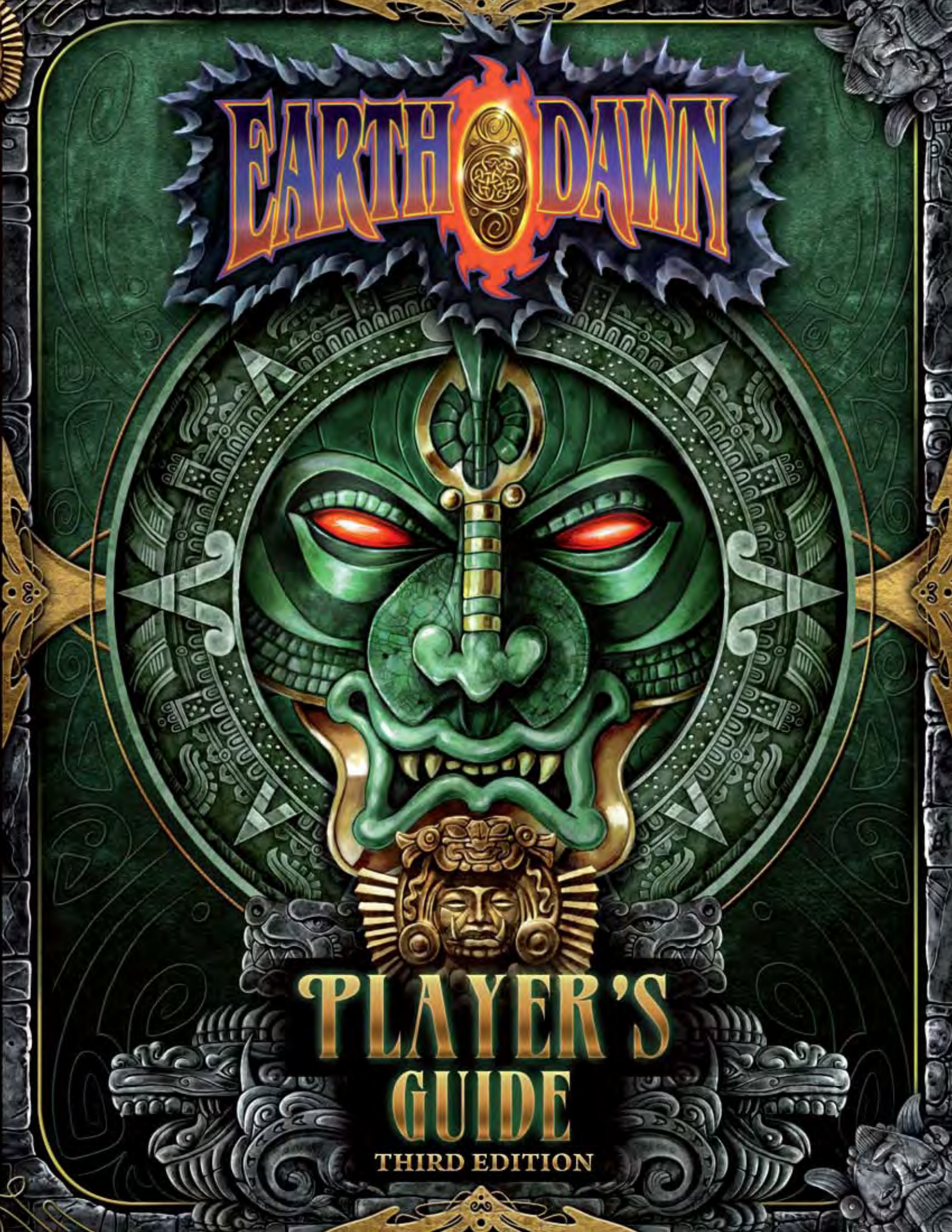

EARTH DAWN
PLAYER'S GUIDE
THIRD EDITION



• THIRD EDITION •

PLAYER'S GUIDE

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• EARTHDAWN THIRD EDITION •

PLAYER'S GUIDE

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Our minds are our own, our thoughts incomprehensible to others. Should you wish to understand the wisdom of others, that will cost you extra.

• Merrox, Master of the Hall of records •

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INHERITANCE

When the Scourge ended, we were determined to reclaim our heritage. But we were not yet ready to pay the price.

• Tolan Oddear, Historian of Landis •

Yes, it is a fine axe, and tempered in many battles, my friend. Its head has even tasted the blood of a Horror. How did I gain possession of such a fine weapon? Well, fill my mug with more of that fine dwarf stout and I'll gladly tell you the tale. 'Twas during an expedition to the lost city of Jalendale. I shall never forget it. We set out on a cold, wet day, much like today—the elven magician, myself, and the warrior who wielded this mighty axe, the troll called Lorm …

⅄ ⅄ ⅄

I ran up the steep, rocky slope, breathing in steaming gasps. Over the din of rain pelting the nearby rocks, I could hear the ork scorchers below. I stumbled and rolled down a few lengths then regained my feet, strands of moss now clinging to my matted red beard. As I fumbled to put my helmet back on my head, arrows hissed past, striking rocks upslope. Fear gave my legs new strength and I quickly crested the hill, diving for cover behind the boulder I had seen my companions use earlier.

Glancing up, I saw Lorm's green wart-covered fist holding his huge axe a finger's width away from Mestoph's face. The hair tufts in Lorm's large ears twitched and his nostrils dilated. His rough tongue rimmed his left tusk, and his yellow eyes glared from the slits formed by his pockmarked eyelids. Lorm was one unhappy troll.

"Where's all the gold? Where's this lost city? *Where is Jalendale?*"

Mestoph shook his long white hair away from his face, revealing an ugly sneer. He stared at Lorm with the orb of magical amber that served as his left eye.

I wheezed over to Lorm, reached up and tapped him near his belt.

"Wouldn't you rather kill some scorchers?"

"No thanks, dwarf."

"Then perhaps you would consider killing some scorchers before killing me?" Mestoph asked.

Lorm blinked at the elf's question, then pulled his axe away from our magician. Mestoph slumped away from Lorm into a puddle, rain dripping from his aquiline features. Noticing that Lorm and Mestoph had leaned their packs against the boulder, I took mine off too. As feeling returned to my shoulders I looked downhill.

The ork scorchers had taken cover about halfway up the hill. Apparently they were concerned about what sort of defense we would concoct and wanted to consider the possibilities before charging up the last open stretch of ground. They were giving us more credit than we deserved.

I took a step toward Mestoph, and the elf fixed me with his amber eye.

"I swear the maps put Jalendale here, or close to here."

"Well that's great. How about whipping up a spell to take care of a few angry scorchers?"

"I am afraid my 'destroy angry ork' selection is limited."

"Then how about something from your 'take action to make angry troll happy' collection?"

Mestoph nodded. He squatted and crabbed along the ground, careful to stay behind the boulder as he gathered a few pebbles and began to weave a spell.

Lorm and I had seen this one before. I drew my short sword. Lorm grabbed his axe with both hands.

Suddenly the sky above us darkened and within minutes we were enveloped by a blackness so deep we could barely make out the stones at our feet. This was midnight dark, copper-cavern-no-lamp dark. This was Mestoph's darkness. I crouched and waited.

A few moments later we were back to the murky-storm light. A quick glance told me Mestoph had cast the darkness on the pebbles, then tossed the pebbles down the hill at the orks. Confused shouts now came from three large bubbles of darkness where the orks had stood.

Lorm and I scrambled down the hill and waited at the edge of the darkness. An ork stumbled out. Lorm smashed him and the scorcher fell back into the darkness, leaving a trail of red on the rocky slope.

Apparently unable to coordinate their movements in the darkness, the orks kept wandering out haphazardly. Lorm and I took care of as many as we could. As soon as four orks made it out of the darkness at the same time, Lorm and I rushed back up the hill.

The plan now called for Mestoph to take care of the most determined ork pursuer or two with a different spell. Nothing happened.

Lorm strode on ahead while the orks gained on me. They say never look behind you when you're in a close chase because it slows you down. I looked. The orks were maybe fifteen of their strides back, swinging their swords across their bodies as they pumped their arms in time with their legs. They looked angrier than Lorm had looked. Two of them stopped to draw their bows.

I heard Lorm yell, a peculiar fading yell. The lead ork made an extra effort, and I promptly did the same. I reached the crest at top speed and dived for the cover of the boulder. I remember thinking, "That doesn't look like Mestoph's darkness spell," then falling.

Darkness again surrounded me as I fell, interrupted by an occasional flash of blue light ahead of me. Then I hit something, more gently than I expected, and my descent stopped. A blue glow enveloped me, then I was falling again, but not too fast. Another hit. Another blue glow. Another fall.

Soon I realized I was inside some type of shaft carved into the hill, and the blue glows were coming from runes carved into the shaft's walls about every three body lengths. I passed about a dozen levels of runes before landing on the rocks at the bottom of the shaft.

As I checked for broken bones, a flame sputtered, died, then another sputter turned into a warm yellow glow. Mestoph had lit a torch. While Lorm just sat there, looking a bit dazed, Mestoph walked over and handed me the torch. He took another from his pack, but this one took some time to light because it was damper than the first. The torch popped and hissed as it caught, illuminating my pack lying a few feet away. Lorm was already picking his up. Mestoph cleared his throat. "An illusion hid this shaft until one of my spell castings revealed it. Rather surprising."

"Mestoph, take a look at this," Lorm said, pointing to the section of wall near his pack. Mestoph walked over and leaned toward the wall, holding his torch just above his head.

After a moment of exploring the wall with his fingers, he shivered, pulling his hand back. He took a deep breath. His fingers went back to the wall.

The wall was covered with curving lines just slightly thicker than my fingernail. They were carved into the rock to different depths, some as deep as a finger length. Pacing around the shaft wall, I saw that the lines covered nearly every inch of its surface, except for occasional palm-sized blank spots. I counted out seventy paces to circle the shaft. The curlicues rose perhaps five or six dwarf-lengths from the floor of the shaft. The lines were deepest near three pitted, metal triangles hanging above a pillared entrance. We had found Kaer Jalendale.

Stone doors four dwarf-lengths tall lay cracked on the ground. Apparently, we were not the first to discover the city.

Mestoph pointed at the triangles.



"Those metal triangles look like they contain orichalcum. They must have been the wards protecting the town."

Lorm ran his axe across the wall. The rasp was just loud enough to hear above the splatter of rain overhead.

"And this?"

"I think a Horror etched all this. Every single line has an astral image. I think these designs sapped the magic from the wards. But carving these lines would take a year at the very least, and probably closer to five."

"A Horror spent five years breaking into Jalendale?" My voice rose in pitch as I spoke. I thought of something carving a few lines, stepping back, then carving a bit more, scratching lines a jeweler would be lucky to make as precisely. Something carving day after day, year after year, just waiting to get into the town. My desire for treasure was lessening.

"Did they know?" Lorm asked.

"The citizens? Probably not at first, not until the first ward failed. And by then it would have been too late to do anything."

Lorm took a long look through the doorway. I decided to check out my short sword. Mestoph laughed, a quick, high-pitched sound.

"We can wait for the monster out here or look for treasure inside." Mestoph spun in a half turn, then walked over the broken gates. I took a swig of water and thought a bit. I suppose only a desperate dwarf thinks on water. Lorm hurled a stone as far up the shaft as he could, then followed Mestoph inside. I made my most gallant "after you" bow, before crunching over the broken rock just behind our troll.

The town smelled dry, musty, like leaves during a parched autumn. I thanked the Passions for the dry part. Mestoph's map showed a Jalendale built along dwarf lines. The large central marketplace housed the guild building, the courts and jail, and the Passions' temple. Eight streets radiated out from the market to the edge of town, bisected by evenly spaced cross streets, giving Jalendale's road grid the appearance of a spider web.

Give humans and orks a couple of centuries, however, and they can foul up any dwarf plan. My first clue was the rope ladders and hemp-and-slat bridges above us. Jalendale's population must have been larger than planned, and the settlement had expanded up rather than out. A few buildings were even hewn from the rock of the cavern ceiling and used as supports to suspend thick cables and ropes. These ropes, in turn, held platforms and precarious dwellings. Other shacks stood on platforms resting on pillars set atop the roofs of Jalendale's original buildings. An incomprehensible series of ropes, rods, and beams connected the entire construction.

I found a night post with a light quartz that still responded to touch, and Lorm fashioned a lantern from the quartz, some rope, and one of his sacks. It gave off better light than the torches, but Mestoph and I kept ours lit. Light frightens some things, but fire hurts more of them.

Mestoph tried to lead us to the guild building. We started down the main avenue, but an array of pillars and cables supporting the city overhead blocked our passage before we had walked even fifty paces from the gate.

Blocking the main avenue seemed downright ork-stupid. Then I realized that once the gate was sealed, it wouldn't matter if they blocked the avenue this far from the market. Nobody would be coming through the gate until the day the Horror came along, that is. The walls all around the jumble showed more of the scrolling lines, even more intricate than the writing outside the gate.

Mestoph tried another street. It was blocked by shanties. His next choice got us closer to the marketplace before a thicket of stone spikes closed it off. A few of the spikes penetrated the walls of nearby buildings.

As we backtracked, Lorm wandered from one side of the avenue to the other, peering into buildings. I squinted in the glare of the

light quartz as he walked over to me. Lorm shifted the lantern to his other hand, then whispered, "Where are all the bodies?"

"Maybe the Horror ate them all."

"Even all the bones?" Lorm blinked his eyes.

"Maybe it's a very tidy Horror. Maybe it stacked all the bones in a corner somewhere."

"Thief, take a look at these."

I heard the strain in Mestoph's voice. He was standing at the mouth of an alley. Five cracked crystalline shells lay next to a heap of pottery shards. I took a few steps toward them.

A sharp odor stung my nose as I held my torch close enough to one of the empty shells to see the gray-streaked ooze. The shells were cysts. Whoever was in charge had just awakened a welcoming committee.

The shadowmants attacked us when we were nearly halfway to the center of Jalendale. I heard a fluttering sound and looked up just as two dark shapes swooped at Lorm. Blunt heads fanned out into pairs of sleek, featherless wings. Bodies tapered to scorpion-like tails that curved along the under of the creatures. Crystalline-pointed stingers tipped the tails.

Lorm roared, swinging the light over his head like a sling, and the creatures rose out of sight on silent wings.

As I drew my sword, four more of the creatures plunged from the darkness above. Mestoph performed a nimble dive-and-roll to avoid three dark shapes, and I heard him begin a spell.

I had my sword out and up, hoping to impale a swooping shadowmant. But the dark form in front of me furiously beat its wings, halting its forward motion in time to avoid my blade. I parried its tail strike, the stinger coming within an inch of my face.

I stabbed upward without looking and struck something soft. The shadowmant fluttered back a few paces, then came at me again. I blindly thrust my sword again and felt the thud of its stinger against my hardened leather breastplate.

The shadowmant dove at me again. I swung my blade and the creature wobbled back. I crouched low, and when I heard the flutter I struck, driving as hard as I could with my legs and arms. I felt a weight on my blade writhe for a moment, then become still, and I began congratulating myself just as Lorm howled.

I spun to see a shadowmant flopping at his feet, an axe embedded in its dark flesh. Another fluttered over the troll, its stinger lodged in Lorm's neck. I ran and hacked the tail off and the shadowmant careened away. Lorm dropped his axe and fell to his knees, head to the ground, left hand opening and closing spasmodically, right hand clutched to his neck. I pulled out a poultice.

"Don't touch me, worm beard!"

I stepped back, hands to my shoulders, palms facing outward and my fingers apart. Lorm needed the poultice, but I could wait until he felt less like pulling off my arms.

Three shadowmants lay on the ground. Mestoph eyed two dark shapes circling above his head. He spoke and the shadowmants spiraled up and away from us.

Lorm nodded to me. Mestoph walked toward us, but when he saw what I was doing, he turned away. The elf made a big display of studying his map.

I drew one of Lorm's knives, testing it on a plucked beard hair to make sure it was sharp. I tried to cut a small slit near Lorm's wound.

"Ahhoww!"

"Sorry. If troll skin were a little less tough, this would be easier."

"If dwarf hands didn't shake, it would be easier."

I finally managed a clean cut. I applied pressure around the wound with both hands, then tried to suck the wound clean. I felt his neck buzz as he spoke.

"Have you ever seen a Horror?"

I pulled away, remembering to spit. I didn't know whether the bitter taste was the poison or the troll blood.



"No. You?" I went back to the wound.

"Years ago my father's captain received a mind-plea from some Caucavic kin. We launched our ship, flew all damn night, arrived exhausted. We found all the adults dead, lying all about the place in different stages of rot. The children were alive, except for the babies who died from neglect."

I spit a second and third time. Lorm kept talking.

"I was scouting for survivors when I saw the Horror. It was like a slug, mottled yellow and white. It was only half my size, around a corner and two steps away."

"You mean twice your size?" I started shaking the vial containing the poultice. It began to warm.

"No, half. I caught myself thinking, this can't be what killed all these people. It didn't make sense. I took a step toward it. That was as far as I got. Glittering silver lines appeared where its eyes might have been, and I stopped dead. It looked at me, then turned away, moving slower than I could ever walk. I couldn't move until it was out of sight."

I took the poultice from the vial. Warm and moist, it smelled of basil. I carefully placed it into the wound. Lorm flinched very little.

"We took the children back home with us. As time passed, the Horror touched each of them, one by one. One's voice became painful to hear, another congealed mead when she got too close. One by one, we threw the children out of the hold. A couple left before we had the chance."

"Can you sit up?" I helped the troll as best I could by getting a good grip on his shirt near his shoulder blades.

"I remember thinking that the Horror had gotten two holds."

"Can you stand?"

"Not yet. I always wondered what would have happened if I could have taken that second step."

"Probably it would have blown you to flaming bits. Come on, let's try the standing thing now."

I put my back to his hip, planted my feet and pushed. Lorm pushed back, sliding up my back to a standing position. He leaned forward, hands on his knees, gasping for breath.

"Sure your poultice is going to work?"

"Should. I chose these carefully."

"Doesn't feel right yet. Just like this place. This whole place feels wrong. The smell."

"Smells like leaves to me."

"Dry leaves. It's pouring outside. It's desert dry in here."

"Maybe," I stopped talking. None of my maybes sounded good. I finished with a weak, "You should be fine."

Lorm took a step. He winced, a funny expression on a wart-covered old troll. One tusk poked through his familiar, lopsided grin.

"Maybe. Thanks for your help, Ragnar."

I blinked. The three of us had met in Throal. Somewhere on the road to Jalendale they lost "Ragnar." I became "dwarf," sometimes "thief." It struck me that a person's name was the only thing you could steal by refusing to use it.

"If the short and the tall are ready to go?" I matched Mestoph's mocking bow up with one of my own.

Mestoph led us, which is to say he walked a few steps ahead of us. Each time we found the way blocked, Mestoph would then stand and contemplate the next direction to try, and thus we lurched through the maze of Jalendale.

While Mestoph pondered, Lorm and I poked around in nearby buildings. The shops were in ruins. Not the buildings themselves, just the items inside. A porcelain shop with every plate pulverized, every vessel shattered. A goldsmith's every case shattered, every flattening hammer bent, every foil knife broken in two. I saw not one undamaged piece of furniture, not one whole item of merchandise.

Lorm spent less time searching than sitting down. He was still breathing, so the poultice must have had some effect. Ragged breaths said it was not yet enough.

Following Mestoph's latest direction, we came to a crossroads that led to the marketplace. The intersecting road was gone, replaced by a trench some twenty-five paces wide and, well, much deeper.

As Mestoph and I approached the trench, lights winked on in the square across the way. New lights appeared with each heartbeat, revealing a massive shadow. Mestoph and I gazed at the marketplace. A huge, irregular structure stood where Mestoph's map showed three buildings. Built like a primitive mound, stones of all sizes formed its walls and roof. Soon the open plaza shimmered with the sheen of iridescent blues, purples, and silver-whites.

"Cadaver men!"

Until Lorm's shout I had been unaware that I was staring at the plaza. Mestoph had three steps on me by the time I turned around and saw eight shapes walking toward us.

Lorm had taken cover in an empty shop. He sat inside the doorway, axe lying on the ground beside him.

Mestoph stopped running and crouched in a defensive posture, walking crab-style toward the nearest building. Apparently he'd decided he wasn't going make it past the cadaver men. My heart and legs thought it was worth a try, but my mind told me to stick with Mestoph. I sidled along with him. My sword only shook a little.

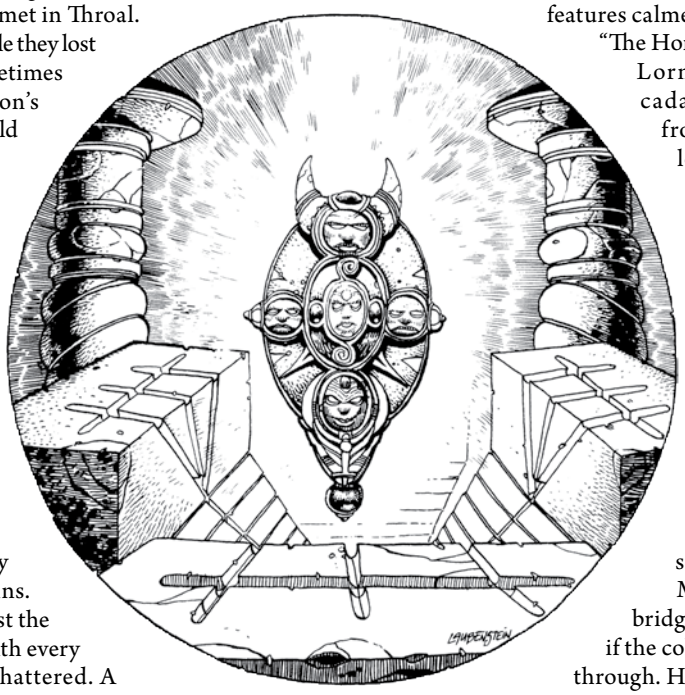
The cadaver men had been orks once. Two still had their ornamental gold tusk-caps. Their braided black hair was dusty and their mummified flesh creaked more than the leather armor they wore. The two with the tusk-caps carried swords and had backpacks slung over their shoulders. Six more staggered along with spears in one hand, rope or wood in the other. They smelled of pepper and rot, as if a chef had tried to conceal the smell of a bad piece of meat.

They walked right past us.

Let me say that again, in case you missed it. Eight cadaver men had us pinned, and they walked right past us. They walked to the edge of the trench. They dropped two coils of rope. The rope twitched, then snaked its way through the air to the other side of the trench.

Mestoph inhaled sharply. His face was contorted in pain. Little by little, he regained control of his expression. His features calmed.

"The Horror is close."



Lorm joined us. We watched the cadaver men as they moved away from the trench one by one. One lone cadaver man pounded in a final stake. He finished his task with a ringing strike, then gathered his tools and rejoined his companions.

The eight cadaver men blocked the road we had taken coming in, and I knew they would stand there forever. Lorm wrung the haft of his axe as if it were a wet cloth.

"Ragnar, when a Horror asks you to visit him, is it foolish to say no?"

Mestoph stared blankly at the bridge. His amber eye went milky, as if the color of his hair had somehow bled through. His eyebrows furrowed, then shot up high on his forehead. He started toward the bridge.

"If he wanted us dead, the cadaver men would have attacked. He wants something from us he cannot get if we are dead."

"So he kills us after we do his bidding," I said.

Mestoph stopped for a second, legs apart and arms raised. "We can try to out-think him, out-wait him, or out-fight him. I know which is my best chance." He turned and began walking again.

Lorm took one wobbly step, steadied himself, and followed Mestoph. So did I.

Hundreds of carvings like those by the gate covered the plaza. Our boots made a scratching sound as we walked, as if we were sliding across invisible sand. Each step was like a knife-edge gliding along the soles of my feet, feather-soft yet sharp.

We made our way toward the mound in the center of the plaza. It seemed the only place to go. I could see a pointed archway. Inside the mound was a cool darkness.

I blinked, then it was next to Mestoph. Twice as tall as me, it wore high boots the color of burnished brass. Six-fingered gauntlets curved into moving tendrils the size of my little finger. Each tendril ended in a clear, sharp gem, each with an edge finer than a knife-blade. A brass breastplate of at least a finger's width covered

its torso, and gritty, dun-colored smoke seemed to flow from the breastplate to form its neck and limbs.

The face froze me in my tracks. The whitish-gray color of mushrooms and tree-rot, it looked like a skull built entirely of worms. The worms squirmed in a pattern most active around its eye sockets. A single worm protruded from the center of each socket.

Two droplets of blood burst from Lorm's wound, drawn by magic to the Horror. They exploded with a white flash and sizzle on its armor. The Horror flinched and the worms of its face twitched and rolled a bit faster.

It opened its mouth to speak, revealing the writhing mass of its tongue. When it spoke my lungs burned and my mouth dried.

"The one who brings me the small orichalcum shield shall live. The others …"

The Horror swept his hand past me. One of the gems on his finger-tendrils touched my face and bones in my legs snapped. Blinding pain accompanied popping sounds as muscle disconnected. I fell forward. Several of my ribs twisted and snapped. I screamed, I blubbered, I tried to crawl away, but I could not control the spasms of my body. I spit up a mouthful of vomit, bitter bile spilling over my lips and matting my beard. My legs jerked wildly. I could not even beg.

Then the pain stopped. My body was mine again, impossibly whole. The Horror stood over me, watching me carefully.

I ran. I ran in a blind panic toward the mound. I slammed into a wall, bounced and fell. I got up, slammed into the wall again, still screaming. Lorm reached out of the mound to pull me the few feet sideways to the door. I lunged inside.

I do not know how long I sat rocking myself. I remember Lorm persuading me to drink something, and Mestoph asking me questions.

"I think our dwarf is with us again."

Mestoph knelt beside me, then handed me one of his flasks. I took a sip of wine, passed it back to him.

"You have been out for some time. Welcome to your new home."

"Where are we?"

"We are in the biggest mausoleum I have ever seen."

The sweep of Mestoph's arm took in the entire building. Atop eight pillars sat light quartz illuminating perhaps forty box-frames, each nearly fifty arm-lengths high. Each frame was like a gigantic library shelf, filled with bodies rather than books. Most were wrapped in burial shrouds, a few in robes or armor. The place smelled overwhelmingly of cloves, with just a hint of dry rot.

Mestoph rose, gesturing to me to follow. As I walked behind him I noticed a couple of new books in his backpack. In the middle of the mausoleum, eight altars surrounded two sloped, square pits, each pit deepest in the center. One altar stood on each side of each square. Each altar was carved with troughs leading to the pits. The troughs fed into notches running to the center of each pit, each holding a brilliant golden shield. The light struck the shields, flowing and dazzling in a way impossible even for pure gold. Orichalcum.

Mestoph brushed a lock of hair away from his ear.

"The shields are magical protections. The magic was strengthened by the blood of the citizens."

"They killed themselves?"

"Sacrificed, almost down to the last man. Last few in here took poison. The larger shield protects this tomb from being entered or harmed by the 'destroyer of our brethren' or his 'unliving servants.' The smaller prevents the 'destroyer of our brethren' from moving more than a few hundred yards away from it."

"Destroyer of our brethren?"

"I think they enchanted eight of their citizens, left them outside this tomb. Their deaths triggered the magic in the shield."

"Those are the cadaver men?"

"Yes, but they would have been alive then."

I thought about the citizens of Jalendale. A Horror gnawing his way through the town's defenses. No magic strong enough to stop him from coming in. But they had one desperate way of preventing the abomination from harming another town.

"They left plenty of loot." Lorm nodded toward a wall. I could see the gleam of neatly stacked gold. Items in chests and bins, weapons laid out in a panoply. It all looked attractive. But not as attractive as I thought it would.

"Pick something light." Lorm held up a gleaming dagger. Its pommel was carved into a wolf's head and its blade gleamed with the same fire as the shields. "Our plan requires speed."

I walked toward the treasure. Lorm directed me to a small pile.

"Mestoph separated out some of the more promising items."

I started sorting through the loot. I rejected a sword with five matching emeralds in its hilt, but paused to consider a helmet that was as clear as glass and lighter than ten coins.

"Those bracers," Lorm said, pointing to finely hammered copper bracers adorned with jade and lapis lazuli, "probably have defensive magic. Might as well take something that will help you get out of here."

I fingered the bracers, but took the helmet. Lorm grinned. I tried it on. Fit was a little big, but the helmet felt cool and somehow reassuring. I stashed my old helmet in my pack.

Mestoph was reading one of the books when we walked over. Lorm nodded in his direction.

"While you were worthless, Mestoph read. He's already reversed the levitation magic in the shaft. It should now push us up and out."

"How do we get past the Horror?"

"Mestoph starts working on a spell. I take the shield outside. When creepy comes for the shield, I whack him long enough for the spell to finish. You run out and throw the shield back in here, out of his reach. Elfie throws the spell. While creepy recovers, we head out of town. Got it?"

"I have my doubts about running out there to get the shield. And serious doubts about you whacking creepy long enough for Mestoph to take a breath, let alone finish a spell."

Lorm swung his axe in a lazy arc, stopping the axe in mid-swing. He loosened his grip, letting the haft slide down until his right hand rested just below the axe-head. His left hand tested the edge.

"This is my axe. My grandfather made it for my father. He told my father the axe was destined to blood a Horror, perhaps slay one."

"Sure, once the Horror kills you, he can use your axe to whack his friends."

A page rustled.

"You are unduly pessimistic, dwarf."

"Name's Ragnar."

Mestoph closed his book and regarded me with that amber eye.

"Ragnar. The good people of Jalendale did not die in vain. They left detailed records behind, and so we know this Horror is somewhat vulnerable to life magic. Are we ready?"

Lorm nodded vigorously. I shrugged. Mestoph reopened his book. Lorm set his axe down. He drew his newly acquired wolf-handled dagger and carefully cut his left forearm three times. He sheathed the dagger. The troll picked up his axe and began to apply his own blood to the blade.

I walked back to the pit and got the smaller shield. When I returned I saw Lorm had spread a generous coating of blood on his axe. He looked up.

"Just in case things go wrong, I want you to know the poultice finally worked. You chose well."

"What could possibly go wrong, Lorm?"

The troll snorted. I handed him the shield. We watched Mestoph work his way through the spell. The elf spoke softly, his fingers moving in time with his words. His right eye was closed. His left eye swirled with light. He began to speak more slowly.

"That's the signal."

Lorm took four steps out, then dropped the shield and stood on it.

"Here's your cursed shield!"

The Horror appeared a yard from Lorm, its tongue flailing like a snake on fire. Lorm stepped toward it, swinging his axe. The weapon found the Horror's breastplate, and the blood on the axe flared into white fire. The Horror hissed and screeched. Lorm roared.

I finally remembered to get the shield. I scrambled for it, picked it up as Lorm rang another blow off the Horror's armor. I carried it back into the tomb. Once inside I saw Mestoph fling his arms up and heard him shout three elven words.

Thousands of droplets of water appeared, then coalesced into dozens of spinning blades. The blades flew around Lorm, striking the Horror. The screech turned into a scream. The blades tore whisps of dun-colored smoke from its legs and arms and sliced a tendril off its left hand. They rang and sizzled against its breastplate. The Horror spun around. Two of the blades caught it in the side of his head, sending shreds of white worm through the air.

Mestoph was already running, and so I followed his lead. Lorm took one last swipe then brought up the rear.

"Follow me! I found more maps in the tomb and I think I can get us to a clear avenue!"

We crossed the bridge and turned left. We ran past a plaza with four brass poles, through dusty alleys, down a road with shops with blue doors, then turned right at a dry fountain with lion-head spouts onto a broad avenue. Mestoph's laugh boomed down the dead streets of Jalendale. The magician slowed to a walk. I caught up. Lorm was huffing half a dozen paces behind. Lorm bellowed.

"Whacked him pretty good, I'd say."

The Horror appeared next to Mestoph. Its left eye-worm twitched uncontrollably as it reached out to touch the magician. Mestoph tried to dodge, but the elf reacted too slowly. A sucking, tearing sound came from within him and he began screaming. Then his hair whipped up and forward and his screams suddenly grew strangely muffled.

I screamed too, a dry, pitiful noise. I was staring at Mestoph's eyes and mouth, which were on the side of his face. The Horror had torn the skin loose from muscle and was shifting it around the elf's body.

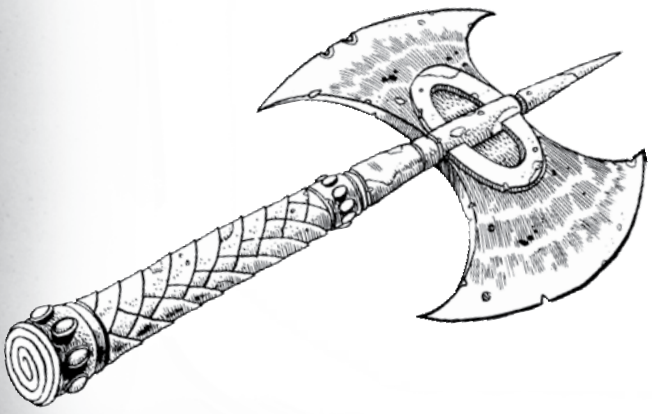
Mestoph's blood did not flow so much as gush toward the Horror, transforming into burning white ribbons that wrapped around the entity. The Horror's triumphant screams drowned out our own.

The Mestoph-lump collapsed to the ground. The left side of the Horror's face was a smoking, ruined mass. It pointed at Lorm.

"Get me the shield."

Lorm started to run. He took five fast steps, then stopped and turned around. His eyes shone with a silvery web. The Horror hissed.

"Once Horror-touched, never free. Get me the shield!"



I tried to tackle the troll as he started to move, but he batted me aside. The Horror turned his gaze on me.

"Nothing more from you."

I was frozen to the ground. The Horror stared at me with his one good eye. Its seared tongue wiggled back and forth, as if it tasting my fear and anguish.

Apparently the Horror's momentary distraction provided Lorm a brief second of self-control, because he suddenly flung himself at the entity, the wolf's-head dagger flashing in his outstretched hand. The Horror snapped its head around and Lorm crumpled to the ground with a strangled cry. Blisters boiled up on the troll's green skin, releasing rivulets of blood as they burst.

"Noooo!"

I do not remember whether that was my scream, or the Horror's. The entity tried to reach the troll, but the blood now pooling on the ground sparked when it approached. The Horror staggered back and began to hiss rhythmically.

I struggled to gain control of my legs, then knelt by Lorm. His cloudy yellow eyes met mine for a split second then darted toward the axe at his side.

I grabbed for the weapon, but could barely lift the damn thing. Finally I worked the blade around the pool of troll blood. Lorm's breathing rose and fell in time with the Horror's hiss.

When I charged, the Horror looked up but did not move; its hiss just grew a little louder. The axe wobbled a bit at the top of its arc and my resolve wavered, then I crashed the weapon onto the thing's head. I felt a jolt, heard a brittle crunch and smelled the odor of rotted wood.

The Horror lurched back. I held onto the axe, which jerked free as the Horror moved. The creature had no working eyes. But it kept hissing. I could no longer lift the axe. I looked over at Lorm, and saw he was dead.

I clutched the axe to me. The hiss told me to leave it. I turned around. This hiss told me to stay. I took a step. The hiss grew louder, almost strident. Another step. Then another. The hiss grew weaker, thinner. Then I could no longer hear it.

I found my way back to the shaft. Struggling to climb up to the first blue rune, I was dimly aware of the cadaver men entering the chamber, climbing after me. I heard them scrabble at the wall. I reached the rune. A warm sensation lifted me, then hurtled me upward. I passed from rune to rune, gathering a little more speed with each.

I shot out of the shaft, over the unsuspecting sentries the scorchers had posted. They might have pursued me if the cadaver men had not appeared to keep them busy. I walked as far as I could, reaching the village of Twin Chin well into the next morning. There I stopped and slept for days. I do not think I let go of Lorm's axe the whole time.



Many years have passed since that night, and I have survived my share of adventures. But one task remained unfinished, one I believed I would take to my grave undone. Tonight I walked into this tavern and saw you and heard your tales, the stories of your adventures. Now I have hope that it will be completed. Take this axe. It is Lorm's axe. His grandfather made it for his father. It has blooded a Horror. Perhaps now it shall slay one…



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

After the Scourge, we found the world black, shattered, and twisted. Are you a hero? I hope you are a hero; because by the Passions, the world already has enough villains.

• J'Role, Eye of Throal •

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 other, more 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 left this world, many of them remain, inflicting cruel anguish and suffering on other living creatures. As humanity struggles to remake the shattered world, they must combat the 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 people 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 largest inhabited province in the known world. The dwarfs seek to unite Barsaive's far-flung cities and people under one crown and 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. Beaten for the moment, the Therans gather strength and wait to strike again. As Barsaive's heroes search for lost treasures and battle fantastic creatures, they must also fight the Therans, who plot to rob Barsaive of its new-found freedom and make its people pawns of their vast Empire.

In the Age of Legend, heroes band together fighting the Horrors and reclaiming 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. Like 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 magician who combines deception and reality to confuse those around him; a Swordmaster, one trained in the art of fighting with melee 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 six 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.13, or the **Creating Characters** chapter, p.25, and dive right into the **Earthdawn** game. The opening short story—**Inheritance**—provides atmosphere and a taste of the language and style of **Earthdawn**. Specific chapters cover every aspect of the game and how to play it in detail.

For those who are new to roleplaying, the following text introduces the concept. This introduction will not answer all your questions, because most roleplaying is more easily learned from other players than from reading a book. This brief overview will 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 himself out of a tight situation rather than resorting to that trusty sword, he can talk away. The plot of a roleplaying game is flexible, ultimately based on 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 or in reaction to other events. The story remains an outline, with few concrete events, until the players become involved. When that happens, the adventure can become a drama as riveting as that great movie you saw last week or the 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), 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. While there are many published game supplements and adventures to aid the gamemaster, talented gamemasters always adapt the game world to suit their own and their players' 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 your imagination. The game is not a contest between the players and the gamemaster, however. The gamemaster may control all the bad guys, but he should work with the players to build and experience a tense, exciting adventure.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The **Earthdawn** game is very easy to learn. The ***Player's*** and ***Gamemaster's Guides*** contain all of the rules you need to run an **Earthdawn** game. Since most roleplaying games are played as ongoing campaigns, these books provide enough material for years of play. If you can't get enough, the ***Player's*** and ***Gamemaster's Companions*** feature advanced rules, high-Circle opponents, legendary spells—you name it, you'll probably find it in one of those books. However, you only need to be familiar with a fraction of the material in order to get started.

The best advice we can give beginning players and gamemasters is this: **only use the rules you need**. You can safely ignore everything else; optional rules, for instance, can be integrated later when you are more comfortable with the game. Much of the content in our books is sorted alphabetically (talents, skills, spells, and so on), with other content organized in a similarly accessible order—goods and services, for instance, are grouped by type.

While you might want to read everything from cover to cover, you will soon realize how boring it can be to read hundreds of talent descriptions at a sitting (something your brain might just take serious umbrage at being subjected to). You don't need to memorize everything. Instead, focus on remembering where to find the information you need. A comprehensive **Contents** and **Index** are included in each book to help you find things quickly. The **Appendix** should prove useful as a quick reference as well.

The **Game Concepts** chapter also summarizes a number of basic rules and game mechanics that are covered in detail in later chapters. Armed with this knowledge, you should be in a good position to quickly get up to speed with the **Earthdawn** game and therefore get your first game running as soon as possible. Welcome aboard!

CHAPTER TWO

GAME CONCEPTS

The magic of the world follows rules. Understand them and use them, as others will surely use them against you.

• Blackshard, Wizard of the Crystal Raiders •

This chapter introduces you to the **Earthdawn** game and explains the key concepts and terms used. 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.

