more information.

GAMEMASTER CHARACTERS

During their adventures in **Earthdawn**, player characters will meet a myriad of characters controlled, not by other players, but by the gamemaster. These characters are called **gamemaster characters.**

The good-natured sheriff from your character's home town, the greedy dwarf merchant who regularly outfits your group, the t'skrang tavern owner who keeps your character's favorite ale in stock, and the insane Elementalist who considers your character her nemesis – these are all examples of gamemaster characters. They flesh out the game world, adding variety to your adventures and setting evil villains against the player characters.

SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

This section provides rules on how player characters interact with gamemaster characters to accomplish ordinary tasks in the course of questing for a goal – in other words, those times a player character is not casting a spell or swinging a weapon. These social interactions are grouped into three general categories: roleplaying, making Interaction Tests, and using talents. All social interactions with gamemaster characters are based on the characters' attitudes toward the player



characters. Their attitudes determine how difficult or easy it is for your character to influence a gamemaster character or otherwise achieve a goal requiring cooperation.

Attitudes

Like all characters, gamemaster characters have their own personalities. Each has a unique way of viewing the world and your character. The gamemaster may give each of his characters a detailed personality, or he may decide to accomplish the same ends using a kind of shorthand referred to as the character's **Attitude**. This attitude represents the gamemaster character's basic point of view about other characters and affects every type of interaction other than combat.

A gamemaster may assign one of seven basic attitudes to his characters: Awestruck, Loyal, Friendly, Neutral, Unfriendly, Hostile, and Enemy. Gamemaster characters, like most people, hold different attitudes toward different people. Your character need only be concerned with a gamemaster character's attitude toward him. A servant who is Loyal to the king, for example, might be Hostile to you. Player characters should not judge gamemaster characters' attitudes toward themselves by their attitudes toward other player or gamemaster characters.

When a gamemaster character is **Awestruck** by your character, he thinks your character is the most wonderful person in the world. He may worship your character as a hero or fall head over heels in love with your character. An Awestruck character willingly makes great sacrifices to please the object of his worship, and will take great risks, giving little or no thought to the consequences of his actions. He will even sacrifice his own life to save the life of your character.

A gamemaster character who is **Loyal** to your character firmly believes in your character's worth. A Loyal character might look up to you or devote himself to a cause you serve; harbor a strong, quiet love for your character; be a close friend or serve faithfully as a long-time employee. A Loyal character looks out for your character's best interests and expects to have his loyalty returned, but waits patiently even if this doesn't happen immediately. A Loyal gamemaster character will take great risks for your character as long as he considers your character's actions and behavior worthy of his loyalty, and he will betray your character only under extreme duress.

A **Friendly** gamemaster character enjoys your character's companionship and values your character as a person. The Friendly attitude encompasses friendships formed through time, the relationships of employers and respected employees, and the solidarity of characters who share a common bond, such as a group of t'skrang meeting in an all-dwarf area of Throal. Friendly characters expect a mutually beneficial relationship over the short term as well as the long term. A Friendly gamemaster character readily does small favors as long as those favors are returned. Your character may convince a Friendly character to take considerable risks for him, but only rarely and with much difficulty.

A **Neutral** gamemaster character takes a "live-and-let-live" attitude toward your character. He will not go out of his way to accommodate your character, but usually takes action if he sees someone violate another's right to live and let live. Neutral characters include neighbors, merchants, and other people who know your character but consider him no more than an acquaintance. A Neutral character might help a player character to fight an immediate, obvious injustice such as a mugging from a gang of thugs. He might not intervene, however, if he thinks your character started the fight. A Neutral character is more dispassionate than indifferent. If he sees values that he holds dear being trampled, he will involve himself in other people's affairs, but he will not go out of his way to make life better for others. Neutral characters can be convinced to do small favors for your character, but they will not take significant risks without the promise of equally significant rewards.

An **Unfriendly** character, on the other hand, is out for himself. He holds a "live-and-let-die" attitude toward your character. A greedy merchant, suspicious authorities, or a gamemaster character who supports a cause your character opposes would all be Unfriendly. An Unfriendly character will take advantage of your character but without openly harming him, and will gladly deceive him. He may often act politely and feign friendliness to gain your character's trust. An Unfriendly character cannot be persuaded to do even a small favor for your character, unless he clearly gains from doing so. Convincing an Unfriendly character to take risks for your character will prove extremely difficult, and he will weasel out of any commitment at the first opportunity.

A **Hostile** character also is out for himself, and will not hesitate to harm your character if doing so will better his station in life. Hostile characters include thieves and other criminals and most creatures. As with Unfriendly characters, Hostile characters may pretend friendliness to gain your character's trust in order to take advantage of him or her. However, most won't even bother with that pretense, openly and immediately attacking any character they judge incapable of defending himself. Your character will find it almost impossible to convince a Hostile character to take any positive action on his behalf, and convincing one to take significant risks is out of the question.

An **Enemy** character harbors a personal vendetta against your character. The enemy may try to fake friendliness, but usually the best he can manage is a chilly politeness. An Enemy character takes great delight in contemplating and planning ways of harming your character and cannot be convinced to do your character any favors. An Enemy will mock any attempts at persuading him to take risks for your character.

"Better" and "Worse" Attitudes

Awestruck is the most favorable attitude a gamemaster character can have toward your character. Enemy is the least favorable. An attitude is "better" if it lies closer to Awestruck than the character's current attitude. An attitude is worse if it lies closer to Enemy. Thus, when the rules specify "an attitude of Unfriendly or better," this includes the Unfriendly, Neutral, Friendly, Loyal and Awestruck attitudes. An attitude of "Neutral or worse" includes Neutral, Unfriendly, Hostile and Enemy. An attitude that improves from Neutral to Friendly has improved by 1 degree. Some interactions, such as Favors, work only within a limited range of character attitudes, as explained below.

ROLEPLAYING

Roleplaying is perhaps the best way to resolve interactions with gamemaster characters. Players speak for their character and describe his or her actions and reactions to the gamemaster characters. The gamemaster does the same for the gamemaster characters. The players and the gamemaster continue in this manner until they resolve the scene or reach an impasse. If you roleplay your way through the scene, congratulations. Your character has succeeded at continuing his or her adventure through wit rather than dice rolls. If you reach an impasse, you can try another avenue.

When roleplaying an interaction, imagine yourself in the scene. What are your surroundings? Who are the gamemaster characters you are dealing with? What do they want, and can you give it to them and still get what you want? Draw on books and movies for inspiration, clever lines have saved the hides of many fictional heroes. And be daring – even the failure of a bold plan is more fun than a successful, but timid ploy.

Sam is playing a dwarf Sky Raider named Grolk, Ross is playing a human Warrior named Sebastian, Grant is playing an elf Troubadour named Sir Nef, and Jen is playing a t'skrang Nethermancer named Zoar. The characters wish to speak to a legendary Thief, Garlthik One-Eye, and have approached the entrance to Garlthik's stronghold in Kratas. Garlthik is not expecting them, and so the ten ork guards stationed at the gate have no instructions to allow them to pass. The characters have a pendant that once belonged to Garlthik, however, and hope it will help them persuade the guards to let them pass.

In the exchange below, the players are speaking as their characters when noted.