ADEPTS AND 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 **Discipline**. This training focuses the magical energies of your character into special abilities called **talents**. Each Discipline offers unique talents. Characters of some Disciplines—collectively known as **magicians**—possess the ability to cast **spells**.

All adepts are rated in their Discipline according to their knowledge and experience. These ratings are called **Circles**. Adept characters usually begin the game at First Circle. Though characters tend to specialize in one Discipline, some learn talents from other Disciplines, or learn a new Discipline in addition to their first.

The gamemaster awards **Legend Points** after each game session. Your character uses Legend Points earned through adventuring to increase the Ranks of his talents and abilities, in turn allowing him to advance his Circle. Each time an adept reaches a new Discipline Circle, he gains new talents and abilities. Your character gains Legend Points based on how well he performed during the gaming session, but based also on how well you, as a player, roleplayed your character.

The different Disciplines are fully detailed in the **Disciplines** chapter, starting on p. 42. The talents available to each Discipline are described in the **Talents** chapter, p. 57. Descriptions for non-magical skills can be found in the **Skills** chapter, p. 87. See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p. 104, for more information on magic and magical theory.

See the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 236, for more information on how you use Legend Points to improve your character's talents and skills, and how the accumulation of Legend Points affects those who come into contact with the character, in person or by reputation.

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

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 a **Character Record Sheet** (see p. 307 for a reproducible copy or download one from our web site at earthdawn.com). This is where you record your character's abilities, possessions, physical appearance, and other facts about him. 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.

Attributes measure a character's natural abilities, what he can accomplish without training or magic. **Talents**, **skills**, and **spells** also appear on the Character Record Sheet. Like Attributes, these are measured in Step Numbers.

The Health section of your Character Record Sheet tracks any damage your character takes. The number of Damage Points a character has taken is reflected in his Current Damage total. When the Current Damage total equals your character's **Unconsciousness Rating**, he falls unconscious. When the Current Damage total equals or exceeds your character's **Death Rating**, he dies.

The **Wound Threshold** represents the amount of damage it takes to wound your character from a single attack. **Wounds** are serious injuries that heal more slowly than normal damage and can impair your character's ability to carry out actions. You use your character's **Recovery Tests** to recover from injury. The test result reduces your character's Current Damage total or allows you to heal Wounds. Your character may make only a limited number of Recovery Tests each day.

More information on the game statistics of your character can be found in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p. 25.

STEPS & ACTION DICE

Almost all abilities in **Earthdawn** are rated by Rank and Step Numbers. The **Rank number** is the measure of proficiency in a skill or talent. Rank numbers are often added to an Attribute Step to determine a **Step Number**. The Step Number 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 corresponds to a Step Number.** The Step/Action Dice Table lists consecutive Step Numbers and their corresponding Action Dice.

Whenever a player rolls his Action Dice, he is making an **Action Test** (p.14). All individual die results are added together to determine the **test result**. **Earthdawn** uses four different types of polyhedral dice: six-sided (D6), eight-sided (D8), ten-sided (D10), and twelve-sided (D12) dice. These dice don't come with the game, but are available in most gaming stores.

Me'gana has a Dexterity Step of 7 and Rank 3 with the Melee Weapons talent. This gives Me'gana a Melee Weapons Step of 10 (7+3=10). Looking up this Step Number on the Step/Action Dice Table, Me'gana notes that she rolls 2D8 Action Dice when making a Melee Weapons Test. When Me'gana hits an opponent in combat, she uses Step 12, which is the result of adding her broadsword's Damage Step of 5 to her Strength Step of 7.

Increasing or decreasing the Step Number changes the Action Dice rolled. Adding +1 Step to Step 10 puts you on Step 11, which resolves to D10+D8. Subtracting –2 Steps from Step 8 puts you on Step 6, which resolves to a D10 Action Die.

The Step Number corresponding to an Action Dice combination equals the average roll for that combination of Action Dice, taking into account the chances of rolling one or more Bonus Dice (see below). For example, the average result of a D10 roll is 6 (Step 6 uses a D10). The average result of a D8+D6 roll is 9 (Step 9 uses both a D8 and a D6).

Bonus Dice

When you roll the highest possible number on an Action Die, you immediately get to roll another die of the same type—this is a **Bonus Die**. Add the result of the Bonus Die roll to the result of any Action Dice already rolled to determine the test result. If you roll the maximum on a Bonus Die, you roll another Bonus Die of the same type. This continues for as long as you continue to roll the maximum possible result for the Bonus Die.

A player rolling for Poohrt, a windling Thief character, rolls a D8 and a D6 Action Dice (a Step 9 Action Test). The results are an 8 and a 6, the highest numbers possible on each die, respectively. He gets two Bonus Die rolls. On his D8 Bonus Die he rolls a 2, and then a 6 on his D6 Bonus Die—this entitles him to another D6 Bonus Die for which he rolls a 3. Adding together the final rolls gives the player a total of 25 for his Action Test result (8+6+2+6+3=25).

Steps 1, 2, and 3

Steps below 4 aren't usually rolled during an **Earthdawn** game, as they are generally too small to create usable results for an epic game. If, for any reason, you do need to roll dice at those Steps, use the following table.

Total any Bonus Die rolls before subtracting the modifier from the result. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum result is 1.**

Karma

All adepts, as well as some of the more powerful creatures of the world, are able to tap into the magical energy of the world in order to enhance their use of magic and magical abilities. This magical energy is known as **Karma**. The use of Karma is simulated through Karma Points and Karma dice.

When an adept uses Karma on an action, he spends a **Karma Point**. Unless noted otherwise, this allows him to roll an additional D6 when performing the action. The result of the **Karma dice** is added to the result of the other dice rolled for the Action Test. Karma dice can be re-rolled as Bonus Dice. Although all characters use the same Karma dice of Step 4/D6, special circumstances, magic, or even Horror-taint can increase their Karma Step later in the game.

Adepts cannot use Karma on just any Action Test; they can only use Karma on talents that allow the use of Karma. As they progress to higher Circles, adepts are allowed to spend Karma Points on other actions as well.

Action Tests

Whenever a character attempts to take an action such as casting a spell, swinging a sword at an opponent, tracking a Horror, or flirting with a barmaid, the gamemaster or the player rolls dice to determine the action's outcome. These dice rolls are called **Action Tests**.

To make an Action Test, the player or gamemaster rolls the appropriate Action Dice and adds the individual die results together to determine the **test result**.

Bonuses and Penalties

Test results may be modified by a **bonus** or a **penalty**, indicated in the rules where appropriate. As a general rule, the modifier is applied to the Step Number of the Action Test before the Action Dice are rolled. For example, a character using the Aggressive Attack combat option adds +3 Steps to his Attack and Damage Steps. A character who is Harried subtracts –2 Steps from all of his Action Test Steps. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum Step Number is 1.**

However, this method can slow down game play while players recalculate Step Numbers and Action Dice on the fly. If the gamemaster feels that it would be beneficial to the game, he may instead apply temporary or one-time modifiers to the test result after the dice are rolled. As per the above example, the Aggressive Attack combat option would add +3 to the character's Attack and Damage test results.

Test Results

A test result is interpreted or used in several ways. In most cases, the test result is compared to a **Difficulty Number**. If the result is at least equal to this number, the test succeeds (see below for more information on Difficulty Numbers).

Effect Tests

Sometimes the test result simply represents a value, which is not compared against a Difficulty Number. The most common examples of these tests are Recovery Tests, in which the

STEP/ACTION DICE TABLE

Step Number	Action Dice
4	D6
5	D8
6	D10
7	D12
8	2D6
9	D8+D6
10	2D8
11	D10+D8
12	2D10
13	D12+D10
14	2D12
15	D12+2D6
16	D12+D8+D6
17	D12+2D8
18	D12+D10+D8
19	D12+2D10
20	2D12+D10
21	3D12
22	2D12+2D6
23	2D12+D8+D6
24	2D12+2D8
25	2D12+D10+D8
26	2D12+2D10
27	3D12+D10
28	4D12
29	3D12+2D6
30	3D12+D8+D6
31	3D12+2D8
32	3D12+D10+D8
33	3D12+2D10
34	4D12+D10
35	5D12
36	4D12+2D6
37	4D12+D8+D6
38	4D12+2D8
39	4D12+D10+D8
40	4D12+2D10

STEPS 1, 2, AND 3

Step Number	Action Dice
1	D6–3
2	D6–2
3	D6–1



die roll result equals the amount of damage healed; Damage Tests, which determine the amount of damage inflicted on a target; and Initiative Tests, which are used to find out who acts when and in what order during a combat round. These types of tests are known as Effect Tests.

Effect Test results can determine the duration of a spell, a creature's Attribute values, the Difficulty Number for Action Tests made by opponents, and so on. For example, a magician casting the Mind Dagger spell makes a Spellcasting Test to determine whether he affects his target. If successful, he makes a spell Effect Test to determine how much damage his spell inflicts.

The Rule of One

If all of the Action Dice rolled for an Action Test each show a result of one (1), then the character automatically fails to accomplish the action, even if the Test Result total is equal to the Difficulty Number needed. This is known as the **Rule of One**. The character is considered to have achieved a Pathetic Result (see **Result Levels**, below). At the gamemaster's discretion, the Rule of One only applies to the results of Action Tests where two or more Action Dice are rolled. The Rule of One is not applicable to Effect Tests, such as Initiative Tests, Recovery Tests, Damage Tests, spell Effect Tests, and so on.

Difficulty Numbers

The **Difficulty Number** represents how easy or hard it is for each character to accomplish any given task. In many cases when the player characters must make a test, the required ability is shown with the Difficulty Number of the task in parentheses. For example, a Perception (13) Test means a character uses his Perception Step to make an Action Test against a Difficulty Number of 13. The Difficulty Number is otherwise given in the ability's description or determined by the gamemaster.

Result Levels

Frequently, a test result determines not only success or failure, but the degree of success. A test may have one of six result levels: Pathetic, Poor, Average, Good, Excellent, and Extraordinary.

The Test Result is compared to the appropriate Difficulty Number on the Result Level Table. If the result falls within the range of numbers on that row, it achieves the result level indicated at the top of the table for that column. For example, an Action Test roll of 9 made against a Difficulty Number of 7 indicates an Average Result. An Action Test roll of 16 against the same Difficulty Number would be an Excellent Result.

A **Pathetic** Result is a bad enough failure that the gamemaster may impose unpleasant side effects. Some talents, skills, and other types of tests include side effects for Pathetic Results in their descriptions. The gamemaster can choose to disregard such results, but he may also chose to use negative side effects on Pathetic Results for all Action Tests. A **Poor** result usually indicates simple failure. An **Average** Result, equal to or barely exceeding the Difficulty Number, means that the character accomplished his action—but only just. A somewhat better roll yields a **Good** Result, and a roll close to double the Difficulty Number garners an **Excellent** Result. To achieve an **Extraordinary** Result requires an even better roll again. The Result Level Table shows the Test Result range required to successfully achieve each different result level.

Better-than-Average result levels may give the character an extra reward for his efforts—additional information or clues, reduced armor for foes, and so on. The amount of gain for each result level is usually provided in the ability's description, but is ultimately determined by the gamemaster.

Leandra swings her sword at a charging Theran guard. The Difficulty Number to hit the guard 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 guard with a blow that punches right through his armor, ignoring the protection it would normally provide, and inflicting considerable damage on the unfortunate Theran.

TIME

Time is important in **Earthdawn**. A standard **day** is twenty-four hours long. A **week** is seven days, corresponding to the length of the Throalic week. (The Theran Empire, by comparison, measures the passage of time in five-day weeks.) Unless stated otherwise, all references to a week in the game rules are assumed to be a standard seven-day period.

A **month** is thirty days long. Each **year** has twelve months, with a separate five-day adjustment period in the middle of the year, bringing the total number of days per year to 365.

ROUND

A **round** is a time-keeping unit used to keep the action of the adventure flowing. It represents the time required to carry out most actions and equals approximately six seconds of game time.

During combat, a round of action is referred to as a **combat round**. See the **Combat** chapter, p. 214, for more information on what you can do during a combat round.

DISTANCES AND WEIGHTS

Throughout the **Earthdawn** game you will see references to distances and weights expressed in the Imperial system of inches, feet, yards, miles, pounds, and tons. Recognizing that many gamers are more familiar with the metric system, we have attempted to make conversions from Imperial to metric as simple as possible.

While not strictly accurate, Imperial units can be converted to metric units for game purposes as shown in the Distance/Weight Conversion Table. These approximations have been used to make the math simpler for 'on-the-fly' game calculations.

Most distances are given in yards in the **Earthdawn** game, making it a simple matter to replace "yards" with "meters" to get a (near) metric equivalent. This is especially useful when taking into account the tactical distances in which most action occurs in **Earthdawn**.

RESULT LEVEL TABLE

Difficulty Number	—Result— Pathetic	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent	Extraordinary
2	*	1	2–4	5–6	7–8	9+
3	*	1–2	3–5	6–7	8–9	10+
4	*	1–3	4–6	7–9	10–11	12+
5	1	2–4	5–7	8–10	11–13	14+
6	1	2–5	6–8	9–12	13–16	17+
7	1–2	3–6	7–10	11–14	15–18	19+
8	1–3	4–7	8–12	13–15	16–19	20+
9	1–4	5–8	9–14	15–17	18–21	22+
10	1–5	6–9	10–15	16–19	20–22	23+
11	1–5	6–10	11–16	17–20	21–24	25+
12	1–6	7–11	12–17	18–22	23–26	27+
13	1–6	7–12	13–19	20–24	25–28	29+
14	1–7	8–13	14–20	21–25	26–30	31+
15	1–8	9–14	15–22	23–26	27–30	31+
16	1–9	10–15	16–23	24–27	28–32	33+
17	1–10	11–16	17–24	25–29	30–33	34+
18	1–11	12–17	18–25	26–30	31–35	36+
19	1–11	12–18	19–27	28–32	33–36	37+
20	1–12	13–19	20–28	29–33	34–38	39+
21	1–13	14–20	21–29	30–35	36–40	41+
22	1–14	15–21	22–30	31–36	37–41	42+
23	1–15	16–22	23–32	33–37	38–42	43+
24	1–15	16–23	24–33	34–38	39–43	44+
25	1–16	17–24	25–34	35–40	41–45	46+
26	1–17	18–25	26–35	36–41	42–46	47+
27	1–18	19–26	27–36	37–42	43–48	49+
28	1–18	19–27	28–38	39–44	45–49	50+
29	1–20	21–28	29–39	40–45	46–50	51+
30	1–20	21–29	30–40	41–46	47–52	53+
31	1–21	22–30	31–41	42–47	48–53	54+
32	1–22	23–31	32–42	43–48	49–54	55+
33	1–23	24–32	33–44	45–50	51–56	57+
34	1–23	24–33	34–45	46–51	52–57	58+
35	1–24	25–34	35–46	47–52	53–59	60+
36	1–25	26–35	36–47	48–53	54–59	60+
37	1–26	27–36	37–48	49–55	56–61	62+
38	1–27	28–37	38–50	51–56	57–62	63+
39	1–28	29–38	39–51	52–57	58–63	64+
40	1–29	30–39	40–52	53–58	59–65	66+

* No such thing as a Pathetic result for this Difficulty Number, except if the **Rule of One**, p.15, is being used.

THE PASSIONS

Barsaivians worship twelve **Passions**, living, physical embodiments of the wishes, hopes, beliefs, and strongest emotions of Barsaive's people. A Passion is summoned wherever its ideals are strongly felt, grievously violated, or aggressively defended.

Some say the Passions are mysterious magical beings given control over pieces of people's lives by the universe. Some say they are the people's hopes given form by the legend that springs from the Namegivers' collective thoughts. Some say that whether a Passion exists or not is up to the believer alone, created by the moment. Whatever the truth, it cannot be denied that the Passions exist, wandering the roads, visiting Barsaive's towns, and touching people in thought and sometimes helping lift their burdens through gifts of healing, comfort, or strength.

The Passions do not appear in any single place or in any one form. Rather, they shape their surroundings and likenesses in a fashion that gives either slight clues or absolute certainty about their identity—the former when they set a test, the latter when they bring a message.

For more information on Passions and Questors, refer to the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.

QUESTORS

Even the Passions cannot be everywhere, tackling every task, healing every sick person, and inspiring every man to chop wood with renewed energy so he will have fuel to keep warm in winter. For this, they have their **questors**, Namegivers taking to the ideals of the Passions. Questors serve to bridge the gap between their patron Passions and the denizens of the world. To be a questor means to regard all of the Passions, but to quest for the ideals of one. The Passions grant magical powers to the questors , with which they inspire and help Barsaive's people.

MAGIC

The world of **Earthdawn** is touched by magic in every aspect. The tide of magic brought the Horrors into the world, but also enabled magicians to devise the means to protect people from them. Heroes wield powerful magical weapons that bear their own Names, and magic has allowed civilizations to be built and maintained as airships travel the sky and structures that defy the laws of physics are erected in the cities. There are a number of established magical theories, facts, and laws detailed below that are recognized by all scholars throughout Barsaive and the Theran Empire.

NAMES

Names hold power, and the ability to Name an object, place, or person bestows power over and a link to that object through magical means. Indeed, some say that because the Therans Named Barsaive when they made it their province, they will forever hold power over it, unless that Name is not used anymore and forgotten.

The power, imagination, and will to create things by Naming them is what makes the races of Barsaive and beyond **Namegivers**, even though other sentient beings exist. Most scholars also include the dragons among the Namegivers, although their abilities and motives are beyond the short-lived lives of the other races, and their numbers are few.

Patterns

Naming a thing or place solidifies what is called its magical pattern, stabilizing its ever-changing interaction with the world's magic. All living things have patterns, as do objects and places that have interacted with powerful magic or spawned mighty legends. When successfully Named, these items and places gain a sort of life of their own, and from then on are able to magically influence all with which they interact. The Name and knowledge of the deeds done with an item grant access to the power in such patterns. Heroes are famous for seeking out powerful magic items to research their patterns, which enables them to make use of these objects with greater efficiency.

THE PLANES

Besides what is known as the physical world, there are an infinite number of planes, domains, and realms—only accessible by magic—that are collectively known as the netherworlds. One of them is the origin of the Horrors, while others bear stranger life or none at all. Some have been visited by travelers and are known throughout the magical community, while more remain to be found and explored. Bizarre laws rule the netherworlds.

The netherworlds are home to various spirits, those of deceased Namegivers as well as those alien to the physical world. Many magicians have summoned these spirits to serve their whims, although they may appear without a summoner's call. They seldom have reason to do so, however, as their motives have passed beyond the physical world.

The Elemental Planes

Among the netherworlds are the five elemental planes. They are each mostly made up of one of the five True elements, the planes of air, earth, fire, water, and wood. Travelers cannot survive on these planes without powerful magic, and they are home only to elemental spirits.

The elemental planes are said to intersect with the physical world in numerous places, frequently attracting elemental spirits and leaving behind kernels of True elements that are gathered or mined to be used in enchantments. Orichalcum, a perfect combination of the True elements, is the most potent magical ingredient known.

DISTANCE/WEIGHT CONVERSION TABLE

Distance	
1 inch = 2.5 centimeters	
1 foot = 30 centimeters*	
1 yard = 0.9 meters**	
1 mile = 1.6 kilometers	
Weight	
2 pounds = 1 kilogram	
2 pints = 1 liter	
1 quart = 4 pints	
1 ton = 1,000 kilograms	
General	
1 foot = 12 inches	
1 yard or meter = 3 feet	
1 mile = 1,760 yards	
1 pound = 16 ounces	
1 ton = 2,000 pounds	

* Round to .33 meters
** Round to 1 meter

OPTIONAL RULES

By design, the **Earthdawn** game is extremely flexible. This means there are many places where more complex rules can be used by those who like more detail in their games. Throughout this book you will find sections presented as **optional rules**. These rules are intended for use only where the gamemaster and players feel they add to the overall playing experience. Often this requires trying the rule out for a while to see if it suits the group's playing style. We have presented a number of different rule options, but they are by no means the only ones available.

Another reason for including optional rules is for those players using older published rulebooks and supplements. Some optional rules in this book are actually standard rules for earlier editions of the **Earthdawn** game. They are included here for players and gamemasters who prefer to use them.

Blood Magic

Blood magic is magic fueled by the life force of a living being, and as such is even available to individuals who cannot wield magic by spell or other natural ability, as every living thing has a life force. Blood magic comes at a price, though, as the life force nourishing it is weakened while the magic is in effect. There are two main forms of blood magic: life magic and death magic.

Life magic is the sacrifice of small amounts of life energy to create or uphold minor magical effects. The most common ways of using it are to empower minor magical items known as **blood charms,** or to spill blood during a ritual to strengthen its effects or make oaths binding.

Death magic usually results in the death of the donor of life force, and often the donation is not voluntarily (if it is voluntary, the term Sacrifice Magic is sometimes used instead). Dark rumors are spoken of the Therans' use of blood magic, wasting away the lives of their slaves to empower great rituals and propel their magical vessels.

Legends

Legends, tales, and stories are said to play a major part in the balance of all things magical. As all things interact with magic, so does the telling of heroes' legendary deeds, of tales and news from faraway places, and of stories from olden times. As a city is shaped by the actions of its inhabitants, as a company grows rich and influential by the efforts of its founders and employees, so does a magical pattern grow by the attention it receives when its tale is told.

The people of Barsaive recognize someone's or something's legend as a measure of that object or person's strength, its status in the world of magic. Thus, people strive to make their legend noteworthy, to be recognized in the way they deem right and remembered in the centuries to come. Many of the strongest magics of Barsaive and the Theran Empire, whether magical items or famous places, are part of the greatest legends told to this very day.

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, many cities and nations fell to the Horrors' power. Some individuals and communities embraced dark magics to defend themselves, some 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. Many 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**.

Taint and Corruption

While the forces of magic were never to be fooled around with, the forming and channeling of raw magical energy always exacting a toll from the user, the Scourge has changed much of the magical energy in the physical world. The destruction wrought by a Horror or caused by its mere presence can spoil life and magical energies, and during the Scourge, the Horrors were everywhere. As a result, using magical energies became dangerous for magicians



after leaving the shelters (which were safe as long as no Horror had entered them, as they were shielded against tainted magical energies). Using magic in an unsafe area could not only seriously harm the magician, but could even attract Horrors. Thus, magical constructs called matrices were devised as a way to filter the most dangerous parts of taint from the magical energies. Spells became less powerful, but could be used very safely. Not using matrices can ease the casting of a spell, but using magic in its raw and now tainted form often spells doom for the magician.

Traces of Taint

While the taint of magical energies is only visible to those with command over magic, the physical representation of the Horrors' corruption can sometimes be observed by mundane means. The taint and corruption caused by any one particular Horror is unique to it, but there are often common themes to the taint. For example, a Horror lairing in a natural environment might cause plants and animals in the vicinity to become mutated and wicked, resembling undead life or the terrible constructs that Horrors forge. In such an environment, animals may become hostile, stone may develop sharp edges, and even plants may lash out at explorers, spreading newly developed poisons.

The most dangerous form of corruption is that of Namegivers, though. People under the influence of a Horror might open their kaers' doors at the Horror's command or start to slaughter innocents to satisfy the Horror's hunger for misery. Horrors can even mark the patterns of living things, thus exerting greater control over a person, thing, or place. Such corruption is difficult to detect, but a great many people believe the loss of beauty and the inability to create art is a clear sign or corruption, as Horrors do not seem to be able to create, only mimic and despoil.

NAMEGIVER RACES

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

• Seethian, Windling Thief •

Many different species and races of sentient beings populate the world of **Earthdawn**. They vary in size and shape, color and culture, and together bring the game world to life. These races are all Namegivers. Barsaive is home to eight Namegiver races, while more races are rumored to exist in the Theran Empire and the lands beyond. Besides the human race there are dwarfs, elves, orks, trolls, and even more exotic races such as the obsidimen, windlings, and the t'skrang. The descriptions in this chapter provide basic information about each of the races populating the province of Barsaive.

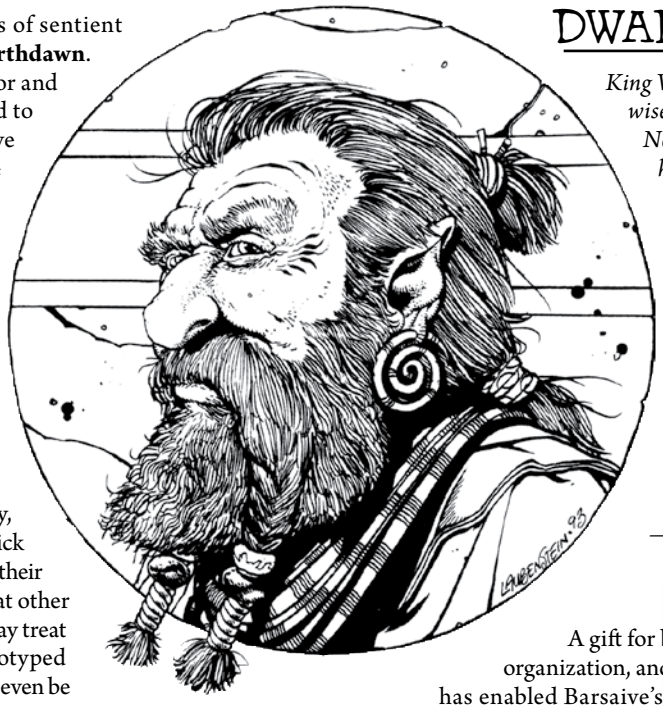
These descriptions contain broad generalizations. Though we may say that orks are slow thinking but quick tempered, you may choose to play your character differently, creating an ork who is quick thinking and quick tempered. Players are always free to customize their characters. When roleplaying, remember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

In addition, many settlements in Barsaive are actually composed of several different races, so the types of settlements outlined below indicate each race's preferred living arrangement and are not always followed by members of those races. This mixing largely began in the kaers, as many settlements and groups had to band together to afford to build the expensive shelters they would need to survive. Single-race settlements fitting these descriptions certainly exist, but are not all there is in Barsaive by any means.

Also included in this chapter is game information needed for character creation. See the **Creating Characters** chapter, p.25, for a full explanation of how to use this information.

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. However, the libraries in the ancient realm of Landis tell us that all Namegivers were born of magic acting upon the human bloodline.

—Kallarian of Jerris



DWARFS

King Varulus III was a wise ruler. Young King Neden seems a bit hasty in his policies. We need to trade with everyone 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

A gift for building, large-scale organization, and unwavering loyalty has enabled Barsaive's dwarfs to forge the greatest nation in the province, as well as found other towns, trade compacts, and a host of business enterprises. Dwarfs tend to lend their loyalty to families and clans, and large families are an important aspect of dwarf culture that often has four generations living under one roof, as dwarfs have an average lifespan of 100 years. Of short and stocky build, dwarfs have a connection to the earth and dislike traveling on airships, riverboats, and tall animals. Dwarfs have 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 in abundance, particularly the hair on their heads. Dwarfs are broad chested, tough, and strong for their size. They are 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.

Though their social instincts comfortably embrace the idea of kingdoms and nations, a dwarf's first loyalty is to family and tribe. While loyal and efficient, they are often 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.

Dwarfs prefer to live underground or as close to the earth as possible. While not adverse to travel and life above ground, they sometimes develop a "home sickness" for subterranean life. Dwarfs generally dislike traveling on riding animals, as their short legs make them ungainly riders. Their short legs also make them poor swimmers, so they dislike traveling over open water.

GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 12, TOU 13, PER 10, WIL 10, CHA 8
Movement Rate: 5 — **Karma Modifier:** 4

RACIAL ABILITIES

Dwarfs possess the following racial ability:

Heat Sight: Characters with Heat Sight can visually perceive heat emitted by another character or object. Different degrees of heat translate into different colors; the color of an object depends on the heat difference between it and its surroundings. Extreme differences show the warmer object as white, the scale thereafter going through red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and finally violet for minute differences.

Heat Sight is not active all the time. A character may activate and deactivate it using a Simple Action, whereupon it replaces normal vision. Active Heat Sight impairs the perception of details unaffected by temperature. Magical effects that prohibit normal sight, for example magical darkness, also affect Heat Sight, and Heat Sight does not penetrate objects.

ELVES

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.

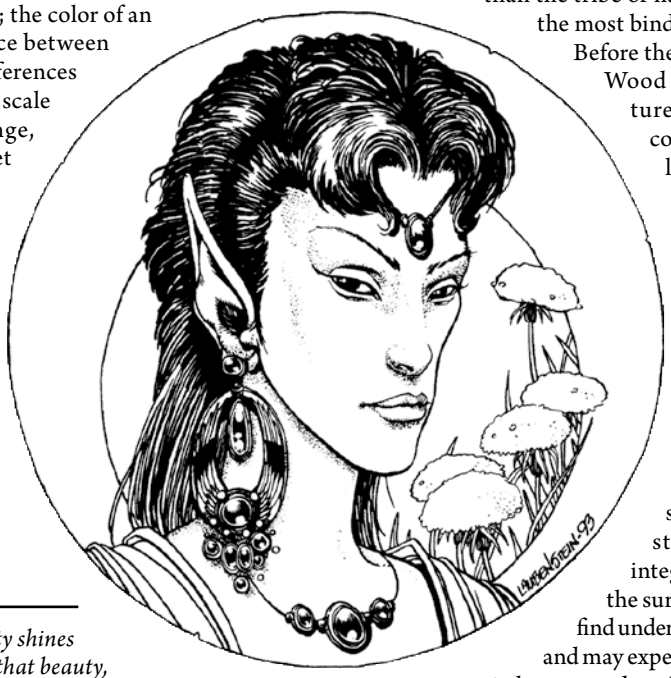
—The Elementalist Furnithann
in a letter to his friend, the Nethermancer Mestoph

Most of Barsaive's elves felt cultural loyalty to the Court of Wyrm Wood before the Scourge, though its self-inflicted corruption has made most of them turn away from the queen and the ways of the court. Most elven settlements, usually located in remote areas and forests, govern themselves today and either preserve pre-Scourge elven culture or enter an exchange with their non-elf neighbors. Many elves that left Wyrm Wood when Queen Alachia rejected Theran Protection went to live in Barsaive's major cities. After the Scourge, many were among the first to leave the cities to form small communities in the wilds.

Elves revere the beauty of nature and welcome living in open environs, leaving non-elf communities to live with friends or family in a more natural community a couple of times per year. Many who stick to elven traditions follow the Wheel of Life, a series of five spiritual paths that enables the elf to achieve self-reflection and perfection.

Elves grow to an average height of 6 feet 3 inches, and weigh an average 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 three hundred years. Some records show individuals living up to four hundred years. Legends speak of some elves rumored to live even longer.



Elves give their primary loyalty to their family, rather than the tribe or nation, and consider blood ties the most binding relationship of their lives. Before the Scourge, the Court at Wyrm Wood stood as the center of elf culture. Since the Scourge, and the corruption of Wyrm Wood, this loyalty has generally been replaced by a sorrow for what has been lost.

Elves 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 prefer living in wilderness areas and constructing dwellings and other structures from living plants, integrating their community with the surrounding natural world. Elves 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.

GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 12, STR 10, TOU 8, PER 11, WIL 11, CHA 11
Movement Rate: 7 — **Karma Modifier:** 4

RACIAL ABILITIES

Elves possess the following racial ability:

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 30-yard by 30-yard 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. Complete darkness—the complete absence of light—will render a character with Low-Light Vision unable to see, like other characters requiring normal vision.

A character's Low-Light Vision is not activated at will; this racial ability automatically comes into effect when illumination is reduced below the level of normal daylight.

HUMANS

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

Without any unified human kingdoms left, Barsaive's humans have scattered all over Barsaive, their innate flexibility to live in any environment enabling them to live alongside all the other races of Barsaive. Where several races live in one place, such as in the cities, humans are often the ones that can create a middle ground or broker the deal between members of other races whose different temperaments create friction. They are seldom the largest racial group in a community and are not as comfortable building and living in great nations as dwarfs are, but they fill the niches left open by other races, and can often rise to influential positions, especially those that do not require specialization, but generalization. A few all-human cultures with unique lifestyles exist, but they are comparatively small.



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 seventy-five years, though individuals have been known to live one hundred 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.

Humans display a wider variety of cultural practices than any other race in Barsaive. As a result, few generalizations about human culture can be made.

GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 10, WIL 10, CHA 10
Movement Rate: 6 — **Karma Modifier:** 5

RACIAL ABILITIES

Humans possess the following racial ability:

Versatility: Human adepts have a special racial talent available to them from First Circle: Versatility. This talent allows them to learn talents from Disciplines other than their own (see the **Talents** chapter, p. 85, for a full description). Human adepts starting play with no Ranks assigned to their Versatility talent know it at Rank 0. They may purchase Ranks for it during the game using Legend Points, just like other talents. Non-adept humans cannot learn the Versatility talent.

OBSIDIMEN

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 a race whose very tissue is stone-like in appearance. Obsidimen are sexless, though they often adopt a gender; they are born of their Liferocks, large stone formations inhabited by powerful elemental earth spirits, and usually found in Barsaive's wild areas, especially in mountainous regions. Obsidimen from the same Liferock call themselves a brotherhood and usually resemble each other and the Liferock in both coloration and texture of skin, as well as in spirit. Regularly, they travel home to meet with their Brotherhood and merge with the Liferock in communion.

While many who meet their first obsidiman assume he is made of stone, obsidimen are creatures of flesh and blood like any other, although they are quite resilient to the effects of weather and injury. They tend to be slow when approaching mundane matters, and the hastiness of some other races unsettles them, as they prefer to take their time and make careful decisions. Though when angered–which only regularly happens if someone insults their Liferock or threatens innocent life–the strong obsidimen are a terror to behold.

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 the most common coloration is black or gray. The skin of a few obsidimen shows veins of semi-precious stone, such as tourmaline. Obsidimen are mostly hairless and have internal ears completely covered by a thin layer of skin. Their blood, unlike that of most Namegiver races, is a bluish gray.

Obsidimen mature over the first century of their life, which they spend attached to their Liferocks. During this time, the obsidiman communes with the elemental spirit of his Liferock and the other obsidimen attached to it in a state called the Dreaming. After this learning period, he is given his Name, and is free to travel the land as he wishes. Obsidimen will return to their Liferocks from time to time to share their experiences with their Brotherhoods. As they age, obsidimen spend more and more time attached to their Liferocks; they may spend decades showing no sign of being aware of their surroundings, then emerge again in a time of crisis. The average obsidiman has a lifespan of approximately nine hundred years, but many of an obsidiman's later centuries will be spent attached to his Liferock.

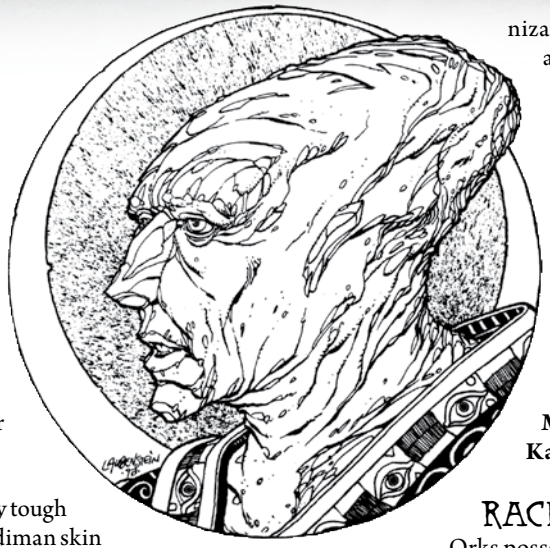
GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 8, STR 18, TOU 13,
PER 9, WIL 10, CHA 9
Movement Rate: 5
Karma Modifier: 3

RACIAL ABILITIES

Obsidimen possess the following racial abilities:

Increased Wound Threshold: Add +3 to the Wound Threshold of obsidimen to represent this race's inherent resistance to damage from their stone-like skin.



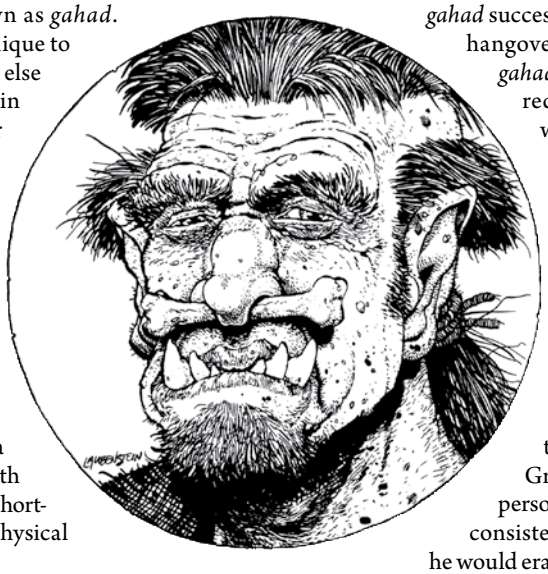
Natural Armor: Obsidimen have very tough skin, which serves them as armor. Obsidiman skin has a Physical Armor Rating of 3. Obsidimen can only wear other types of living armor, which add their protection to the character's Natural Armor. (See **Armor and Shields**, p.254; types of armor considered "living" are indicated as such in the armor's description.)

ORKS

Dwarfs pay well, but I don't like their attitude. Of course, I don't like most peoples' attitudes.

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

As tall as elves and with similarly pointed ears, but more muscular than humans, orks often are a fearsome sight when angered—which their elongated lower canines serve to enhance. They anger quickly indeed, due to a feature known as *gahad*. An ork's *gahad* is an individual reflex unique to each ork that can be awoken by someone else saying or doing "that one wrong thing" in the ork's presence, and the ork can either give in to it, be driven to resolve the situation, or try to restrain himself. While inconvenient for other races, orks consider *gahad* as a sign of being alive, an energy from deep within that burns as the heart pounds whenever necessary.



Orks are passionate, freedom-loving people, often gathering in tribes or clans that travel in a nomadic fashion, living fast and intense, hoping their deaths will make a good story. Orks are fires that burn fast; with only 40 years, their average lifespan is the shortest of all the races. As such, they reach physical maturity in their early teens.

Orks have a powerful build, 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. 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 war chief and the shaman. Most ork tribes live in tents as nomads, but will willingly inhabit any kind of dwelling.

GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 13, TOU 11,
PER 10, WIL 8, CHA 9
Movement Rate: 6
Karma Modifier: 5

RACIAL ABILITIES

Orks possess the following racial abilities:

Gahad: *Gahad* is a sensation similar to intense heartburn, triggered in orks by certain circumstances or situations, causing them to feel a drive to eradicate the situation triggering the *gahad* or take revenge on the perpetrator. Each ork experiences *gahad* in response to unique circumstances or stimuli. The player should specify two impulses that trigger *gahad*, summed up in short sentences. For example, a player might specify that "Grisalk's *gahad* is triggered when his mother is insulted." The player may specify limits or exceptions for these triggers, for example that "Grisalk's *gahad* is triggered when his mother is insulted, except by someone in the family."

When his *gahad* is triggered, the player may choose to have his character give in to it or may try to resist the impulse.

To resist *gahad*, the character has to succeed at a Willpower (6) Test, but requires a Result Level that depends on the severity of the trigger, determined by the gamemaster. In the above example, an ambiguous comment about Grisalk's mother would only require an Average Result, while an obvious and vicious obscenity would require an Extraordinary Result. Resisting, or swallowing, *gahad* successfully causes a *gahad* hangover. A *gahad* hangover begins within an hour of swallowing *gahad* and lasts for one hour per Result Level required on the Willpower Test, starting with one hour for an Average Result up to four hours for an Extraordinary Result. A hangover manifests as localized pains and cramps, headaches, and in extreme cases, hallucinations about the object of the trigger. While it lasts, the character is considered Harried (p.227).