Gamemaster: *You round the corner, your soft boots making muffled noises against the cobblestone of the damp city street, leaving the well-lit boulevard for Carrion Row. Three light crystals struggle to illuminate the street, their efforts choked by the hanging fog, and their old enchantments flickering near the end of their usefulness. You see a group of orks adorned in light armor, weapons sheathed, stationed in front of bronze-bound double doors, and you know you've arrived at Garlthik's home.*

Ross: *How many orks? How heavily armed?*

Gamemaster: *Nine or ten. Do you stop to count?*

Ross: *Yep.*

Gamemaster: *Ten, all wearing light armor. Most are carrying longswords, but one is using shortswords and daggers only, and one is fondling a large axe.*

Jen: *I'm going to have Zoar use Astral Sight on them. Got a ... wow ... 22.*

Gamemaster: *What's your range?*

Jen: *60 feet.*

Gamemaster: *They'll know you're approaching.*

Sam: *Not a problem, we can take them.*

Ross: *Whoa, whoa, whoa, down boy, heel. Anybody got any raw meat? Let's just approach this slow, no hands on weapons and see what's up.*

Grant: *I'll go up and talk to them.*

Gamemaster: *... Everyone done? Okay, Jen, Zoar sees the patterns of 10 orks, non-Adept, though two of them appear to be highly skilled.*

Jen: *Zoar whispers, "non-Adepts ... 2 toughs," to Sir Nef and tells everyone else that they're about 6th Circle and grins a lot.*

Ross: *I weep.*

Jen: *Okay, okay. Zoar tells everyone the truth. I whisper, "non-Adepts." Do the orks hear?*

Gamemaster: *(rolls some dice) If they do, they don't seem to care. They just look up at you and snort.*

Grant [as Sir Nef]: *Evening to you, orks. How fare you this fine eve? We need to talk to Garlthik, if you don't mind.*

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *Well, fancy that – an elf who can tell the time of day!*

Ross [as Sebastian]: **sigh* I live for days like this.*

Sam: *Grolk is fingering the haft of his axe.*

Gamemaster [as second ork]: *Yeah, and a dwarf with more beard than brains.*

Sam: *That's it! Grolk is drawing his weapon.*

Ross: *Oh good grief ... Sebastian tries to put himself between Grolk and the rest of the working world.*

Gamemaster: *The orks draw their weapons.*

Grant [as Sir Nef]: *Hold, my friends. Keep it down, keep it down ... we're just looking for an ork who calls himself Garlthik. That's it. We don't want any trouble.*

Jen: *Zoar stands back a little and moves to the left of everyone, keeping my hands clear of my swords ... I don't need them anyway ... and look to see if anyone in the area's gotten curious.*

Gamemaster: *Everyone seems to have better things to do than watch you guys chit-chat.*

Ross: *Sebastian mutters, "I need a drink," and pulls out his flask and takes a swig.*

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *Huh? Hand that over!*

Ross: *Sebastian raises an eyebrow.*

Grant: *I'm still planted where I am 'til Grolk backs up.*

Sam: *Grolk backs up ... a little*

Grant: *Nef relaxes slightly, but keeps a close eye on the orks ... and Grolk.*

Ross: *Sebastian tosses him the flask.*

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *You spit in this?*

Ross [as Sebastian]: *Do you care?*

Gamemaster: *The orks chuckle, and seem relax a little.*

Jen: *Zoar is taking out the pendant.*

Grant [as Sir Nef]: *Listen guys, we don't even care if we*

talk to him, we just need to hand that pendant to him in person. Can you give us 2 minutes?

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *All right, all right. Can you control him? (points to Grolk)*

Jen [as Zoar]: *Yes. For a time, anyway.*

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *I will be right back. I need to check this with the head of the night watch.*

Grant [as Sir Nef]: *That's perfectly understandable.*

Gamemaster: *A few minutes pass. The some of the remaining orks shift nervously from foot to foot, watching Grolk, the others listen to Sir Nef play and drink Sebastian's hard earned liquor. The ork guard soon reappears.*

Gamemaster [as ork guard]: *The head watch says you can go in. Follow the green carpet to the staircase. Go up. Someone will meet you. Don't dawdle. You will be watched.*

Grant [as Sir Nef]: *Thanks. Most kind of you.*

Sam: *Grolk is foaming slightly around the edges of his mouth. He keeps growling.*

Ross [as Sebastian]: *Whimper. That stuff is expensive.*

The players gained entry into Garlthik's Hold strictly by roleplaying. The players and the gamemaster created the scene by imagining the encounter from the viewpoints of their characters.

The characters wanted to see Garlthik. They might have been powerful enough to simply barge in, but killing the ork guards would almost certainly have angered Garlthik, making him very dangerous and difficult to deal with.

The gamemaster characters were concerned about angering their employer. By presenting the pendant, Sir Nef demonstrated that Garlthik might have a reason to see them. Though the orks would not simply allow the player characters to enter the hold, Ross letting them drink his liquor set them a little more at ease, so they were willing to check with a higher authority, rather than risk dying in a battle that Garlthik may not have wanted them to fight in the first place.

In the end, both groups got what they wanted, at least in the short run. This is the key to most roleplaying solutions: both sides have to gain something from an exchange. A player should try to figure out what a gamemaster character wants out of a situation, and manipulate the circumstances so that he can provide that and achieve his own goal at the same time.

Roleplay interactions between player and gamemaster characters whenever possible, because this frees characters from the random roll of the dice and involves the players in the game at the same time.

INTERACTION TESTS

Even the most imaginative roleplaying sometimes ends in an impasse between player characters and gamemaster characters. To resolve such an impasse, a player character can use his Charisma step to make an Interaction Test. Five basic types of Interaction Tests can be resolved using a character's Charisma step: Deceit, Insight, Intimidation, Making an Impression, and Favors. Most social interactions any characters would need to make fall somewhere into these five categories. If your character has a talent appropriate to an interaction situation, he can use his talent step to make the Interaction Test (see **Using Talents**, p. 335). To resolve interactions, make an Interaction Test for your character against the target character's Social Defense.

The outcome of an Interaction Test is most often expressed as the success level of a character's Interaction Test, or how well your character succeeded at an action. The five success levels are Poor, Average, Good, Excellent and Extraordinary. For example, an Interaction Test result equal to or greater than the target's Social Defense yields an Average success level or better. To achieve an Excellent success level, the result must equal roughly twice the target's Social Defense Rating. See **Using Success Levels**, p. 339, in this section. To find the minimum required success levels for each of the five types of Interaction Tests, see the **Interaction Success Table.**

INTERACTION SUCCESS TABLE

Interaction	Success Level
Deceit	
Exaggerations	Average
Fabrications	Good
Half-Truths	Average
Insight	
Detecting basic emotions	Average
Detecting deception	Good
Detecting deception when target character's features are obscured	Excellent
Intimidation (Line of sight required)	
"Do nothing"	Average
Take action	Good
Favors	
(See **Favor Success Table**)	
Making an Impression	
Failure worsens target's attitude 1 degree.	
Average success or better improves target's attitude by 1 degree.	

Deceit

Your character can attempt to convince another character of something that isn't true. This type of interaction is called Deceit. Deceit covers everything from a white lie to the darkest moment of betrayal. Some types of deceit are easier to accomplish than others. In order to deceive another character, your character must speak to the character he is trying to deceive.

An Exaggeration is a stretching of the truth, perhaps changing details of a story to make it more impressive in some way. Telling your superior that you were ambushed by a dozen orks rather than by the five who actually jumped you would be an Exaggeration. Claiming that the orks were armed with fire swords, or misstating the size of a creature that got away – whether claiming it was larger or smaller than its actual size – would also be Exaggerations. To make an Exaggeration, a character makes a Charisma Test against the target character's Social Defense. An Average success level or better means the target believed the Exaggeration.



A Half-Truth reveals a sizable portion of the truth while withholding at least one vital piece of information. A character telling a Half-Truth speaks the truth, but in such as way as to mislead the listener. Telling someone you found more than 800 pieces of gold when you actually found closer to 3,000 pieces would be a Half-Truth. Or telling authorities you saw nothing at the scene of a crime, when you heard the cries of the victim, would also be a Half-Truth. To tell a Half-Truth, a character makes a Charisma Test against the target character's Social Defense. An Average success level or better means the target believed the Half-Truth.

A Fabrication is a lie cut from whole cloth. The story, or important parts of the story, have no basis in truth. Lies that contradict actual events are Fabrications. Reporting to your superior that no ambush attempt took place, even after dispatching the five orks who jumped you, would be a Fabrication. Saying you have no treasure map when you actually do, or making up stories about a lost city would also count as Fabrications. To tell a Fabrication, a character makes a Charisma Test against the target character's Social Defense. An Average success level causes the target to suspect the truth of the character's Fabrication. A Good success level or better means the target believes the Fabrication to be true.

A Deceived character remains so until presented with facts or evidence that contradict the deception, which immediately ends the deception.

Insight

Your character can attempt to determine the intentions of another character through a type of interaction called Insight. Insight gives a character information on what another character is trying to accomplish in an interaction. Your character can also use Insight to judge another character's surface emotions or state of mind. Insight can allow your character to detect such emotions as anger, love, fear, lust, hunger, tranquillity, and nervousness. To use Insight, a character makes a Charisma Test against the target character's Social Defense. An Average success level or better means the character successfully read the target's feelings.

Insight also allows your character to determine whether or not an opponent is trying to Deceive your character. To use Insight in this way, your character must observe the opposing character as he speaks. If your character cannot see the speaking character, he cannot use Insight to detect deception. To detect a deception, make a Charisma Test against the speaking character's Social Defense. A Good success level means your character detected the deception. If the opposing character's features are obscured by a mask or helmet, an Excellent success level is needed to use Insight to detect a deception.

Intimidation

Player characters can also try to influence an interaction with another character by Intimidation. Generally, your character may only attempt Intimidation if the target character understands your character's speech. The gamemaster may allow non-verbal Intimidation in some cases.

Intimidation often creates resentment in the target character. A successful use of Intimidation against a target character makes all subsequent Favor attempts aimed at that same character more difficult (see the **Favors** section, below).

Intimidation works best against characters who have a reason to fear your character and who hold Unfriendly or worse attitudes toward your character. To use Intimidation, make an Interaction Test against the target character's Social Defense. The success level determines the result of using Intimidation.

Your character can use intimidation to order a character to refrain from performing an action, or do nothing, or to perform an action. Examples of the first include orders such as "don't touch that," "stop dead in your tracks," or "leave her alone." An Average success level or better on the Interaction Test is needed to make a target character stop an action. The effect of such Intimidation lasts for only one round. An Extraordinary success on the Interaction Test convinces the target character to refrain from a forbidden action as long as the intimidator is within sight. Your character cannot use Intimidation to make a target character stop an action he performs simply by existing. You cannot, for example, order a character to stop breathing.

Intimidation can also be used to force a character into taking an action, but the target character will not take an action he or she believes is more dangerous than resisting the Intimidation. A Good success level or better on the Interaction Test will convince the target character to spill secrets, walk ahead in a corridor, or cast a spell. An intimidated character stops performing the requested action as soon as he is out of the intimidator's sight.

Making An Impression

Sometimes player characters want to make an impression on gamemaster characters immediately upon meeting them. Player characters cannot make impressions on anyone they choose to, however. For example, your character cannot impress characters who are already Awestruck, Loyal, or Enemies of your character.

When your character first meets another character, you must declare your intention to Make An Impression on the target character. To make an impression, make an Interaction Test against the target character's Social Defense. A Failure worsens the character's attitude by 1 degree – for example, an Unfriendly character becomes Hostile. An Average success or better improves the character's attitude by 1 degree; an Unfriendly character becomes Neutral, or a Neutral character becomes Friendly. The effects of making an impression last for 1 day.

Each time your character interacts with the impressed character in a Neutral, Unfriendly, or Hostile manner (determined by the gamemaster), the favorable impression may wear off. In this case, the impressed character makes a Willpower Test against your character's Social Defense. If the success level of the Willpower Test is equal to or greater than the success level of your Interaction Test, the impression fades. Any openly hostile act your character commits against the impressed character immediately erases the impression.

Delthrien Makes An Impression on an Unfriendly troll bruiser in a tavern. He gets a Good success on his Interaction Test, and the troll takes a Neutral attitude toward him. In an effort to trick the troll into an ambush, the elf Archer tries to talk him into going to another tavern. The troll makes a Willpower Test against Delthrien's Social Defense and gets a Good success. Because his success level matched Delthrien's, the troll's attitude reverts to Unfriendly.

Favors

Your character may to try to convince another character to take an action through logical argument, flattery, appeals to friendship, or "buttering up" the target character in other ways. As long as the target character understands your character's speech, your character may try to persuade him to do a favor for your character. In some cases, the gamemaster may allow non-verbal attempts at such persuasion.

The target character's attitude can alter the success level required to persuade him to do a favor. This type of persuasion works best on characters who harbor a Neutral attitude or better toward your character. A character whose attitude is Unfriendly or worse can be persuaded to perform a favor only if he believes that doing so will benefit him. See **Making Favor Tests** for details.

Favors are grants of time, money, or resources that benefit your character, or actions performed on behalf of your character. The success level needed to gain favors depends on the attitude of the gamemaster character from whom you request the favor. Consult the **Favor Success Table**, below, for the success levels required.

Your character can request small favors and large favors from other characters. Small favors include such things as holding a character's place in line, buying a round of drinks, or bringing water to a character's cell. As a rule of thumb, small favors cannot endanger a character or require more than 15 minutes of extra effort from him (as determined by the gamemaster). Small favors cannot cost a character more than 5 silver pieces, a few hours' earnings, or 1 percent of his cash on hand, whichever amount is largest. Characters holding Neutral or better attitudes toward your character can be persuaded to do small favors.

Large favors include giving loans (which your character must repay within three days), delivering a package across town into a questionable neighborhood, giving your character a place to stay for a few days, untying your character, and so on. As a rule of thumb, large favors cannot cost a character more than a day's earnings or 3 percent of his total cash savings. Loans provided as large favors cannot exceed a character's weekly earnings or 15 percent of his total savings. A large favor cannot require more than 8 hours of extra effort from a character, though it can pose physical, mental, or emotional risks. Keep in mind that only characters Loyal or Awestruck toward your character will agree to obviously dangerous favors.

Your character can persuade characters with attitudes toward him of Friendly or better to do large or small favors over an extended period. For example, the tavern owner who always has your favorite ale on tap is doing you a small favor over time. Friendly characters may let small favors go unreturned, but expect large favors to be repaid in kind. They expect your character to repay borrowed funds and items promptly, and will not extend more than one large favor until your character has done them a large favor in return. Characters holding Loyal and Awestruck attitudes toward your character are more lenient in their accounting and will extend your character credit for two or even three large favors. They still expect favors in return, but will wait several months for repayment. Hostile or Enemy characters will do your character no favors unless prompted by their own ulterior motives.