When giving in to *gahad* or when failing to resist it, the character is driven to end the stimuli that triggered *gahad* or to take revenge on a character that caused it. In the above example, Grisalk would react violently towards the person who insulted his mother or, if the insult consisted of an obscene picture drawn on a wall, he would erase the picture. This drive lasts for as long as the hangover would have lasted, regardless of whether or not a resistance test was attempted, and grants the character a +1 bonus to any Action or Effect Test made towards ending the stimulus or taking revenge, for example to attack the insulting party or tear down the wall.

Gahad is meant to be a roleplaying element. ***Gahad* is not intended to be a game mechanic giving orks a test bonus on every flimsy excuse.** The use and application of *gahad*, and the bonuses or penalties it confers, are always at the discretion of the gamemaster.

Low-Light Vision: Like elves, ork characters have the racial Low-Light Vision ability (see p.20).

TROLLS

Take no backtalk 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.

—Captain Larus Baldurion, Sky Raider, making his traditional speech to a new crew



Towering over even the obsidimen, whom they call rock brothers, trolls stand at about eight and a half feet, with an average weight of 500 pounds or more. They originate on Barsaive's mountain ranges where they live in clannish societies, as often as not making a living from numerous raids. Many feature protruding lower canines like orks, but their most exceptional feature is the pair of horns that grow from their skulls. The most important aspect of a troll's life is honor, which a troll extends to his family and clan–and, in case of city-dwelling trolls, to neighbors and nations, although to a lesser degree.

Strong and tough, trolls live into their fifties on average, though some trolls have lived into their seventies. 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 that forms 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 are fiercely loyal to their families or clans. The clans of the Twilight Peaks, which have organized themselves into moots—alliances of clans—are the largest troll population in Barsaive, feared for their raids but admired for their skills at building airships and crafting crystal items. 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 often prompts trolls to choose sites near Liferocks for trollmoots.

Troll culture places great value on honor, dividing it into three concepts: *katorr, kat'ral*, and *katera*. These terms can be roughly translated as personal, clan, and racial honor. Each troll defines and values these concepts in different ways, but nearly all trolls place some value on honor, and will fiercely defend it if they believe it has been slighted.

GAME INFORMATION

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 10, STR 14, TOU 12, PER 9, WIL 11, CHA 10
Movement Rate: 7
Karma Modifier: 3

RACIAL ABILITIES

Trolls possess the following racial abilities:

Heat Sight: Like dwarfs, troll characters have the racial Heat Sight ability (see p.20).

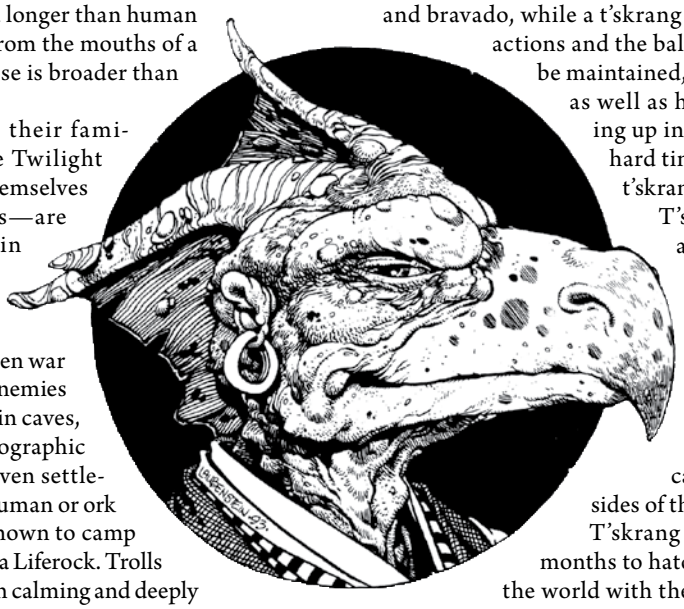
T'SKRANG

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 pirate Theormaz

T'skrang are reptilian beings with a flair for the dramatic. Having an affinity for water, they live along Barsaive's waterways and sometimes in domed structures underwater that can be reached only via towers that break the surface. These towers often have facilities to dock the riverboats the t'skrang use to trade on the Serpent River. T'skrang communities, called *nialls*, are tight knit, living close together and communally sharing the profits of their trade expeditions, daily food, care of the young, and hatching of their eggs.

T'skrang spiritual concepts center around fearlessness, passion, and bravado, while a t'skrang knows that the right measure of actions and the balance of self and community is to be maintained, so his actions may benefit others as well as himself. Members of races growing up in small individual families have a hard time understanding relationships a t'skrang takes for granted.



T'skrang 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 pounds is 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.

T'skrang lay eggs, which take eight to ten months to hatch. The young t'skrang come into the world with their gender unknown. When they reach physical maturity after the first decade of life, their sex is revealed during puberty. The average t'skrang lifespan is eighty 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 years. T'skrang scholars blame this variance on faulty dwarf calculations, which the dwarfs vigorously deny.

T'skrang prefer to live in roofed dwellings along bodies of water, and often 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 give primary loyalty to their families, called *nialls*, or foundations. The *niall* is matriarchal, led by the eldest female in the foundation, called a *lahala*. A t'skrang village usually consists of between four and twenty *nialls*, who share responsibility for the focus of village life: the riverboat. Villages will occasionally band together to form trading companies, with the largest being called *aropagoi*, or Great Houses, led by a *shivalahala*. The *aropagoi* are the closest thing to a nation the t'skrang have built for themselves.

T'skrang consider members of the other Namegiver races rather dull and boring. In turn, most other Namegiver 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.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 11, STR 10, TOU 11, PER 10, WIL 10, CHA 11
Movement Rate: 6 — **Karma Modifier:** 4

Racial Abilities

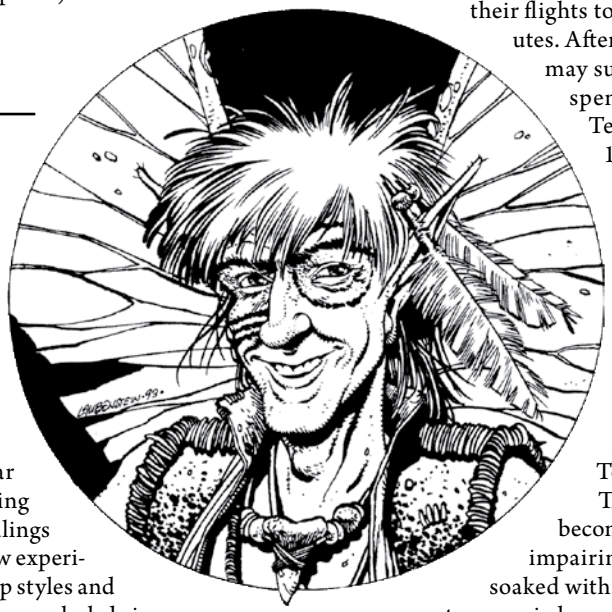
T'skrang possess the following racial ability:

Tail Combat: T'skrang often make use of their tails when engaged in combat. A t'skrang can use his tail to whip at opponents in unarmed combat much like striking with an arm or kicking with a leg, using an appropriate unarmed combat talent or skill for any Attack Tests. The Damage Step used is the character's Strength Step, unless modified by abilities that enhance unarmed combat Damage. A t'skrang may also latch a melee weapon of up to Size 2 to his tail, and this is treated as an Attached Weapon (see p.248). Tail Combat allows t'skrang to use the Combat Options of Tail Attack and Tail Parry (see p.226).

Windlings

"Wheeeeeeeeeee!"

—Poorht the Thief, as he fled for his life after stealing the dagger of Captain Larus Baldurion, Sky Raider



Windlings are small winged creatures. Only 18 inches in height and weighing an average of 13 pounds, windlings take to the skies by two pairs of wings similar to those of a dragonfly. While living in clans in the deepest forest, windlings regularly travel the land to gain new experiences, meet new people, and pick up styles and traditions unknown to their homes, regularly bringing them back to incorporate into clan society. While seen as pranksters, windlings often have a "live and let live" attitude, revere freedom, and abhor slavery. Their fragile natures makes windlings perceptive to dangers that larger races would not even consider as such, and their senses extend as far as the magical world, but their curiosity distracts them just as often.

If not caught unaware by too many distractions, windlings can live to their average lifespan of 170 years, but they are not considered adults before their thirties. Their appearance does not age during this time.

A windling's skin color matches the brightest-colored elements of the environment in which it lives: icy white in a snow cap, the yellow and orange of meadow flowers, the glazed blue of the ceramic roof tiles of the city of Travar. Skin 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.

Windling society can best be described as haphazard. Windlings often speak of a class of nobles who rule them. Although 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 makes comfortable.

Game Information

Starting Attribute Values:
DEX 11, STR 4, TOU 8, PER 11, WIL 10, CHA 12
Movement Rate: 3/8* — **Karma Modifier:** 6
* Flying Movement Rate

Racial Abilities

Windlings possess the following racial abilities:

Astral Sight: All windlings have access to the Astral Sight Talent (see p.61). Windling adepts starting play with no Ranks assigned to their Astral Sight talent know it at Rank 0. They may purchase Ranks for it during the game using Legend Points, just like other talents, treating it as a talent of First Circle.

Flight: Windlings can fly, but it is not their primary method of movement. Flying windlings tire quickly and usually limit their flights to short periods of around twenty minutes. After twenty minutes of flying, a windling may suffer Strain. Every additional minute spent in flight requires a Toughness (5) Test. Failure means the character takes 1 Strain. Each five-minute period spent flying beyond the initial twenty minutes adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of the Toughness Test. Short interruptions do not reset the time spent flying, they only reduce it on a one-to-one basis: a windling who has spent twenty minutes in flight and then rests five minutes to avoid taking Strain can only continue flying for five more minutes before having to make Toughness Tests again.

Though windling wings are durable, they become heavy and fragile when wet, severely impairing the windling's ability to fly. When soaked with water, for example after falling into a stream or in heavy rain, the duration of Flight is reduced from twenty to five minutes, and the Difficulty Number of the Toughness Tests increases by +2 every minute, instead of every five minutes. When flying with wet wings, the windling is considered Harried (see p.227). Windling wings dry within ten minutes of being in a dry place, or within five minutes of being in a warm place, such as in front of an open fire.

Increased Physical Defense: The natural mobility of windlings, combined with their small size, adds +2 to their Physical Defense.

CHAPTER FOUR

CREATING CHARACTERS

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 the hope that calling them heroes will make it so.

• King Varulus III of Throal •

A player character in **Earthdawn** is similar to a character in a novel or a movie. The character is part of a story, 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 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 skills, 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 an 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 should now know what roleplaying in **Earthdawn** involves. You have a feel for the history of the world and its races. You've read about another group of adventurers' travels and encounters in the province of Barsaive. 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**.

Creating a character follows a series of ten Steps:

1. Choose a Discipline
2. Choose a Race
3. Generate Attributes
4. Determine Characteristics
5. Record Racial Abilities
6. Assign Talent Ranks and Spells
7. Assign Skill Ranks
8. Equip the Character
9. Flesh out the Character
10. Play the Game!

Each Step is described in detail below, demonstrating the process at each stage by creating a sample character. Once you reach Step ten, finish filling out your Character Record Sheet. Your character now stands ready to become a hero.

GETTING STARTED

In addition to a blank Character Record Sheet and a pen or pencil, you will need another sheet of paper (useful for making notes to enter on your Character Record Sheet). 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** (p. 35), **Talents** (p. 57), and **Skills** (p. 87) chapters.

Many decisions made when creating a character are affected by other decisions; your choice of race affects your Attributes, your choice of Discipline affects the talents available to your character, and so on. It's better to have all the facts before you start, rather than be disappointed later on as a result of making uninformed choices.

CHARACTER RECORD SHEET

As you create your character, fill in the appropriate spaces on a Character Record Sheet. A reproducible copy is provided with this book, or one can be downloaded from our web site at earthdawn.com.

You have permission to make as many personal copies of the Character Record Sheet as you need for your games. Bear in mind that the set of sheets provided is fairly flexible—you won't need all pages for a beginning character, but you might want to add additional pages as your character advances or learns additional Disciplines. For example, the Grimoire page is only used by spellcasters and the Discipline page isn't needed until your character reaches Fourth or Fifth Circle.

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 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.

The fifteen most common **Earthdawn** Disciplines are described in the **Disciplines** chapter, p. 35.

Circle

Next to 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—write a "1" on the Circle line of your Character Record Sheet. Some day, assuming things go the character's way, he could even reach Fifteenth Circle!

Sebastian is ready to create his first Earthdawn character. While flipping through the pages of the Player's Guide, he is thrilled when he sees the Elementalist Discipline description. Fascinated by what he reads, Sebastian decides his first character will be an Elementalist.

Choose a Race

Once you select a Discipline, the next Step is to choose your character's race. The different races populating the world of **Earthdawn** are described in the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19.

Playing a character with wings opens up a lot of possibilities—especially for a magician—so Sebastian chooses the windling Namegiver race for his character.

Generate Attributes

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 greater or lesser 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 fine-motor control, in order to follow his Discipline faithfully. A Nethermancer needs a high Willpower Value, not only to make the effectiveness of his spells more powerful, but also to keep the spirits he summons in check.

Attribute Descriptions

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

Dexterity (DEX)

Dexterity measures your character's agility, speed, and hand-to-eye coordination. Dexterity determines your character's basic ability to engage in and avoid physical attacks.

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

Strength (STR)

Strength measures a character's muscle power. It determines the base damage inflicted by physical attacks, what weapons he can use, and how much a character can lift and carry.

Important For: Warrior

Toughness (TOU)

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.

Important For: Sky Raider

Perception (PER)

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 avoiding the effects of spells.

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

Willpower (WIL)

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: Beastmaster, Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, Weaponsmith, Wizard

Charisma (CHA)

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

Important For: Air Sailor, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, Swordmaster, Troubadour

Assign Attribute Points

Every character starts with the Attribute Values for his race, as outlined in the **Namegiver Races** chapter (p. 19). Each player receives 25 Attribute Points which he uses to modify his character's Attributes. The Attribute Point cost for doing so appears in the Attribute Modifier Cost Table.

A player can also lower an Attribute to gain more Attribute Points, as outlined on the Additional Attribute Points Table.

Sebastian notes that Perception and Willpower are the important Attributes for an Elementalist. He decides to provide his windling with high Perception and Willpower Values and checks the beginning racial values for windlings. Windlings start with a Perception Value of 11 and a Willpower Value of 10. He adds +5 to his Perception and +6 to his Willpower, so that both Attributes will have values of 16. Sebastian has spent 16 of his 25 Attribute Points. Now Sebastian wants his windling to have average values on the remaining Attributes. He calculates that he cannot afford that with his remaining 9 Attribute Points and chooses to have a low Strength Value. His character is a flying magician—hopefully he won't need to make regular use of that Attribute. Windlings start with a Strength Value of 4 and Sebastian decides to leave it there. He adds +3 to his Dexterity and +1 to his Toughness at a cost of 4 Attribute Points to end up with a 14 for Dexterity and 9 for Toughness. He has spent 20 Attribute Points so far, so he adds +4 to his Charisma for the remaining 5 points. As a windling, this gives him an above-average Charisma of 16. The windling Elementalist is a good magician with a thick hide. Even for a windling, he is weak, which suggests he might perhaps be a little overweight. Sebastian decides that his windling is somewhat sluggish when it comes to physical work, making others do it for him when he can.

Unused Attribute Points

Sometimes, a player will have leftover Attribute Points after purchasing his character's Attribute Values. Any unused Purchase Points convert into additional Maximum Karma Points at a one-to-one ratio. See **Karma**, p.29, for more information. Note that this is one-way; you can not sacrifice Maximum Karma Points to gain additional Attribute Points.

If Sebastian had not spent all of his Attribute Points, for example if he wanted to give his windling a Charisma Value of 14, he would have 3 Attribute Points remaining. Instead of

spending them on increasing other attributes, he would have the choice to have his Maximum Karma Points be 3 higher than they normally would be.

Record Values and Step Numbers

After determining your Attributes, consult the Characteristics Table for each Attribute Value to determine your character's Attribute Steps. Record the Value and Step Number beside each Attribute on your Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian notes Attribute Values and Step Numbers on his windling's Character Record Sheet, after consulting the Characteristics Table (the value in parentheses is the character's Attribute Value):

DEX (14): 6	*STR (4): 3*	*TOU (9): 4*
PER (16): 7	*WIL (16): 7*	*CHA (16): 7*

Determine Characteristics

A character's Attribute Values determine his **characteristics**, the abilities that allow him to accomplish things in the game. These values determine how well the character defends against various kinds of attacks, how much damage he can take before falling unconscious or dying, how far he can move each round, how much he can carry, and so on. Consult the Characteristics Table to find the value for each characteristic.

Armor Ratings

Physical Armor represents the value of the physical protection the character wears or carries. Physical Armor is not listed on the Characteristics Table because it is not based on an Attribute. It helps defend against physical attacks by modifying the amount of physical damage the character takes from attacks. The Physical Armor Rating combines the protection provided by purchased and worn armor and shields. With the exception of the obsidiman Natural Armor racial ability, p.22, a character's Physical Armor Rating is based solely on the armor he wears and the shield he carries.

Mystic Armor helps protect the character from some magical attacks, such as spells, by immediately reducing the spell's damage. For example, 4 points of Mystic Armor reduces the damage from many spells by –4 Damage Points per attack. The character's Willpower Value determines his natural Mystic Armor Rating. Certain equipment, such as crystal armor or shields, will improve this value.

Record the character's Mystic Armor Rating on his Character Record Sheet. You may decide instead to simply note this rating on a separate sheet of paper until after you purchase equipment for your character, because the equipment bought may modify the Mystic Armor Rating. Record the character's Physical Armor Rating after you purchase armor and equipment for your character.

Sebastian figures his windling Elementalist is likely to need only light armor for protection, but he decides to skip filling in his character's Physical Armor Rating until he has chosen what armor he will purchase. Based on his Willpower Value of 16, the Elementalist's natural Mystic Armor Rating is 2.

Defense Ratings

The **Physical Defense Rating** represents a character's ability to dodge a physical attack. Based on the character's Dexterity Value, Physical Defense serves as the Difficulty Number an attacker must overcome when making a physical Attack Test against the character. For example, an attack made against a character with a Physical Defense of 6 is successful if the Attack Test result is 6 or more.

A character's **Spell Defense Rating** represents his innate ability to avoid a spell. Based on the character's Perception value, his Spell Defense Rating is the Difficulty Number a magician must overcome when making a magical Attack Test against the character.

Based on his Charisma Value, the **Social Defense Rating** represents a character's chance to know when he is being lied to or manipulated by others. In this sense, a lie is an intentional deception, as opposed to a falsehood told through ignorance, and is therefore tested against the character's ability to believe it. The dwarf to whom your character is talking may genuinely believe that he is the best *hach'var* player in Throal, even if he's not; Social Defense would not help a character detect that the dwarf's statement is false. However, if the dwarf was intentionally trying to deceive someone into believing his sporting prowess when the same dwarf didn't believe it himself, then the character's Social Defense would be the Difficulty Number for the dwarf's Action Test to make the character believe him.

Some races receive special modifiers to their Defense ratings (see the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19). Record the character's

Attribute Modifier Cost Table

Modifier	Attribute Point Cost
+1	1
+2	2
+3	3
+4	5
+5	7
+6	9
+7	12
+8	15

Additional Attribute Points Table

Modifier	Attribute Point Cost
–1	+1
–2	+2



modified Physical, Spell, and Social Defense Ratings on his Character Record Sheet.

Based on his Dexterity Value of 14, Sebastian's character has a Physical Defense of 10, taking into account his windling Increased Physical Defense racial ability, which adds +2 to his base Physical Defense. Spell Defense is based on his Perception value of 16, so the Elementalist has a Spell Defense of 9. His Charisma Value of 16 gives him a Social Defense of 9.

HEALTH RATINGS

Based on his Toughness Value, a character's Health Ratings determine how much damage he can take before being knocked unconscious, taking a serious wound, or dying. Health Ratings also determine how quickly a character heals.

The **Death Rating** represents the number of Damage Points required to kill a character. When his Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating, the character dies. The **Unconsciousness Rating** represents the amount of cumulative damage it takes to knock a character out. When the character's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Unconsciousness Rating, he falls unconscious. Because this value is lower than his Death Rating, a character will usually pass out before dying.

Any single attack that inflicts a number of Damage Points at least equal to a character's **Wound Threshold** also inflicts a Wound. Wounds heal more slowly than normal damage and reduce the character's ability to perform actions. **Recovery Tests** refers to the number of Recovery Tests a character may make each day. When characters use their Recovery Tests they roll a number of Action Dice based on their Toughness Step to determine how many Damage Points they recover—the amount of damage healed. Wounds impair the character's ability to recover damage. Recovery Tests can also be used to fuel some magical abilities. See **Resolving Attacks**, p.218, and **Effects of Injury**, p.220, for more information on how to inflict (and recover from) damage.

Some races receive special modifiers for damage and recovery (see the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19). Record the character's Health Ratings on his Character Record Sheet.

CHARACTERISTICS TABLE

	Initiative DEX	*Defense Ratings* DEX/PER/CHA	*Encumbrance* STR	*Health Ratings* TOU				*Armor* WIL
Attribute Value	**Step Number**	**Physical / Spell / Social Defense**	**Carrying Capacity (lbs)**	**Death Rating**	**Uncon. Rating**	**Wound Threshold**	**Recovery Tests (per day)**	**Mystic Armor**
1	2	2	5	19	10	3	½ days	0
2	2	3	10	20	11	4	½ days	0
3	2	3	15	22	13	4	1	0
4	3	4	20	23	14	5	1	0
5	3	4	25	24	15	5	1	0
6	3	4	30	26	17	6	1	0
7	4	5	40	27	18	6	1	0
8	4	5	50	28	19	7	2	0
9	4	6	60	30	21	7	2	0
10	5	6	70	31	22	8	2	0
11	5	7	80	32	24	8	2	1
12	5	7	95	34	26	9	2	1
13	6	7	110	35	27	9	2	1
14	6	8	125	36	28	10	3	2
15	6	8	140	38	30	10	3	2
16	7	9	160	39	31	11	3	2
17	7	9	180	40	32	11	3	3
18	7	10	200	42	34	12	3	3
19	8	10	230	43	35	12	3	3
20	8	10	260	44	36	13	4	4
21	8	11	290	46	39	13	4	4
22	9	11	330	47	40	13	4	4
23	9	12	370	48	41	14	4	5
24	9	12	410	50	43	14	4	5
25	10	13	460	51	44	15	4	5
26	10	13	510	52	45	15	5	6
27	10	13	560	54	47	15	5	6
28	11	14	620	55	48	16	5	6
29	11	14	680	56	49	16	5	7
30	11	15	740	58	51	17	5	7

Overall, the different Health Ratings tell Sebastian how much trauma his character can take before dying. He checks the Characteristics Table, looking up his Elementalist's Toughness Value of 9. The windling has a Death Rating of 30, a Wound Threshold of 7, an Unconsciousness Rating of 21, and he can make 2 Recovery Tests per Day at Step 4/D6, his Toughness Step.

INITIATIVE

A character's **Initiative Step** determines when he acts during a combat round. The Initiative Step is equal to the character's Dexterity Step, minus any modifiers for armor (see **Armor and Shields**, p.254). Record the character's Initiative Step on his Character Record Sheet, noting any modifiers on the Armor Modifiers line. Then record the character's modified Initiative Step and Action Dice.

With a Dexterity Value of 14, Sebastian's character has an Initiative Step of 6. He certainly won't act first during combat, but he won't be the last to act either—as long as his luck holds. He has not purchased any armor at this stage, so his Initiative Step remains unmodified for the time being.

KARMA

Each race has access to a different amount of Karma, as described in the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19. Karma Points may be replenished by using the Karma Ritual talent, p.74, and spending Legend Points. Also, see p.41 for more information on how Karma is used in **Earthdawn**.

A character's **Maximum Karma Points** is determined by multiplying the character's **Karma Modifier** from his race by the Rank of his Karma Ritual talent (see p. 74). If the character had leftover Attribute Points, they are then added to this number. Characters always start with a number of Karma Points equal to their Maximum Karma Points.

Sebastian notes that his windling has a Karma Modifier of 6, and will determine his Maximum Karma Points after choosing his talents.

MOVEMENT RATE

A character's **Movement Rate** determines how far he can move in combat. This value assumes the use of a battle map with a hex overlay, allowing the character to move up to a number of hexes equal to his Movement Rate each combat round (see **Combat**, p.214). **If a battle map is not used, double the character's Movement Rate to determine how far he can move, in yards.**

Each race has a unique Movement Rate, as shown in the racial **Game Information** sections of the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19.

To determine his character's Movement Rate, Sebastian checks the game information for windlings on p.24. His character has a Movement Rate of 3 when walking. But being a windling, his character will use his wings when important: he has a flying Movement Rate of 8. Flying windlings are much faster!

CARRYING CAPACITY

A character's Strength value limits his ability to carry or lift weight and ultimately shows how weak or strong he really is. The **Carrying Capacity** is the number of pounds a character may carry without suffering a penalty for carrying too much weight. Record the character's Carrying Capacity on his Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian references the Characteristics Table and sees that a Strength Value of 4 allows his character to carry only 20 pounds. He will definitely have to find someone else to help carry his stuff when he is adventuring.

RECORD RACIAL ABILITIES

Your character has abilities specific to his race, such as a special type of vision or a unique attack capability. These abilities, along with detailed explanations, appear in the **Namegiver Races** chapter, p.19. Record them, along with any other racial modifications, on your Character Record Sheet.

Sebastian checks the racial abilities for windlings, and sees that he has already allowed for his windling's Increased Physical Defense when determining his Physical Defense Rating. Sebastian writes the remaining two abilities—Astral Sight and Flight—on his Character Record Sheet. He is glad that his character possesses the Astral Sight ability. This is very useful for a magician.

ASSIGN TALENT RANKS & SPELLS

Adept 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. Talents are rated by Rank—the higher the Rank, the more proficient your character is. Talents add a Step bonus equal to the talent Rank to one of your character's Attribute Steps to generate the Talent Step. The **Talents** chapter, p. 57, describes all the talents and which Attribute relates to each. For example, a character with a Dexterity Step of 6 and the Melee Weapons talent at Rank 2 uses Step 8 when making a Melee Weapons Test (6+2=8).

There are four Disciplines which allow characters to be magicians, capable of casting **spells**. Magicians need to know the Spellcasting, Thread Weaving, and Spell Matrix talents to weave and safely cast spells and the Read/Write Magic talent to learn spells. The Spell Matrix talent appears multiple times in the list of available talents in the Discipline description: magicians can have more than one spell matrix active at a time. Each matrix requires a separate Spell Matrix talent that must be acquired and assigned Rank Points individually. The Spell Matrix Rank determines the highest-Circle spell that the matrix can hold. For more information on spell matrices, spellcasting, and spells, see the **Workings of Magic**, p. 104, and **Spell Magic**, p. 129, chapters.

STARTING TALENT RANKS

Players have a total of eight Rank Points to assign to the talents their characters start the game with. Each point assigned to a talent improves the talent by +1 Rank. You may assign up to three Rank Points to a talent, for a maximum starting Rank of 3. You may only choose talents listed as available to 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 given in the **Talents** chapter, p. 57.



With the exception of talents available to your race (see **Namegiver Races**, p. 19), do not record talents on your character sheet that you did not assign any Ranks to. If your character has no Ranks in a talent, he cannot use it, although he can improve it using Legend Points later in the game. Talents available to your character's race are recorded as Racial Abilities.

Note that you may select one talent from a pool of five talents freely at First Circle. These talents are called Talent Options. You do not have to choose now, you can choose the talent at a later point during the game and increase its Rank by spending Legend Points, but have to undergo some tutelage (see **Reaching the Next Circle**, p.241).

*Sebastian feels his Elementalist is finally taking shape. He looks at the Discipline description and sees that he can have up to seven talents at First Circle. Because he wants his character to be well-rounded and versatile, Sebastian decides to choose an additional Spell Matrix talent from the Talent Options, which allows him to have more spells ready at any one time. To give his windling access to all seven talents at the start of the game, albeit at a lower Rank than he could achieve if he focused on only a few of them, he assigns one Rank Point each to Air Speaking, Karma Ritual, Read/Write Magic, Spellcasting, both Spell Matrices and Thread Weaving (Elementalism), for a total of seven Rank Points. He assigns the remaining Rank to the Astral Sight talent provided by his race – this gives him insight into the magical world, which may come in handy for a magician. Also, Astral Sight can later be learned as a Talent Option for Elementalists, which is not necessary if it is learned as a racial ability – that means Sebastian can learn another talent instead. In order to fill in the information for using the talents on the Character Record Sheet, Sebastian reviews the descriptions for each of his character's talents in the **Talents** chapter, p.57. Now that he has assigned a Rank (1) to his Karma Ritual talent, he multiplies it by his race's Karma Modifier (6) to determine his starting and Maximum Karma Points (6). If Sebastian had chosen to leave his Charisma at 14 and had 3 remaining Attribute Points, his Maximum Karma Points would be 9.*

Versatility

As mentioned previously, human adepts automatically possess the Versatility talent at Rank 0. If you assign additional Ranks to your human character's Versatility talent, you may acquire talents for your character from other Disciplines (First Circle talents only at this stage, however). You may choose a number of talents from Disciplines other than your own equal to your character's Versatility Rank and assign them Rank Points. Talents gained through Versatility at character creation have a maximum Rank of 3. These talents must be gained using the initial eight Rank Points each player has available to assign talents to his character.

Only human adepts may choose talents from Disciplines other than their own through use of the Versatility talent. See **Versatility**, p. 21, and the talent description, p. 85, for more information on how this talent works. As you will discover by reading the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p. 236, a character using Versatility to learn many talents from other Disciplines will advance Circles in his Discipline more slowly. Players with human characters should take this into consideration when choosing their character's talents.

Starting Spells

Characters capable of casting spells must also choose their starting spells at this time. Spellcasting characters (usually referred to as magicians) may acquire spells using a number of Spell Points equal to their Perception Step. For example, a magician with a Perception Step of 7 has seven Spell Points to acquire spells. You may only choose from those spells available to your character's Discipline. When selecting your character's starting spells, you choose from First and Second Circle spells. First Circle spells cost one Spell Point to acquire; Second Circle spells cost two Spell Points to acquire.

Note that because the character is only First Circle, he can only place First Circle spells into a spell matrix to cast safely. The character may know Second Circle spells, having written them in his grimoire, but he cannot cast them from a spell matrix until he reaches Second Circle in his Discipline—casting them with risky raw magic or safely from his grimoire are the only options available to him at the moment (see **Casting From a Grimoire**, p.136).

*Based on his Perception Step of 7, Sebastian has seven Spell Points for choosing his Elementalist's starting spells. Reviewing the **Spells** chapter, p.140, he selects the following First Circle spells: Air Armor for protection, Earth Blend for stealth, Earth Darts for combat, Flameweapon to help his more combative companions, and Plant Talk for gathering information. He also chooses a Second Circle spell: Path Home, which he will only use in case he gets lost.*

Assign Skill Ranks

Players receive eight Rank Points to distribute freely among the four skill categories of **Knowledge**, **Artisan**, **Language**, and **General skills**. In addition, they receive a number of free Ranks for Knowledge, Artisan, and Language skills that are specific to a skill category. These represent areas of expertise a character cannot do without. For example, he cannot speak a language without knowing a Language skill, so characters assign free Rank Points to Language skills. The number of free Rank points available for Knowledge, Artisan, and Language skills and how they have to be spent are detailed below. It is usually best to assign these free Rank Points first, and the eight Rank Points that can be distributed freely afterwards.

Each Rank Point gives a character +1 Rank in that skill, and a skill may be assigned up to three Rank points at character creation. In contrast to talents, some skills can be used without a Rank (see **Default Skill Use**, p. 87), albeit with more difficulty.

The gamemaster may allow more than eight Rank Points for skills in his game if it fits the game's tone.

Knowledge Skills

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 free Rank Points for Knowledge skills**. These represent areas of study with which your character is familiar. Ranks in Knowledge skills add to your character's Perception Step to determine the Skill Step. See **Knowledge**, p.98, for a list of typical Knowledge skills.

Sebastian wants his character to have two Rank 2 Knowledge skills. He chooses the Alchemy and Potions skill and the Botany skill—the windling might be able to use this knowledge to identify unmarked bottles and recognize useful herbs and plants when out in the wilderness. He gets two Knowledge skill Ranks for free, so he only needs to spend two of his eight Rank Points here.

Artisan Skills

As the influence of the Horrors grew, people 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 disci-

pline, 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 was widely considered to 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 until, by the time the Horrors reached their full influence and the kaers and citadels began to close, nearly everyone had learned an art or craft. Adepts, whose extensive use of magic made them extremely powerful (and therefore more threatening if corrupted), took special care to become proficient with and to constantly practice an art.

Starting characters receive one free Rank Point for Artisan skills. Each of the Disciplines 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 those provided in your character's Discipline or work with your gamemaster to create one of your own. See **Artisan Skills**, p.88, for more information; see **Artisan**, p.93, for a list of typical Artisan skills.

As an Elementalist, Sebastian gives his character the Artisan skill of Robe Embroidery at Rank 2. He decides that the windling will have his history stitched onto his clothing and he will embroider his robe with symbols related to his Discipline. This way, his character's robe will serve to prove that he remains untouched by the Horrors. Since he gets one Artisan skill Rank for free, he only needs to spend one Rank Point.

Language Skills

In Barsaive, the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue has become the common language since the Throalites distributed their *Book of Tomorrow* (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 14) to kaers throughout the province. It often was the only book in the kaer, and while the peoples of Barsaive still learned to speak their race's language, they often learned to read and write the Dwarf tongue only. Throalic did not fall out of use after the Scourge, and today is spoken by anyone with any contact to the province's society. The languages of the other races are still in use, but commonly only spoken in family homes or communities made up predominantly of one race. The racial languages of Barsaive are: Dwarf, *Sperethiel* (the elven tongue), Human, Obsidiman, *Or'zet* (the orkish tongue), Troll, T'skrang, and Windling.

Starting characters assign two free Rank Points to the Speak Language skill, and one free Rank Point to the Read/Write Language skill. As each Rank Point represents one language known, characters usually speak at least two racial languages and can read and write one racial language. As the Throalic dialect is the common tongue, characters usually choose Dwarf (Throalic) as both their written language and one of their spoken languages. They normally choose the language of their race for the second spoken language. Dwarf characters are not bound to the Throalic dialect if not hailing from Throal, and learn to speak the language of one of the other races. At the gamemaster's discretion, dwarf characters may also assign one of their free Speak Language Ranks to a Knowledge skill.

As a windling, Sebastian's character speaks both Dwarf and Windling, so he assigns Rank 2 to the Speak Language skill for free. He decides to leave the character's Read/Write Language skill at Rank 1, learning Dwarf by default. Lastly, Sebastian notes in parentheses that his windling knows the Throalic dialect of the Dwarf tongue. He can pick up other dialects during game play.

General Skills

General skills represent more practical abilities than Knowledge, Language, or Artisan skills. Many talents also have their equivalent skill in the General skills category. Most of a character's eight freely-distributable Rank Points will be spent on General skills (see the **Skills** chapter, p. 88), but they may also be spent to learn additional languages, more or improved artistic abilities, or represent more knowledge.

Sebastian must now decide his windling's interests. His character is naturally curious, so he will definitely need to talk his way out of difficult situations. He uses his remaining five Rank Points to learn the Slough Blame skill at Rank 3 and the Haggle skill at Rank 2.

Equip Your Character

Your character needs equipment to adventure: food, clothing, armor, weapons, all this is necessary for the character's day-to-day survival. As adventurers, all characters begin play with the items and equipment shown in the Starting Equipment Table.

If you purchase armor or a shield for your character, fill in the Physical Armor Rating on his Character Record Sheet. Some types of armor and shields improve your character's Mystic Armor as well; be sure to check the equipment description and adjust the character's Mystic Armor Rating if necessary.

STARTING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Adventurer's Kit (backpack, bedroll, flint & steel, torch, waterskin, large sack)
Artisan Tools (relevant to character's Artisan skill; needs gamemaster approval)
Dagger or knife (or a similar Size 1 or 2 weapon)
Grimoire (magicians only)
Traveler's Garb (soft boots, shirt, belt, robe or breeches, traveler's cloak)
Trail Rations (1 week)
100 silver pieces

Flesh Out Your Character

Now you know how your character fits into the game, but what kind of person is he? 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 a number of personality traits. Personality traits are simply labels for the way a character acts and interacts with the world.

Personality Traits

The traits given below (positive, neutral, and negative) should help players and gamemasters to begin forming

their characters' personalities. Choose one or two traits or make up one or two of your own. Make sure your gamemaster approves them. If you later find that you want to round your character out further by adding more traits, work with your gamemaster to determine what caused your character to change.

Sample Personality Traits: Aggressive, Aloof, Altruistic, Ambitious, Amoral, Apprehensive, Argumentative, Astute, Attentive, Bloodthirsty, Bold, Charismatic, Chivalrous, Cold, Compassionate, Compassionless, Condescending, Confident, Conniving, Conservative, Courageous, Courteous, Cowardly, Creative, Cruel, Cunning, Curious, Cynical, Depraved, Dignified, Disciplined, Dishonest, Drunkard, Easy-going, Eloquent, Energetic, Extroverted, Fanatical, Follower, Forgiving, Friendly, Generous, Good-humored, Gracious, Greedy, Gullible, Honorable, Humorless, Idealistic, Immature, Immoral, Insightful, Insulting, Intellectual, Intense, Intimidating, Intolerant, Introverted, Intuitive, Irrational, Jealous, Judgmental, Kind, Lazy, Liar, Logical, Loner, Loyal, Lustful, Malcontent, Manipulative, Militant, Miserly, Mocking, Moral, Naïve, Obsessive, Opinionated, Optimistic, Overbearing, Paranoid, Passionate, Patient, Persuasive, Pragmatic, Protective, Proud, Rational, Reactionary, Realistic, Reasonable, Rebellious, Reserved, Resourceful, Rude, Sadistic, Sarcastic, Selfish, Sensitive, Sentimental, Shrewd, Spontaneous, Superstitious, Suspicious, Sympathetic, Treacherous, Vengeful, Witty.

Sebastian's Elementalist will be gullible and lazy, two personality traits that best fit the character he has in mind. The windling will believe almost anything a friendly person tells him and is lazy because of his low Strength.

Personality and Discipline

Your character's Discipline can be an important element in determining his personality. As mentioned earlier, 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. For example, an Archer might interpret a particular event in a completely different way than a Nethermancer or a Swordmaster. The individual Discipline descriptions provide 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 as much a representation of the character's Discipline as his personality.

Many of the Discipline descriptions use personality traits to create the "feel" of the Discipline. For example, Cavalrymen are described as "fierce mounted warriors," many people consider Nethermancers "eerie," and Sky Raiders are known to be "proud." These simple examples demonstrate how personality traits can help define characters of a given Discipline. Select one or two traits that define your character's behavior as an adept of his Discipline, using these examples as a guide.

Elementalists are eager to learn about the complex nature of the elements, something which blends well with the natural curiosity of the windling race. Sebastian decides to add "curious" to his character's list of personality traits.

Character History

Once you establish your character's personality, decide what made him 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 characters gender? 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 elven 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 **Namegiver Races** chapter, p. 19, 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 not doing it just to match the rubies on their dagger handles.

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 he have any markings or decorative tattoos? 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 for where he 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 Crystal 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?

How old is your character? The Scourge ended about a 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 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? 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 adhere to a personal code of ethics about violence? What about sex? Or 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 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 Caucavic 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?

What is your character's Name? Your character's Name is very important. In **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 Ice-stare or Shiver-eyes. Was your character born with the same Name he uses now? Is his current Name a nickname? If so, who gave it to him?