Making Favor Tests

Except at the gamemaster's discretion, your character can request only one favor per day from a gamemaster character. To request a favor, the player character makes a Favor Test using his Charisma step against the gamemaster character's Social Defense. The gamemaster character's attitude toward your character determines the success level required for a successful test, as shown in the **Favor Success Table** below. If the test fails, your character cannot repeat the request or ask that character for another favor for 24 hours.

FAVOR SUCCESS TABLE

Character Attitude	Small Favor	Large Favor
Awestruck	Any Success Level	Average
Loyal	Average	Good
Friendly	Average	Excellent
Neutral	Good	Extraordinary
Unfriendly	Excellent	—
Hostile	—	—
Enemy	—	—

Increasing the Likelihood of Favors

Your character can increase the likelihood of getting favors from a gamemaster character by "sweetening the deal": that is, adjusting your request for the favor or offering something in return. For example, you may offer to perform a small favor in exchange for a small favor, or a large favor for a large favor. If he accepts this deal, the gamemaster character must perform his favor first. Your character may make 2 consecutive Interaction Tests to persuade the gamemaster character to perform the favor.

Alternatively, you may propose the same "favor for favor" exchange, but have your character offer to perform a favor first. For the purposes of the Interaction Test in this instance, the gamemaster character's attitude toward your character improves 1 degree. For example, an

Unfriendly guard becomes Neutral when you try to persuade her to do you a small favor, if you do her a small favor first. As indicated above, in this case your character can make 2 consecutive Interaction Tests to try to persuade the gamemaster character.

Your character may also offer to perform a large favor in return for a small favor, with the gamemaster character performing his favor first. For purposes of the Interaction Test in this case, the gamemaster character's attitude improves 2 degrees. Finally, your character may offer to perform a large favor in return for a small favor at a later date. Your character may make 2 consecutive Interaction Tests to persuade the gamemaster character, whose attitude improves 2 degrees for the purposes of the test.

USING TALENTS

The **Talents** chapter p. 84, describes many talents that add steps to your character's Charisma step. Your character can use many of these talents when interacting with gamemaster characters. In such instances, the rules given in Talents supersede the interaction rules detailed in this section. Talents often provide better results than Interaction Tests, but have a limited range of applications when compared to the Interaction Test rules. For example, talents can rarely be used when requesting favors or using Intimidation to coerce a character. Because your character is focusing his magic through a talent, the pattern of the talent limits the effects your character can achieve. As a rule of thumb, the gamemaster should limit the use of talents to the applications described in the Talents section.

EARNING LEGEND POINTS

Your character can earn Legend Points from interactions as well as from combat, often with less risk. As described in **Building Your Legend**, p. 246, your character earns Legend Points by completing adventure goals, defeating opponents, gathering legendary treasure, accomplishing heroic deeds, and creative roleplaying. Creative roleplaying offers your character the greatest opportunity to collect Legend Points through interaction, though social interaction can also help you earn those points by accomplishing other goals. Roleplaying interactions helps move the story along, and your character reaps the reward whenever you roleplay an interaction with particular originality or skill.

Interaction can also help you complete your adventure goal, earning you more Legend Points. Along the way, you may talk your way into treasure, another source of Legend Points. Interactions with gamemaster characters also give you a chance to turn your ideas and words into heroic deeds. By giving your character more alternatives than simply swinging a sword, interaction with gamemaster characters may benefit your character in many ways.

You can also defeat opponents through interaction. To gain Legend Points for defeating an opponent, your group must remove the opponent as an obstacle to the adventure. You can remove him by any method you choose; you need not whack an opponent over the head or slit his throat when persuading him to let you pass unmolested will serve just as well. For example, the characters talked their way past ten ork guards in the example given earlier. The guards certainly counted as an obstacle to the adventure, which Sam, Ross, Grant and Jen overcame by roleplaying their characters and interacting with the guards. For doing that, they got the same number of Legend Points they would have gotten for killing the ten orks. In fact, the gamemaster might give them additional Legend Points for creative roleplaying as well as for defeating opponents. See **Awarding Legend Points**, p. 336, for more information on earning Legend Points.

Keep in mind, however, the gamemaster only awards Legend Points once for any opponent. If Sebastian, Sir Nef, Zoar, and Grolk had to fight those same guards later in their adventure, the fight would not earn them any Legend Points because they already earned the Legend Points available for defeating the ten orks.

GAME AIDS

To make an adventure run smoothly, the gamemaster can use several strategies to keep track of story lines, gamemaster characters, combat, treasures, and the zillion and one other things that go into an adventure. The following describes the most useful physical aids in running a game.

DISPLAYS

Visual aids are the most useful game aid a gamemaster can have. They allow the players to see exactly where they are at any point during the adventure, and help settle the inevitable (and distracting) arguments about who stands where, who got hit by what spell or weapon, and so on. Draw the area or location of your adventure on a big pad of paper, or use any of the various plastic mats made for gaming that feature hexagonal or square grids. To show the placement of characters, enemies, creatures, and so on, using 25mm-scale metal miniatures. These add a lot of atmospheric detail and are small enough so that you don't need an auditorium to display a battle. If miniatures are not available, use coins or some other form of place markers.

MAPS

Maps are powerful tools. A map of the area where the adventure takes place, even just a simple sketch with shapes showing landmarks, is darn near essential to the smooth running of a game. Try using two maps: one to show the explored area that everyone knows (share this with the players) and another that shows the locations of all those secret places you want to send the characters (keep this one to yourself). As the group discovers these secret locations, they can add them to the "public knowledge" map.

Maps of smaller places in which certain events take place (buildings, neighborhoods, and so on) are also important. Draw them or borrow them from other game adventures. Don't be afraid to re-use them – just as in the real world, many buildings in **Earthdawn** have similar floor plans. Heck, if you've seen one cheap inn, you've seen them all.

GAMEMASTER CHARACTER FILES

Complete dossiers on generic gamemaster characters and/or the major gamemaster characters in a specific adventure can also help the gamemaster a great deal. Use a card file, notebook, computer database or any other efficient system to store profiles for supporters, family members, lovers, people with special skills or talents (magicians, merchants, sages), important gamemaster characters in your game, or any other character likely to play recurring roles in adventures. Easy access to these characters lets the gamemaster throw his players plausible left curves and helps keep the game moving.

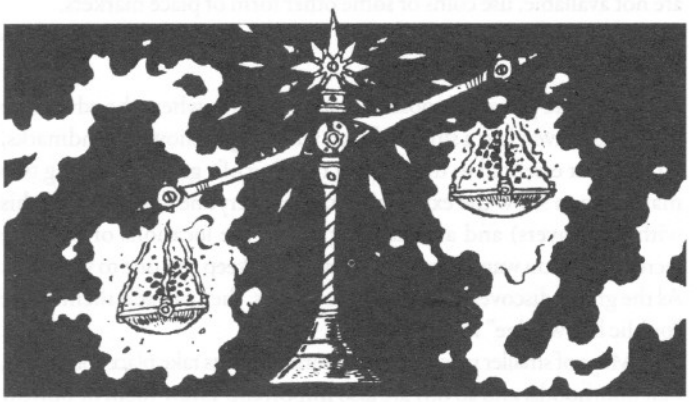
If the profiles that we publish keep showing up as characters or opponents again and again, players eventually become familiar enough with the bad guys' stats to defeat them regularly (unless you start figuring in experience for them), so creating your own variations on such character profiles pays off for your game.

AWARDING LEGEND POINTS

Players use Legend Points to improve their characters by increasing Attribute Values, adding Ranks to talents, buying skills, advancing to a higher Circle, and so on (see **Building Your Legend**, p 246). They earn Legend Points according to a gamemaster system called Legend Awards.

When designing an adventure, the gamemaster calculates the potential number of Legend Points each character may earn for the whole adventure by taking into account four elements: completing the game session goal, defeating creatures or opponents, acquiring treasure, and completing the overall adventure goal. Depending on how well the characters fulfill these elements, characters earn **Legend Awards**, a number of Legend Points determined by the character's Circle. Characters also earn Legend Awards for creative roleplaying and heroics, but the gamemaster determines these awards at the end of each session, rather than when designing the adventure (see **Assigning Legend Awards**, below).

The gamemaster awards Legend Points at the end of each game session, determining how much of the calculated Legend Award each player character has actually earned based on the events that took place during the session and how the characters handled those events.



ASSIGNING LEGEND AWARDS

The **Legend Award Table**, below, provides the gamemaster with a standard for determining the Legend Point value of the four elements mentioned above, and for evaluating characters' creative roleplaying and heroics during the session in terms of Legend Awards. Guidelines for determining specific Legend Award numbers for any of these elements appear in the descriptions of those elements following.

Based on a character's Circle, a single Legend Award should award a number of Legend Points that falls within the range given in the Legend Award column. For example, a Second Circle character should always receive between 75 and 100 Legend Points per Legend Award. The total number of Legend Points received from all Legend Awards in any one game session should not exceed the upper limit given in the Total Legend Points Per Session column.

LEGEND AWARD TABLE

Circle	Legend Award	Total Legend Points Per Session
1	50-75	100-450
2	75-100	150-600
3	125-150	250-900
4	125-200	400-1,200
5	200-300	600-1,800
6	300-500	1,000-3,000
7	500-750	1,500-4,500
8	750-1,000	2,000-6,000
9	1,000-1,500	3,000-9,000
10	1,500-2,500	5,000-15,000
11	2,500-4,000	8,000-24,000
12	4,000-7,500	12,000-40,000
13	7,500-10,000	18,000-60,000
14	10,000-20,000	25,000-100,000
15	20,000-30,000	40,000-150,000

For each game session, the gamemaster should design a Legend Award for each character for each of the following elements, described in detail below.

1. Completing session goals
2. Completing personal goals
3. Completing the adventure goal (give the character a bonus of 2 Legend Awards)
3. Defeating creatures or opponents
4. Defeating creatures or opponents without undue loss of life.
5. Creative roleplaying and/or heroics (one-half Legend Award for heroics, up to a full Legend Award for creative roleplaying)

Completing Session Goals

Most adventures last for more than one game session. A session goal functions like a chapter break in a book; the story has not been resolved, but the current action reaches a conclusion. Session goals may be simple objectives such as the following:

- Reach Parlainth
- Contact the Guild agent in Bartertown
- Win the airship race
- Eat supper with the Prince without committing a serious social blunder.

Sessions may also be cliffhanger ending points, rather than objectives. Examples include:

- Discovering the secret door leading down into the labyrinth.
- Flying the airship into the heart of a storm to shake off Theran pursuit.
- Uncovering the identity of the traitor in the ork scorcher tribe.

When the characters reach a session goal, the session ends. If this leaves your players clamoring for more, then you have them right where you want them – but not until next session.

Completing Adventure Goals

The gamemaster should design adventures around goals toward which the player characters strive, and each game session should bring them closer to achieving these ends. The overall adventure goal could

be retrieving a specific treasure, producing evidence of treachery, discovering the identity of a murderer, or convincing an ork cavalry tribe to work for your village rather than for a rival. Achieving the goal is the climax of the adventure.

Give your players the Adventure Legend Award at the end of the session in which the characters accomplish the adventure goal. Do not award a Session Legend Award in the same session in which you bestow the Adventure Legend Award; the adventure goal becomes the goal for that game session. Because most session goals represent steps on the way toward fulfilling the larger adventure goal, accomplishing the adventure goal earns the characters 2 Legend Awards.

Defeating Creatures And Opponents

Characters receive Legend Points for defeating creatures and opponents – and defeating them does not necessarily mean killing them. If the characters defeat creatures that you have set up as their opposition, award Legend Points for defeating them. If the player characters engage in wanton butchery of creatures or gamemaster characters never intended as opponents, you should cheerfully ignore their indignant pleas for Legend Points.

The number of Legend Points that each creature is worth appears in each creature's description in **Creatures**, p. 293. The gamemaster should distribute Legend Points earned by defeating creatures and opponents evenly between all player characters, dividing the number of Creature Legend Points by the number of characters in the party. At the gamemaster's discretion, if one or two characters in the party contribute little or nothing to the defeat of the creatures or opponents, the gamemaster may divide the total Creature Legend Award by the number of characters who actually did the work.

In the only exception to the above rule of thumb, if a player character defeats a creature in single combat, with no help from any other character, the character who defeated the creature receives all the Legend Points for that creature.

Each session should provide about a Legend Award's worth of Creature Legend Points per character. If all player characters in a group hold the same Circle, simply choose an appropriate Legend Award from the range given for that Circle in the **Legend Award Table**, p. 336. If the characters hold different Circles, determine the average Circle number of the players and choose an appropriate Legend Award for that Circle. For example, if a group of four player characters are all Circle 5, the gamemaster consults the table and decides that the Legend Award for creatures will be 250 points per character. This means the gamemaster should include creatures worth a total of 1,000 Legend Points, or 250 x 4, for each session. The gamemaster should feel free to adjust this formula to suit his game; the ranges given on the **Legend Award Table** simply provide a good benchmark.

Creative Roleplaying and Heroics

Players sometimes play their characters with particular zest, entertaining the group with their antics and coming up with ingenious ways out of difficult situations. If you feel a player contributed something special to the game session, award his character a number of Legend Points up to one half of a Legend Award for that contribution. We suggest two categories in which players can earn bonus Legend Awards for their characters; creative roleplaying and heroics.

Creative roleplaying includes coming up with good ideas, plans, or tactics for the group. Players who deliver a magnificent line at the right moment, solve the puzzle, or discover a particularly twisted use for a spell would all qualify for this bonus. Gamemasters can also give characters bonus Legend Awards for sticking to their character's personality traits even when doing so puts the character at risk. A player who keeps his character true to himself only when it is safe to do so is missing part of the point of roleplaying. Award characters up to a full Legend Award for convincing roleplaying.

Heroics are the actions of high adventure; running underground rapids rather than taking the roadway, or holding off orks by setting a bridge on fire and then fighting the enemy on the burning bridge until the last possible moment. This is the stuff that adrenaline rushes are made of. The gamemaster may build opportunities for heroics into the adventure, or the players may discover them on their own. Any character who throws himself into heroics should earn up to one half of a Legend Award.

Total Legend Awards

The gamemaster should give Legend Awards for reaching session goals, defeating creatures, obtaining treasures, and creative roleplaying/heroics on a session-by-session basis. Make the adventure goal Legend Award only at the end of the story; don't give partial Awards for approaching the adventure goal. This "lump sum" Legend Award emphasizes the story's climax; the big finale gets the big award.