PLAY THE GAME

Congratulations! You have completed your character. Finish filling out your Character Record Sheet. Your character now stands ready to become a hero of the world of **Earthdawn**.

HIDDEN AND SURFACE TRAITS

Optional Rule: Most characters act in a manner that fits with their chosen personality traits. That is, their personality traits really describe how they act; they have few or no secrets to hide. For those players and gamemasters who want to add a little more depth to their characters, we provide the following option.

Characters in **Earthdawn** can have two types of personality traits: *surface* and *hidden*. The surface traits are a character's public face, what everyone but his most intimate companions sees him to be. For some characters, the surface trait is a vital part of their personality. They act and think in that manner most of the time. For other characters, however, the surface trait serves as a façade, a mask worn to conceal their real nature or their hidden traits. The character's hidden traits should only rarely come to the surface. These secret traits provide the character's true motivation, define the character's view of the world, and determine how the character goes about achieving his long-term goals. Hidden traits will also color a character's interaction with others.

Gamemasters who decide to use this option should allow their players to give their characters at least one surface trait and one hidden trait. While multiple traits certainly create more believable characters, they create greater roleplaying challenges. The demands of certain traits may begin to conflict with other traits. It's hard enough being a real human being and trying to work through these conflicts without worrying about acting them out for the character, too.

Sebastian decides to give his windling the hidden trait of sensitive, which will be a nice addition to his gullible surface trait. Everyone who meets this character will see that it is easy to lie to him. Sebastian chooses to make his windling secretly sensitive, so he will be hurt by such lies, seeing them as acts of deliberate cruelty and malevolent ill-will. He rarely gives away what he feels inside, revealing this trait only to his closest friends. As he is a typical windling, his surface trait is being openly curious.

Balancing Hidden and Surface Traits

Though the hidden trait may technically be the dominant trait, subtly guiding your character through life, it must remain hidden. Gamemasters who notice a character frequently performing overt actions based on his hidden trait should warn the player that the hidden traits are threatening to become the surface traits. If the character continues to express the "hidden" traits openly, the gamemaster can rule that the character's original surface traits no longer exist, and that the hidden traits are now the surface traits. The character loses a number of surface traits equal to the number of hidden traits that have come to the surface.

At this point, the player must decide whether to choose new hidden traits for the character or to simply accept the new surface traits as the whole of the character's personality.

The Reward (and Price) of Roleplaying

Roleplaying your character according to his surface and hidden personality traits 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. If you ignore or play fast and loose with your character's traits as the story unfolds, the gamemaster may remind you to remain true to your character's traits. If you continue to act out of character, or expose his hidden traits, the gamemaster may award fewer Legend Points at the end of the story.

SAMPLE CHARACTER

Sebastian's character, created in the examples in this chapter, is detailed below.

BROOMÉ



Broomé is often called *Broom* by his friends—a play on his real Name, and the nickname given to him because of his wild, all-over haircut, reminiscent of the business end of a broomstick. Born in a kaer only recently emerged to the world, he spent most of his youth underground. Although continually harassed by his master for his sluggishness, he finally became initiated into his Discipline. Ever since he first saw the sun, he became eager to explore the world. Being lazy and somewhat overweight, Broomé only takes to the air when he has to, preferring to sit on the shoulders of his companions when traveling. Because of his increased body weight, his wings make a deeper humming noise than those of other windlings. People encountering Broomé for the first time often consider him annoying, as he asks questions faster than they can be answered. He is interested in everything others do. It is an easy task to use his curiosity against him—Broomé believes almost anything and is sometimes *too* trusting towards strangers. Only his closest companions realize Broomé is actually very sensitive. He believes that everyone is good and there is no reason to be bad or cruel to others. He is deeply hurt when people harm others or betray his open nature.

Broomé is a First Circle windling Elementalist.

DEX (14): 6 **STR** (4): 3 **TOU** (9): 4
PER (16): 7 **WIL** (16): 7 **CHA** (16): 7

Initiative: 6
Physical Armor: 2
Mystic Armor: 2

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 9

Death: 30
Unconsciousness: 21
Wound Threshold: 7

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 3
Movement: 3/8*

Karma Points: 6/6

* Flying Movement Rate

Elementalist Talents:

Air Speaking[D] (1): 8
Astral Sight (1): 8
Karma Ritual (1): 1
Read/Write Magic[D] (1): 8
Spellcasting[D] (1): 8
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Spell Matrix (1): 1
Thread Weaving [Elementalism][D] (1): 8

[D] Discipline talent (the adept may spend Karma on this talent)
Italicized talents require Karma (except when also a Discipline talent)

Skills:
Alchemy and Potions[K] (2): 9
Botany[K] (2): 9
Haggle (2): 9
Read/Write Language (1): 8—Dwarf (Throalic)
Robe Embroidery[A] (2): 9
Slough Blame (3): 10
Speak Language (2): 9—Dwarf (Throalic), Windling

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Elementalism Spells: Air Armor, Earth Blend, Earth Darts, Flameweapon, Path Home, Plant Talk

Armor: Padded Cloth (Phys 2)

Weapons: Windling Dagger (Damage 4; Range 4—8)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb, Linen Robe, Scroll Case, Grimoire, Embroidery Tools, Fire Starter

Loot: 7 copper, 5 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: As a windling, Broomé has the Astral Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense racial abilities.

Personality Traits: Curious (surface), Gullible, Lazy, Sensitive (hidden)

CHAPTER FIVE

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 in this world.

• Jerreck, Wizard of Lowilla •

Player 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 sees the world. For example, a Troubadour may see the world as a grand stage on which he can perform, while a Warrior may see the world as a vast battlefield on which he can fight for the causes he supports.

The following sections describe the fifteen "core" Disciplines. Future supplements will describe other new Disciplines, plus rules and guidelines for customizing existing Disciplines, but those presented in this book are the most common Disciplines found in the **Earthdawn** game. Each Discipline is divided into **Circles**, which indicate the character's level of experience. Your character begins the game at First Circle, advancing to each consecutive Circle as he gains experience, measured in Legend Points. Each Circle description includes a list of the talents a character may learn at that level of experience. Each Circle also lists any other abilities or options the character gains at that Circle.

A sample archetype character for each Discipline—one that players can use as a character in the game instead of creating their own—can be found in the **Appendix** (p. 293). These archetypes were created using the rules for creating characters presented in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p.25. The races shown for each archetype are only suggestions. When creating your own character, you can choose any race, although this may require some alterations to the character's Attributes and abilities. Archetype characters may also be used by the gamemaster as opponents and villains in his games.

▲ ▲ ▲

The following introductory essay by Ilkith Fandor, human Troubadour and Weaponsmith, speaks of matters pertaining to all Disciplines. As an adept of multiple Disciplines, and having used his Versatility to learn talents of still other Disciplines, Fandor (in the Library's judgment) possesses unique qualifications to address the common elements of all adepts' lives. At my request, his essay also includes a brief discussion of multiple and minor Disciplines, which seemed logically to belong in this opening document.

—Presented for the edification of the reader by Derrat, Wizard of the City of Yistane, 1507 TH

▲ ▲ ▲

TO LIVE LIFE AS AN ADEPT

I embark upon the writing of this manuscript with a heart full of awe, at the honor of my commission from the Great Library of Throal and the grave responsibility that honor places squarely on my shoulders. To increase the store of knowledge available to us all is an act of virtue, particularly now that we must struggle to piece together knowledge lost during the Scourge. And yet, if my part in this endeavor is to be worth the ink and parchment spent on it, I must address fully and accurately a truth that for centuries has resisted being defined in general terms. A common perspective and philosophy does exist for all adepts in Barsaive, and yet the key to understanding our common experience is the intimate, individual bond between each Namegiver and the magical fabric of the world. Each adept's experience is unique; there is no single way of practicing any Discipline. The adept becomes inextricably interwoven with his Discipline, so that no clear boundary remains between his inner nature and the outer world. To be an adept is the profoundest possible expression of identity, yet it also demands submission to tradition and the most basic patterns of our existence. Like anything truly magical, the heart of the Adept's Way is paradox.

My qualifications for this task are as follows. Though my home now lies in Throal, I have lived in many places. I am an adept, and that identity is as much a part of me as my heart or my lungs. I practice two Disciplines, the Troubadour and the Weaponsmith, and so know first-hand the peculiar challenges of fully embracing seemingly disparate ways of magical thought. I have also used my race's unique ability to learn the talents of other Disciplines, and so understand at least the rudiments of many other adepts' ways. In all these many ways, I know the shared experiences of all adepts as well as I know my own mind and soul. I believe I can say some truth of what makes an adept, how we balance our separate selves with the established traditions of our Disciplines, and what happens when we bend those traditions too far.

ON DISCIPLINE AND IDENTITY

When a Namegiver becomes an adept, he steps onto a path that will change him forever. The adept acquires new and wondrous abilities that make ordinary folk gasp with amazement or quail in fear, but this external change is the least part of the adept's transformation. Many young adepts embark upon a Discipline thinking simply to learn these abilities, but they soon find they cannot wield these talents without first changing their hearts and minds. The Adept's Way is much more than a collection of mysterious powers. It is a way of thinking, of

seeing, of connecting to others and to the world. The powers that the uninitiated so admire and envy are a mere incidental benefit of the Disciplines we follow. Using our talents connects us in the deepest way with our inner patterns—and it is the connection, not the talent, that is the heart of life as an adept. To a practitioner of the Warrior Discipline, striking an opponent with a weapon is more than a way to bring that opponent to heel. It is the ultimate declaration of his deepest magical self. In successfully using a talent of his Discipline, he briefly becomes one with the eternal truths of creation.

An outside observer may see followers of different Disciplines using what appears to be the same talent; rest assured that each adept experiences those talents in utterly different ways. When a Warrior strikes an opponent with a weapon, he is infused with a primal understanding of force as a means of triumph over others. If I strike an opponent through my Weaponsmith Discipline, I experience a revelation about the nature of the sword I am wielding and all swords in general. My opponent may see no meaningful distinction between my hitting him and a Warrior hitting him, but the Warrior and the Weaponsmith experience the act in vastly different ways.



On Individuality and the Adept's Way

Being an adept involves more than simply adhering to a clear and obvious list of rules. There is no one way to be a Weaponsmith, Troubadour, or any other kind of adept. Instead, the adept must be true to a personal vision of his Discipline. The legends of the great Weaponsmiths and Troubadours inspire me, but I am not bound to mimic their behavior. I must forge my own path, or I am no true adept. I must find my path within myself, remaking my chosen Discipline to fit my own heart and soul.

Of course, this vision of one's Discipline does not come from nothing, nor is it infinitely mutable. No sane person can believe it is possible to be a pacifist Warrior, or a Beastmaster who loathes animals. Indeed, no pacifist or animal-hater would ever seek out those Disciplines. Nor can the adept change his vision of his Discipline on a whim, or for expediency. How we see our Disciplines shapes who we are, and determines how we act. If a Cavalryman has always thought of his Discipline as a union between himself and his mount, he cannot easily abandon his horse in the heat of combat. But a Cavalryman who understands his Discipline by dominating his mount and forcing it to do his will might treat any mount as expendable and suffer no penalty. Of course, such a Cavalryman will not easily inspire extraordinary loyalty from any mount. One's self-chosen definition of the Adept's Way always has costs as well as benefits.

Training a Namegiver to tread the adept's path means teaching the student to think like an adept, and so an adept's teacher has an incalculable influence on the student's vision of his Discipline, especially when the student first begins learning the way. Many of my own deepest beliefs about my place in this world and in my Discipline were given to me by the teachers who initiated me.

Like students of any Discipline, I took all of my master's pronouncements as distilled and unquestionable truth for a time; and though I have found my own truths beyond those first lessons, the early principles taught to me form the foundation upon which all my later understanding of both my Disciplines rests to this day. Other pieces of our individual lives are vital as well. Childhood stories about the great adepts of Barsaive's past, seeing or hearing of the deeds performed by an adept in a neighboring village, proverbs and parables about the workings of our magical world all help to form one's ideas of how the followers of a particular Discipline should act. Without those early thoughts and yearnings, I would not have followed the path that brought me to where I am.

And as it has been with me, so it is with all the other adepts of Barsaive. We all understand our Disciplines through the frame of what we bring to them, as well as through what they are.

On Becoming an Initiate

To become a successful initiate requires two qualities that rarely appear together in Namegiver souls: openness to new experience, and the ability to dedicate oneself to a specific way of living. I have tried and failed to teach more than one prospective initiate who simply could not grasp the combination of questioning and acceptance necessary to embark upon the adept's path.

A certain degree of physical soundness also seems necessary, possibly because one needs strength to deal with the magical energies of talents. Whatever the reason, those whose True patterns are marred by serious illness or infirmity cannot become adepts. Taking the physical and mental requirements together, I estimate that only one of every twenty Namegivers has the wherewithal to Step onto the path of the Adept's Way. Even fewer actually succeed in following their chosen Discipline.

Teaching can take time, but initiation is swift. Whether learning a whole new Discipline or learning a new talent within a Discipline, adepts learn through sudden, dazzling flashes of insight as magic floods into their True patterns. This relative ease of learning is one of the prime advantages adepts enjoy over those who do not walk the Adept's Way. Many of the abilities an adept displays can be learned through mundane means, but such lessons are learned slowly and painstakingly by comparison. The path of the adept blends practical and magical insight, hastening the learning process by teaching the spirit as well as the mind and body.

In many cases, initiation rituals subject the would-be adept to sudden shocks—physical, mental, or both—in order to stimulate profound insight. I have known adepts who have used such varied ritual devices as intoxicating or noxious substances, dream exploration, the playing of ecstatic music, fasting, meditation, mind-bending riddles and even physical torture. All of these new experiences are intended to open the initiate to new ways of perceiving the world. Through his new perception, the initiate's mind and spirit can connect to the heart of his Discipline, and this connection becomes a permanent part of the new adept's True pattern.

On Initiating Other Adepts

Each of us leaves his own mark on the Disciplines we practice by initiating other would-be adepts. Though the practitioners of some Disciplines jealously guard their secrets, most adepts see teaching others as a way of perpetuating their own spirits beyond death. I am forever marked by the teachings of my masters, to which I have added the accumulated wisdom of my own experience. When I pass my knowledge on to prospective Weaponsmiths and Troubadours, I give them a part of myself and a part of my master as well—and also a part of my master's master, my master's master's master, and so on. In this way, the True pattern of each adept is bound to the True pattern of the original practitioner of his Discipline, though the name of that ancient worthy may now be lost in the fog of time.

One must choose carefully whom to teach, and whom to initiate. No adept wishes to stain his inner vision by initiating an unsuitable candidate. In these days of adventure and exploration, one rarely ventures into a new place without drawing a crowd of eager young bravos wishing to be taught the Adept's Way. Most of these I reject after a few moments of conversation because they do not truly wish to learn my Disciplines, but rather any Discipline. I wish to teach those who are born to be Troubadours or Weaponsmiths, who truly love the song or the anvil. Those whose heads are filled with dreams of gold or other petty goals must find other masters to train them.

Adepts of other Disciplines who wish to learn mine are often no more suitable initiates than raw village youths. Many think only of a particularly useful talent they wish to acquire, and forget that they must first learn a new vision of the world. For others, the vision of their current Discipline is utterly incompatible with any possible vision of the Discipline they wish to learn. In my own case, I spent many months persuading my second master to teach the methodical, demanding Discipline of the Weaponsmith to what she perceived as a callow, carefree Troubadour. Only after I proved my dedication through a prolonged, mundane apprenticeship in my master's shop did she permit me the honor of initiation. For a young adventurer already pursuing an exciting and profitable career, such as I was then, this humbling was a high price to pay. But my knowledge of the way of the Weaponsmith has been well worth that cost in the decades since.

Experience also has taught me that most adepts are as cautious as was my second master when approached by humans who wish to employ their versatility to learn a talent or two of another Discipline. My race is blessed with a natural affinity for flexible thinking, allowing us to learn enough of the bare rudiments of any vision to wield any talent, but many adepts, especially those of other races, view our adaptability as unseemly. To convince an adept to teach him a single talent or two, a human must often pass a moral test or perform some onerous service.

On the Acquisition of Multiple Disciplines

The adept who wishes to follow multiple paths simultaneously undergoes a continual challenge. In order to pursue more than one Discipline, one must not only persuade a master to perform the necessary second initiation, but must also acquire the knack of seeing the world through multiple prisms of thought. The new Discipline chosen cannot be completely at odds with the vision the adept has already developed for his current Discipline. If the visions are too different, the would-be initiate cannot acquire the new Discipline, no matter how much effort he devotes to the task. I once knew a Swordmaster who defined his Discipline as the art of poking holes in high-flown ideals with his wit and the point of his blade. He sought to become a Beastmaster, and tried to learn the Discipline from an adept who taught his students to show the deepest respect for all living things. My sardonic friend found himself incapable of this degree of seriousness, and so failed to learn the Beastmaster Discipline. Yet I have known other adepts who practiced both those Disciplines simultaneously, succeeding where my friend could not because they learned different visions of these paths. The compatibility of Disciplines has no hard and fast rules; it depends upon the individual.

Nor may the vision of a new Discipline merely imitate one's existing code of conduct. To learn a new Discipline, one must radically readjust one's way of viewing the world. I once tried and failed to learn the Discipline of the Elementalist, thinking I could simply adapt my knowledge of metalworking to the crafting of all of the basic elements through magic. This method did not aid me; I was trying to shape the vision for my convenience rather than allowing the vision to change me. One must prepare to be altered by the process of initiation; otherwise, the necessary insight will not come.

On the Practice of Multiple Disciplines

An adept who walks multiple paths does not meld his different visions into one. Rather, he switches back and forth between ways of thinking, as one might don and doff a cloak. Often when I find myself facing a decision, I step back and look at the situation from two points of view. The Troubadour side of me may wish to do one thing, while the mind of the Weaponsmith reaches a completely different conclusion. These divisions of viewpoint are difficult to reconcile, to say the least. Adepts of multiple Disciplines often seem peculiar or outright crazy to others, for we seem to speak with different voices. This effect can be quite literal and dramatic; I have known individuals who adopt completely different personalities, ways of speaking, and body language from moment to moment, depending on which Discipline they are currently employing. I suspect, however, that most of these persons are intentionally exaggerating the effects of multiple Disciplines in order to confuse their foes or entertain their friends.

Concerning Other Disciplines

When Barsaivians speak of adepts, they usually mean a person who follows the most common Disciplines: the Air Sailor, Archer, Beastmaster, Cavalryman, and all the others in this document. Other adepts practice other Disciplines in our land with equal devotion, however. One's practice of the Adept's Way is tied tightly to one's view of the world, and so there may be as many Disciplines as there are ways of seeing. Indeed, our assiduous research here at the library shows that each of the Namegiver races has developed Disciplines peculiar to adepts of that race: the Traveled Scholar among dwarfs, the Woodsman among elves, the Journeyman among humans, the Purifier among obsidimen, the Liberator among orks, the Outcast Warrior among trolls, the Boatman and Tail-dancer among t'skrang, and the Winddancer, Windmaster, and Windscout among windlings. Many adepts view these racially oriented Disciplines as less significant than others, but no justification for that opinion can be found. All of these—and an infinite number that we have yet to discover—are true Disciplines whose practitioners adhere to the same ideals as do followers of the core Disciplines discussed in this volume. Unfortunately, a discussion of racially specific and less common Disciplines lies beyond the scope of this volume.

Personal Visions

Adepts wield power by finding a connection between their own personalities and experiences on one hand, and the great traditions of their Discipline on the other. No two adepts relate to their Discipline in exactly the same way, nor can a character become an adept simply by following someone else's view of the world. The adept must bring something of himself to the Discipline, and build something new instead of simply copying the patterns of the past.



When creating a character, you should give some thought to your character's personal vision of his Discipline. You should think about the character's general creed, and perhaps a few examples of actions the character regards as taboo. A personal vision can lend depth and focus to characters, providing a foundation for future roleplaying. This statement of the character's viewpoint may be anything from a few brief sentences to a detailed essay.

> *Somok Nightsails believes that the way of the Sky Raider is to take without apology and to avoid backing down at all costs. He never shows regret for his actions, and hates to retreat from even the direst peril. He does not plunder by stealth because he considers sneaking to be the coward's way; he believes the brute frontal attack serves as the hallmark of a true Sky Raider.*

The gamemaster should work with his players to develop this important aspect of their characters. As long as the personal vision makes some kind of sense, the gamemaster should allow it. A Beastmaster who hates animals or a Swordmaster who hates drawing attention to himself is almost certainly unsuitable, but Barsaive is home to many strange things. Somewhere there may be Warriors without a sense of honor or Nethermancers who are afraid of the dark.

Initiation into a Discipline

The time it takes for potential adepts to undergo initiation in their first Disciplines varies widely from Discipline to Discipline and master to master. Becoming a Wizard can take years; becoming a Thief can take as little as a few days. The amount of time needed to learn additional Disciplines is more standard.

The difference in initiation time between acquiring a first Discipline and additional ones stems from the initial difficulty of learning to see the world magically. Once a character achieves this breakthrough moment, the acquisition of additional Disciplines becomes a matter of unlearning some old habits and picking up a few new ones. Acquiring a second, third, or even fourth, Discipline is more akin to Circle advancement than initiation into a first Discipline.

Initiation into a Discipline creates a mystical link between the initiate's True pattern and the path of that Discipline. Each Discipline employs varying methods of initiation, often (though not always) linked to particular ways of looking at that Discipline. The initiation of a selfish Thief is much more brutal than that of a trickster Thief, for example. After initiation, an adept has reached the First Circle of his Discipline and is referred to as an **Initiate**.

Teachers do not usually charge for initiating students into their first Disciplines. Initiating a student often requires a substantial investment of time, however, and so few masters undertake it lightly. All adepts screen potential adepts carefully to make sure they will perform admirably in the Discipline. Only an adept who has attained at least Journeyman status in a Discipline may initiate others into it.

Training for Circle Advancement

Upon reaching Second Circle, adepts lose their Initiate status and become **Novices**, as they have proven themselves worthy for further training. At Fifth Circle, they have usually earned the respect of other adepts and attain **Journeyman** status. Adepts who advance to Ninth Circle have learned most of the secrets of their Discipline, and are called **Wardens**. True mastery is only reached at Thirteenth Circle and above, when the adept is referred to as a **Master**.

As with initiation, the amount of time needed to train for Circle advancement varies between Disciplines. Most training consists of practice in the talents available at the new Circle, balanced with some degree of theoretical discussion. The weight given to each, however, may be very different. For example, the fighting Disciplines tend to downplay theory, while the spellcasting Disciplines concentrate on theory far more than practice. Specific training times for advancing to new Circles are given in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p.236.

Adepts advancing to a new Circle learn the rudiments of all Discipline Talents available at that Circle, whether or not they immediately learn how to use the talents. With meditation, adepts can recall their training sessions and pick up talents they may have originally skipped. At higher Circles, adepts gain new abilities such as increased Defense Ratings and more flexible Karma use, through particular rituals taught to the advancing character. The character may later perform these rituals with others when acting as an instructor.

Adepts advancing in spellcasting Disciplines usually learn one new spell from the Circle in question as part of the overall training procedure. This spell is considered to be learned automatically and the magician need not make any tests to acquire it. Generous gamemasters may allow players to choose the spell they wish to learn, otherwise determine the spell learned randomly.

Any adept may train a character of his Discipline for Circle advancement, provided the adept is of a higher Circle than the student. Many instructors are retired adventurers who earn their living by passing on the benefits of their experience. Also, adepts frequently earn money by training lower-Circle colleagues and then pay their earnings to an instructor for training in their own advancement. Customary fees for training appear in the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p.236.

HALF-MAGIC

Though the **Earthdawn** skill system accounts for knowledge a character might possess that would not require the full power of an adept's magic, that system does not accommodate the different levels of knowledge two characters of the same Discipline, but different Circles, might possess (see the **Skills** chapter, p.87, for more information on skills and how they work).

The half-magic rule covers areas of knowledge such as the principles of weapon making, wilderness survival, and the legends and lore of a Discipline. For example, adepts of all Disciplines learn of the lives and deeds of other adepts who have followed their Disciplines, such as the heroes Nioku the Archer, Venna the Warrior, and any other heroes the gamemaster may add to his **Earthdawn** world.

For example, an Elementalist character may possess the Knowledge skills of Horror Lore and Pre-Scourge History, but a follower of that Discipline would also know a great deal about plants, weather, rock formations, tides, and other subjects related to the five elements. Further, his knowledge of these topics would increase with time and experience. Because this knowledge is closely related to the character's Discipline but not specifically covered by any talents, it falls into the realm of half-magic.

The half-magic system also offers a way to determine the adept's success or failure in performing more practical tasks related to his Discipline. A Beastmaster, for example, could perform basic veterinary techniques, while an Air Sailor would be proficient at tying knots and navigating an airship. These skills would be possessed by any member of the Discipline, and may also fall under the realm of half-magic.

Each of the Discipline descriptions provides suggestions on possible uses for half-magic. Players and gamemasters are encouraged to work together to develop and describe what areas their character's half-magic covers, but the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether a Half-Magic Test may be used in a given situation.

MAKING HALF-MAGIC TESTS

When you make a Half-Magic Test, first determine the Half-Magic Rank. The Half-Magic Rank is equal to the character's Circle divided by 2 (rounded up). For example, First and Second Circle characters have a Half-Magic Rank of 1, Third and Fourth Circle characters have a Half-Magic Rank of 2, and so on. Then the gamemaster determines the Attribute most appropriate for the action the character wishes to accomplish. You may suggest what you consider to be an appropriate Attribute, but the gamemaster has final say. The sum of the character's Half-Magic Rank and Attribute Step is the Step Number used for the Half-Magic Test. Adepts may spend a Karma Point on a Half-Magic Test.

HALF-MAGIC AND SKILLS

Many half-magic abilities allow access to Knowledge or General skills, using the Half-Magic Rank as the Skill Rank. For example, Scout adepts can use half-magic to perceive hidden objects or traps, and Weaponsmiths can use half-magic to craft weapons and armor, by having access to skills for free, by virtue of being an adept. This is intentional; the focus of **Earthdawn** is primarily on adepts and their magical talents. Keeping track of the many mundane skills an adept might have adds another layer of record keeping that detracts from that focus. If the gamemaster wishes to downplay the role of half-magic, and add more detail on the skill side of character development, he may do so, but should compensate by awarding more Legend Points and time to advance the character's skill Ranks.

When an adept possesses knowledge of a skill that matches a half-magic ability for his Discipline, he may choose to make either a Half-Magic Test or a Skill Test. If he chooses to make a Skill Test, he cannot spend Karma on the test.

DISCIPLINE DESCRIPTIONS

Players (and gamemasters) are encouraged to use the Discipline information given later in this chapter as a guideline. How you, as a player, choose to portray your character is entirely your own choice! That is what roleplaying is about, after all.

The individual Discipline sections contain game information, detailing the abilities provided to members of the Discipline in question. Information in the following categories describes how to use it in the **Earthdawn** game. In the **Appendix**, p. 293, **archetype characters** can be found, created using the rules in the **Creating Characters** chapter, p.25. These characters can be used by players who want to get into the game quickly, or by gamemasters looking for examples of First Circle adepts they can use as gamemaster characters.

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 key talents are based.

KARMA RITUAL

Each Discipline includes a 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 Points, then perform the ritual to receive the points. The player need not make any tests to perform the Karma ritual; it is always successful. Each ritual takes a half hour to perform. Your character may perform his

⚙RACIAL⚙ RESTRICTIONS

Optional Rule: Previous editions of **Earthdawn** suggested a number of races with most Disciplines; characters of that race could not learn that Discipline unless the gamemaster allowed an exception based on a detailed character background. Most racial restrictions to Disciplines were not so much because a race could not gain access to the special magic of a specific Discipline, but rather because their racial culture did not allow a member of that culture to fully embrace the worldview of certain Disciplines. Below is a condensed representation of former racial restrictions. The gamemaster may enforce these if using this optional rule, or use them as a guideline for very uncommon combinations of race and Discipline–either when filling his world with gamemaster characters or to require a more detailed background from a player with such a combination.

Obsidimen seldom become Sky Raiders or Air Sailors, as their deep bond to the earth urges them to stay on the ground. They do not normally get an opportunity to bond with a mount and become a Cavalryman simply because so few mounts that can carry them exist. The ways of the Archer and Swordmaster require a little too much finesse for obsidimen to follow them frequently; if they do, they favor weapons appropriate to the obsidiman physique.

Trolls usually do not become Thieves, as their culture's honor forbids them from stealing in secret, but dictates they take openly with a show of force. This stance is the way of life of highland trolls, but trolls integrated into other societies do not follow it.

Windlings seldom become Nethermancers, as their culture celebrates life, and contact with the afterlife is unsettling to them. They also seldom become Sky Raiders, as the way of the Sky Raider emphasizes physical prowess and brute force over cunning and subtlety.

Future **Earthdawn** products will introduce Disciplines not restricting a race, but restricted to only a single race – Disciplines that can only be learned by windlings or obsidiman, for example. In contrast to the restrictions presented here, these future restrictions are suggested to be enforced, with only rare exceptions.

Karma ritual only once each day. Each Discipline's Karma ritual is a unique talent that allows a character to purchase additional Karma Points, which he can spend to increase the chance of success for specific actions. The character's Karma Ritual Rank equals the maximum number of Karma Points he can purchase per ritual. For example, an adept who knows the Karma Ritual talent at Rank 3 can purchase up to 3 Karma Points each day by performing the half-hour long ritual. The Karma Ritual Rank also determines the Maximum Karma Points that a character may have. Each race has a Karma Modifier that is multiplied by the Karma Ritual Rank to determine this number.

A sample Karma Ritual is included with the **Game Information** for each Discipline. Players are encouraged to create unique Karma Rituals for their characters.

ARTISAN SKILLS

Each Discipline lists two Artisan skills common to that Discipline. The Artisan skills listed have a connection to the Discipline they are listed for. They are typically picked up during training to become an Initiate. For example, it is traditional for magicians to learn Robe Embroidery as an Artisan skill, so this skill is listed with all spellcasting Disciplines. Cavalrymen learn to take care of their mounts, and often learn the Braiding skill to braid their mounts' manes. The lists of Artisan skills are not absolute, however. Working with the gamemaster to find another suitable skill, players can choose an Artisan skill not listed for their character's Discipline. Under some circumstances, players may also want to learn an Artisan skill totally unconnected to their Discipline, for example one picked up in their childhood, long before training to become an adept.

TALENTS AND ABILITIES

The most important part of the gifts conveyed by a Discipline comes in the form of Discipline Talents, Talent Options, and Discipline Abilities. While Talents need to be raised in Rank to achieve a better performance and for the adept to attain a higher Discipline Circle (see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p.236), Discipline Abilities are learned upon reaching the indicated Circle and are not improved over time.

Discipline Talents form the core of a Discipline and are identical for each member of that Discipline. A Discipline Talent is always available from the indicated Circle. An adept learns five Discipline Talents at First Circle (six for magicians), and an additional Discipline Talent each Circle thereafter. Discipline talents receive a number of advantages over Talent Options, including a more flexible use of Karma Points. Refer to the **Talents** chapter, p.57, for details.

Talent Options are more versatile, facilitating diversity among members of each Discipline. A player can choose which Talent Options fit his character's philosophy best. At each Circle, he can choose one talent from a pool of optional talents, which are keyed to each status level of a Discipline (Initiate, Novice, Journeyman, Warden, and Master). While those Talent Options can be chosen from talent pools of lower status, advancing the talents in question will cost the same as if they were purchased at the current Circle. Characters cannot fill a talent slot with a talent available in a higher pool.

Discipline Abilities are magical abilities adepts learn based on their Discipline—unlike talents, they cannot be learned via the Versatility talent, are never available as skills, and are not normally available to any other Discipline. Usually, one Discipline Ability is learned at Fifth, Ninth, and Thirteenth Circle. The adept has access to it as soon as he completes his Training to reach that Circle, and can use it at any time thereafter. Discipline abilities are special abilities that follow their own rules.

Humans and Versatility

The Talent Options for a single Discipline cover only a fraction of the entire talents list, leaving more than enough room (and sense) for acquiring multiple Disciplines and the use of human versatility. The Versatility talent is the only way to learn Talents of other Disciplines without one's own Discipline sharing it with that Discipline or resorting to a secondary Discipline.

A human can learn any talent that is not a Discipline Talent for his Discipline using the normal rules for Versatility (see p.85), but it does not become a Discipline Talent for him. The Circle of the talent is still equivalent to the Circle at which his teacher learned it and is subject to all other rules and restrictions.

Likewise, a human can learn Talent Options from another Discipline—provided he finds a teacher who actually picked that Talent Option—even if it is a Talent Option for his own Discipline. The Circle of the Talent Option is equivalent to the Circle of the Talent Option slot the teacher filled with it. If the teacher has learned an Initiate Option at Fifteenth Circle, the talent is treated as a Fifteenth Circle Talent.

Characteristics Bonuses

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

Defense bonuses permanently increase your character's Physical, Spell, or Social Defense by the number listed.

Initiative bonuses permanently increase your character's Initiative Step by the number listed.

Recovery bonuses permanently increase the number of Recovery Tests per day your character can make.

Characteristics bonuses are cumulative within the same Discipline (see **Learning New Disciplines**, p.241, for details on how to handle characteristics bonuses for multi-Discipline characters).

Spell Bonuses

Spell bonuses give the character a new spell when he attains that Circle. This is assumed to be taught to the character for free by his mentor. At the gamemaster's discretion, this spell may be chosen by the character's player, otherwise it is determined by the gamemaster. Bonus spells are taught to Novice magicians (Second to Fourth Circle). Once the character attains Journeyman status, at the Fifth Circle of his Discipline, he is taught one final bonus spell. Spells above Fifth Circle must be learned independently by the character; there are no bonus spells taught at Circles higher than this.

Karma Bonuses

Karma bonuses allow your character to spend a Karma Point on the types of actions listed for the ability. At higher Circles, characters gain another type of Karma bonus: when characters reach Master status, they increase their Karma Die to a D8.

Attribute-only Tests

Attribute-only Tests are Action Tests made using the character's Attribute Step only. For example, a Strength Test to move a rock aside, or a Dexterity Test to grab hold of a branch to avoid falling out of a tree. If the Discipline description lists a specific Attribute, the adept may spend a Karma Point on Action Tests using that Attribute *only*; this includes Skill Tests using that Attribute with the rules for **Default Skill Use**, p.87.

Some types of tests are typically identical to Attribute-only Tests for adepts of lower Circles. For example, an Initiative Test is based on the Dexterity Step, a Recovery Test is based on the Toughness Step, and an unarmed Damage Test uses the character's Strength Step. These tests are not Attribute-only Tests! They are merely Effect Tests (see p.14) that use the Attribute as a base to determine a new characteristic, and the ability to spend Karma on Attribute-only Tests does not allow an adept to spend them on these Tests.



Half-Magic

Some Disciplines list examples or special uses for that Discipline's Half-magic Tests. While Half-magic allows players and gamemasters to work out a broad or narrow definition of its extent (see p.39), these abilities conveyed by Half-magic are an integral part of the Discipline, and are always available to an adept.

Flexibility

The sheer number of optional talents gives a player enough flexibility for customization—characters of the same Discipline can be developed with a different focus. For example, a player could choose to create a stealthy Archer—a sniper. Likewise, he could place his focus on being more close-combat-oriented, or make his Archer more socially competent. He could even change this focus slowly as his character advances in Circles. But no matter what his choices are, the character will still remain an Archer at its core, since the limitation of one Talent Option per Circle ensures that the choices a player faces will be significant but not overwhelming.

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Navigation, Parry, Speak Language, Throwing Weapons, Unarmed Combat

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Air Sailing, Avoid Blow, Climbing, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons

Novice

Talent Options: Air Dance, Durability (6/5), Great Leap, Haggle, Heartening Laugh, Missile Weapons, Read/Write Language, Wind Catcher

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense
Discipline Talent: Distract

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Empathic Sense

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Air Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Acrobatic Strike, Disarm, Etiquette, Lasting Impression, Lion Heart, Riposte, Tactics, Taunt

Fifth Circle

Collaborate: Once per round, when performing the same type of action as an ally, the adept may take 2 Strain to grant the ally a +2 bonus to an Action Test towards achieving their common goal.
Discipline Talent: Swing Attack

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Action Tests made on an airship.
Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense
Discipline Talent: Leadership

Air Sailor

Air Sailors are the swashbuckling brotherhood of the sky. Air Sailors never leave their fellows behind and embrace the idea of togetherness, working to protect and spread civilization, rather than preying upon it.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity

Karma Ritual: To begin his Karma ritual, the Air Sailor sits alone in silent meditation under the open sky for several minutes, picturing in his mind's eye his airship sailing through the clouds at the start of a long journey. The adept envisions an aerial journey he hopes to make one day, imagining scenes of this journey, including the risks and perils, and how his training and skills might help make the journey a safe one. The ritual is complete when, half an hour later, the imagined journey ends safely.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Sail Embroidery

Half-Magic: The Air Sailor's uses for half-magic include the maintenance, repair, and construction of airships; knowledge of airship designs; and recognition of different types of airships, commonly followed flight paths, and airship crew complements. Air Sailors gain access to the Navigation skill (p. 99) via half-magic while aboard airships. Working on an airship requires a high degree of athletic ability, so Air Sailors may make Half-Magic Tests to swing from rigging or avoid obstacles when moving around an airship.



Archer

The Archer learns the art of the bow and crossbow, and by extension, all types of ranged attacks. This Discipline stresses accuracy and, to a lesser extent, speed. Most Archers show greatly enhanced perceptive powers, often noticing things that others miss.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: The Archer spends the first few minutes of the Karma ritual oiling and stringing his bow, then starts meditating, with the bow in front of him and all of his arrows fanned out beside him on the ground. At the end of the half-hour-long 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 last arrow hits.

Artisan Skills: Arrow Fletching, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Archers may use half-magic when caring for ranged weapons and to recognize different types of ranged weapons, ammunition, or their creators. Archers gain access to the Craft Weapon skill to make ranged weapons, as well as ammunition for those weapons. An Archer also often crafts his own arrows and bolts, personalizing them in some manner.



Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Climbing, Melee Weapons, Silent Walk, Tracking

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Karma Ritual, Missile Weapons, Mystic Aim, Throwing Weapons, True Shot

Novice

Talent Options: Detect Weapon, Durability (6/5), First Impression, Flame Arrow, Great Leap, Long Shot, Speak Language, Sprint

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Direction Arrow

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Anticipate Blow

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Arrow Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Call Missile, Conceal Object, Creature Analysis, Empathic Sense, Evidence Analysis, Heartening Laugh, Lip Reading, Steel Thought

Fifth Circle

Arrow's Eye View: After firing an arrow as normal, for 1 Strain the adept may replace his vision by what would be seen if his eyes were on either side of the flying arrow head. His vision reverts to normal at the end of the round, but until then he is considered Harried and any sight-based reactions suffer penalties as if in Full Darkness.
Discipline Talent: Stopping Aim

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Bank Shot

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on ranged combat Damage Tests.
Discipline Talent: Impressive Shot

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Second Shot

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Climbing, Sense Danger, Tracking, Wilderness Survival

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Animal Bond, Claw Shape, Creature Analysis, Karma Ritual, Unarmed Combat

Novice

Talent Options: Acrobatic Strike, Borrow Sense, Durability (7/6), Frighten Animals, Great Leap, Haggle, Silent Walk, Sprint

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Dominate Beast

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Animal Training

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Beast Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Animal Companion Durability (6/5), Blood Share, Call Animal Companion, Empathic Command, Lion Heart, Poison Resistance, Search, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle

Primal Urges: For 2 Strain, the adept may induce a strong animalian urge in a target animal or Namegiver, by making a Charisma Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful he may induce an urge of his choice into the target, for example fear, fury, hunger, thirst, sexual desire, or drowsiness. The urge is strong, but does not force a target into acting against his will, though it may influence his actions at the gamemaster's discretion. Primal Urges uses a Standard Action.
Discipline Talent: Heal Animal Companion

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Animal Talk

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Action Tests made by any animal companion.
Discipline Talent: Animal Possession

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Frenzy

Beastmaster

Beastmasters have an innate affinity for working with animals. Many Beastmasters feel uncomfortable in large cities or towns, and prefer to live in the wild, away from other people.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Willpower

Karma Ritual: The Beastmaster walks off a large circle, at least twenty yards in diameter, around the area on which he last slept. Then he sits in the center of the circle and makes a silent, meditative call to the animals of the area. At the end of the half-hour-long ritual, an animal typical of the local wildlife approaches, but does not enter, the circle. The adept motions for the animal to enter the circle, thus completing the ritual. The animal then leaves the circle and departs.