Each character should earn between 2 and 6 Legend Awards per game session. Characters can only earn the maximum of 6 Legend Awards in the session in which they accomplish the adventure goal, and then only if all of the characters play well. On average, players should earn 3 or 4 Legend Awards per session, including one for achieving the session goal, one for defeating creatures and opponents, one for acquiring treasure, and up to one for creative roleplaying and heroics. Adjust the Legend Awards to suit your gaming style; for example, you might want to award more than the suggested Legend Points for acquiring treasure and fewer for defeating creatures. Remember, however, that keeping the per character Legend Award total within the bounds described here will help you maintain the balance of your game.

RUNNING THE GAME

The **Earthdawn** game system gives gamemasters a great deal of decision-making power. Many roleplaying game systems make every action and reaction a numerical equation: if you do this, then that happens, every time. **Earthdawn** lets the gamemaster control how hard a character must try to accomplish an action, and to reward him for making that action with extraordinary style or finesse.

Running the Game explains how to use the **Success Level Table**, p. 340, and the Perception Test. These two areas provide the gamemaster with the greatest flexibility and degree of control over his game.

SUCCESS LEVEL TABLE

The **Success Level Table** is the **Earthdawn** gamemaster's most important tool because he uses it to make two vital decisions: judging the quality of a test, or the success level (see **Game Concepts**, p. 27), and determining how difficult a task is to perform. The following pages explain how to determine a given task's Difficulty Number, as the first step in determining the success level of a test.



CREATING DIFFICULTY NUMBERS

Difficulty Numbers usually derive from an opponent's Attributes or talents. However, characters often want to perform actions or tasks that do not involve another being or use of magic or a skill. These situations offer no obvious Attributes or values on which to base a Difficulty Number. This section explains how to create Difficulty Numbers for these situations.

The key to the system for creating Difficulty Numbers described below is deciding what type of person would normally perform the activity being attempted. Might an ordinary person take this action? Would a low level of skill or talent suffice to accomplish it? Is it a task that only a highly skilled practitioner would dare try? This system sets up 5 levels of expertise by assigning Difficulty Number Ranges to five classes of characters: Ordinary, Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, and Class 4.

An **Ordinary** character has no special skill or talent with which to perform the task.

A **Class 1** character possesses some skill or talent particularly suited for the task, though not at an outstanding level. Class 1 includes those characters with beginning to mid-level skills and talents (from Circle 1 to Circle 4).

A **Class 2** character is a seasoned veteran who knows the ropes and has climbed more than his share. Tasks that seem nearly inconceivable for an Ordinary character, a Class 2 character considers merely difficult. The Class 2 category includes characters of Circles 5 to 8.

A **Class 3** character enjoys a reputation as one of the best in his field, maybe even in the history of his field. His prowess has made him famous; others in his area of expertise speak with awe of his deeds. The Class 3 category includes characters of Circles 9 to 12.

A **Class 4** character is legendary. Ordinary people know tales of his deeds, and tell them in awestruck whispers by the hearth fire. He is an example of the best that is, was, and ever will be. Tasks that he accomplishes with ease every day are the stuff of dreams to lesser characters.

Once you choose the class of character that would normally perform a task, you decide how hard that task would be for the player character actually attempting it: Easy, Average, Hard, Very Hard, or Heroic. The **Difficulty Number Table**, below, lists the five classes of characters in the Acting Character column and the 5 levels of Difficulty in the Difficulty Row across the top of the table. Each entry gives a range of Difficulty Numbers appropriate for a given class of character and Difficulty level. From the appropriate range, choose the Difficulty Number that you think best fits the situation. If you are worried about making the task too difficult, choose the lower end of the range.

DIFFICULTY NUMBER TABLE

	Difficulty of Task				
Acting Character	Easy	Average	Hard	Very Hard	Heroic
Ordinary	1-2	3-5	6-9	10-12	13-15
Class 1	1-2	3-7	8-12	13-16	17-20
Class 2	3-6	7-12	13-18	19-22	23-27
Class 3	6-8	12-16	18-24	25-29	30-35
Class 4	8-11	17-20	25-28	29-34	35-41

•A character makes his first visit to the city of Jerris. He wants to find a Weaponsmith, but decides to reduce the chances of anyone remembering him by not asking for directions. To determine the Difficulty Number of finding the Weaponsmith, the gamemaster reasons that many newcomers to Jerris need to purchase goods or services. Most of them would eventually find the appropriate shops, but would also ask directions. The gamemaster decides that finding the Weaponsmith is usually an average task for ordinary folks, made a hard task by refusing to ask directions. Consulting the ***Difficulty Number Table,*** *the gamemaster reads across the Ordinary row to the Hard column, which gives a Difficulty Number range of 6-9. The gamemaster decides to set the Difficulty Number at 7.*

•A ship sailing on the Aras sea is caught in a fierce storm. Blinding spray, howling winds, and crashing waves make travel across the deck dangerous. Of course, player characters love to take dangerous actions. The gamemaster considers that the ship's captain would not expect passengers or new recruits to make their way across the deck under these conditions, and so the gamemaster decides that Ordinary and Class 1 characters are not capable of performing this task. The gamemaster decides that the captain would only send experienced sailors out in such a storm, and that experienced sailors are Class 2 characters. Even for them, the storm's fierceness makes the task hard. Consulting the table, the gamemaster sees that a Hard task for a Class 2 character has a Difficulty Number range of 13-18. To reflect the full impact of the hellish weather, the gamemaster assigns a Difficulty Number of 18 to crossing the deck.

As the examples show, assigning a Difficulty Number is an art, not a science. Remember that your most important job is to come up with a reasonable number quickly. Getting a number wrong might create a small ripple in the flow of your game; agonizing over the correct number for too long can stop it cold. Don't agonize. Pick a

number you feel is reasonable, explain your reasoning if appropriate, and have the players roll the dice. You have our official permission to make an occasional mistake:

Living Room Games hereby gives you, the gamemaster, permission to occasionally pick the wrong Difficulty Number. We've all done it. Welcome to the club. Now get on with the game.

USING SUCCESS LEVELS

In order for a character to perform most actions, the player must make an appropriate test. For example, if the character is trying to observe something, the player makes a Perception Test; if the character wants to attack an opponent, the player makes an Attack Test. If the test produces a successful result, then the gamemaster uses the following procedure to determine the success level of that test result.

Determine (or Assign) the Difficulty Number

Most tests use established Difficulty Numbers, such as an opponent's Physical Defense or Spell Defense, or the Dispel Difficulty Number of a spell. The **Talents**, **Combat**, and **Spell Magic** chapters supply the majority of Difficulty Numbers needed during a gaming session of **Earthdawn**. Use the method described above to assign Difficulty Numbers for other types of actions.

Keith declares that his character, Poorht the windling Thief, intends to stab a ghoul. The ghoul has a Physical Defense Rating of 7. This gives Poorht a Difficulty Number of 7 when attacking the ghoul.

Consult the Success Level Table

The left-hand column of the **Success Level Table**, p. 340, lists Difficulty Numbers. Find the Difficulty Number for the test in this column. The rows of numbers across from the Difficulty Number represent the Difficulty Numbers needed to achieve the various success levels for each test. The numbers in these rows correspond to the Success Level line, the second line at the top of the table.

Poorht's ghoul has a Physical Defense of 7. Consulting the ***Success Level Table,*** *the gamemaster finds the 7 in the Difficulty Number column. Reading across, the row for that Difficulty Number shows the following figures for each success level:*

Poor	*Average*	*Good*	*Excellent*	*Extraordinary*
2	*7*	*12*	*15*	*19*

Find the Success Level

If the test result equals or exceeds the Difficulty Number, the character successfully performed an action (you knew this already, right?). Now compare the test result to the numbers across from the Difficulty Number. If the result equals or exceeds any of these numbers, the character achieves the corresponding success level. Because the Difficulty Number for an Average success level equals the Difficulty Number of the test, any test result below Average means the character failed to accomplish his intended goal.

Keith rolls an Attack Test result of 13. Because 13 exceeds the Difficulty Number of 7, Poorht succeeds at his task and stabs the ghoul with his dagger. Because the result of 13 also exceeds the 12 listed across from Difficulty Number 7 in the Good success level column, Poorht achieves a Good result. If Keith had rolled an Attack Test result of 15, Poorht would have made an Excellent hit against the ghoul and possibly defeated its armor.

Unlike Average to Extraordinary success levels, the Poor failure level column rates a degree of failure rather than the degree of success. Though failure at some tasks may mean your character simply doesn't affect the situation, a failure that produces a Poor result (or worse) often has serious consequences.

An intrepid band of adventurers decides to try to cross a rickety bridge in a hailstorm. Crossing each third of the bridge requires each character to make a successful Dexterity Test against a Difficulty Number of 6. A successful result means the character crosses that span safely. Simple failure (a test result of 5 or less) causes the character to slip, leaving him dangling precariously from the bridge. A Poor test result (2 or 1) means the character falls, hurtling down to the crevasse below.

Situation Difficulty

In addition to measuring levels of success, the gamemaster also uses the **Success Level Table**, p. 340, to determine how difficult a task is to perform depending on the current conditions or situation. To do this, the gamemaster finds the Difficulty Number of the task under normal circumstances using the method described above, then determines the revised level of Difficulty he wishes to assign to the task. A task may be Easy, Average, Hard, Very Hard, or Heroic. Once the gamemaster has chosen one of these levels of Difficulty, he finds that level on the Difficulty of Task line (the top line of the **Success Level Table**) and reads down the appropriate column until he reaches the row for the base Difficulty Number. The number at the intersection point of the column and the row is the modified Difficulty Number for the task at hand.

While trying to pick a door lock, Poorht the Thief has triggered a trap which is pouring hot water down on him. Under normal circumstances, the Difficulty Number for picking a lock is 9. However, because of the extreme discomfort and distraction caused by picking the lock under a shower of hot water, the gamemaster decides that the task is Hard. Consulting the ***Success Level Table,*** *the gamemaster finds 9 on the Difficulty Number column, then finds Hard on the Difficulty of Task line. Reading down and across, the gamemaster finds the modified Difficulty Number – in this case, 14.*

PERCEPTION TESTS

In **Earthdawn**, as in most roleplaying games, much of what happens in adventures depends on what the player characters notice around them. The adventure may hinge on the thief waiting to ambush the characters, a clue left behind by an assassin, or the scent of a creature or person.

When the gamemaster needs to know whether or not a character notices something, he asks the player to make a Perception Test for his character. Characters use their Perception step to make Perception Tests, unless they have a talent or skill appropriate for the task.

SUCCESS LEVEL TABLE

Difficulty of Task	Easy	Average	Hard	Very Hard	Heroic
Success Level	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Extraordinary
Difficulty Number					
3	1	3	6	8	10
4	1	4	7	10	12
5	1	5	9	11	14
6	2	6	10	13	17
7	2	7	12	15	19
8	3	8	13	16	20
9	4	9	14	18	22
10	5	10	15	19	24
11	5	11	17	21	25
12	6	12	18	22	27
13	6	13	20	24	29
14	7	14	21	26	32
15	8	15	22	27	33
16	8	16	24	29	35
17	9	17	25	30	37
18	10	18	26	32	38
19	11	19	27	33	39
20	12	20	28	34	41
21	13	21	29	35	42
22	13	22	31	37	44
23	14	23	32	38	45
24	15	24	33	40	47
25	16	25	34	41	48
26	17	26	35	42	49
27	18	27	36	43	51
28	18	28	38	45	52
29	18	29	40	47	56
30	20	30	40	47	55
31	21	31	41	48	56
32	22	32	42	49	58
33	23	33	43	51	59
34	23	34	45	53	62
35	24	35	46	53	62
36	25	36	47	55	64
37	26	37	48	56	65
38	26	38	50	58	67
39	27	39	51	59	68
40	28	40	52	60	70
41	29	41	53	61	71
42	30	42	54	62	72

A group of adventurers is cautiously exploring the entrance of a kaer. The gamemaster wants to see if they notice the trap ahead in the corridor, so he asks each player to make a Perception Test for his character. Most of the characters use their Perception step, but the Thief wants to use his Detect Traps talent. Because this talent is appropriate to the situation, the gamemaster agrees.

The Difficulty Number for a Perception Test derives from the object of the test. For example, for a Perception Test made to determine whether or not the characters see a thief hiding in ambush, the Difficulty Number is the thief's Dexterity step number. The Difficulty Number for spotting traps is the Detection Difficulty of the trap in question (see **Adventuring in Earthdawn**, p. 235). The table below lists common

PERCEPTION DIFFICULTY TABLE

Situation	Typical Difficulty Number
Target hidden	Target's Dexterity step
Locating traps	Detection Difficulty of the trap
Spotting secret doors	8+
Noticing clues	5+
Noticing anything unusual about surroundings	6

situations requiring Perception Tests and the typical Difficulty Number for the different tests. The gamemaster should adjust these numbers to fit the situation at hand.

Perception Success Levels

Perception Tests allow characters to notice things. The success level of the test result determines how much the characters notice. The amount of information a Perception Test reveals depends on the success level of the test. An Average test result simply tells the observing character that he can see something. A Good test result means the character notices something, and has some idea of what it is. An Excellent test result means the character knows what type of object or person he has noticed, and can guess at its exact nature. An Extraordinary test result means the character knows precisely what he is looking at. Until he can examine the object or meet the person, however, he does not have any more specific information about it.

Perception Test Modifiers

Of course, not all Perception Test Difficulty Numbers are as clear-cut as the examples given above. The above Difficulty Numbers assume that no distracting sights, sounds, or other environmental conditions make it more difficult for characters to make observations. In reality, many factors can affect a character's physical ability to see or the likelihood of their noticing any given person or object. Though characters can make Perception Tests for any of the five senses – sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste – environmental conditions can modify the Difficulty Number of any Perception Test. The **Perception Modifier Table** below suggests ways for gamemasters to take various environmental factors into account when players are making Perception Tests. Apply all suggested modifiers to the step number used to make the Perception Test.