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Beastmasters may use half-magic when dealing with or caring for animals in ways beyond those described by their talents, including animal breeding, first aid, and husbandry. Beastmasters may use half-magic when recognizing different animals, animal tracks, and abnormal behavior among animals and creatures. They also gain access to the Wilderness Survival skill via half-magic.

Note: Many of the Beastmaster's talents and abilities refer to Animal Companions. An animal may be considered an Animal Companion if it has a Loyal attitude towards the Beastmaster. See the **Animal Bond** talent on p.60 for details.



Cavalryman

Members of the Cavalryman Discipline are fierce, mounted warriors. They train with their mounts and form a close empathic bond with them. In fact, a Cavalryman respects his mount more than any Namegiver, with the possible exception of other Cavalrymen. This Discipline emphasizes motion and empathy for one's mount.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Cavalryman plants a target in the ground, then rides his mount several minutes distance away. First blindfolding himself, he directs his mount to return to the target. Once he closes to about 100 yards, which takes him half an hour to do so, the Cavalryman uses the almost psychic connection with his mount, and whatever other empathic talents he possesses, to urge his mount to charge the target. Still blindfolded, the Cavalryman strikes the target with one of his weapons. He then removes the blindfold to end the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Body Painting, Braiding

Half-Magic: Cavalrymen may use half-magic for knowledge of different types of mounts used by the Namegiver races, upkeep of riding gear, animal breeding and first aid, and knowledge of significant cavalry units in Barsaive.

Mount: Cavalrymen begin the game with a mount of the gamemaster's approval (see p. 270 for a selection). The mount is trained for riding only; the Cavalryman needs to combat-train it (p. 233). Humans, orks, and elves prefer horses, although many tribal ork Cavalrymen use thundra beasts. Trolls, windlings and dwarfs find horses awkward to ride. Some dwarf Cavalrymen ride ponies due to their short size; some use the troajin or the huttawa. Because of their size and weight, troll Cavalrymen are known to ride large war horses, but most ride an unusually strong and sturdy breed of horse called a granlain. Too small to ride normal horses, windling Cavalrymen most often ride small lizard-like mounts known as kues, or large birds called zoaks.



Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Animal Training, Avoid Blow, First Impression, Haggle, Unarmed Combat

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Animal Bond, Charge, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Trick Riding

Novice

Talent Options: Blood Share, Creature Analysis, Dominate Beast, Durability (7/6), Speak Language, Tactics, Tracking, Wilderness Survival

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Empathic Command

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Sure Mount

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Rider Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Fearsome Charge, Frighten Animals, Heal Animal Companion, Heartening Laugh, Leadership, Mount Attack, Mount Durability (6/5), Spirit Mount

Fifth Circle

Masterful Horseman: While mounted, the adept is not considered Harried when using Splitting Movement (see p.226). The mount is not considered Harried when using Running (see p.225) while the adept rides it. Strain from either combat option still applies.
Discipline Talent: Wheeling Attack

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Armor Mount

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on his mount's Attack and Damage Tests.
Discipline Talent: Wheeling Defense

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense
Discipline Talent: Double-Charge

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Haggle, Read/Write Language, Speak Language, Spell Matrix

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Air Speaking, Karma Ritual, Read/Write Magic, Spellcasting, Spell Matrix, Threadweaving [Elementalism]

Novice

Talent Options: Astral Sight, Durability (4/3), Item History, Parry, Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Tracking, Wind Catcher

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Fire Heal

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Elemental Tongues

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Elemental Hold

Journeyman

Talent Options: Detect Trap, Enhanced Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Gliding Stride, Spot Armor Flaw, Steel Thought, Willforce, Wood Skin

Fifth Circle

Fire and Ice: For 1 Strain the adept may do one of the following with a successful Elementalism Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or a Difficulty Number of 6:
1. Create a small flame between his thumb and forefinger. This fire lasts for only one round, but is intense enough to light a torch. If used in combat, it inflicts Step 4/D6 fire damage (Physical Armor provides protection).
2. Freeze water by touching it with his middle three fingers. The adept can freeze up to one quart of water from each use of this ability. If used in combat, it inflicts Step 4/D6 cold damage (Physical Armor provides protection).
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Summon [Elemental Spirits]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Cold Purify

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.
Discipline Talent: Earth Skin

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Temperature

Elementalist

An Elementalist is a spellcaster who focuses on learning about, and gaining power over, the five magical elements: air, earth, fire, water, and wood.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Elementalist first draws a triangle on the ground. While sitting in the triangle, the Elementalist boils a pot of water, singing to the fire all the time to encourage its heat. Then the Elementalist extinguishes the fire and adds earth to the water, turning it into hot mud. When cool enough, the Elementalist covers his face with the mud like war paint, then sings to the wind, calling a small breeze, and as the wind dries the mud over the next half hour, much of it cracks and blows away, leaving behind a series of intricate, swirling patterns. The Karma ritual is then complete.

Artisan Skills: Robe Embroidery, Sculpting

Half-Magic: Elementalists use half-magic for knowledge of nature, the elements, uses of elemental magic, and other magical rituals. Elementalists may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to locate and gather True elements (see the ***Player's Companion*** for more information).

The Elementalist may make a Perception-based Half-Magic Test to detect the presence of elemental spirits within 30 yards (15 hexes). The Detection Difficulty for sensing an elemental spirit is the spirit's Spell Defense (determined by the gamemaster). If the test succeeds, the Elementalist can sense the presence of the elemental spirit and can use spells, or talents such as Elemental Tongues and Elemental Hold, to communicate and interact with it. The gamemaster may choose to make this Half-Magic Test on behalf of an Elementalist character at any time, as this innate sense is always active.



ILLUSIONIST

Illusionists cast spells that work through deception. However, some Illusionist spells do have real effects; Illusionists learned long ago that if every-thing they did was an illusion, people quickly caught on and their magic became less effective. Now they balance real magic, illusions, trickery, and sleight of hand.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: Illusionists do not use the same ritual each time they regain Karma. Their Karma ritual does require them to incorporate certain elements every time, however: showy spells, tricks or snappy banter, and an assistant. Other than that, the Illusionist makes up his own Karma ritual, incorporating these elements into a half-hour show. The Illusionist must do his best during this time to convince his assistant that the ritual is very serious and must conform to a precise formula.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Illusionists make Half-Magic Tests to recognize different types of magic use, as well as specific uses of illusion magic. They also make Half-Magic Tests when attempting to perceive the "truth" of a given situation. Illusionists may also make Half-Magic Tests when attempting to disbelieve illusions cast by others (see **Illusions**, p.139).



TALENTS AND ABILITIES

INITIATE

Talent Options: Astral Sight, First Impression, Read/Write Language, Silent Walk, Spell Matrix

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Karma Ritual, Read/Write Magic, Speak Language, Spellcasting, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving [Illusionism]

NOVICE

Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Durability (4/3), Frighten, Haggle, Mimic Voice, Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix, Winning Smile

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Disguise Self

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Dead Fall

Fourth Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: False Sight

JOURNEYMAN

Talent Options: Enhanced Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Graceful Exit, Hypnotize, Resist Taunt, Slough Blame, Steel Thought, Willforce

Fifth Circle

Glamour: For 1 Strain, the adept creates a simple illusion, no bigger than a Namegiver, which appears and remains within 3 yards of him. The adept may create and control a number of illusions at a time equal to his Illusionism Rank. The illusions are for show only—they have no effect on their surroundings. Viewers can disbelieve an illusion with a successful Disbelief (6) Test. The illusion lasts for 10 minutes.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: True Sight

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Engaging Banter

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.
Discipline Talent: Fast Hand

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Power Mask

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Arcane Mutterings, Read/Write Language, Silent Walk, Speak Language, Spell Matrix

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Astral Sight, Karma Ritual, Read/Write Magic, Spellcasting, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving [Nethermancy]

Novice

Talent Options: Animal Possession, Blood Share, Creature Analysis, Dominate Beast, Durability (4/3), Frighten Animals, Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Frighten

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Spirit Talk

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Spirit Hold

Journeyman

Talent Options: Abate Curse, Elemental Tongues, Enhanced Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Item History, Lion Heart, Steel Thought, Willforce

Fifth Circle

Decay and Renewal: For 1 Strain the adept may do one of the following with a successful Nethermancy Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or a Difficulty Number of 6:
1. Touch a single, nonmagical object that fits in his hand and cause it to suddenly age and decay, rusting metals, spoiling food, or otherwise showing signs of age and neglect.
2. Touch a single, nonmagical object that fits in his hand and remove all signs of decay, removing rust, making food fresh, or otherwise reversing any signs of decay.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Summon [Ally Spirits]

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Lifesight

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.
Discipline Talent: Spirit Dodge

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Orbiting Spy

Nethermancer

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

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: Nethermantic Karma rituals are quiet affairs in which the Nethermancer drinks tea with a spirit servant or other otherworldly creature and talks of life beyond this world. The ritual ends after a half hour has passed with the Nethermancer draining the last drop from his final cup of tea.

Artisan Skills: Bone Carving, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Nethermancers use half-magic to recognize uses of nethermantic magic, different types of undead and spirits, and magical rituals—especially blood magic rituals. Nethermancers may also use half-magic to understand the effects of different blood charms, as these are linked with Nethermancy. Nethermancers may make Perception-based Half-Magic Tests to produce blood charms (see the **Enchanting** chapter in the ***Player's Companion***). A Nethermancer may use half-magic to sense the presence of spirits within 30 yards (15 hexes) of his location. The Detection Difficulty for sensing a spirit is the spirit's Spell Defense (determined by the gamemaster). If the test succeeds, the Nethermancer can sense the presence of the spirit can use spells, or talents such as Spirit Hold or Spirit Talk, to communicate and interact with the spirit. The gamemaster may choose to make this Half-Magic Test on behalf of a Nethermancer character at any time, as this innate sense is always active.



SCOUT

Scouts are the vanguard, the tracker, and the brave rangers who go where others cannot. Scouts are masters of becoming one with their environ-ment—be that the wildest primeval forest or the heart of the largest city.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: To begin his Karma ritual, the Scout allows his companions to lead him blindfolded deep into the forest, about ten minutes walk from his starting point. The Scout meditates for ten minutes as he visualizes the route back to where he began, then makes the journey, still blindfolded, to his starting point. Removing the blindfold, the half-hour-long ritual is complete.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: A Scout may use half-magic to recognize tracks and trails left by different types of animals and Namegivers in wilderness or urban environments. They gain access to the Search and Detect Trap skills via half-magic.

Scouts also gain access to the Navigation and Mapmaking skills (see p. 98 and p. 99) via half-magic.



TALENTS AND ABILITIES

INITIATE

Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Creature Analysis, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, Silent Walk

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Climbing, Karma Ritual, Search, Tracking, Wilderness Survival

NOVICE

Talent Options: Anticipate Blow, Detect Trap, Detect Weapon, Disguise Self, Durability (6/5), Great Leap, Read/Write Language, Sprint

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Speak Language

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Navigation

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Scout Weaving]

JOURNEYMAN

Talent Options: Conceal Object, Direction Arrow, Disarm Trap, Lock Picking, Maneuver, Sense Danger, Trap Initiative, Trick Riding

Fifth Circle

Enhanced Senses: For 2 Strain, the adept enhances one of his natural senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste), gaining a +2 bonus to Perception Tests based on the sense for 10 minutes.
Discipline Talent: Evidence Analysis

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Astral Sight

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on another person's Action Tests to avoid and get out of environmental hazards; stay on the path; and endure any harsh conditions for the journey. The adept must be traveling with them for this ability to be used.
Discipline Talent: Empathic Sense

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Safe Path

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Climbing, Navigation, Parry, Throwing Weapons, Unarmed Combat

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Air Sailing, Battle Shout, Fireblood, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons

Novice

Talent Options: Air Speaking, Detect Weapon, Durability (8/6), Missile Weapons, Swift Kick, Wilderness Survival, Wind Catcher, Wound Balance

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Great Leap

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Shield Charge

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Toughness-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Sky Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Blood Share, Cold Purify, Lasting Impression, Leadership, Lion Heart, Surprise Strike, Tactics, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle

Strike Without Warning: When he fights Surprised or Blindsided (see pages 226 and 228) opponents, the adept may take 2 Strain. The Difficulty Numbers of all Knockdown Tests made by these opponents as a result of the adept's attacks are increased by +3 until the end of the round.
Discipline Talent: Battle Bellow

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Steely Stare

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.
Discipline Talent: Momentum Attack

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Down Strike

Sky Raider

Sky Raiders are ruthless pirates forming a potent force in Barsaive. Their drakkars raid all over the province, most frequently targeting Therans or their vassals. 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, Toughness

Karma Ritual: To start his Karma ritual, the Sky Raider spends several minutes in silent meditation beneath the open sky. Then he begins to strike his shield with a weapon, slowly at first, perhaps two beats a minute. The striking accelerates until the Sky Raider is beating his shield at a furious rate. The drumming continues for a half hour, then the Sky Raider stops, continuing to meditate while his shield still resonates from the furious bashing. The Karma ritual ends as soon as the sound from the last drumbeat dies away.

Artisan Skills: Panel Painting, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Sky Raiders use half-magic for tasks related to the upkeep, repair, and building of drakkar-sized airships, knowledge of different airship designs and recognition of different airship types, knowledge of commonly followed flight paths, and identification of crew complements of different sizes according to types of airships. They also gain access to the Climbing and Navigation skills via half-magic while aboard an airship.



SWORDMASTER

Swordmasters are fighters who learn the value of a well-handled weapon, training to demonstrate quickness, flash, and panache in a fight. Swordmasters often swagger when they walk.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Dexterity

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Swordmaster fences against imaginary opponents. He fights the first few duels as silent, simple exercises. Over the next half hour, the Swordmaster provides sound effects, performs acrobatic moves, and even engages in swashbuckling dialog. The ritual is completed when the last foe falls.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Dancing

Half-Magic: Swordmasters use half-magic to care for their weapons, know the history of legendary weapons, and recognize different types of melee weapons. Swordmasters may also use half-magic to identify another Swordmaster's fighting techniques, including which prominent Swordmasters may have shaped the individual's style.



TALENTS AND ABILITIES

INITIATE

Talent Options: Acrobatic Strike, Avoid Blow, First Impression, Speak Language, Wound Balance

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Karma Ritual, Maneuver, Melee Weapons, Parry, Taunt

NOVICE

Talent Options: Anticipate Blow, Detect Weapon, Durability (7/6), Haggle, Sprint, Throwing Weapons, Unarmed Combat, Winning Smile

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Heartening Laugh

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Riposte

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Weapon Weaving]

JOURNEYMAN

Talent Options: Conceal Object, Etiquette, Graceful Exit, Lasting Impression, Lion Heart, Surprise Strike, Swift Kick, Tiger Spring

Fifth Circle

Flourish: Taking 2 Strain, the adept swings his weapon outward in as wide an arc as possible. He then makes a Charisma Test against his opponent's Social Defense. If successful, the opponent cannot engage the adept in unarmed combat until the end of the round.
Discipline Talent: Second Weapon

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Disarm

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on melee weapon Damage Tests.
Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Second Attack

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Climbing, Melee Weapons, Search, Throwing Weapons

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Karma Ritual, Lock Picking, Picking Pockets, Silent Walk, Trap Initiative

Novice

Talent Options: Detect Weapon, Disguise Self, Durability (6/5), First Impression, Great Leap, Haggle, Sprint, Surprise Strike

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Detect Trap

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Disarm Trap

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Thief Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Call Missile, Conceal Object, Dead Fall, Direction Sense, Engaging Banter, Evaluate, Graceful Exit, Mimic Voice

Fifth Circle

Thieves' Tongue: For 1 Strain the adept may speak for up to 10 minutes in Thieves' Tongue. While what he says makes perfect sense to Thieves, even if they do not possess this ability, it sounds like lilting gibberish to anyone else. Thieves' Tongue cannot be learned by any other means (such as the Speak Language talent).
Discipline Talent: Sense Poison

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Slough Blame

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on another person's Action Tests to sneak, hide, or otherwise be stealthy. The adept must make an effort to assist the other person.
Discipline Talent: Fast Hand

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: True Sight

Thief

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

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Perception

Karma Ritual: To start his Karma ritual, the Thief sits by himself in a darkened area and concentrates for half an hour on the knowledge that he is alone in the world and can rely, first and foremost, only on himself. With this firmly established in both heart and mind, he sets out to use one of his Discipline talents. The ritual ends as soon as the adept successfully uses the talent.

Artisan Skills: Acting, Poetry

Half-Magic: Thieves may use half-magic to build or bypass security measures intended to prevent theft, and to recognize different types of locking mechanisms. Thieves gain access to the Search, Detect Trap, and Disarm Trap skills via half-magic.



TROUBADOUR

Troubadours serve as entertainers, storytellers, actors, and songsmiths. As such, they represent the closest thing to a historian or scholar that common people usually see.

Important Attributes: Charisma, Perception

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Troubadour must perform a ballad or skit before an audience of at least two others. He can juggle, joke, tell tall tales, or sing serious legends. Half an hour after he starts, the Troubadour finishes the performance with a short story, ending the tale with the phrase, "And there it ends, for such is the truth of the thing." This completes the ritual.

Artisan Skills: Musician, Storytelling

Half-Magic: Troubadours may make Half-Magic Tests whenever they perform for audiences, and also for knowledge of legends, myths, and folklore of their home province's lands and people.



TALENTS AND ABILITIES

INITIATE

Talent Options: Emotion Song, Haggle, Melee Weapons, Read/Write Language, Speak Language

First Circle

Discipline Talents: First Impression, Impress, Item History, Karma Ritual, Mimic Voice

NOVICE

Talent Options: Avoid Blow, Durability (6/5), Etiquette, Heartening Laugh, Lasting Impression, Taunt, Throwing Weapons, Winning Smile

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Disguise Self

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Empathic Sense

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Charisma-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Story Weaving]

JOURNEYMAN

Talent Options: Blade Juggle, Book Memory, Diplomacy, Engaging Banter, Graceful Exit, Performance, Research, Slough Blame

Fifth Circle

One Last Word: If he fails an Action Test against a target's (or multiple targets') Social Defense, the adept may take 2 Strain to roll 1 Karma Point and add it to the Test Result. The Test Result is then compared to the Difficulty Number again to determine success. One Last Word can only be used once per failed Action Test.
Discipline Talent: Inspire Others

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on another person's social Action Test. Using Karma in this way counts as the adept's Standard Action that round. The adept must speak on behalf of the other party or take some other action that justifies spending the Karma Point.
Discipline Talent: Leadership

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Social Defense.
Discipline Talent: Lion Heart

Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Acrobatic Strike, Air Dance, Climbing, Maneuver, Parry

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Avoid Blow, Karma Ritual, Melee Weapons, Unarmed Combat, Wood Skin

Novice

Talent Options: Detect Weapon, Durability (9/7), Fireblood, Heartening Laugh, Missile Weapons, Swift Kick, Throwing Weapons, Tiger Spring

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Anticipate Blow

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Wound Balance

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Strength-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [War Weaving]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Cobra Strike, Disarm, Leadership, Lion Heart, Second Weapon, Shield Charge, Steely Stare, Tactics

Fifth Circle

Battle Rites: The adept performs his Karma Ritual for the day, but instead of buying Karma Points, he spends 1 Karma Point, takes 2 Strain, and chooses one of his talents. In the next fight that day, using this Talent does not cause Strain once per round (every use after the first in a round causes Strain as normal).
Discipline Talent: Temper Self

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Life Check

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on close combat Damage Tests.
Discipline Talent: Crushing Blow

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Physical Defense.
Discipline Talent: Second Attack

Warrior

Warriors are fighters and soldiers trained to use magic to enhance their combat techniques. They often form groups with other Warriors, living in seclusion in self-sufficient settlements similar to monastic orders.

Important Attributes: Dexterity, Strength

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 him any Strain damage. The Warrior then performs a series of four exercises: the earth defense, the water defense, the fire attack, and the air attack. The ritual ends half an hour later, as soon as the Warrior completes the final move of the air attack.

Artisan Skills: Sculpting, Rune Carving

Half-Magic: Warriors can use half-magic when caring for or repairing their weapons and armor, knowledge of military tactics and strategy (recognizing the safest approach to a target when planning a battle, for instance) and to recall events of Barsaive's military history. The use half-magic to recognize warrior orders, famous ancient Warriors, and ancient arms and armor. Warriors gain access to the Tactics skill via half-magic.



Weaponsmith

A Weaponsmith trains to gain an iron will and a highly critical eye. Weaponsmiths help identify and create legendary weapons. To this end, the Discipline borrows abilities from both Elementalism and Wizardry. Nearly every community places great value on their Weaponsmiths.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: To perform his Karma ritual, the Weaponsmith heats a thin strip of metal in a hot fire or forge. Over the next half hour, he fashions the metal into a blade, arrowhead, or spear-tip, but instead of forging an effective item, he intentionally tempers the metal too soon, making it brittle. The Weaponsmith then shatters the defective piece of metalwork. The ritual ends the instant the item breaks.

Artisan Skills: Rune Carving, Wood Carving

Half-Magic: Weaponsmiths may use half-magic when caring for weapons and armor and to recognize different types of weapons and armor used or worn by different Namegiver races or their creators. They may also make Half-Magic Tests in place of Craftsman Tests when making or repairing forged metal items, such as horse shoes, barrel stays, and the like.

Weaponsmiths gain access to the Craft Armor and Craft Weapon skills via half-magic. From Fifth Circle on, Weaponsmiths can create living armor with this ability.



Talents and Abilities

Initiate

Talent Options: Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons, Parry, Speak Language, Throwing Weapons

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Evaluate, Forge Weapon, Haggle, Karma Ritual, Steel Thought

Novice

Talent Options: Detect Weapon, Durability (6/5), Fireblood, First Impression, Heartening Laugh, Read/Write Language, Shield Charge, Wound Balance

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Item History

Third Circle

Discipline Talent: Abate Curse

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Thread Weaving [Thread Smithing]

Journeyman

Talent Options: Conceal Object, Detect Trap, Elemental Tongues, Fire Heal, Leadership, Read/Write Magic, Resist Taunt, Temper Other

Fifth Circle

Traveling Smithy: Taking 1 Strain per hour, the adept can create an impromptu forge or workshop required for making weapons or armor (or items he can craft that are no more complicated than these) while traveling, provided he has the minimum requirements necessary, such as a fire for working metal, and of course tools. The Traveling Smithy doubles the time required to craft any items.
Discipline Talent: Temper Self

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Lion Heart

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Damage Tests made with weapons he produced himself.
Discipline Talent: Spot Armor Flaw

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Forge Armor

TALENTS AND ABILITIES

INITIATE

Talent Options: Arcane Muttering, Conversation, Creature Analysis, Evidence Analysis, Spell Matrix

First Circle

Discipline Talents: Astral Sight, Karma Ritual, Read/Write Magic, Spellcasting, Spell Matrix, Thread Weaving [Wizardry]

NOVICE

Talent Options: Abate Curse, Detect Weapon, Durability (4/3), Item History, Search, Speak Language, Spell Matrix, Spell Matrix

Second Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Read/Write Language

Third Circle

Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Book Memory

Fourth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Perception-only Tests.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Research

JOURNEYMAN

Talent Options: Detect Trap, Direction Sense, Enhanced Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Lifesight, Lip Reading, Orbiting Spy, Willforce

Fifth Circle

Book Mage: Taking 2 Strain, the adept does not suffer penalties to Spellcasting or Thread Weaving for attuning to or casting from a Grimoire, for the casting of one spell.
Spell: The adept learns one new spell from the current Circle.
Discipline Talent: Steel Thought

Sixth Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on Willpower-only Tests.
Discipline Talent: Book Recall

Seventh Circle

Karma: The adept may spend 1 Karma Point on spell Effect Tests.
Discipline Talent: Resist Taunt

Eighth Circle

Defense: The adept adds +1 to his Spell Defense.
Discipline Talent: Hold Thread

WIZARD

Wizards are spellcasters well-trained in the theoretical aspects of magic. Those who follow other spellcasting Disciplines sometimes disparage Wizards as being simple "book magicians," but it is interesting to note that very few have the guts to call a Wizard that to his face.

Important Attributes: Perception, Willpower

Karma Ritual: To perform his 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 first circle, the Wizard 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 half-hour-long sequence ends with a triangle and is complete once this final triangle is drawn.

Artisan Skills: Manuscript Illumination, Robe Embroidery

Half-Magic: Wizards may use half-magic to recognize different types of magic use, identify specific uses of Wizardry, and for knowledge of magical rituals.



CHAPTER SIX

TALENTS

Magic is the source from which adepts draw their power. Talents are the tools for harnessing that power.

• Grondall Hearthstone, Dwarf Weaponsmith •

Talents are 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. Though the talents your character may learn are limited by his Discipline, how effectively and creatively he uses them is limited only by your imagination.

The use of talents draws from every aspect of the game system: spell magic, combat, Action Tests, and so on. The brief explanations of the various elements of using talents are referenced to the complete explanations provided elsewhere in this book. Because of their magical nature, learning and improving talents is much easier than learning and improving mundane skills.

The individual **Disciplines** chapters list the talents available to adepts of each Discipline. This chapter describes those talents.

USING TALENTS

When an adept uses a talent, he will usually make a Test to determine how successfully he used that talent. This Test often replaces other types of Tests, including Attribute, Damage, Initiative, or Attack Tests. The Step Number used for the Test is determined by adding an Attribute Step to the Talent Rank. The Difficulty Number against which the Test is made is often based on the target's Social, Spell, or Physical Defense Rating. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual talent descriptions.

A character can only be affected by a single use of a talent at any one time—multiple uses do not stack. If targeted by another use of the same talent, the character is only affected by the greater of the two effects. In the case of talents that last longer than one round, an adept may extend the duration by activating the talent again before it expires. In this case, the new duration replaces any time remaining from the previous use, so long as the effects remain the same.

See the **Game Concepts** chapter, p.14, for more information on rolling dice and making Action and Effect Tests.

TALENT TESTS

To make a Talent Test (usually referred to by the name of the talent, i.e., Missile Weapons Test), the adept rolls the dice indicated for the Talent Step against a target Difficulty Number. For the Test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number. If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the adept may have achieved an advantageous Result Level, which could increase or otherwise beneficially change the talent's effect.

Replacement Effects

Some talents replace or substitute their Step for a Step Number used in another type of Test. For example, the Air Dance talent replaces the adept's Dexterity Step with the Talent Step for the purpose of determining the Initiative Step. When such talents are used, they are not considered Talent Tests. In the above example, the use of Air Dance is part of an Initiative Test. It is not a Talent Test, although the talent is considered to be used. If an adept has multiple talents that replace the same type of Test, he only benefits from the use of one of those talents for a given Test—using two such talents would mean replacing the original Step once, and then replacing the new Step again. For example, if the adept had two talents that substituted for his Strength Step, such as Crushing Blow and Down Strike, he would have to choose which talent to use. In other instances, a Talent Test replaces another type of Test instead of substituting its Step. For example, the Flame Arrow Test replaces the normal Damage Test made for a missile weapons attack with a Talent Test. These are considered Talent Tests as well as the type of Test they replace for the purpose of other bonuses.

The difference between talents that replace their Step with a type of Test—or for an Attribute Step being part of a type of Test—and talents that replace their whole Test with a Talent Test, is that the latter circumvent the normal rules for the replaced type of Test. For example, if an adept uses Crushing Blow to determine damage, he follows the normal rules for Damage Tests and may add his weapon's Damage Step to the Test. If an adept uses Flame Arrow, he makes a Flame Arrow Test as his Damage Test and cannot add the Damage Step of his weapon (as his weapon's Damage Step is added to Damage Tests, not Flame Arrow Tests). He could add other bonuses to Damage Tests though, if they were of another origin, and would suffer penalties for Range.

Special Uses and Exceptions

The individual talent descriptions in this chapter give detailed rules for using each talent. Any special uses of or exceptions to normal talent use are noted in the talent description.

DISCIPLINE TALENTS

Disciplines emphasize the importance of particular talents and mold a greater portion of their magic around them. These talents are called **Discipline Talents**. Discipline Talents have advantages over talents learned as Talent Options. When an adept uses a Discipline Talent, he may spend a Karma Point to roll a Karma Die with the Talent Test, adding the results together to determine the Test Result. Spending Karma on a Discipline Talent does not normally improve the result of any other Tests that occur as a result of the Talent Test.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, is using his Melee Weapons talent to make a stylish attack against his opponent. Since Melee Weapons is a Discipline Talent for Swordmasters, Kricklen may choose to spend a Karma Point to increase his chance of success. This Karma Point only affects his Melee Weapons Test. If the attack is successful, Kricklen does not get to roll his Karma Die again on the subsequent Damage Test.

However, some Discipline Talents specifically add their Rank to, or substitute their Step for, another Test. In this case, the adept may spend a Karma Point to roll a Karma Die with the Test enhanced by using the Discipline Talent.

Velrak, a troll Warrior, knows Crushing Blow as a Discipline Talent. This talent is not rolled directly, as it substitutes its Step Number for the adept's Strength Step. However, Velrak may spend a Karma Point to roll a Karma Die with the Damage Test enhanced by his Crushing Blow.

Talents that are always active and not rolled or do not enhance any Tests, such as Durability or Karma Ritual, do not benefit from the use of Karma. **Unless stated otherwise, an adept can spend only one Karma Point on a talent**, but sometimes a combination of talents and other abilities can result in multiple Karma Dice being rolled on a Talent Test.

Multi-Discipline Talent Use

Adepts who are members of multiple Disciplines may find that some of their talents are Discipline Talents for more than one Discipline. Regardless of how many Disciplines the talent in question is a Discipline Talent for, the adept may spend only one Karma Point on a single Talent Test, unless noted otherwise in the talent description.

TALENT DURATION

The effects of some talents vary in duration. Many talents have a duration determined by multiplying the Talent Rank by the time unit given (rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on). For example, the effect of Engaging Banter lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Engaging Banter Rank. In most cases, if the adept using the talent is knocked unconscious, the talent's effect ends.

Dispelling Talents

Because talents are powered by magic, player and gamemaster characters can interrupt or end an opponent's use of a talent by using magic-disrupting spells such as Dispel Magic (p.163). The Difficulty Number for dispelling a talent is based on its Talent Rank. Only those talents with an extended duration can be dispelled this way. This excludes talents such as Karma Ritual and Durability, which have no duration. Also, some talents are more or less resistant to being dispelled—these talents note the Dispel Difficulty in their description. See **Dispelling Magic**, p.138, for more information.

TALENT RANGE

Many talents have a variable range and use their Rank, a multiplier thereof, or Talent Test result to determine a viable target, measure their effects, or determine the area affected. The measurement of ranges differs between talents. Talents that are used in combat and up-close usually give the range in hexes—one hex being two yards wide—while talents usually used outside of combat or at very long ranges (not fitting onto a typical medium-sized battle mat), give ranges in yards. That a talent gives a range in hex or yards, respectively, is no indication of whether it can be used in combat or not—the most applicable measurement is presented for convenience. Simply convert hexes to yards by multiplying by two, and convert yards to hexes by halving the value, rounding up (1 yard becomes 1 hex, 3 yards become 2 hexes, and so on).

GAME TERMS

The talent descriptions describe how to use each talent. The text also describes the effects of the talent, and **boldface** entries above each description summarize important game information. This information falls into the following categories.



Step Number

The Talent Step is usually determined by adding the adept's Talent Rank to the Attribute Step listed under the "Step:" notation. If the talent requires the adept to make a Talent Test, the Step Number is used to determine the dice the player rolls. For example, an adept with a Perception Step of 6 and the Spellcasting talent at Rank 3 would have a Spellcasting Step of 9 (6+3=9). The Step/Action Dice Table, p.14, shows that Step 9 uses D8+D6 Action Dice. Some talents use only a Talent Rank—no Attribute Step is added to the Talent Rank in this case. Many talents require no Talent Test—their effect is determined differently, as detailed in the talent description. For example, an adept's Karma Ritual Rank determines the maximum number of Karma Points he can gain by performing a Karma ritual.

Action

Different talents require an adept to perform different types of Actions (see **Actions**, p.215). Different types of Actions indicate different amounts of effort the adept has to put into using that talent (and many other abilities). The type of Action required to use a talent is indicated in the "Action:" notation in the talent's characteristics. A talent requires the indicated Action every time it is used, which normally means for every Talent Test made. There are five types of Actions: Standard, Simple, Free, Sustained, and NA (Not Applicable).

Standard Actions require most of the adept's attention or govern much of what he can do in one combat round. An adept has only one Standard Action per combat round, so he can only use one talent that uses a Standard Action. Note that while most talents require a Standard Action every time they are used, which normally means for every Talent Test made, some talents explicitly allow several Tests be made as part of using that Talent. For example, most adepts use their Standard Action to make a single Attack Test per round with a talent, such as with the Melee Weapons talent. However, adepts with the Frenzy talent can make several Attack Tests as part of using the talent, because the special rules for that talent allow it.

Simple Actions require little effort. There is normally no restriction to the number of Simple Actions an adept can perform, but some groups may want to limit the number of Simple Actions available in one combat round (see the optional **Action Cap** rule, p.217). Simple Actions differ from Free Actions (below) in that they are usually independent from other Actions the adept makes and often indicate some sort of obvious activity be performed, such as speaking, moving, or making gestures.

Free Actions, like Simple Actions, are not limited, but usually are not independent from other Actions. They are typically used as part of other Actions or an adept's general defensive abilities. For example, using a talent that enhances Damage Tests is often a Free Action, as the activities performed become part of the initial attack that used a Standard or Simple Action. Free Actions are

usually not indicated by any special visible effects, except where otherwise noted, but may intensify an existing visible effect. For example, all characters continuously dodge and evade in combat, which is represented by their Physical Defense. An adept using Avoid Blow to dodge attacks might look as if he did so with more effort than normal. Free Actions are normally the only type of Action an adept can use when it is not his turn—they often form reactions to other Actions in this capacity.

Sustained Actions take more than one round to perform, and use the adept's Standard Actions over the course of several consecutive rounds, minutes, or hours, as indicated in the talent description. They usually apply more special rules to how they are used than other talents, or require the player and gamemaster to determine exactly how many Standard Actions are used. Sustained Actions often require complicated activities before they can be used, and these may differ from use to use. While some talents require efforts over multiple rounds, they are only Sustained Actions if they actually require a Standard Action to be used several times in a row, and only if they do so *before* the talent takes effect. For example, the Book Memory talent requires a Standard Action, despite the adept only being able to memorize a specific number of pages per minute, but the memorization takes place after the Book Memory Test is made. The Forge Weapon talent, on the other hand, requires the adept to work on a weapon for some time before making the Forge Weapon Test, and therefore uses a Sustained Action.

Some talent Actions are shown as **NA** or Not Applicable. These talents do not use Actions—they are usually active all of the time and typically do not use Talent Tests.

Karma

Some talents require an adept to spend Karma, providing the necessary magical energy to fuel the talent. These talents are noted by the word "Yes" in the "Karma:" notation in their description.

If a talent requires Karma, the adept must spend a Karma Point when using the talent. If an adept has no Karma Points he may use a Recovery Test to generate the magical energy required. **If the talent requires a Talent Test to be made, roll the Karma Die and add it to the result on every Talent Test made**. If the talent does not require a Talent Test, but adds its Rank as a bonus to another Test, the Karma Point is likewise spent on every use of the talent and the Karma Die rolled with the Test which is enhanced. If the talent use does not involve any Test, the Karma Point is simply used to fuel the talent's magic, and no Karma Die is rolled. If a character has no Karma Points or Recovery Tests he cannot use a talent that requires Karma.

If a talent is also a Discipline Talent for an adept (see **Discipline Talents,** p.57) he may *choose* whether or not to spend a Karma Point. This supersedes the requirement to always spend Karma. **Unless stated otherwise, an adept can spend only one Karma Point on a talent**, though some combinations of talents and other abilities can result in multiple Karma Dice being rolled on a Talent Test.

Strain

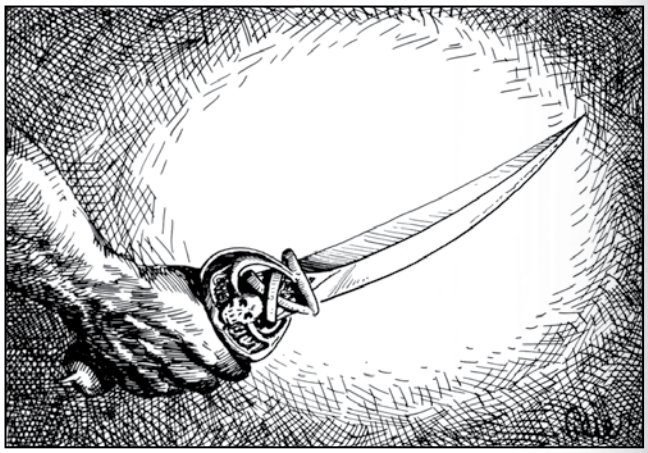
Talents that cause Strain drain small amounts of an adept's life energy to fuel their use. The "Strain:" notation shows the number of Damage Points the adept takes each time he uses the talent. An adept always takes full, unmodified damage from Strain—no armor provides protection—and may take Strain damage multiple times for a single talent during a round. Unless specified, Strain never causes Wounds.

Malgat, an ork Beastmaster, knows the Frenzy talent at Rank 3. She may make up to three attacks per round using this talent. Frenzy has a Strain cost of 1. If Malgat used Frenzy to make three attacks, she would take 3 Strain damage.

ABATE CURSE

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept's presence temporarily nullifies any curses or active spell effects present on an object. It does not alleviate a curse's effects on those already affected by it, but it will allow unaffected characters to handle the object without risk of being cursed or affected by spells. The adept makes an Abate Curse Test against the higher of the highest Step Number of any curse or the highest Dispel Difficulty (p.138) of any spells present on the object, +1 for each additional curse or spell. If successful, all of the curses and spells are neutralized for a number of hours equal to the adept's Abate Curse Rank—their effects are suspended, but their duration is still kept track of. The adept must remain within a number of yards equal to his Abate Curse Rank of the target object throughout the talent's duration or the effect ends.



ACROBATIC STRIKE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept performs flips, somersaults, or similar acrobatic maneuvers, making him harder to hit. He must be able to move and have sufficient space to perform maneuvers in. The adept makes an Acrobatic Strike Test against the highest Physical Defense of any opponents in close combat range (1 hex) and must then attack one of the opponents in close combat. If both the Acrobatic Strike Test and the Attack Test are successful, the adept adds his Acrobatic Strike Rank to his Physical Defense against the opponents for the remainder of the round. If the adept is Knocked Down or otherwise finds his movement restricted, he loses this bonus.

AIR DANCE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept performs quick, gliding movements and rapid attacks in combat. Air Dance requires that the adept be able to move. Windling adepts may use this talent while flying, but it cannot be combined with talents that utilize other forms of magical movement, such as Gliding Stride. The adept substitutes his Air Dance Step for his Dexterity Step when making his Initiative Test (see **Determine Initiative**, p.214), incurring Initiative Penalties for armor as normal. If making a close combat attack that round, the adept compares his Initiative Test result against his opponent's. On an Excellent Result, the adept may make an additional close combat attack against his opponent, following that character's turn.

Air Sailing

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Sustained
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept knows how to work the rigging, tiller, and oars of airships. An adept who wishes to join an airship crew must know Air Sailing at Rank 1 or higher. Positions of command require greater ability: the higher an adept's Air Sailing Rank, the bigger the ship he can command or the higher the position he can fill within a ship's crew. The adept makes an Air Sailing (5) Test to help propel an airship. If successful, he effectively takes the place of one crew member for each Result Level achieved. For an airship to stay airborne, at least 25 percent of the crew must make successful Air Sailing (5) Tests each hour. For example, an airship with a rowing crew of twenty needs at least five rowers to succeed at Air Sailing Tests to stay afloat. This might be an equivalent number, such as two rowers, one of whom achieved an Extraordinary Result on his Air Sailing Test (thereby replacing four rowers). If at least 50 percent of the crew make successful tests, the airship can maneuver at its current altitude, dive, or climb slowly in a straight line. If 75 percent of the crew are successful, the airship can speed up, maneuver while climbing, or perform aerobatics. A ship's officers can use Air Sailing to enhance the ship's performance and steer it through hazardous situations (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for more information).

Air Speaking

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Simple
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept communicates without vocalizing, moving his lips and mouthing the words he wants to speak, and makes an Air Speaking Test. Anyone within Test Result×5 yards hears the adept speaking as if he were conversing normally, for a number of hours equal to his Air Speaking Rank. Those without knowledge of Air Speaking can hear someone employing this talent, but can only reply using normal communication methods. When speaking, the adept "talks" in a language he knows; if those listening do not know that language, they cannot understand what is being said. Elementalists often use this talent to lecture at gatherings.

Animal Bond

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept develops a bond of trust with an animal, making an Animal Bond Test against the animal's Social Defense. If successful, the animal takes a Neutral "live and let live" attitude toward him. The adept may make additional tests to further improve the animal's Attitude, but must spend at least one week with the animal between tests, treating it well during that time. Each subsequent improvement requires an additional Result Level on the Animal Bond Test. Once the animal's Attitude increases to Loyal, it willingly takes risks for the adept and expects appropriate rewards for doing so. (This is more easily accomplished for an animal than for a Namegiver friend. For example, all a dog really wants is lots of affection and enough food.) A Loyal animal will accompany the adept on adventures if he so desires, and is referred to as an animal companion. However, an animal will not maintain a better Attitude towards an adept than the adept shows to it. As a result, mistreatment, neglect, or abandonment can offset the talent's effects, worsening the animal's Attitude towards the character. This talent can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to improve the Attitudes of Horrors, Horror-constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

Animal Companion Durability

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept's animal companions' ability to take damage is improved in a similar manner to the Durability talent (p.66), with each Animal Companion Durability Rank increasing the animal's Death Rating by +6 and its Unconsciousness Rating by +5. The adept assigns Ranks individually to animal companions Loyal to him, with each companion benefiting only from those Ranks assigned to it, by performing an hour-long ritual. An animal can only benefit from one Durability-type talent at a time. Should an animal die, any Animal Companion Durability Ranks assigned to it may be assigned to another companion by performing another ritual.

Markla, an ork Beastmaster, knows the Animal Companion Durability talent at Rank 3 and has five companion animals Loyal to him. He may assign all 3 Ranks to one animal, 1 Rank to three animals, or 2 Ranks to one animal and 1 Rank to another. Not all of his companions can benefit from this talent until Markla improves his Talent Rank. The Beastmaster decides to assign 1 Rank to his bat (who gains a +6 Death and +5 Unconsciousness Rating bonus) and 2 Ranks to his wolf (who gains a +12 Death and +10 Unconsciousness Rating bonus). As all of his companions are gathered in the same place, the ritual only takes one hour to perform.

Animal Possession

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 2

The adept places his spirit into the body of an animal by touching it and making an Animal Possession Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, his spirit takes possession of the animal's body and the animal's spirit enters the adept's body. The adept now controls the animal's body, but not vice versa, for a number of hours equal to his Animal Possession Rank or until animal and adept touch again. While using this talent, the adept's physical form slumps into a coma-like state. He retains his own intellect while in the animal's body, but cannot perform any actions that the animal is normally incapable of, such as speaking. If the animal body is killed during this time, the possession ends immediately. Any damage inflicted on the animal's body during the possession is also applied to the adept (no armor provides protection). When the talent ends both spirits return to their proper bodies. An unwilling animal may attempt to resist the talent at the time of possession by making a Willpower Test against the adept's Animal Possession Step. If successful, the animal prevents the possession occurring, although the adept can try again. Otherwise the talent functions normally and the animal may take no further actions until the possession ends.

Animal Talk

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

The adept comprehends animals and creatures, talking with them by imitating their own forms of communication and making an Animal Talk Test against the target creature or animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept can talk to and understand the target for a number of minutes equal to his Animal Talk Rank. This talent does not compel the animal or creature to communicate with the adept, it merely makes communication possible. While the gamemaster is advised to treat animals as if they were gamemaster characters, using the rules for Social Interactions (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93), he should keep in mind that animals aren't as intelligent as Namegivers and perceive the world differently.

ANIMAL TRAINING

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept trains an animal to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead," "smell that," and "go home," as well as the more usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." An animal can be taught a maximum number of commands equal to the adept's Animal Training Rank. Each command requires a separate successful use of Animal Training and the animal must hold a Friendly attitude towards the trainer. The adept spends a day with the animal, focusing on teaching it the new command, and reviewing any commands it already knows, then makes an Animal Training Test against the creature's Social Defense. If successful, the animal understands and obeys the command. Trained animals only respond to commands given by characters they are Friendly with, including their trainer. The animal remembers all of the commands it has learned to date for a number of months equal to the adept's Animal Training Rank. If an adept tries to maintain too large a collection of trained animals, he will find their training slipping unless he constantly works with them. If the adept neglects an animal's training, it will forget all of its training within a month of the talent ending.

ANTICIPATE BLOW

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

If the adept has a higher Initiative Test result, he anticipates attacks made against him by making an Anticipate Blow Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If successful, he adds his Anticipate Blow Rank to his Physical Defense against that opponent's attacks until the end of the round. The adept can use this talent against a number of different opponents equal to his Anticipate Blow Rank each round.

After one or more successful Anticipate Blow Tests, the adept may announce a Reserved Action (p.217) for later that round to interrupt the attack of an opponent Anticipate Blow was successfully used against with a counter-attack. When doing so, he does not add +2 to the Difficulty Number for physical attacks against that opponent (but still adds it to other Difficulty Numbers). Instead, he adds his Anticipate Blow Rank as a bonus to the first Attack Test made against the opponent that round. Anticipate Blow does not convey any additional attacks—the attacks used on the counter-attack must be saved up.

Krarg successfully uses his Anticipate Blow talent against two opponents, both of whom are yet to attack him. He decides to Reserve his Action until he is attacked, to profit from the Attack Test bonus Anticipate Blow provides. When the first opponent attacks him, Krarg interrupts, attacking his opponent instead. He would normally add +2 to the Difficulty Number of all of his actions when he takes his Reserved Action, but the Anticipate Blow talent negates this effect and gives a bonus to his first counter-attack. Krarg makes a Melee Weapons Test using his Standard Action as his first attack, and adds his Anticipate Blow Rank of 6 as a bonus to that Test. He then uses his Second Attack talent, but receives neither a bonus to the Test nor increases his Difficulty Number. However, he then decides to use Taunt against his second opponent, and as this is not a physical attack, the Difficulty Number for the Taunt Test is increased by +2, despite Krarg having used Anticipate Blow successfully against that opponent. After his turn has ended, Krarg's opponents can now attack him, but he benefits from the higher Physical Defense conveyed by using Anticipate Blow.



ARCANE MUTTERINGS

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept confuses others by muttering dire, largely incomprehensible, warnings and making an Arcane Mutterings Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the target characters become confused and are considered Harried for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Arcane Mutterings Rank. Due to the disconcerting nature of the talent, this penalty also applies to the target's Social Defense. During this time, the adept must continually "mutter away" or the effect ends; this requires his concentration. On a Good Result, those affected also feel uneasy and will take no hostile actions against the adept or his obvious companions—so long as no one takes any hostile action against them. Arcane Mutterings is ineffective against targets engaged in combat.

ARMOR MOUNT

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept wills an increase to his mount's natural armor, making an Armor Mount Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept adds his Armor Mount Rank to the animal's Physical Armor for a number of minutes also equal to his Armor Mount Rank.

ASTRAL SIGHT

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept sees into the astral plane to a distance equal to his Astral Sight Rank×10 yards and for a number of rounds equal to his Astral Sight Rank. Details on perceiving astral space and the Difficulty Numbers associated with it are explained in the **Workings of Magic** chapter (see **Using Astral Sensing**, p.110). Examining magical items using Astral Sight this way does not provide any information about the item's history or reveal any Test Knowledges (p.114).

Avoid Blow

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept avoids injury by dodging blows directed against him. When attacked in close or ranged combat, the adept makes an Avoid Blow Test against his opponent's Attack Test result. Dodging a ranged attack requires a Good Result. If successful, the adept avoids the blow—he sees the attack coming and dodges out of the way at the last moment. The adept can dodge a maximum number of attacks equal to his Avoid Blow Rank each round, but only one attempt per Attack Test. An adept cannot use Avoid Blow if he is Blindsided or Surprised by his attacker.

Bank Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept ricochets projectiles or thrown weapons off objects, bypassing obstructions such as cover, to strike an obscured, but visible, target. The adept points out the objects off which he intends to ricochet his shot, to a number equal to his Bank Shot Rank, then makes a Bank Shot Test as his ranged combat Attack Test, ignoring Cover penalties (p.226). If successful, the projectile or thrown weapon ricochets off the designated objects and strikes the target. Use of this talent destroys any arrows, bolts, or other projectiles used in the attack. Though daggers and other throwing weapons are nicked and scratched, they remain usable afterwards, unless the Bank Shot Test was a Pathetic Result, in which case they too are ruined. Bank Shot is especially effective when used in combination with the Blind Fire talent.

Battle Bellow

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept issues a great bellow, either bolstering the resolve of comrades or intimidating enemies, within a distance equal to his Battle Bellow Rank×3 hexes. The adept decides whether he is targeting friends or foes, then makes a Battle Bellow Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successfully targeting friends, affected characters add +1 to their Social Defense per Result Level achieved. If successfully targeting foes, affected characters suffer a –1 penalty to their Action Tests per Result Level achieved. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Battle Bellow Rank. Targets who are immune to fear are also immune to this talent's effects.



Battle Shout

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept issues a loud shout, intimidating a single foe within a distance equal to his Battle Shout Rank in hexes (twice this in yards). The adept makes a Battle Shout Test against his opponent's Social Defense. If successful, the target incurs a penalty to his Action Tests equal to the adept's Battle Shout Rank, until the end of the following round. Reduce the penalty by –1 for each additional successful Battle Shout Test made against the same target during the encounter. Targets which are immune to fear are also immune to this talent's effect.

Blade Juggle

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The adept creates a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other bladed weapons between himself and his opponents. He makes a Blade Juggle Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the combined Sizes of the blades being juggled+the highest Damage Step among the blades, noting the Test Result. If successful, the adept takes 1 Strain and begins juggling; he takes 1 Strain and uses a Simple Action for each round of juggling juggling after the first. The adept cannot juggle blades with a Size higher than his one-handed Size limit. While juggling, the adept adds the combined Sizes of the blades he is currently juggling to his Physical Defense. If an opponent unsuccessfully attacks the adept, he strikes a juggled blade of the adept's choice. If the attack was in ranged combat, the blade falls to the ground. If the attack was in close combat, the blade flies back at the attacker. The result of the adept's Blade Juggle Test is used as a thrown Attack Test against the attacker. Damage is determined normally if the attack is successful. The adept may also use juggled blades to make thrown attacks by resolving his attack as normal, or using a Standard Action to make a Blade Juggle Test as his Attack Test. If the juggled weapon chosen for the attack is not a throwing weapon, the Range is 3 hexes. For each weapon struck or thrown out of the juggling process, the adept's Physical Defense bonus is lowered accordingly.

Krarg attempts to juggle six broadswords—Size 3/Damage Step 5 weapons—so he makes a Blade Juggle (23) Test (6 × 3 + 5 = 23), succeeding with a result of 27 (which is noted down) and taking 1 Strain. He now adds +18 to his Physical Defense (6 × 3 = 18). Krarg continues juggling in the following round, and as this now uses a Simple Action, he can make an attack. Broadswords are not throwing weapons, though, so he can only attack by using his Blade Juggle talent against a nearby opponent within 6 yards (3 hexes). Krarg makes a Blade Juggle Test against his opponent's Physical Defense as normal. As he is using the talent to both juggle and attack, Blade Juggle uses a Simple and a Standard Action and causes Krarg 2 Strain that round: 1 Strain and a Simple Action for continuing to juggle, and 1 Strain and a Standard Action for the attack. Also, Krarg's Physical Defense bonus is reduced to +15, as one blade is now gone. Later that round, Krarg is attacked in close combat by a dwarf. The dwarf does not hit, due to Krarg's high Physi-

cal Defense. Krarg compares the Blade Juggle Test result of 27 he noted earlier against the dwarf's Physical Defense—a hit. Because this is treated as a thrown attack, the dwarf may use defensive talents such as Avoid Blow to dodge the blade, but fails. Unfortunately, the attack is an Armor-Defeating Hit. Krarg determines damage as normal, adding his Strength Step to the blade's Damage Step. His Physical Defense bonus now drops to 12 from the loss of another broadsword.

Blood Share

Step: Rank+TOU **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept transfers damage between himself and a Loyal character or creature. He first cuts himself and the target, then touches the incisions together and makes a Blood Share Test. The result is the maximum number of Damage Points that can be transferred between both parties. For example, an adept might transfer only 7 Damage Points from a Test Result of 10, or he might transfer the whole amount of 10. Transferring only 7 points to himself reduces the target's Current Damage by 7 points, however, not the full 10 points. Transferred damage never causes a Wound, but if the number of Damage Points transferred causes the adept's or the target's Current Damage total to equal or exceed his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, the adept or target passes out or dies, respectively. Members of the Cavalryman Discipline coined the term "blood betrayer" for anyone who uses Blood Share to transfer so much damage to another character, mount, or animal that he dies. Cavalrymen shun blood betrayers.

Book Memory

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept commits the content of a book or other written text to memory for use at a later time. He need not know the language that the text is written in. The adept makes a Book Memory Test against the book's Spell Defense—typically 5 for ordinary books, but higher for magical texts. The Spell Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see **Grimoires**, p.131, and **Dispelling Magic**, p.138). If successful, the adept memorizes a number of pages per minute equal to his Book Memory Rank. The book remains memorized for a number of months equal to the adept's Book Memory Rank, before fading, during which time the content is readily accessible—the adept can read, transcribe, or look up information as though he had an actual copy of the book in front of him. An adept can memorize a maximum number of texts at a time equal to his Book Memory Rank. He may voluntarily discard currently memorized texts in order to memorize new ones.

Book Recall

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept retrieves information previously memorized with the Book Memory talent which has faded over time or been pushed out of the adept's memory by other books. While there is no real limit to how much information an adept can learn, the Recall Difficulty is equal to the book's Spell Defense, +1 for each book the adept has currently memorized. This is because of the difficulty of sifting through all the information readily available to the adept through the Book Memory talent in order to access information he has previously memorized, and which is stored in his subconscious. The adept makes a Book Recall Test against the Recall Difficulty. If successful, the adept retrieves the lost information, which remains in memory for a number of hours equal to his Book Recall Rank. During this time the contents of the book are readily accessible to him; the adept can read, transcribe, or look up information as though he had an actual copy of the book in front of him. The adept may even return it to active memory if desired, provided he has a free Book Memory Rank available. On a Pathetic Result the adept's knowledge of the book in question has degraded to the point where he can no longer recall any information from it. All knowledge of the book is effectively lost to the adept, although he can always take the time to memorize the book again using his Book Memory talent.

Borrow Sense

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept temporarily takes one of an animal's five senses—touch, taste, hearing, smell, or sight—for use as his own. He does not literally "see through the animal's eyes," however. Instead, the adept's own sense becomes like that of the animal. The adept touches the animal and makes a Borrow Sense Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, he gains all the benefits (and limitations) of the borrowed sense for a number of minutes equal to his Borrow Sense Rank, during which time the animal temporarily loses use of the sense. Because the loss of a sense is a distressing, disorienting experience, only animals Loyal toward the adept—or those under the effect of a controlling spell or talent, such as Dominate Beast—will willingly submit to this talent. If the adept attempts to take a sense from an unwilling animal, he must achieve a Good Result with his Borrow Sense Test. The gamemaster has the final word on the specific effects of borrowing a given animal's sense. Generally, some senses give the adept new sensory abilities—a bat's sonar, a snake's ability to smell by "tasting" the air, and a cat's night vision are a few such examples. In other situations, borrowed senses improve the adept's existing senses—the sharp vision of an eagle, and the keen hearing or smell of a dog are a few such animal senses. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to any Perception Tests he makes with the improved sense.

Call Animal Companion

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept magically calls an animal companion within Call Animal Companion Rank×100 yards distance by making a Call Animal Companion Test against the animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the animal senses the adept's call and attempts to make its way to him as fast as possible.

Call Missile

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept calls unbroken ammunition or weapons that he has fired or thrown to him. His Call Missile Test result determines how many projectiles or thrown weapons fly back to him, tumbling and rotating into proper position, before dropping into their quiver, other container, or stopping in the adept's hand. Call Missile calls back all missiles and thrown weapons used by the adept within Call Missile Rank×10 hexes, provided there is a straight unblocked path to the object. The talent will extract missiles or thrown weapons from targets' bodies, but the objects cannot be secured, for example by a rope or cord, or "locked away", for example by being in a cupboard or behind a closed door.

CHARGE

Step: Rank+STR **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The mounted adept increases the effectiveness of a successful Charging Attack, using his Charge Step in place of his Strength Step for the Damage Test. The normal rules for Charging Attacks otherwise apply (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233). The adept may make a Charge Test in place of a Strength Test to avoid losing his weapon or being dismounted by lance or spear attacks (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233). The adept's mount does not benefit from this talent.



CLAW SHAPE

Step: Rank+STR **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept transforms his hands into fearsome claws, using his Claw Shape Step for Damage Tests in unarmed combat until the end of the round.

CLIMBING

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept clambers up or down vertical surfaces and objects by making a Climbing Test against the Climbing Difficulty of the surface being scaled, as determined by the gamemaster (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 108). On a Pathetic Result he loses his grip and falls, possibly suffering Falling damage. Climbing uses a Standard Action in every round spent climbing. Climbing characters move up or down a number of yards equal to their Climbing Rank each round (to a maximum equal to his Movement Rate in yards, not hexes).

COBRA STRIKE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept attacks suddenly and unexpectedly. When entering the first round of close combat with an opponent, the adept may substitute his Cobra Strike Step for his Initiative Step. If the adept's Initiative Test result is higher than his opponent's, he catches his opponent off-guard and prevents him from using any defensive abilities, such as Avoid Blow or Riposte talents or skills, against the first Attack Test he makes that round. Abilities that function independently of the character, such as the Spirit Dodge talent, remain unaffected however.

COLD PURIFY

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept creates an improvised poultice from ice, snow, chilled water, or other cold materials, packing it around a poisoned character's Wound to draw out the poison. If the character has no external injuries, then a Wound must be created to allow the poultice to draw out the poison. The adept quickly prepares and applies the poultice, making a Cold Purify Test against the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or Step Number. If successful, the effect of the poison is stopped and the victim recovers a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Test Result and the Difficulty Number.

CONCEAL OBJECT

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept hides one or more objects on his body, using illusion magic to help mask them. He must make a reasonable attempt to conceal the object, but any obvious shortcomings (a hilt sticking out of a pocket, a bump in his coat) are hidden by illusion. This talent is often used to conceal weapons, so its effects are measured by weapon Size (p.248), but other objects can be hidden just as easily, with the gamemaster assigning an appropriate Size to them. No object can be greater in Size than the adept's one-handed Size limit (p.248). He can conceal objects up to a combined Size equal to his Conceal Object Rank. The adept makes a Conceal Object Test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for attempts made to find the item. Items of Size 1 (Size 2 for trolls and obsidiman, or items equivalent to Size 1 for windlings) are hidden from all kinds of searches; larger items are only hidden from visual inspections. The gamemaster may increase or decrease the Detection Difficulty depending on the adept's choice of clothing. As long as an item is concealed, the adept gains the benefit of Surprise when producing it for a fitting purpose, such as drawing a weapon to attack. Adepts may use this talent to regain Surprise when using the Surprise Strike talent. The target of a concealed weapon attack is entitled to a Perception Test to avoid being Surprised (p.228).

CONVERSATION

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept holds his own in social conversations, using quips, clever timing, and other verbal tricks to make a favorable impression. The adept makes a Conversation Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, the Attitude of the target characters rises favorably toward the adept by one degree (for example, from Neutral to Friendly) for the duration of the conversation and for a number of hours afterwards equal to the adept's Conversation Rank. The target's Attitude cannot be improved further while the talent is in effect. The adept can converse with a maximum number of characters equal to his Conversation Rank at a time.

CREATURE ANALYSIS

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept uses a type of divination magic to gain information about a creature he is observing by making a Creature Analysis Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept's player can ask a specific question that would reveal one of the creature's game statistics or abilities for each Result Level

achieved, such as, "What is its Physical Defense?" or "What is its Death Rating?" The question must be about a specific trait—general questions such as "How tough is it?" should warrant equally vague answers ("Pretty tough"). The gamemaster should disallow questions comparing more than one statistic, such as "Is this beast tougher than I am?" or "Which is higher, its Physical or Spell Defense?" Adepts often use this talent to size up an unknown creature's Spell or Social Defense to determine how well other talents, such as Dominate Beast, will work on it. At the gamemaster's discretion, using this talent yields insights about a creature's vulnerabilities that can prove very useful to any adventuring group about to tangle with an unknown beast.

CRUSHING BLOW

Step: Rank+STR **Action**: Free
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept inflicts fearsome damage on an opponent from a successful close combat attack, substituting his Crushing Blow Step for his Strength Step for the Damage Test.

DEAD FALL

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept creates the illusion of a Wound or the symptoms of poison or disease, and masks his breathing to support the appearance of his "death". As he collapses to the ground, the adept makes a Dead Fall Test to determine the Disbelief Difficulty (see **Illusions**, p.139). Those observing the adept "dying" may make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test against the Disbelief Difficulty. If this test fails, they believe he is really dead. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Dead Fall Rank.

DETECT TRAP

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept detects traps by making a Detect Trap Test and comparing the result against the Detection Difficulty of any traps within short range of Visibility (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 119). The average Detection Difficulty for most mechanical traps is 5, though well-concealed traps may have a Detection Difficulty as high as 9. The Detection Difficulty for magical traps is equal to the trap's Spell Defense. On an Average Result, the adept notices something that gives away the trap's presence. On a Good Result, he pinpoints the trap's trigger and generally figures out how to avoid setting it off. An Excellent Result tells him what type of effect (crushing, smashing, poison, and so on) the trap employs. On an Extraordinary Result the adept adds his Detect Trap Rank to any attempts he makes to disarm the trap (see **Disarm Trap**, p.65).

DETECT WEAPON

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept detects hidden weapons by making a Detect Weapon Test and comparing the result against the Detection Difficulty of any concealed weapons within short range of Visibility (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 119). If successful, he spots the weapon and learns its type, but is unaware of any magical properties it may possess. Once the adept notices a concealed weapon, he becomes aware of its presence and is alert to possible treachery. As a result, he cannot be Surprised by an attack made with that weapon (see Conceal Object, p.64) unless the weapon's owner takes different measures to gain Surprise against him.

DIPLOMACY

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept mitigates disputes and influences the development of mutual interests by making a Diplomacy Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the negotiator's Attitude towards his opponents improves by one degree for a number of hours equal to the adept's Diplomacy Rank. While this might not necessarily settle a dispute or prompt the target to sign a contract, the use of Diplomacy usually helps to get the parties working together to approach the matter from a mutual perspective.

DIRECTION ARROW

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 2

The adept, who must possess an item directly associated with the target, such as a strand of hair, a bit of masonry, or even a Pattern Item, determines the location of a character or object relative to his position by firing a missile into the air and making a Direction Arrow Test against the target's Spell Defense. Regardless of the outcome, the missile rises to its full height, then plummets to the earth where it shatters into sparks. If successful, the sparks form a 1-yard-long flaming arrow pointing in the direction of the target. If the test fails, or the target is further than Direction Arrow Rank miles away from the adept, the burning fragments scatter haphazardly, with no clear direction indicated.

DIRECTION SENSE

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 2

The adept senses the location of a character or object relative to his position by closing his eyes and focusing his thoughts on an item directly associated with the target, such as a strand of hair, a bit of masonry, or even a Pattern Item. The adept makes a Direction Sense Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he feels a pull drawing him in the direction of the target. If the test fails, or the target is further than Direction Sense Rank miles away from the adept, he doesn't sense the target.

DISARM

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept uses a combination of clever feints and flashing weapon-play to knock an opponent's weapon from his hand by making a Disarm Test against the target's Physical Defense. An opponent wielding a two-handed weapon can only be disarmed on a Good Result. If successful, the opponent's weapon is sent spinning from the wielder's hand in a direction of the adept's choice for a number of feet equal to the Damage Test result. The target takes no damage from being disarmed. Disarm cannot be used against shields or weapons that are part of the defender's body, such as claws. Disarm counts as an Attack Test, and can be defended against accordingly.

DISARM TRAP

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept uses deduction, divination magic, and a deft touch to render traps inoperative by making a Disarm Trap Test against the trap's Disarm Difficulty, as determined by the gamemaster (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 110). If successful, the trap's trigger mechanism is disabled, preventing it from activating. On a Pathetic

Result, the trigger is "tripped" and the trap immediately goes off. The adept may attempt to disarm the same trap a number of times equal to his Disarm Trap Rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, he cannot try again until he increases his Disarm Trap Rank.

DISGUISE SELF

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept uses illusion magic to disguise himself as another Namegiver by making a Disguise Self Test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for attempts to see through the disguise. The disguise cannot weigh more than twice, or less than half, the adept's body weight, nor can the height, width, or length of the adept's body parts—limbs or torso—be adjusted by more than 50 percent. For example, a human trying to disguise himself as a t'skrang would have an almost vestigial tail. Each use of this talent lasts until the disguise is discarded or for a number of hours equal to the adept's Disguise Self Rank. The talent only alters appearance—if impersonating another character, the adept will require other abilities, such as the Acting skill or Mimic Voice talent, to fully convince others of his false identity.

DISTRACT

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept diverts an opponent's attention by making a Distract Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target is distracted, focusing his attention on the adept until the end of the next round. The adept's allies may attack the target as if he was Blindsided until the end of the next round.

DOMINATE BEAST

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept subdues and temporarily controls an animal by making a Dominate Beast Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he establishes dominance over the animal for a number of minutes equal to his Dominate Beast Rank, during which time the animal will not take any hostile action against the adept. The creature may be commanded to perform one simple task posing no more danger to the animal than to the adept and requiring less time to complete than the talent duration allows. Should the adept attempt to use this talent on an animal already under the influence of a similar talent or spell, his Test Result must exceed the result of the ability affecting the target. If successful, he gains control. Dominate Beast can only be used on non-sentient, natural creatures. It cannot be used to control Horrors, Horror-constructs, or sentient beings of any kind.

DOUBLE-CHARGE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The mounted adept makes two attacks during a Charging Attack, either attacking two targets or attacking the same target twice. He makes a standard Charging Attack (p.233) for his first attack or uses the Wheeling Attack talent (p.85) to perform it, then makes a Double-Charge Test to attack a second time. If attacking a second target, the adept and his mount must move at least one hex between attacks. If attacking the same target twice, he must either use a one-handed weapon in his off-hand or use a one-handed weapon on both attacks. Damage for the second attack is also determined as if it was a Charging Attack.



DOWN STRIKE

Step: Rank+STR **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept takes advantage of higher ground to deliver more devastating close combat attacks. He must be in a stable position at least one yard above his opponent (either mounted or standing on higher ground), or must jump down onto his opponent. If his attack is successful, the adept substitutes his Down Strike Step for his Strength Step on the Damage Test.

DURABILITY

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Unique to each Discipline. The adept's ability to take damage increases by improving the Durability talent specific to his Discipline. Each Rank permanently increases his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings by the values separated by a slash and shown in brackets [ ] in the Discipline description. The number to the left of the slash is the increase to the adept's Death Rating, per Rank. The number to the right of the slash is the increase to the adept's Unconsciousness Rating, per Rank.

DURABILITY INCREASE TABLE

Discipline	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	6/5
Troubadour	6/5
Warrior	9/7
Weaponsmith	6/5
Wizard	4/3

Evantra the Archer improves his Durability talent to Rank 3. According to the Archer Discipline description, the Durability talent is shown as [6/5]—each Rank adds +6 to the adept's Death Rating and +5 to his Unconsciousness Rating. At Rank 3, Evantra will have added a total of +18 to his original Death Rating and +15 to his original Unconsciousness Rating.

Earth Skin

Step: Rank+TOU **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept's skin becomes shot through with dark veins of elemental earth, increasing his resistance to magical attacks. He spends a Recovery Test and makes an Earth Skin Test, adding his Earth Skin Rank to his Spell Defense for a number of hours equal to the Test Result.

Elemental Hold

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept boldly faces an elemental no more than 20 yards away and orders it to halt, making an Elemental Hold Test against the elemental's Spell Defense. If successful, the elemental is held in place, unable to move or take any actions other than communicating, for a number of rounds equal to his Elemental Hold Rank. This requires the adept's concentration—other than communication, he cannot move, cast spells, or perform any other actions, otherwise the talent ends, freeing the elemental. Each round, the elemental may attempt to break free by making a Willpower Test against the adept's Elemental Hold Step. If successful, the elemental is freed and the talent's effect ends. If the talent's duration runs out, the adept may use it again to prolong the hold. If the talent's effect end before the duration runs out by the adept taking other actions or the spirit freeing itself, using the talent again requires a Result Level one higher than the last time.

Elemental Tongues

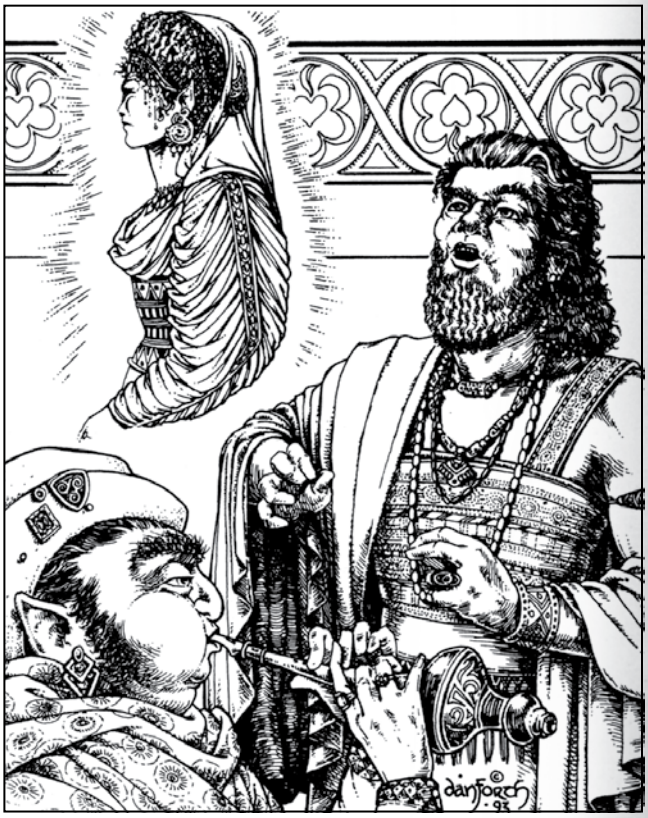
Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept learns to speak the languages of air, earth, fire, water, and wood—the five elemental tongues If the adept has an unassigned Elemental Tongues Rank available, he can attempt to learn a new elemental language. To learn an elemental language, the adept listens to an elemental of the appropriate type for ten minutes and makes an Elemental Tongues (10) Test. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet. If he fails to learn the elemental's tongue, he cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Elemental Tongues Rank, however, he can attempt to learn other unlearned elemental languages. Once an Elemental Tongues Rank has been assigned to a language, it cannot be used to learn any other elemental language. Because there are only five elemental languages, it is possible for an adept to have learned them all by the time he has improved his Elemental Tongues Rank to 5. Communicating with elementals is difficult and personal. The adept makes an Elemental Tongues Test against the elemental's Spell Defense. On an Average or Good Result, the elemental understands the basics of what the adept is saying, and vice versa, but the adept is not able to ask complex questions or make specific requests. An Excellent Result means the elemental completely understands the adept, who can discuss complex topics and ask detailed questions. Each use allows conversation with the elemental for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Elemental Tongues Rank.

Emotion Song

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept sings songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy, directed at the subject of the song. For example, if the song is about love for a king, the audience feels the emotion expressed (love in this case) about the king named in the song. Each performance requires at least ten minutes to complete, after which the adept makes an Emotion Song Test against the highest Social Defense among the audience. If successful, each Result Level achieved affects 25 percent of the audience. The maximum number of people that can be affected by a performance is equal to the adept's Emotion Song Rank×10; if the audience is too big to be affected completely, the adept targets a localized part of it. Each consecutive use of this talent creates a cumulative effect, with each successive result adding to the one before. Once the adept has affected the current audience, he can continue his performance, engaging a bigger audience with his song. The adept can perform for no more than Emotion Song Rank hours, after which he cannot use the talent again for one day. On a Poor Result for any Emotion Song Test, the adept must immediately stop performing—the crowd has grown weary of his performance, and he may not use this talent again for a day. The effects of his performance to that point, if any, are still felt by the audience, however. On a Pathetic Result for any Emotion Song Test, the effect of the song changes, turning the emotion felt by affected members of the audience into the opposite emotion intended by the adept. The song's effect lasts for a number of days equal to the adept's Emotion Song Rank, during which time those affected are more susceptible to suggestions related to the subject and emotion expressed by the song. Those making such suggestions gain a +1 Interaction Test bonus; those making suggestions counter to the emotion suffer a –1 Interaction Test penalty.



Empathic Command

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept commands and calms his trusted mount through emotion and mental imagery. He need not speak any commands, but must be within Empathic Command Rank yards of his mount. The adept may make an Empathic Command Test in place of his mount's Willpower Test to resist the effects of fear, charm, or spells directed against the mount that allow a test.

Empathic Sense

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard (see text)
Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The adepts gains information about the emotional state of a character within 10 yards by making an Empathic Sense Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, he senses the target's emotions and gains information appropriate to the Result Level achieved. An Average Result gives the adept an idea of the target's general emotional state; a Good Result allows him to read the target's surface emotions; on an Excellent Result, he knows exactly what the target is feeling. The adept gains a +1 bonus per Result Level achieved to any Interaction Tests he makes where knowledge of the target's emotional state would be helpful. Each use of this talent lasts for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Empathic Sense Rank. An adept with Empathic Sense may choose to extend the talent's duration to a year and a day by "attuning" the talent to a voluntary target. This requires a half hour of quiet meditation with the target and causes the adept 1 Blood Magic Damage. The talent's range increases to a number of miles equal to the adept's Empathic Sense Rank and provides the adept with a vague sense of the attuned character's location, within a 60-degree arc. Unattuning the target before the talent's duration expires requires another half-hour-long ritual with that character. An adept may not be attuned to more than Empathic Sense Rank characters at a time.

Engaging Banter

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept uses charm and a touch of magical suggestion to distract a character, who must be able to understand him for the banter to work. The adept makes an Engaging Banter Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, both parties engage in witty, idle chat for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Engaging Banter Rank, during which time the target is distracted and considered Harried. Additionally, the target suffers a –1 penalty to all Perception Tests made to notice anything but the adept for every result Level achieved beyond what is necessary (this stacks with the Harried penalty). Bantering requires the adept's concentration; if broken, or if the target is attacked, the talent ends. Increase the Result Level required by one level for each additional Engaging Banter Test made against the target in the same encounter.

Enhanced Matrix

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The Enhanced Matrix talent provides magicians with an improved type of spell matrix designed to make better use of spells requiring threads (see **Spell Matrix Types**, p.129). An Enhanced Matrix holds the pattern of a single spell and a pre-woven spell thread. The magician weaves this thread when he attunes the spell to the matrix, allowing him to cast the spell faster. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent, and is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor. Each Enhanced Matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank, and is improved independently.

Etiquette

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Etiquette is the art of proper behavior in social situations and can be extremely important—improper behavior may be punished by responses ranging from the scorn of nobles to beheading at the hands of enraged ork scorchers. Committing faux pas in Barsaivian society should be avoided, where possible. The adept observes the surrounding culture for a minute, then makes an Etiquette Test against the Difficulty Number of knowing the proper behavior for a given social situation. The base Difficulty Number is 5, with modifiers dependent on how unfamiliar the adept is with that culture, at the gamemaster' discretion. The Difficult Number is typically increased by +3 for each differing aspect: different social standing, different race, a foreign land with different traditions, and others, are typical sources for modification. If successful, the Result Level alters the reaction of observers. An Average Result means observers believe the adept possesses the rudiments of proper behavior; a Good Result means those same people fully approve of the adept's manners; an Excellent Result so impresses observers with the adept's manners that their Attitude improves toward him by one degree, to a maximum of Friendly. The effect lasts for a number of days equal to the adept's Etiquette Rank or until the social situation ends, whichever comes first.



Evaluate

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept has a shrewd sense for the true market value of an object. The adept examines the object and makes an Evaluate Test against the item's Spell Defense. On an Average Result, he learns the item's approximate price. Better Result Levels may disclose more detailed information based on the local or global economy, at the gamemaster's discretion. On a Good Result, the adept also learns the item's hidden value, if any, not readily apparent to the casual observer (for example if it is worth more to collectors). When evaluating magical items, the adept learns that the item is magical on an Excellent Result, but not the effect or purpose of its enchantment.

Evidence Analysis

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

Using equal parts observation, logic, and divination magic, the adept examines physical evidence to determine the answers to questions relating to his investigation. For example, he might examine a bed to determine that its occupant had not slept well, or he might identify a weapon as being the object used to murder someone. The adept makes an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person responsible for leaving the evidence. If successful, he learns the answer to one question about the object or place for each Result Level achieved. As a general rule, this talent only answers

questions regarding "what" or "how" something happened to an object or place. In the previous example, the adept would make an Evidence Analysis Test against the Spell Defense of the person who had slept in the bed. On a Good Result, he could ask the gamemaster one or two "what" or "how" questions related to the bed. If the activity occurred within a day of the Evidence Analysis Test, the adept gains a general impression of when the event happened (morning, afternoon, or evening) with a successful Test Result. When using this talent to evaluate evidence that is more than a day old, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for each day after the first. Other than the increased Difficulty Number, there is no limit to the age of the evidence being analyzed. The gamemaster answers the questions posed to him. Evidence Analysis cannot help the adept answer the questions of "who" or "why"—the focus of the examination is on facts, not motive or intent.