PERCEPTION MODIFIER TABLE

Environmental Condition	Step Modifier
Sight	
Dusk/dawn	-2
Darkness	-5
Light rain/precipitation	-1
Heavy rain/precipitation	-3
Target concealed:	
25%	-1
50%	-2
75%	-3
95%	-5
Target camouflaged: same color as surroundings	-3
Target color contrasts with surroundings	+3
Target uniquely shaped compared to surroundings	+2
Viewer knows what to look for, i.e., has seen specific object or character before	+2
Sound	
Soft background noise	-1
People talking	-2
Boisterous talk/singing	-3
Loud noises/battle sounds	
10-19 yards away	-1
20-49 yards away	-2
50+ yards away	-4
Sound is lower in pitch than background noise	-2
Sound is higher in pitch than background noise	+2
Sound has steady rhythm that contrasts with background noise	+2
Listener has heard sound before and recognizes it	+2
Listener trying to identify the only audible sound	+3
Smell	
Odor obvious	+2
Other odors present	-2
Touch	
Extreme temperature (hot or cold)	+3
Perceiver is wearing gloves	-3
Taste	
Taste is obvious	+3
Perceiver has a cold	-3



FROM THE FINISHING TEAM

Well, this is it. The end of the book where the Game Designers get to talk to you about life, the universe, and everything. These words were actually written after we had finished everything else with the book by myself, Mike Williams, and *Marco Soto*, the last writer to be up burning the midnight oil with me. We hope you've enjoyed reading **Earthdawn Second Edition** as much as we've enjoyed writing it, and we hope that it brings you many, many hours of fun. You may notice that there have, until now, been a lack of conversion rules for first edition character to the second edition. It's my belief that the best possible conversion is one that pleases the players and gamemaster, so I'm not going to include any hard rules. What follows are some suggestions that might make the transition easier. If a Discipline has lost a talent, give the character those legend points back. Let the player spend them on the new talents the Discipline has gained, or on a skill in place of the talents. Give all of the first edition characters a number of rank one skills equal to their Charisma step. If a talent is no longer usable as a skill, and a character had that skill; give the character the legend points back, and let them spend it on a skill that they would like to replace it. If a character had a skill that was more general, allow them to choose a specialization, or, allow them to get back legend points so that they may have the several specializations of the skill at a lower rank. If a character was armed with a Troll Sword, they shouldn't be too surprised to find that it is now called a Great Broadsword. A conversion of a character is a process where the gamemaster will need to work with the players to make sure that the changes to second edition are as smooth as possible.

As I have worked on second edition, I have been fortunate in that I have been forced to reread the entire book again to make sure everything is as accurate as possible. I recommend that you also take the time to reread the book. You may be tricked into thinking that you will be able to spot the changes that have taken place in second edition, but I can assure you that you won't. Ok, not unless you sit with both books and go over them word for word.

There are so many things I want to say but I fear that if I say them all, I will still be at the keyboard at 6 am tomorrow. So I'll just say that ***Earthdawn*** *is your game. The changes we have made have come from our desire as gamers to make our favorite game better. If you think that some of the new rules are not better than the old ones, don't feel bad. There's no way to please everyone and I'm sure we'll step on someone's toes. I've said it a number of times and I'll say it here. Being a gamemaster gives you a power that we as the creators will never have. You and you alone decide how your game will run. We've made a second edition that we hope you will agree with, but if you don't, it is ultimately your decision which rules you use. Have fun. I can't stress that enough.* ***Earthdawn*** *is a game and you should have fun playing it. We certainly had fun making it.*

Living Room Games likes to consider itself a company that is there for the gamers. Drop us an e-mail, p. 5, let us know how we're doing. Or, better yet, catch up with us at a convention and let us know in person. With the publishing of **Earthdawn Second Edition**, we hope to continue the **Earthdawn** game line for years to come. Indeed, I believe that our attitude can well be summed up by the words of Lou Prosperi, **"Earthdawn Forever Baby!"**

PLAYER: _____

CHARATER NAME: _____

DISCIPLINE: _____

CIRCLE: _____

RACE: _____

AGE: _____ HAIR: _____ EYES: _____

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____ SEX: _____

NOTES: _____

_____



ATTRIBUTES

	INCREASES	VAL.	STEP	ACTION DICE
DEXTERITY	00000	( )	____	_____
STRENGTH	00000	( )	____	_____
TOUGHNESS	00000	( )	____	_____
PERCEPTION	00000	( )	____	_____
WILLPOWER	00000	( )	____	_____
CHARISMA	00000	( )	____	_____

DEFENSE

PHYSICAL _____

SPELL _____

SOCIAL _____

ARMOR

PHYSICAL _____

MYSTIC _____

MOVEMENT

FULL _____

COMBAT _____

STRENGTH

LIFT _____

CARRY _____

INITIATIVE

INITIATIVE STEP _____ ARMOR MOD. _____

FINAL STEP _____ ACTION DICE _____

KARMA

CURRENT _____ MAX _____

COST _____ ACTION DICE _____

CURRENT _____ WOUNDS _____

DEATH RATING _____ UNCON. RATING _____

WOUND THR. _____ BLOOD MAGIC _____

DEPATTERNING _____ DURABILITY _____

RECOV. TESTS _____ RECOV. DICE _____

TALENTS

TALENT	RANK	ATTR. STEP	TALENT STEP	ACTION DICE	DISC	KARMA	STRAIN
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____
_____	____	_____	_____	_____	Y/N	Y/N	_____

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WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE STEP	DAMAGE DICE	RANGE (S/M/L)
			/ /
			/ /
			/ /
			/ /
			/ /

EQUIPMENT

EQUIPMENT	WT.	COST	EQUIPMENT	WT.	COST

SKILLS

SKILL	RANK	ATTR. STEP	FINAL STEP	ACTION DICE

LEGEND POINTS

CURRENT _____

TOTAL _____

LEGENDARY STATUS _____

MONEY

GOLD _____

SILVER _____

COPPER _____

ELEMENTAL COIN _____

_____

RACIAL ABILITIES

_____

_____

_____

STEP/ACTION TABLE

STEP	DICE
4	D6
5	D8
6	D10
7	D12
8	2D6
9	D8+D6
10	D10+D6
11	D10+D8
12	2D10
13	D12+D10
14	D20+D4
15	D20+D6
16	D20+D8
17	D20+D10
18	D20+D12
19	D20+2D6
20	D20+D8+D6
21	D20+D10+D6
22	D20+D10+D8
23	D20+2D10
24	D20+D12+D10
25	D20+D10+D8+D4
26	D20+D10+D8+D6

BACKGROUND NOTES

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SPELLCASTER TALENTS

	TALENT STEP	ACTION DICE
WILLPOWER/WILLFORCE		
SPELLCASTING TALENT		
THREADWEAVING TALENT		

DEFENSE

SPELL DEFENSE _____ SOCIAL DEFENSE _____

THREADS

TIED TO	THREAD RANK	AMT. FOR NEXT

SPELLS IN MATRIX

SPELL MATRIX

ENHANCED MATRIX

GRIMOIRE DESCRIPTION

SPELLS

SPELL	THREADS	WEAVING DIFFICULTY	RANGE	DURATION	EFFECT

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Topos
Blood Wood
Elf Queen's Palace
Scol Mountains
Serpent River
Eidolon
Ishkarat
Lake Vors
Glenwood Deep
Poison Forest
The Waste
Tylon Mountains
Shattered Tower
Kratos
Daiche
Jerris
Liej Jungle
Tylon River
Delaris Mountains
Scavia
Ustrecht
Twilight Peaks
The Mist Swamps
Cara Fahd
Scarlet Sea
The Badlands
Landig
Vivane
Skypoint
Death's Sea


THE LANDS OF
BARSALVE
= ONE DAY WALKING
Parlainth
Scytha Mountains
Caucavic Mountains
SERPENT RIVER
CAUCAVIC RIVER
OLD THERAN ROAD
Throal Mountains
Syrtis
Tansiarda
Bartertown
PILGRIMAGE ROUTE
SERVOS RIVER
GALANGA RIVER
COIL RIVER
Darranis
Denlikiyan
Lake Ban
Vorst
GRIFFON FALLS
Servos Jungle
ADIAPAE RAPIDS
V'strimon
Triumph
Axalacail
SERPENT RIVER
Lake Pyros
Urupa
K'tenghin
Fallam
Travar
IONTOS RIVER
BYROSE RIVER
Thunder Mountains
Badlands
Aras Sea
Dragon Mountains
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