FALSE SIGHT

Step: Rank **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept intensifies an illusion at the time of creation, making it more difficult for observers to penetrate by adding his False Sight Rank to the Disbelief Difficulty for any attempts to Sense, Disbelieve, or otherwise see through it (see **Illusions**, p.139). The talent effect lasts for the duration of the illusion.

FAMILIAR DURABILITY

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept's familiar's ability to take damage is improved in a similar manner to the Durability talent (p.66), with each Familiar Durability Rank increasing his familiar's Death Rating by +4 and its Unconsciousness Rating by +3. This talent only works on the familiar that the adept has bonded with through the appropriate Blood Magic ritual (p.124), and requires both adept and familiar to perform an hour-long ritual each time it is increased. If the adept's familiar dies, this talent is lost as it originates in the Blood Magic bond and is invested into one particular familiar. A familiar may only benefit from a single Durability-type talent at a time.

FAST HAND

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept combines sleight-of-hand with minor illusion magic to move one or two small items—no bigger than 6 inches along any one dimension—from one place to another without being noticed. The adept makes a Fast Hand Test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for attempts made to notice the move. Anyone observing the adept may make a Perception Test against the Detection Difficulty to notice the action immediately after the switch has occurred. This talent does not allow the adept to empty a purse or pocket of its contents (see **Picking Pockets**, p.77), although it could be used to switch two purses around.

FEARSOME CHARGE

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The mounted adept frightens an opponent when making a Charging Attack (p.233), undergoing a radical transformation as he charges—his eyes grow larger or glow, his teeth become pointed or the canines more elongated, and his hair stands away from his head in a wild tangle. The adept makes a Fearsome Charge Test against the Social Defense of the next opponent he will attack during the Charging Attack. On an Average Result, the target is frozen with fear and cannot move or act against the adept; on a Good Result, the target flees away from the adept as fast as possible on his next turn. At the adept's discretion, he can also cause others witnessing the effect to flee in fear. The Test Result is compared against the Social Defense of other opponents witnessing the charge, but not being charged themselves. On an Excellent Result, the target freezes with fear; on an Extraordinary Result, the target flees away from the adept as fast as possible on his next turn. The effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Fearsome Charge Rank. An adept can affect a maximum number of opponents (targets and observers) equal to his Fearsome Charge Rank. Each round, those affected by this talent can end the effect by making a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Fearsome Charge Step.



FIREBLOOD

Step: Rank+TOU **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The blood oozing from an adept's scratches, cuts, and injuries, bubbles and hisses, cleansing, cauterizing, and healing him. The adept must be currently engaged in combat, although he does not have to be directly facing an opponent—the heat of being in or near a battle provides the stimulus for the talent. The adept spends a Recovery Test to immediately heal a number of Damage Points equal to the result of his Fireblood Test. Using this talent supersedes the normal waiting time requirements for Recovery Tests (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220).

FIRE HEAL

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept cleanses himself in healing flame. Successfully completing this ritual grants the adept bonus Recovery Tests, while failure burns him. This talent can be risky for low-Circle adepts, who generally possess low Wound Thresholds and Death Ratings. Before starting, the adept first builds an open fire large enough to completely engulf him. The ritual requires the adept to be in full contact with the elemental power of fire—if a spell or item currently protects the adept from the effects of fire, the talent has no effect. Before Stepping into the fire, the adept declares how many extra Recovery Tests he is attempting to gain. The talent requires a half-hour-long ritual for the first Recovery Test, +10 minutes for each additional Test. For example, to gain 1 bonus Recovery Test requires a half-hour-long long ritual. To gain 3 bonus

Recovery Tests requires a 50-minute-long ritual (30+2×10 = 50). The gamemaster makes a Step 8/2D6 Fire Intensity Test for the first Recovery Test, adding +2 for each additional Recovery Test the adept is attempting to gain. The adept makes a Fire Heal Test against the Test Result. If successful, he gains the desired number of Recovery Tests. If the test fails, the adept gains no bonus Recovery Tests. Instead, he suffers a Wound and a number of Damage Points equal to the difference between the Fire Heal and Fire Intensity Test results (no armor provides protection)—this can result in the adept taking another Wound. On a Pathetic Result, the adept takes the full amount of damage from the Fire Intensity Test (no armor provides protection). Bonus Recovery Tests gained through use of this talent must be used before the adept gains his Recovery Tests the following day or they are lost.

First Impression

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept favorably impresses a gamemaster character he has met for the first time by making a First Impression Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target's Attitude improves toward the adept by one degree (a Neutral character becomes Friendly; an Unfriendly character becomes Neutral; and so on). On an Excellent Result, it improves by two degrees. The new Attitude may be changed for better or worse through future interactions, but reverts back to the original level at a rate of one degree per day. Any hostile act the adept commits against the target immediately erases the impression. The adept may only attempt to use this talent once against a given character.

Flame Arrow

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Free
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

This talent transforms a normal piece of ammunition into a fiery missile, destroying the projectile in the process. The adept makes a missile Attack Test against the target. If successful, he makes a Flame Arrow Test as his Damage Test (Physical Armor provides protection).

Forge Armor

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The adept improves the Armor Rating of armor or shields. The work must be carried out at a properly-equipped forge, using forge tools (p.266) if working metal, or at a properly-equipped workshop, using appropriate tools if working other materials. A poorly-equipped workplace may increase the time required, or a well-equipped workplace may reduce the time required to use the talent, at the gamemaster's discretion. The adept spends a number of days working equal to the armor's or shield's base Physical+Mystic Armor Ratings. At the end of this time, he makes a Forge Armor Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the item's current Physical+Mystic Armor+9. If successful, the item's Physical or Mystic Armor Rating is increased by +1—if an Armor Rating is 0, however, it cannot be enhanced and the other Rating must be improved. This process can be repeated, but the increase to a Rating cannot be higher than half the item's base Rating, rounded up. The process also gets harder with each additional improvement, as the item's current Armor Ratings increase, leading to ever higher Difficulty Numbers. An adept cannot forge a bonus if the sum of existing improvements are higher than his Forge Armor Rank—an adept with Forge Armor at Rank 6 cannot enhance an item if it has already been improved six times; for example, by having its Physical Armor increased by +4 and Mystic Armor by +2. He can only increase one of those Ratings by another +1 if he first improves his Forge Armor talent to Rank 7. Armor Rating enhancements last for a year and a day from the date of the last successful forging. Additional Forge Armor Tests can be made at any time to extend the duration to a full year and a day, even for armor or shields already enhanced to their limit. A Pathetic Result on a Forge Armor Test ruins the item. This talent cannot be used to enhance threaded magical armor or shields; rather, armor and shields enhanced by Forge Armor form the base of further enchantment to create thread armor and shields. The services of armorers can be bought in only the largest cities, but the higher the bonus desired, the higher the cost (higher bonuses require a more experienced armorer). The first three increases usually cost 300 silver pieces each; the fourth to sixth, 600 silver pieces each; the seventh to ninth, 2000 silver pieces each; and every attempt thereafter, 3000 silver pieces (these costs cover any failed attempts).



Krarg has appropriated a nice suit of crystal ringlet armor and wants a Weaponsmith to improve it as much as possible. Both Physical and Mystic Armor Ratings are 4. This means that they can be increased by +2 each, for a total of four increases, requiring a Weaponsmith with at least Rank 4 in Forge Armor. Also, the sum of these unimproved Ratings determines the time one attempt takes: at least eight days work per attempt, thirty-two days in total for four Rating increases—assuming every Test succeeds and the Weaponsmith does not insist on a day off. The Difficulty Number for the first Forge Armor Test is 17 (4+4+9), and every successful forging will add another +1. Krarg needs to find a really experienced smith, because he does not intend to spend weeks waiting while an amateur has to make retries—nor does he want to risk his armor getting ruined! After all, he will be paying good money for the work: 1500 silver pieces (3×300+600).

FORGE WEAPON

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept improves the Damage Step of a weapon, including melee, missile, and thrown weapons, but not ammunition, like arrows or bolts. The work must be carried out at a properly-equipped forge, using forge tools (p.266) if working metal, or at a properly-equipped workshop, using appropriate tools if working other materials. A poorly-equipped workplace may increase the time required, or a well-equipped workplace may reduce the time required, to use the talent, at the gamemaster's discretion. The adept works to improve a weapon for a number of days equal to the weapon's Size and makes a Forge Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's current Damage Step+9. If successful, the weapon's Damage Step is increased by +1. Forge Weapon can be successfully used on the same weapon a number of times equal to its Size, but the process gets harder each time, as the Difficulty Number increases as the weapon's Damage Step increases. The adept cannot forge a weapon's base Damage Step higher than his Forge Weapon Rank—an adept with Forge Weapon at Rank 4 can perform increases up to the fourth, regardless of whether he forged previous increases himself. The Damage Step increase lasts for a year and a day from the date of the last successful forging. Additional Forge Weapon Tests can be made at any time to extend the duration to a full year and a day, even for weapons already enhanced to their limit. A Pathetic Result on a Forge Weapon Test ruins the weapon. This talent cannot be used to enhance threaded magical weapons; rather, weapons enhanced by Forge Weapon form the base of further enchantment to create thread weapons. The services of smiths can be bought in larger cities, but the higher the desired Damage Step increase, the higher the cost (higher bonuses require a more experienced smith). The first two increases usually cost 250 silver pieces each; the third and fourth, 500 silver pieces each; and the fifth and sixth, 750 cost silver pieces each (these costs cover any failed attempts).

Krarg commissions his trusted broadsword to be enhanced by a Weaponsmith. The blade was forged by another Weaponsmith six months earlier and has a current Damage Step of 6, so Krarg only needs the smith to forge it again two more times—the broadsword is Size 3, it can only be enhanced three times, to a maximum +3 Damage Step bonus. After finding a suitable smith, Krarg pays him 750 silver pieces (the combined cost of the second and third increase) and says he will return in a week. During that time, the Weaponsmith must succeed at a Forge Weapon (15) and, after that, a Forge Weapon (16) Test (6+9=15, then 7+9=16). When Krarg picks up his sword, it is now Damage Step 8, and this improvement will hold for close to a year (the new increases determine the time all increases last, despite the first one being made over a half-year ago).

FRENZY

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1 (per attack; see text)

The adept makes multiple frenzied attacks in close combat in the same round. He declares how many attacks he wants to attempt before making any Attack Tests, to a number equal to his Frenzy Rank, taking 1 Strain per attack declared before making any Tests. The adept then makes Frenzy Tests as Attack Tests in close combat for as long as his attacks are successful—if an Attack Test fails, he stops attacking (but still takes the full Strain cost)—or until there are no more opponents to attack, or until he has made the declared number of attacks. Frenzy cannot be combined with any talent that allow additional attacks in close or ranged combat, such as Second Attack, Swift Kick, or Momentum Attack.

FRIGHTEN

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept scares another by staring silently into the character's eyes and making a Frighten Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target becomes frightened and attempts to get away from the adept's line of sight as fast as possible on his next turn. The target remains scared for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Frighten Rank, during which time he will not willingly approach the adept. If the target is not able to completely escape from the immediate area, he will attempt to move as far away as possible from the adept. If an opportunity presents itself for him to move out of line of sight while the talent is in effect, he will do so. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the adept's Frighten Step. If successful, he throws off the effect of his fear and the talent ends.

FRIGHTEN ANIMALS

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept terrorizes one or more animals within line of sight, to a maximum number equal to his Frighten Animals Rank, by making a Frighten Animals Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If successful, the animals flee in terror away from the adept as fast as possible on their next turn—hounds will desert a hunter, a mount will throw its rider, guard tigers will flee from their ward, and so on—for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Frighten Animals Rank. Each round, an animal may attempt to overcome its fear by making a Willpower Test against the adept's Frighten Animals Step. If successful, the animal stops fearing the adept and may act normally. Most untended or wild animals will not make Willpower Tests, however, so this is made at the gamemaster's discretion.

GLIDING STRIDE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept moves in a graceful fashion through the air, horizontally as well as vertically, using his Movement Rate to glide instead of walking or running. He makes a Gliding Stride Test, the result being the number of hexes he can glide horizontally. The adept is restricted by his Movement Rate for gliding horizontally, but can use the Running combat option (p.225) to double the distance traveled. For every two hexes he glides horizontally, the adept may move up or down one hex vertically without affecting his total Movement Rate. The adept cannot go higher, or glide safely lower, than his Gliding Stride Rank in hexes. If the adept happens to be suspended any higher than this in mid-air, he may instinctively activate his Gliding Stride talent to reduce the distance falls by 2 yards per Rank. Gliding Stride cannot be combined with other talents that allow a special form of movement, such as Sprint or Great Leap.

Legnaz has a Movement Rate of 6, a Gliding Stride Rank of 8, and has just rolled a 16 on his Gliding Stride Test. He has rolled more distance than he could use if he just wanted to glide horizontally—his Movement Rate of 6 could be doubled to 12 if Running—but he wants to go vertically, to glide over a 6-yard-high wall. His game group uses yards in this situation, so he simply multiplies his Test Result by two: 16 hexes equal 32 yards, and his Movement Rate is 12 yards (24 yards if Running). To move upwards 6 yards, he has to move double

that distance—12 yards—horizontally. This means he can just make it to the top of the wall: 12 yards horizontal gliding constitutes his Movement Rate, and the 6 yards of upwards travel comes free. If he uses the Running combat option, he can move another 12 yards, which would allow him to move 6 yards downwards—enough movement to get up over the wall and down again in one round.

GRACEFUL EXIT

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept escapes from combat by distracting his opponents and making a Graceful Exit Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, he makes good his escape, immediately moving as far away from the combat as possible. He may not take any actions other than movement or the talent's effect ends. Those characters bedazzled by the adept's sudden departure may take no direct action against him for a number of rounds equal to his Graceful Exit Rank. This talent protects only the adept—his colleagues must fend for themselves. If the adept returns to the combat after having made a Graceful Exit, the characters who were originally affected become enraged. If possible, they will try to attack the adept in preference to others, and are immune to all Interaction Tests made against their Social Defense to influence them otherwise. Their anger and outrage gives them a +1 bonus to any Action Tests they make against the adept.

GREAT LEAP

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept jumps large distances by making a Great Leap Test, the result being how many hexes the adept may jump, with the distance covered divided between horizontal and vertical, but not exceeding his Movement Rate in either direction. If he uses the Running combat option (p.225), the adept may leap up to double his Movement Rate in either direction. Great Leap can also be used to avoid environmental hazards, such as rock traps and falling rigging, but not as a normal Avoid Blow Test in combat. If the adept is aware of the threat, he may make a Great Leap Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster to avoid being struck. If successful, he leaps clear at the last instant. Air Sailors and Sky Raiders often use this talent to board airships in combat or to leap clear of burning rigging and debris.

Yorlk intends to leap over a small building to showcase his jumping prowess. He makes a Great Leap Test with a result of 10. Yorlk's Movement Rate is 6, so he can divide his result between the horizontal and vertical distance covered, but neither can exceed 6 hexes. The building is 3 hexes wide and 2 hexes tall, so he decides to split the Test Result evenly, jumping 5 hexes upward and 5 hexes in length, and successfully leaping over the building. Later, he is challenged to jump over a building 8 hexes wide and 8 hexes tall. He cannot jump this distance without using the Running combat option, no matter what he rolls, and even if Running, he requires a Test Result of 16 to succeed.

HAGGLE

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept drives a "hard bargain" when selling or buying goods by making a Haggle Test against the customer's or merchant's Social Defense. If successful, the price rises or falls by 5 percent of the goods' cost in favor of the adept. Merchants or customers can make Haggle Tests to readjust the price in their favor. The adept may make a number of tests per transaction equal to his Haggle Rank. However, as soon as he fails a Haggle Test, his bargaining stops. Haggle can also be used to get a better price for stolen or illegal goods—shady merchants usually buy stolen or illegal goods for a base 10 percent of their value (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.247). What constitutes a transaction may vary from a single ring to an entire chest of jewelry. The adept can only use the Haggle talent on one transaction per day against a merchant.



HEAL ANIMAL COMPANION

Step: Rank+TOU **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept heals a Loyal animal companion, spending one of his Recovery Tests to make a Heal Animal Companion Test, and reducing the animal's Current Damage by the result. Only the adept's natural Recovery Tests can be used with this talent—bonus Recovery Tests from magic items, spells, or talents like Fire Heal, cannot be used.

HEARTENING LAUGH

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept bolsters morale by directing a booming, mocking laugh at his opponents and making a Heartening Laugh Test against the highest Social Defense among all opponents within earshot. If successful, any characters Friendly to the adept and who hear the laugh add his Heartening Laugh Rank to any Willpower Tests made to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation caused by the adept's opponents for a number of rounds equal to his Heartening Laugh Rank.

HOLD THREAD

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The magician weaves a thread to a spell and then holds it until he is ready to cast. This talent can only be used with spells that require a single spell thread to be woven. Normally, these are spells with a "Threads: 1" notation (see the **Spells** chapter, p.140), but if the magician is casting the spell from an Enhanced Matrix (with a pre-woven thread), it also includes spells with a "Threads: 2" notation. The magician makes a Thread Weaving Test, as normal. If successful, he makes a Hold Thread Test against the spell's Weaving

Difficulty. If successful, the final spell thread is held within its spell matrix for a number of rounds equal to the magician's Hold Thread Rank. The magician may make a Spellcasting Test to cast the spell during any of these rounds. If the spell has not been cast by the final round of the talent's effect, the magician may make another Hold Thread Test against the spell's Weaving Difficulty. If successful, he continues to hold the spell for a number of rounds equal to his Hold Thread Rank. The talent duration can be extended this way for as long as the magician continues to make successful Hold Thread Tests. If a Hold Thread Test fails, the magician must cast the spell in the following round, or he loses it. While using this talent to hold a spell, the magician cannot make any other Thread Weaving or Spellcasting Tests, other than for the spell he is currently holding.

Hypnotize

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept magically mesmerizes another character, making him susceptible to persuasion. The target must be within 10 yards of the adept and in a state where he is not distracted—a target involved in combat cannot be hypnotized, for instance. The adept makes a Hypnotize Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target's Attitude improves toward the adept by one degree, to a maximum of Friendly. While hypnotized, the target remains placid, unless attacked. Over a number of minutes equal to his Hypnotize Rank, the adept can make post-hypnotic suggestions to the target. The adept makes as many Interaction Tests as required against the target's Social Defense, with successful Test Results persuading the target to perform actions suggested to him. The target will carry out any actions to which he agrees while under the talent's effects, as long as they can be completed within a number of hours equal to the adept's Hypnotize Rank after the hypnosis session ends. A character can only be affected by a single Hypnotize effect at a time. This talent does not require the adept to be able to speak with the target, merely to hold his attention long enough to exercise the talent's magic on him.

Poohrt the windling Thief successfully hypnotizes an off-duty guard in a tavern. He improves the guard's Attitude and uses a little persuasion to get what he wants. While hypnotized, the guard agrees to let Poohrt into the house he guards as long as the windling brings some ale to share. Poohrt knows Hypnotize at Rank 3, so the effect lasts for three hours. At the end of that time, the guard comes to his senses—while he may not blame the windling for having tricked him, he is no longer bound by any promises made while under the talent's effects.

Impress

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept impresses a character with a performance of his choice. The performance can be of any kind, as long as the target character observes it. After his performance, the adept makes an Impress Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target becomes impressed and the adept adds his Impress Rank to any Interaction Tests he makes against that character for a number of minutes also equal to his Impress Rank.

Impressive Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept impresses onlookers with a display of targeting accuracy, choosing a target and declaring where the attack will hit, then making an Impressive Shot Test as his ranged combat Attack Test. If successful, he hits the target in the designated area, inflicting no damage, but possibly impressing witnesses to this display of prowess. The adept compares the Test Result against the Social Defense of each character witnessing the attack. If successful, he adds a +1 bonus for each Result Level achieved to all Interaction Tests made against affected characters for a number of rounds equal to his Impressive Shot Rank.

Inspire Others

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept inspires his companions, raising spirits and boosting morale. He speaks inspirational words, then makes an Inspire Others Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character, targeting friendly characters only. If successful, all affected characters add +1 to Social Defense and gain a +1 bonus to their Action Tests for each Result Level achieved. The talent effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Inspire Others Rank.

Item History

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept learns the history of an enchanted or mundane item. The adept studies the item for a week, carefully examining it for at least one hour each day, then makes an Item History Test against the item's Spell Defense. If successful, each Result Level achieved reveals one new Test Knowledge from the item's history. When used on mundane items (which do not have True Patterns), each Result Level provides the adept with a different piece of information, instead of a Test Knowledge. Item History can be used multiple times on the same item, but each test requires another week of study. The adept can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges equal to his Item History Rank.

Thom Hammerblade, a dwarf Weaponsmith, has devoted weeks of study to a weapon known as Grag's Battle-Axe. Previous studies have revealed three Test Knowledges from the weapon's history. On his latest Item History attempt, Thom achieves an Excellent Result, learning three more Test Knowledges from the axe's past. This means he now knows a total of six Test Knowledges. However, because Thom knows Item History to Rank 5, he can only learn a maximum of five Test Knowledges—the sixth Test Knowledge remains out of his reach until he improves his Item History Rank, allowing him to make another attempt to learn more of the axe's secrets.

See the **Workings of Magic** chapter, p.104, for more information on threads and Pattern Knowledge, and the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.113, for more information on weaving threads to magic items and how Key Knowledges are used.

Karma Ritual

Step: Rank
Action: NA
Karma: No
Strain: 0

Unique to each Discipline. The adept performs a Karma ritual unique to his Discipline to replenish his pool of Karma Points. An example of a typical Karma ritual is included with each Discipline description. The ritual takes a half hour to complete and can be performed once each day. Once the adept has completed his Karma ritual, he can purchase a number of Karma Points no greater than his Karma Ritual Rank for 10 Legend Points each. For example, an adept purchasing 4 Karma Points deducts 40 Legend Points from this Current Legend Points. Karma Points are added to the adept's Current Karma Points. An adept cannot have more Karma Points than his Maximum Karma Points allows, determined by multiplying the adept's racial Karma Modifier by his Karma Ritual Rank (see **Karma**, p.29, for more information).

KARMA MODIFIER TABLE

Race	Karma Modifier
Dwarf	×4
Elf	×4
Human	×5
Obsidiman	×3
Ork	×5
Troll	×3
T'skrang	×4
Windling	×6

Lasting Impression

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

The adept impresses a group of characters on first meeting them or when leaving the group. He strikes a dramatic pose or makes a short impassioned soliloquy, then makes a Lasting Impression Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional character. If successful, a powerful image of the adept is imprinted in the targets' minds. The adept adds his Lasting Impression Rank to Interaction Tests he makes against the affected characters for a number of weeks equal to his Lasting Impression Rank. Once impressed, a target cannot be affected by the same adept until the talent's duration expires. If, after using this talent when leaving the group, the adept is seen by any of the target characters within one day of his departure, the effect ends.

Leadership

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Sustained
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

The adept leads a group of gamemaster characters no larger than his Leadership Rank×20 members by giving a short speech, then making a Leadership Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group. If successful, characters with a Neutral attitude or better towards the adept follow his lead. The Result Level determines the talent's effect and duration. An Average Result means the target group treats the adept as their leader for his Leadership Rank×10 minutes; a Good Result for a number of hours equal to his Leadership Rank; an Excellent Result means the target group treats the adept as their leader for Leadership Rank days. While under the adept's leadership, the target characters will follow his lead and accept him as their commander. This grants him an authority typical to being their designated commander in a military environment, but can be used in other situations, such as being a superior in an administration or a foreman in construction. If the adept causes any individual to change his Attitude to worse than Neutral, the individual is not bound to follow the adept any more.

Life Check

Step: Rank+TOU
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept gains a last chance to save himself from dying. When the adept's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating, he spends a Recovery Test, makes a Life Check Test, and reduces his Current Damage by the result. This may be repeated for as long as the adept has Recovery Tests available or until his Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating. Once the adept's Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating, he has avoided dying. If his Current Damage is reduced below his Unconsciousness Rating, the adept also regains consciousness. Unsuccessful use of Life Check does not prevent the application of other means that prevent the adept from dying, such as applying a last chance salve (p.265).

Lifesight

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Simple
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept can see the strength and composition of another being's life force by making a Lifesight Test and comparing the result against the Spell Defense of each living being within Lifesight Rank×10 yards. If successful, the adept can see that target's life force—which appears as an interpretation of their astral imprint—for a number of rounds equal to his Lifesight Rank, and gains qualitative information about it. A vibrant, 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 appear 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. An adept 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 inside the bole of a tree.

Lion Heart

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept's resolve improves, allowing him to use his Lion Heart Step in place of his Willpower Step when making tests to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation. An adept cannot use both Lion Heart and Resist Taunt against the same attack.

Lip Reading

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 1

The adept eavesdrops on a conversation by watching the target character's lips move and making a Lip Reading Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, he is able to read what the speaker is saying for a number of minutes equal to the Test Result, as long as he can see the target's lips. The adept must be able to understand the language being spoken to make sense of the conversation. If he doesn't, the adept can phonetically sound out what the target is saying, allowing someone nearby who can understand the language to translate for him.

Lock Picking

Step: Rank+DEX
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept conjures a set of pale blue telekinetic lock picks which he uses to open mundane and magical locks by making a Lock Picking Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster for mundane locks, or against the lock's Spell Defense for



magical locks. If successful, the lock opens. The adept may attempt to open the same lock a number of times equal to his Lock Picking Rank. Should he fail all of his attempts, or on any Pathetic Result, he cannot open that lock until he increases his Lock Picking Rank.

Long Shot

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept can hit targets he can see beyond the normal distance allowed for his ranged weapon. The adept makes a Long Shot Test against the Spell Defense of the target, who must be between one and two times the weapon's Maximum Range away (see **Ranged Combat**, p.412). If successful, the adept may make a ranged combat Attack Test with a –4 Extreme Range penalty, which also applies to the character's Damage Test for a successful hit.

A throwing axe has a Maximum Range of 24 yards (12 hexes). An adept can use Long Shot to hit a target beyond that range, up to 48 yards (24 hexes) distant (24 yards×2). If the adept makes a successful Long Shot Test, he can use his Throwing Weapons talent for his attack, but he incurs a –4 penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests for the Extreme Range.

Maneuver

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept sacrifices his Standard Action to avoid an opponent's attacks and move into a more advantageous position against that opponent by making a Maneuver Test, the result replacing his natural Physical Defense against that opponent until the adept's turn in the following round. If the adept successfully avoids all attacks directed against him by that opponent until that turn, he may add his Maneuver Rank to the first close combat Attack Test he makes against his now out-maneuvered opponent on that turn. If this attack is successful, the adept adds his Maneuver Rank to the Damage Test.

Melee Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept makes a melee attack in close combat against an opponent with a hand-held weapon, like a sword, axe, or dagger, by making a Melee Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used. See **Melee Attacks**, p.229, for more information.

Mimic Voice

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept mimics a voice he hears by making a Mimic Voice Test against the speaker's Social Defense. If successful, he learns and can mimic that voice for a number of hours equal to his Mimic Voice Rank. When attempting to fool others, the adept makes a Mimic Voice Test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for any Tests made to detect the mimicry. If the adept does not understand the language of the person whose voice he is trying to mimic, the talent produces the equivalent of baby babble to those hearing it—the sounds are right, but the words don't mean anything.

Missile Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept makes a missile attack in ranged combat against an opponent by using a bow, crossbow, or another weapon that fires projectiles, and making a Missile Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used. See **Missile Attacks**, p.231, for more information.

Momentum Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept makes an additional close combat attack while his opponent recovers from the first blow. If the adept achieves a Good Result on his initial close combat Attack Test against an opponent, he may make a Momentum Attack against that opponent. After resolving the damage from his first attack, the adept makes a Momentum Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, he makes a Damage Test, as normal. Damage bonuses applied to the initial attack do not carry over. For example, if the adept uses Crushing Blow with his first attack, he does not add that damage bonus to his Momentum Attack, though he may use Crushing Blow again. This talent can only be used once per round.

Mount Attack

Step: Rank **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The Mount Attack talent allows an adept to increase the accuracy of his mount's attacks. The adept must be riding the mount for it to benefit from this talent. The adept adds his Mount Attack Rank to the mount's Attack Test.

Mount Durability

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept's mount's ability to take damage is improved in a similar manner to the Durability talent (p.66), with each

Mount Durability Rank increasing his mount's Death Rating by +6 and its Unconsciousness Rating by +5. The adept may transfer the talent's effect from one mount to another by performing an hour-long ritual with the new mount. He may not split up his Mount Durability Ranks between multiple mounts. This talent only works on living animals Loyal to the adept. A mount may only benefit from a single Durability-type talent at a time.

Mystic Aim

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept draws a steady aim with a missile or thrown weapon on a target within line of sight and range and makes a Mystic Aim Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a small visible mark appears on the target for a number of rounds equal to his Mystic Aim Rank. The adept adds his Mystic Aim Rank to the next ranged Attack Test he makes against the target. Once he makes an Attack Test, even if against a different opponent, or if the target moves out of line of sight, the mark disappears and the bonus is lost. This talent cannot be used with the Aiming combat option (p.222). The mark created is unique to the adept—it might appear as two or three plain white dots, a symbol from his home town or village, or some other motif personal to the adept.

Navigation

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Use of this talent requires Navigation Charts. The adept can read maps, chart courses, and even guide an airship safely through the skies, circumventing storms and turbulence, flying creatures, and other hazards. To pinpoint their location, navigators must be able to see the sky and must possess a set of navigator's charts. Navigation most often means relying on the constellations of the Passions, the movement of the sun, and similar astrological phenomena for direction. Most maps have the constellations drawn around their borders for use with Shantaya's sextant and similar navigational tools. Consequently, navigation is most effective on clear nights when the stars shine brightest. The adept spends ten minutes determining his current position and makes a Navigation Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the Navigation Table, but modified depending on the circumstances. Incomplete or inaccurate charts increase the Difficulty Number by +1 to +5. The Test Result determines the adept's accuracy. An Average Result gives a position accurate to within 10 miles; a Good Result yields one accurate within 5 miles; an Excellent Result, within 2 miles; an Extraordinary Result places the navigator within a mile of his target location. On a Poor or worse result, the adept becomes lost (see Getting Lost, below).

NAVIGATION TABLE

Condition	Difficulty Number
Clear night sky, few obstructions blocking the character's view (on an open plain, for instance)	5
Scattered clouds and/or minor obstructions, such as low buildings	7
Partly cloudy or significant obstructions (trees, nearby mountains, and so on)	9
Overcast, heavy foliage or other conditions blocking the character's view of the sky	12
Severe rainstorm or blizzard blocking the sky	18

Getting Lost

On a Poor Result, the adept inadvertently plots a destination 20 to 25 miles wide of his intended destination. He only recognizes his mistake if he makes another Navigation Test that yields a better result or arrives at the destination and realizes that it's not the place he intended to travel to. A Pathetic Result positions the adept more than 25 miles away from the intended destination—he is completely lost, but will be fiercely adamant that he knows "exactly" where he is. Any further Navigation Tests the adept makes add +2 to the Difficulty Number (assuming he can be convinced to make another Test by his friends).

Orbiting Spy

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept summons a spy spirit to serve as a lookout by making an Orbiting Spy (6) Test. If successful, the spirit travels in a circular pattern around the adept, up to 20 yards distance, for a number of hours equal to the Test Result. Conjured spy spirits cannot affect or be affected by the physical world and are immune to most spells, except those which disrupt or dispel magic. Whenever the adept wants to use the spirit to detect something, he makes an Orbiting Spy Test instead of a Perception Test. If successful, the spy spirit informs him of anything unusual it notices. This requires the adept's Standard Action that round. The spirit can be given specific instructions on what to look for, to prevent unpleasant surprises. The adept may direct the spirit to look out for and inform him of the presence of a number of objects or creatures equal to his Orbiting Spy Rank. The spirit will remain on constant alert for these creatures or objects and will notify the adept if they are detected—the gamemaster makes Orbiting Spy Tests for the spirit and advises the adept of the results, if applicable. Spy spirits can see into the astral plane as well as the physical world—though this requires a successful Orbiting Spy (6) Test—so they can inform the adept of anything lurking around in astral space. An adept can only have one orbiting spy active at a time.

Parry

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept defends himself against blows directed at him in close combat by making a Parry Test against his opponent's Attack Test result. If successful, he deflects the blow and takes no damage. The adept can use this talent a number of times per round equal to his Parry Rank, but only once per attack. The adept cannot Parry attacks he cannot see, such as when he is Blindsided. Parry uses a weapon, shield, or other sturdy item to deflect an attack. The adept adds his weapon's Size, his shield's Deflection Bonus, a bonus determined by the rules for a special item, or a bonus determined by the gamemaster, as a bonus to the Parry Test. An adept with no such equipment (no weapon, shield, etc.) attempting to Parry a melee weapon attack must achieve a Good Result to avoid injury.

Performance

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept impresses onlookers by actively performing a skill or talent of his choice and making a Performance Test against the highest Social Defense among the members of the target audience. If successful, the adept gains a +1 bonus for each Result Level achieved to his Interaction Tests against those affected, for a number of hours equal to his Performance Rank.

Dalia the Troubadour wants to impress a group of ten elven court officials with a poem about Queen Alachia's beauty. While using her Poetry skill, Dalia makes a Performance Test with a result of 17—a Good Result, when compared against the highest Social Defense among the officials present. An hour later, when Dalia approaches a court official with a request for a favor, she gains a +2 bonus to her Interaction Test from her impressive performance earlier.

PICKING POCKETS

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept combines a deft touch with minor levitation magic to remove an item from the pocket or pouch of another character. The adept makes a Picking Pockets Test, the result being the talent's Detection Difficulty for attempts made to notice the theft. Anyone able to observe the adept's action, including the target character, may make a Perception Test against the Detection Difficulty to notice the action immediately after the act has occurred.

POISON RESISTANCE

Step: Rank+TOU **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept's poison resistance improves, allowing him to make a Poison Resistance Test in place of a Toughness Test when resisting the effects of poison. The adept may also make a Poison Resistance Test in place of a Recovery Test when healing damage inflicted by poison. Each Poison Resistance Test he makes, whether successful or not, removes some of the poison from the adept's body. A few drops of blood seep through his skin, carrying away some of the poison affecting the adept, and reducing the Difficulty Number and Effect Step by –1 for each successive Poison Resistance Test made against that same dose of poison.

POWER MASK

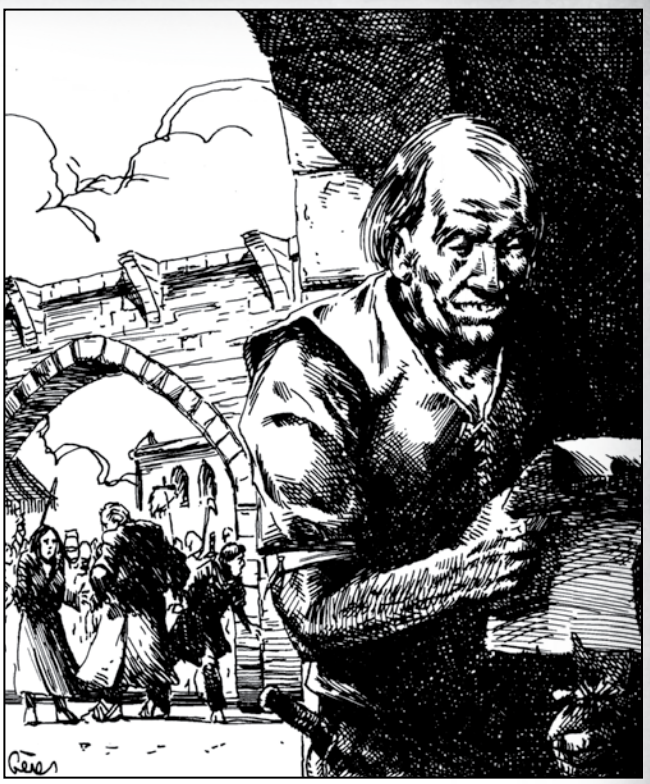
Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept disguises his true magical nature from mundane and magical detection by making a Power Mask Test, the result being the talent's Detection Difficulty for a number of hours equal to his Power Mask Rank. The adept is surrounded by a misleading astral aura, preventing others from identifying him as magical and hiding any obvious magical effects on him from mundane onlookers. Any Tests to discern the adept's magical nature are made against the Detection Difficulty. If the test fails, the adept appears to be mundane.

READ/WRITE LANGUAGE

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The adept learns to read and write different tongues and may learn a maximum number of languages equal to his Read/Write Language Rank. If he has an unassigned Read/Write Language Rank available, the adept can attempt to learn a new language by reading at least one page of text written in the language for at least one minute, then making a Read/Write Language Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet. If the test fails, the adept cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Read/Write Language Rank—he can attempt to learn other languages or dialects, however. Once a Rank has been assigned to a language it cannot be used to learn any other language. The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Table. The numbers reflect the difficulty of learning the base "racial" versions of these languages.



LANGUAGE TABLE

Language	Learning Difficulty
Dwarf*	5
Sperethiel (Elf)	6
Human	6
Obsidiman	7
Or'zet (Ork)	6
T'skrang	7
Troll	6
Windling	7

* All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.

When reading, the adept makes a Read/Write Language Test to see how well he understands the content. The Test Result determines the level of comprehension. Simple sentences or ideas, such as "The mayor's house lies east of here," only require a result of 2; histories or legends containing peculiar idioms or flowery phrases require a result of 6; manuals or other books filled with jargon specific to a field of study require a result of 10; understanding philosophical treatises on the nature of magic, or other writings filled with specialized academic language and abstract ideas, requires a result of 13. When writing, use the same Difficulty Numbers as for reading, depending on the complexity of the topic the adept is writing about. The effect of each Test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Read/Write Language Rank, allowing reading and writing at the level achieved by the Test Result. If the adept is required to read or write at a more complex level, he must make another Read/Write Language Test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required. It takes about one minute to reading a page of text; writing a page of text takes about ten minutes.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, or dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. Adepts attempting to learn a dialect add +2 to the Learning Difficulty of the base "racial" language. The adept must know how to read and write the base "racial" language before he can

attempt to learn a dialect of that language. Once learned, any dialects that an adept knows are recorded in parentheses on the adept's Character Record Sheet beside the language it is based on. An adept can learn a number of dialects for each "racial" language he knows equal to his Read/Write Language Rank. For example, all player characters begin game play knowing how to read and write Dwarf with a Throalic dialect, noted in parentheses on their Character Record Sheet. When attempting to read or write in a dialect, an adept who knows the base "racial" language, but not the dialect, adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of his Read/Write Language Tests.

READ/WRITE MAGIC

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept can read and write magical writing, such as that found on scrolls or magical glyphs. For each page that he is attempting to translate, the adept makes a Read/Write Magic Test against the writing's Difficulty Number, determined by the gamemaster. If successful, the Result Level determines how well he understands the content. An Average Result allows the adept to understand the basic gist of the text, but not any subtle or complex ideas it contains; a Good or Excellent Result means he understands the subtleties of the text, though he might misinterpret obscure clues or riddles; an Extraordinary Result means the adept completely understands content, easily deciphering any hints, clues, or hidden meanings.

This talent also allows magicians to learn new spells. A magician can attempt to learn only one spell per day, by making a Read/Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he has learned the spell and can write it in his grimoire. He may learn more spells (or attempt to learn a spell again) by sacrificing Recovery Tests—for each Test sacrificed, the magician may make an additional Read/Write Magic Test. See **Learning New Spells**, p.238, for more information on learning and scribing spells.

RESEARCH

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Sustained
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept finds information through study and investigation, including library research and following up on rumors and legends, by making a Research Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the type of information sought. The gamemaster may use the guidelines for creating Difficulty Numbers in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 89, or he may use the numbers suggested in the Research Table. The Result Level determines how much information is obtained. A Good Result or better often turns up more detailed information than the adept initially sought.

RESEARCH TABLE

Type of Information	Dificulty Number
General	5
Detailed	7
Intricate	9
Obscure	11

At the Great 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 being sought, the gamemaster decides the Difficulty Number for his Research Test is 7. Jerreck rolls a 15—an Excellent Result. Jerreck had only been searching for the kaer's general location, but the gamemaster decides that an Excellent Result earns a bonus—he tells Jerreck's player that the adept not only learns the kaer's general location, but also that it lies near an area rumored to be home to a tribe of ork scorchers.

An adept may also research an item's legend to gain general knowledge of the abilities attributed to it during its history. Information gained this way is rarely fully accurate, for legends often exaggerate events in favor of the heroes involved.

Me'gana is researching the legend of Kegel's Sword. In a book found 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 fiery ability, though possibly not exactly as described in the legend.

RESIST TAUNT

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept resists the effects of social attacks directed against his Social Defense by making a Resist Taunt Test against the attack's Test Result. If successful, he steels himself and reconsiders his response at the last instant, negating the effect. Resist Taunt is effective against social attacks such as Persuasion, Taunt, Intimidation, and other similar talents or Interaction Tests (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93). The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Resist Taunt Rank, but only once per social attack.

Segue, a t'skrang Troubadour, has a Social Defense of 7. Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, Taunts him—some quip about Segue being able to play music better with his tail than he can with his lute—with a Test Result of 14. Segue chooses to ignore the Taunt, so he uses his Resist Taunt talent, rolling a 15 on his Resist Taunt Test—success! Strumming his lute Segue puts on an air of blatant disdain. Kricklen, realizing his Taunt has failed, blushes and flails his own tail around in frustration.

RIPOSTE

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 2

The adept uses his melee weapon to block an opponent's melee attack, possibly turning it back on his erstwhile attacker, by making a Riposte Test against his opponent's Attack Test result. If successful, the adept parries or blocks the attack and may immediately counterattack, comparing his Test Result against his opponent's Physical Defense. On a Good Result, the riposting attack hits and the adept makes a Damage Test, as normal. Riposte Tests can result in Armor-Defeating Hits, but only if one level higher than normal (usually on an Extraordinary Result). Only attacks that he is aware of can be riposted by the adept. If he is Blindsided or Surprised, he cannot riposte the blow. The adept can use this talent a number of times each round equal to his Riposte Rank, but may only make a single counterattack per round. Riposte Tests can only be made against melee Attack Tests directed against the adept, including an opponent's Riposte Test, if he also knows the talent or skill. An adept may not use both Riposte and another talent that negates being hit, such as Avoid Blow, against the same attack.

SAFE PATH

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept contacts a local elemental spirit to find the safest path through unfamiliar territory. The adept does not conjure the elemental, he only establishes contact. Unless the adept knows the elemental's language (see **Elemental Tongues**, p.67), the spirit communicates by using "sign language," utilizing its native element to produce simple, but effective, signals for the adept to translate. Sometimes the elemental animates a part of the nearby landscape,

making its conversation "audible" to other characters. The adept makes a Safe Path Test, the result being the number of miles of safe passage the elemental can predict. The elemental communicates the safest path to take and indicates possible elemental dangers or natural beasts along the way. Keep in mind that what an elemental considers "dangerous" can be vastly different to what poses danger to a Namegiver. The elemental's knowledge of an area is also limited by its type. For example, earth elementals know very little about flying or waterborne dangers, but may be able to describe the arms and armor carried by other adventuring groups within the talent's effective distance. The information relayed by the elemental does not indicate the intentions of other characters or creatures, merely their presence and whether the elemental "thinks" they are dangerous. Also, the adept is not guaranteed to make contact with an elemental—if the gamemaster determines an elemental is not present in the vicinity, then the talent has no effect.

SEARCH

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

When intentionally trying to spot someone or something—including hidden vaults, secret doors, or disguised characters who are actively avoiding attention—the adept makes a Search Test instead of a Perception Test. If successful, he notices the target of his search if it is within short range of Visibility (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 119). On an Excellent Result, he notices the target within medium range of Visibility. This talent does not enable the adept to find traps or wards.

RIPOSTING LONGER WEAPONS

Optional Rule: When using Riposte against longer melee weapons, the adept may not be able to reach his opponent to make an effective counter-attack. He must have a higher Initiative Test result than his opponent or be wielding a weapon with a Size no smaller than his opponent's weapon Size–2, to be able to inflict a return attack and therefore damage him. For example, a damaging response to a lance (Size 6) attack may be made with a successful two-handed sword (Size 5) Riposte, but not with a broadsword (Size 3) Riposte. The Riposte Test is made as normal against long weapons and can deflect such attacks, thus avoiding harm, but the adept cannot inflict a return blow if his weapon is not large enough.

SECOND ATTACK

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept makes an additional close combat attack, using the same weapon he wielded for his first Attack Test that round. He makes a Second Attack Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes a Damage Test as normal.

SECOND SHOT

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept makes an additional ranged combat attack, using the same weapon (except in the case of thrown weapons) he wielded for his first Attack Test that round. He makes a Second Shot Test against his opponent's Physical Defense. If successful, the adept makes a Damage Test as normal.

SECOND WEAPON

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept wields a one-handed melee weapon in his off-hand to attack an opponent, in the same round as he attacks with his primary one-handed melee weapon, by making a Second Weapon Test as his melee Attack Test. If successful, he makes a Damage Test for the weapon, as normal. T'skrang characters may use a tail weapon as a second weapon.

SENSE DANGER

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept senses if a character or creature is hostile by making a Sense Danger Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, he knows whether or not the target harbors hostile intentions toward him or his friends. No other information is provided regarding the feelings of the target.

SENSE POISON

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept senses the presence of poison in food, drink, and even the air, within Sense Poison Rank×10 yards by making a Sense Poison Test against the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or the Spell Defense of the creature or character (in the case of a poison stinger or poisoned weapon). If successful, he detects poison on the target substance, object, or character. If a poison is carried in a tightly sealed container, like a vial or flask, or if the poison comprises a natural part of an animal, such as a spider's or scorpion's venom, the adept requires a Good Result on his Sense Poison Test to detect the poison's presence.

SHIELD CHARGE

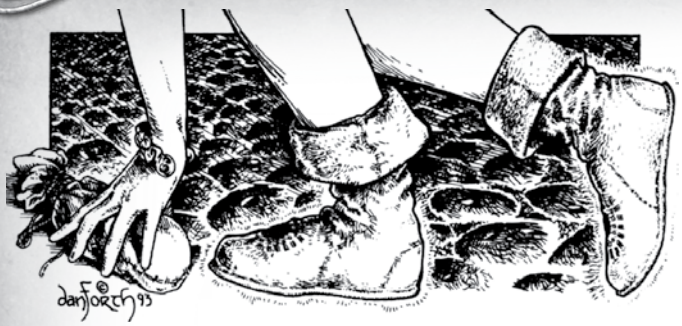
Step: Rank+STR **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept bashes an opponent by making an attack in melee combat using his shield as a weapon. If successful, he makes a Shield Charge Test instead of a Damage Test to determine damage. The attack's impetus increases the Difficulty Number of any Knockdown Tests his opponent makes—the adept adds his Shield Charge Rank to the Knockdown Difficulty (p.233). Because of the positioning required, the adept loses his shield protection against all opponents, other than the one he is currently facing, for the remainder of the round.

SILENT WALK

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept combines fluid movement with magical effects to dampen the sound of his passage, including footSteps and other means of travel, such as the sound of a windling's flight. The adept makes a Silent Walk Test, the result being the Detection Difficulty for



any Perception Tests made to hear him moving. This talent does not make the adept more difficult to see—a character who is aware of the adept's presence and watching him will observe his movements normally. Using Silent Walk halves the adept's Movement Rate and the effect of any abilities used to increase movement speed.

Slough Blame

Step: Rank+CHA **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept temporarily diverts suspicion and blame from one character to another by concocting a plausible explanation, then making a Slough Blame Test against the higher of the accuser's or scapegoat's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character involved. If successful, the blame is passed on, per the adept's explanation for a number of minutes equal to his Slough Blame Rank—hopefully sufficient time for the adept to make himself scarce.

Speak Language

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The adept learns to communicate with others in different tongues and may learn a number of languages equal to his Speak Language Rank. If he has an unassigned Speak Language Rank available, the adept can attempt to learn a new language by listening to a fluent speaker for at least one minute, then making a Speak Language Test against the language's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he learns the language and notes it on his Character Record Sheet. the test fails, the adept cannot attempt to learn that same language again until he improves his Speak Language Rank—he can attempt to learn other languages or dialects, however. Once a Rank has been assigned to a language it cannot be used to learn any other language. The Learning Difficulty for the different racial languages is shown in the Language Table. The numbers reflect the difficulty of learning the base "racial" versions of these languages.

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Windling	7

* All characters beginning play with the Dwarf language know the Throalic dialect.

When speaking, the adept makes a Speak Language Test to see how well he communicates what he wants to say. The Test Result determines the level of comprehension. 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 philosophy, or other abstract ideas, require a result of 13. The effect of each Test lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept's Speak Language Rank, allowing communication at the level achieved by the Test Result. If the adept requires more complex conversation, he must make another Speak Language Test. The Strain cost reflects the concentration required to establish and maintain communication.

Dialects

Languages are often complex and most possess many different variations, or dialects. These dialects are sometimes regional, others by city, or even by kaer. Adepts attempting to learn a dialect add +2 to the Learning Difficulty of the base "racial" language. The adept must know how to speak the base "racial" language before he can attempt to learn a dialect of that language. Once learned, any dialects that an adept knows are recorded on his Character Record Sheet in parentheses beside the language it is based on. An adept can learn a number of dialects for each language he knows equal to his Speak Language Rank. For example, all player characters begin game play knowing how to speak Dwarf with a Throalic dialect, noted in parentheses on their Character Record Sheet. When attempting to speak in a dialect, an adept who knows the base "racial" language, but not the dialect, adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of his Speak Language Tests.

Spell Matrix

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

A spell matrix is an astral construct that allows magicians to cast spells without interference from the denizens of astral space. The Spell Matrix talent represents the most basic type of spell matrix in **Earthdawn.** A magician may only safely cast a spell after he has first placed it into a spell matrix. The Spell Matrix Rank determines the maximum Spell Circle it can hold. For example, a Rank 2 Spell Matrix can hold a single First or Second Circle spell. The matrix's Mystic Armor absorbs damage from attacks directed against it, such as from the Matrix Strike talent, and is equal to the magician's base Mystic Armor. Each Spell Matrix represents a separate talent with its own Rank, and is improved independently.

Spellcasting

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The magician casts spells by making a Spellcasting Test against the Casting Difficulty given in the spell's description. If successful, the spell is successfully cast and the effect determined. See the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.129, for more information. See the **Spells** chapter, p.140, for spell descriptions.

Spirit Dodge

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard (see text)
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept conjures a tasked spirit to protect him in combat by using his Standard Action to make a Spirit Dodge (6) Test. If successful, a spirit is conjured, which rests within the adept for a number of hours equal to the Test Result or until dismissed by the adept. Whether the adept desires it or not, the spirit automatically tries to dodge all close or ranged combat attacks that would otherwise hit the adept—even if he is unable to see the blow coming—pulling or pushing him in any direction needed to avoid being struck. The adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test against the Attack Test result as a Free Action. If successful, the attack misses—the spirit drags the adept out of the way at the last instant. Each time the adept makes a Spirit Dodge Test to avoid a blow, he suffers 1 Strain. He can still be Knocked Down by taking a Wound or from the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (p.222). Action Test penalties for being

Knocked Down are also applied to the Spirit Dodge Test—the spirit's ability to "roll" the adept around to avoid being struck is impaired. The adept incurs Blindsided or Surprised penalties as normal, simply reacting against attacks when he wouldn't normally be able to.

SPIRIT HOLD

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept anchors a spirit within 20 yards to one spot by boldly facing it and ordering it to halt, then making a Spirit Hold Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the spirit is held in place for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Spirit Hold Rank, during which time it is unable to move or take any actions other than communicating. The adept must concentrate to hold the spirit in place—he also cannot move or take any actions other than communication. If he does, the hold is broken and the spirit is free to act. The spirit may free itself by making a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Spirit Hold Step. If the talent's duration runs out, the adept may use it again to prolong the hold. If the talent's effect ends before the duration runs out, by the adept taking other actions or the spirit freeing itself, using the talent again against the same spirit requires a Result Level one higher than the previous use.

SPIRIT MOUNT

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept conjures a riding mount by making a Spirit Mount Test against the spirit mount's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit mount "whose eyes are afire and skin all summer lightning and fog" appears for a number of minutes equal to the Test Result, after which it melts into mist. Spirit mounts usually take the form of horses, but sages have recorded other shapes. Only the summoner may ride the spirit mount—it dissolves rather than obey the commands of another. A spirit mount can walk or gallop on air or water when unburdened, but cannot carry a rider into or over these mediums. They can sink up to two feet into the ground, usually sufficient to allow mount and rider to pass along corridors too low for a normal horse and rider to travel along. Regardless of its summoned form, a spirit mount always has the following statistics:

Spirit Mount

DEX: 6 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 8
PER: 4 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 7 **Physical Defense**: 8
Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 6
Attack (1): 7 **Social Defense**: 7
Damage: **Physical Armor**: 0
Trample (2): 9 **Mystic Armor**: 0

Death: 44 **Recovery Tests**: 4
Unconsciousness: 36 **Knockdown**: 8
Wound Threshold: 13 **Movement**: 10

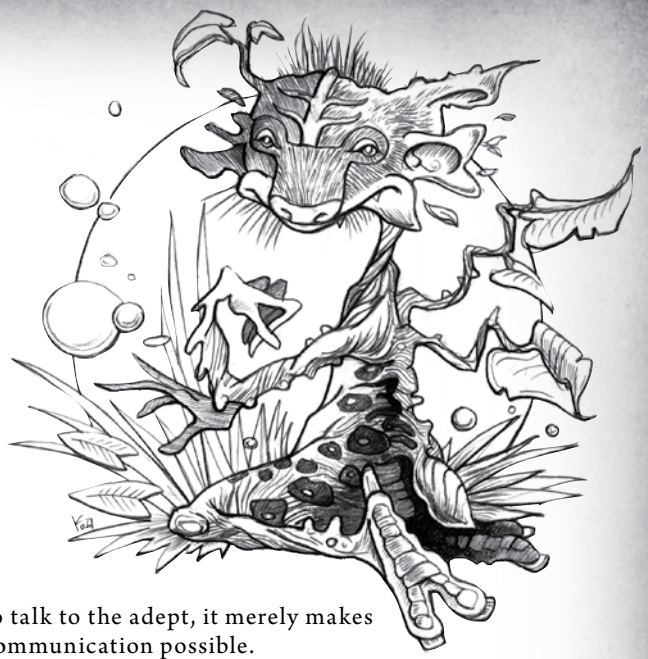
Legend Award: First Circle

Powers: Great Leap [T] (2): 8, Sprint (3)

SPIRIT TALK

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept is able to talk to spirits and entities, including those who do not speak a language known to him and those who do not communicate verbally, by making a Spirit Talk Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept may talk to the spirit for a number of minutes equal to his Spirit Talk Rank. This talent does not compel the spirit to talk to the adept, it merely makes communication possible.



SPOT ARMOR FLAW

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept detects weaknesses in a character's armor by making a Spot Armor Flaw Test against the higher of the target's or his armor's Spell Defense. If successful, the adept sees any flaws in the armor and reduces the Result Level he requires to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit by one level (Excellent to Good, Extraordinary to Excellent, and so on) for a number of rounds equal to his Spot Armor Flaw Rank. The effects of Spot Armor Flaw are not cumulative with the Show Armor Flaw talent.

SPRINT

Step: Rank **Action**: Simple
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The adept temporarily infuses himself with magical speed, adding his Sprint Rank to his Movement Rate that round. Sprint cannot be used during the same round as other movement-enhancing talents, such as Great Leap, or Gliding Stride. The bonus to Movement Rate conveyed by Sprint is not doubled when using the Running combat option (p.225).

STEEL THOUGHT

Step: Rank+WIL **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept resists magical abilities that target his Spell Defense. Any time he is targeted by such an ability, the adept may make a Steel Thought Test against his opponent's Test Result. If successful, he forges his thoughts into more resilient patterns, preventing the ability from affecting him. This talent works similarly to the Avoid Blow talent, but is only effective against magical abilities, such as talents, spells, and creature powers. The adept can use this talent a number of times equal to his Steel Thought Rank each round, but only once against each such effect directed at him.

Lucien the Nethermancer successfully casts a spell at Kindras the Weaponsmith, with a Spellcasting Test result of 16. Realizing his peril, Kindras makes a Steel Thought Test to protect himself against the Nethermancer's magical assault, rolling an 18—success! Lucien's spell takes no effect, leaving him face-to-face with the angry Weaponsmith.

Steely Stare

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept intimidates a character with his piercing gaze, staring intently at him and making a Steely Stare Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target feels a chill travel up his spine and becomes wary of the adept for a number of minutes equal to the adept's Steely Stare Rank. While affected, the target will not take any actions against the adept, including Interaction Tests—such as Persuasion, Intimidation, Taunt, and so on—unless attacked. The target can shake off the effect by making a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Steely Stare Step.

Stopping Aim

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept stops a character within line of sight and weapon range from moving by aiming his missile or thrown weapon at the target and making a Stopping Aim Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, a small, but obvious, mark appears on the target and he immediately stops dead in his tracks for fear of being struck for a number of rounds equal to the Test Result. The target remains transfixed until he is attacked, the talent's duration expires, or he makes a successful Willpower Test against the adept's Stopping Aim Step. Keeping aim on the target requires the adept's concentration, during which time he can perform no other Standard Actions, or the talent ends.

Summon

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

Unique to each Discipline. The adept summons an elemental or other extra-planar being to his current location by making a Summon Test against the entity's Spell Defense. If successful, the entity appears, at which point the adept will likely need other magic or talents to successfully negotiate with or control it. The Summon talent is unique to certain Disciplines, restricting use to summoning only a specific type of spirit, for example, elemental or ally spirits. The type of spirit summoned is indicated in parentheses next to the talent name in the individual Discipline descriptions. See **Summoning**, p.211, for more information.

Sure Mount

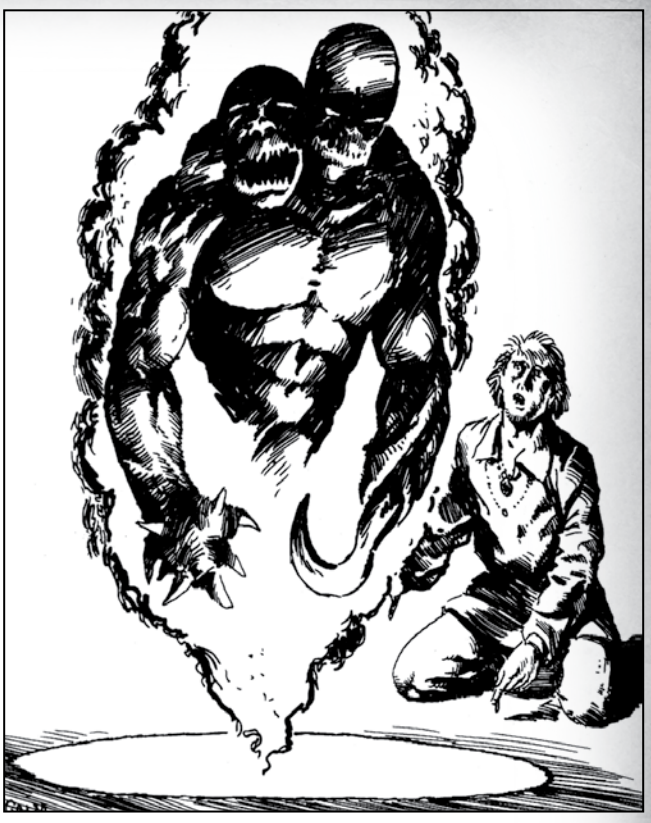
Step: Rank+STR
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The mounted adept avoids being dismounted by making a Sure Mount Test in place of any Knockdown Test he is required to make (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233).

Surprise Strike

Step: Rank+STR
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept takes advantage of surprise to inflict a telling blow. If his Attack Test against a Surprised (p.409) opponent is successful, the adept substitutes his Surprise Strike Step for his Strength Step for the Damage Test. Usually, opponents can only be Surprised at the start of an encounter, but some talents, skills, and other abilities allow the adept to regain a situation of Surprise.



Swift Kick

Step: Rank+DEX
Action: Simple
Karma: No
Strain: 1

If the adept has free use of a leg (or tail, if a t'skrang) and a higher Initiative Test result, he may kick an opponent by making a Swift Kick Test against the target's Physical Defense, as an additional attack in close combat. If successful, the adept makes an unarmed Damage Test as in unarmed combat.

Swing Attack

Step: Rank+DEX
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept swings down at an opponent from an elevated position using sturdy ropes, ship rigging, or vines. Before the attack, the adept decides whether to swing on past, if physically possible, or to stop swinging and land next to his opponent. If he decides to continue swinging, the attack is treated as a Swooping Attack (p.234), but no penalties or Strain for Splitting Movement are applied—they are covered by the effects of the talent. The adept makes a Swing Attack Test as his close combat Attack Test. If successful, he adds his Swing Attack Rank to his Damage Test. When trying to swing on after a successful attack, the adept makes a Strength Test against the target's Toughness Step to avoid being knocked off the rope or vine from the impact. If this test fails, he falls to the ground or deck, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage and is automatically Knocked Down. Many Air Sailors learn to Swing Attack as a tactic for dropping into the thick of trouble from a position of advantage, swiftly dropping to the deck from an airship's rigging or, when climbing trees, using vines to lower themselves quickly to the ground. An adept with this talent can substitute his Swing Attack Step for his Dexterity Step when attempting other non-combat actions while swinging from rigging and the like.

TACTICS

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept directs combat to the advantage of his soldiers. For the "commanding" character to effectively use the Tactics talent, his troops must be at least Friendly to him. The commander decides whether his troops are taking the *offensive* or the *defensive*, then makes a Tactics Test against the opposing commander's Social Defense. If successful, and his troops were on the offensive, they gain a +1 bonus to their Attack or Damage Tests (determined by the commander) for each Result Level achieved; if on the defensive, they add +1 to their Physical, Spell, or Social Defense (determined by the commander) for each Result Level achieved. A Pathetic Result works to the enemy's advantage; the character completely fails to read the situation and his own troops suffer a –1 penalty to their Attack or Damage Tests, or Physical, Spell, or Social Defense, as appropriate. The adept may command a maximum of Tactics Rank×20 troops at a time for a number of minutes equal to his Tactics Rank. If several characters attempt to command the same group of soldiers, the highest Result Level determines the bonus—and who is in command. Tactics can only be used on gamemaster characters; player characters do not benefit from using this talent or having it used on them.

TAUNT

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Simple
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept distracts a character (who must be able to understand him) by insulting and humiliating him, making a Taunt Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target incurs a –1 Action Test penalty and subtracts –1 from his Social Defense for each Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result, for a number of rounds equal to the adept's Taunt Rank.

TEMPER OTHER

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Sustained
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept performs this ritual to toughen another character, making him more resistant to harm. Both the adept and target character must be rested and in good health (not suffering from any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds) or the ritual automatically fails. The adept draws forth icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over the target's body during a half hour of intense meditation, after which he makes a Temper Other Test against the higher of the target's Toughness Step or a Difficulty Number of 6. If successful, the adept adds his Temper Other Rank to the target's Death Rating, Unconsciousness Rating, and Wound Threshold for one day. If the test fails, the target takes Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, resulting in a Wound (no armor provides protection). A character can benefit from only one successful Temper Other or Temper Self ritual at a time.

TEMPER SELF

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Sustained
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept performs this ritual to toughen himself, becoming more resistant to harm. He must be rested and in good health (not suffering from any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds) or the ritual automatically fails. The adept draws forth icy ether from astral space, rolling the chilling substance over his body during a half hour of intense meditation, after which he makes a Temper Self Test against the higher of his own Toughness Step or a Difficulty Number of 6. If successful, the adept adds his Temper Self Rank to his Death Rating, Unconsciousness Rating, and Wound Threshold for one day. If the test fails, the adept takes Damage Points equal to his Wound Threshold, resulting in a Wound (no armor provides protection). The adept can benefit from only one successful Temper Other or Temper Self ritual at a time.

TEMPERATURE

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept controls the temperature within a room or other enclosure that he is inside or adjacent to and no bigger than Temperature Rank yards in any dimension. He makes a Temperature Test against the higher of the room's Spell Defense or the highest Spell Defense among those present in the room, including himself if he is inside. If successful, the adept immediately raises or lowers the room temperature by a maximum of Temperature Rank×10 degrees Fahrenheit for a number of hours equal to the Test Result. The adept may cancel the effect any time he is inside or adjacent to the room; the room returns to its original temperature within one round.

THOUGHT LINK

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept establishes a telepathic link with a character or familiar within line of sight by making a Thought Link Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he may talk telepathically with the target, as long as he is within Thought Link Rank×100 yards, for a number of minutes equal to the Test Result. Telepathic communication is silent and requires no more effort than forming the words in one's mind. Thoughts come across as words, accompanied by a buzzing, ticklish pressure—the recipient of the thought hears and feels the words. Though not painful, the effect is known to cause peculiar expressions on the faces of those not expecting it.

THREAD WEAVING

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

Unique to each Discipline. The adept creates and manipulates magical threads. He can have a maximum number of permanent threads active equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. Each individual thread can be woven to a maximum Thread Rank equal to the adept's Thread Weaving Rank.

Caelarion knows Thread Weaving at Rank 3, allowing him to have up to three threads active at any time, with each thread woven to a maximum of thread Rank 3.

THREAD WEAVING TALENT TABLE

Discipline	Thread Weaving
Air Sailor	Air Weaving
Archer	Arrow Weaving
Beastmaster	Beast Weaving
Cavalryman	Rider Weaving
Elementalist	Elementalism
Illusionist	Illusionism
Nethermancer	Nethermancy
Scout	Scout Weaving
Sky Raider	Sky Weaving
Swordmaster	Weapon Weaving
Thief	Thief Weaving
Troubadour	Story Weaving
Warrior	War Weaving
Weaponsmith	Thread Smithing
Wizard	Wizardry

This limit does not apply to threads woven into spell patterns; such threads are temporary, lasting only long enough for the spell to be cast. If a magician achieves an Excellent Result when weaving a spell pattern, he manages to weave an additional thread to the spell in that round. See the **Workings of Magic** (p.104) and **Spell Magic** (p.129) chapters for more information about threads and spell patterns.

Each Discipline has its own unique Named variant of the Thread Weaving talent, shown in parentheses in the Discipline's talent progression. If a rule calls for this specific Name, the Thread Weaving talent by that Name from that specific Discipline must be used, not just any Thread Weaving talent. Adepts with more than one Discipline learn and improve each of their Discipline's Thread Weaving talents independently. See **Learning New Disciplines**, p.241, for more information on multi-Disciplining and the Thread Weaving talent. For the purpose of weaving permanent threads, they use only the highest Rank among all their Thread Weaving talents.

The Thread Weaving talent also gives adepts a limited type of astral sight called Thread Sight (see **Astral Sensing**, p.112), allowing only enough vision to see threads and patterns. See **Nature of Threads**, p.113, for more information on threads, thread weaving, and True Patterns.

Throwing Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept makes a thrown attack in ranged combat against an opponent by hurling a rock, dagger, spear, or other object, and making a Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target and the adept makes a Damage Test for the weapon used. See **Thrown Attacks**, p.232, for more information.

Tiger Spring

Step: Rank **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept reacts more quickly than normal in combat, adding his Tiger Spring Rank as a bonus to his Initiative Test that round. For example, an adept with Tiger Spring at Rank 3 gains a +3 bonus to his Initiative Test. Tiger Spring can be used with other talents that improve Initiative, such as **Air Dance**, p.59.

Tracking

Step: Rank+PER **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept follows the trails left by people or animals across great distances, using a combination of divination magic and senses—in particular, sight and smell—to find traces of their passage. After first locating some visible tracks, either by searching for them or spotting them with a Perception Test, the adept makes a Tracking Test against the tracks' Detection Difficulty. The base Detection Difficulty of a trail is equal to the lowest Dexterity Step among the target group. If the trail is over a day old, add +2 to the Detection Difficulty; if the trail is a week or more old, add +3 to the Detection Difficulty for every week that has passed. If the tracks have been obscured by weather, such as rain or snow, the adept requires a Good Result on his Tracking Test to be able to follow them. If successful, a faint, luminous image of the tracks is imprinted on the adept's pupils. The adept sees this same image on the ground, allowing him to unerringly follow the tracks, even if they have been obliterated by weather or other causes, for a number of hours equal to his Tracking Rank before requiring another Tracking Test. The adept may also use this talent to obscure his own tracks, as long as he travels no faster than his Movement Rate. If disguising a group's tracks, travel is limited to a maximum speed equal to half the adept's Movement Rate. He must keep to the rear of the group and spend time masking signs of their passage. The adept makes a Tracking Test once for each day of travel, the result of which becomes the Detection Difficulty for attempts to follow him.



Trap Initiative

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Free
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The adept reacts more quickly to avoid mechanical and magical traps. Should he trigger a trap while seeking or attempting to disarm it, or if a trap that would affect him is triggered, the adept makes a Trap Initiative Test against the trap's Initiative Test result. If successful, he acts before the trap goes off, possibly avoiding harm. The adept may move up to half his Movement Rate to get out of the way. If the test fails, the trap's effect is resolved normally. See **Detect Trap**, p.65, and **Disarm Trap**, p.65, for more information on locating and disabling traps.

Trick Riding

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Simple
Karma: No **Strain**: 1

The mounted adept performs acrobatics on his mount, making Trick Riding Tests in place of Avoid Blow Tests to dodge close or ranged combat attacks directed against himself or his mount. He may also goad his mount into jumping fences, chasms, flames, or other obstacles by making a Trick Riding Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster. Jumping a short one-yard-high fence has a Difficulty Number of 4; jumping over a three-yard-wide chasm has a Difficulty Number of 12. If the adept or his mount is required to make a Dexterity-only Test for any acrobatic maneuver, the adept may make a Trick Riding Test instead. Some maneuvers in **Mounted Combat** (see p.233) require a Trick Riding Test if the mount is not sufficiently combat-trained or the rider is unfamiliar with his mount.

True Shot

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 0

The adept makes extremely reliable ranged attacks. True Shot requires 1 Karma Point to be spent even if it is a Discipline Talent. The adept makes a True Shot Test as his ranged Attack Test. If his Test Result is not high enough to achieve success against the Difficulty Number (usually an opponent's Physical Defense), the adept

must spend another Karma Point, roll the Karma Die, and add it to the Test Result. This is repeated until the Test Result is sufficient to hit the target or the adept has spent a number of Karma Points equal to his True Shot Rank, at which point no more Karma must be spent. Once the Attack Test is successful, the target can still dodge the attack with abilities such as Avoid Blow or the Shield Mist spell. Regardless, no more Karma can be spent to increase the Test Result. True Shot is very effective when used in combination with the Blind Fire talent.

True Sight

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept sees through illusions more easily, adding his True Sight Rank to the result of any Tests he makes to Sense, Disbelieve, or otherwise see through an illusion. This bonus does not increase the efficacy of the original test for any purposes other than detecting illusions. For example, if the adept had made a Damage Test which also counted as a Sensing Test to detect an illusion, adding his True Sight Rank to the Test Result would not inflict further damage—it simply increases the Test Result and improves the chance of success with the Sensing Test. See **Illusions**, p.139, for more information on illusions and how they work.

Unarmed Combat

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

The adept makes an unarmed attack in close combat using his hands, feet, or another body part against, or making a Grappling attack to restrain, an opponent. The adept makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the attack hits the target. Unless noted otherwise, the adept uses his Strength Step only for the Damage Test. See **Unarmed Attacks**, p.230, for more information.

Versatility

Step: Rank **Action**: NA
Karma: No **Strain**: 0

Versatility is a racial talent, available only to human adepts (see **Versatility**, p.21). A human adept with Versatility Ranks may learn talents from Disciplines other than his own, paying the same Legend Point cost as a member of that Discipline would to gain those talents. The adept must be trained by a member of the appropriate Discipline for each talent that he learns, something that many Disciplines do not always encourage their members to do. Training time and cost are determined by the gamemaster when learning from a gamemaster character, cost and time involved can get as high as training to advance to a Circle equal to the Circle the tutor learned the talent at. An adept may learn a number of talents from other Disciplines equal to his Versatility Rank. An adept cannot learn a talent from a Circle greater than his highest Discipline Circle. For example, if the adept's highest Discipline Circle is Third Circle, he can learn talents from other Disciplines available to them at Third Circle or lower. As Talent Options can be learned at a range of Circles, they use the Circle the tutoring adept chose them at to determine if a human could learn them via Versatility. For example, a Novice Talent Option learned at Seventh Circle only can be learned by a Seventh Circle human adept, even if the tutor could have learned it at Second Circle.

Talents learned through the use of Versatility are never Discipline Talents. Also, the Versatility talent itself, and talents learned through use of the Versatility talent, do not count toward the requirements for advancing to a higher Circle (see **Advancing Discipline Circles**, p.239). This means that adepts who consistently use Versatility to learn and improve talents from other Disciplines will generally take longer to advance through their own Discipline Circles. An adept cannot use Versatility to learn talents available to his own Discipline as Discipline Talents, but can learn talents available to his Discipline as Talent Options. For example, a Second Circle Archer cannot learn the Anticipate Blow talent from a Warrior, as Anticipate Blow is a Third Circle Discipline Talent for Archers, but could learn the Warrior's Avoid Blow talent, despite having potential access to Avoid Blow from his Talent Options. By using the Versatility talent, human adepts may learn Thread Weaving and Summon talents other than those for their current Discipline. For example, a human Wizard could learn and improve Ranks in the Elementalism variant of Thread Weaving, and therefore learn how to cast Elementalism spells. See **Human Versatility and Spellcasting**, p.132, for more information on how the Versatility talent applies to magicians and magic.

Wheeling Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Action**: Standard
Karma: Yes **Strain**: 1

The mounted adept makes more effective Charging Attacks (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233). He is not required to have his mount move more than its Movement Rate before the attack, but is instead required to have his mount move at double its Movement Rate (by Running, see p.225) during the round. Wheeling Attack requires the adept to use the Splitting Movement combat option (p.226), but he suffers no Harried modifier or Strain (which is covered by the talent). The adept makes a Wheeling Attack Test as his Attack Test in close combat.

Krarg rides a mount with a Movement Rate of 8, but the distance to his target is 5. Normally, Krarg would have to be at a distance of 9 to his target to make a Charging Attack (1 higher than his mount's Movement Rate of 8). When using Wheeling Attack, however, Krarg can make a Charging Attack against any target within reach (which is double the mount's Movement Rate—16), but the mount has to Run and uses up all of its movement. This means, when making a Wheeling Attack, Krarg moves 4 hexes adjacent to his target, attacks, then moves 12 hexes away from the target. This split movement is covered in the talent's effects.



Wheeling Defense

Step: Rank
Action: Simple
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The mounted adept urges his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers by presenting a constantly moving target. The Physical Defense of adept and mount are increased by his Wheeling Defense Rank until the end of the next round. When using Wheeling Defense, the mount's Movement Rate becomes 2, unless another effect causes it to be lower. If the mount moves farther, the talent's effects end.

Wilderness Survival

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Sustained
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept knows how to survive in the wild. He is able to locate or build shelter, start a fire, find water, or forage for edible vegetation, such as berries, roots, fruits, mushrooms, and other plants. The adept makes a Wilderness Survival Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on those shown in the Survival Table, and taking circumstances such as season, weather, and environment into account. Each use of this talent takes two hours and the adept may make four such tests per day, meaning he will sometimes need to make difficult survival decisions—food or water? shelter or food?

SURVIVAL TABLE

Terrain	Difficulty Number
Woodlands	5
Jungles	7
Poison Forest	12
Blood Wood	10
Plains	6
Hinterlands	7
Mountains, lowland	6
Mountains, highland	7

Finding Food

Wilderness Survival allows the adept to forage for food, but it does not provide him with any special advantages for hunting, fishing, or tracking—these are separate skills in their own right (see the **Skills** chapter, p.87). Some barren areas may not support any plants or animals at all; the adept cannot successfully forage in such areas. For each Result Level achieved on a successful Wilderness Survival Test, the adept finds enough food for one person for one day.

Finding Shelter

Unless the adept carries a tent or tarp, he will need to find or build shelter when traveling through the wild. Natural shelters include caves, rock formations, fallen trees, or anything else that can block the wind and/or offer some sort of protection from the elements. On a successful Wilderness Survival Test, the adept finds or builds a shelter providing adequate protection for himself only from light rain, wind, or snow.

Finding Water

Generally, a Namegiver character requires a minimum of one quart of water each day to remain healthy. Unfortunately, not all the water found in the wilderness is safe to drink. Precautions should always be taken before drinking from any untested water source. In areas without obvious sources of water, alternative water sources must be found. For each Result Level achieved on a successful Wilderness Survival Test, the adept finds one quart of water.

Willforce

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 1

The adept focuses his will, increasing the effectiveness of his spells, and enhancing his ability to resist magical effects targeted against him. He substitutes his Willforce Step for his Willpower Step when making a spell Effect Test or resisting the effects of some magical abilities.

Wind Catcher

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

When falling from a height, the adept controls his descent by making a Wind Catcher (6) Test. On an Average or Good Result he lands safely and takes no Falling damage. On an Excellent Result, he directs the direction of his descent to land no further from the target landing site than the distance fallen. For example, an adept who falls from a height of 20 yards could land up to 20 yards away from where he would have landed. If the test fails, he is unable to take control and plummets to the ground, taking Falling damage. The adept can safely fall from a maximum height equal to his Wind Catcher Rank×100 yards. Sky Raiders often use this talent to make precise aerial assaults on enemy positions.

Winning Smile

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Standard
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept appears more attractive to a member of the opposite sex. Depending on the target's sexual preference, this may also include characters of the same gender. The adept makes a Winning Smile Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target finds his appearance very pleasing. The adept adds his Winning Smile Rank to any Interaction Tests he makes against the target for a number of hours equal to his Winning Smile Rank. An adept may attempt a Winning Smile Test only once against a given character each day. While generally most effective against members of the same race, the adept can also use this talent on characters of other races, though typically with greater difficulty. The gamemaster should determine whether such an attempt requires a higher Result Level to be effective and, if so, how much higher. For example, a human trying to impress a dwarf may require a Good Result on his Winning Smile Test. That same human attempting to impress a t'skrang might need an Excellent Result, while an attempt to win over a dragon would be Extraordinary (if it is even possible). By contrast, if the target in question had a preference for humans, the test might require only an Average Result.

Wood Skin

Step: Rank+TOU
Action: Standard
Karma: Yes
Strain: 0

The adept uses a Recovery Test to make a Wood Skin Test, adding the result to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings for Wood Skin Rank hours. When active, his muscles and ligaments toughen and his skin takes on the appearance of wood or bark. Even if the adept falls unconscious, the talent remains in effect.

Wound Balance

Step: Rank+STR
Action: Free
Karma: No
Strain: 0

The adept firmly stands his ground, substituting his Wound Balance Step for his Strength Step when making any Knockdown Tests while supporting and balancing his own weight (as opposed to being mounted or carried by another character).

CHAPTER SEVEN

SKILLS

Not everyone is an adept. Some of us learn our trades the old-fashioned way.

• Harrok, Blacksmith •

Most people lack the magical talents of adepts, but can often accomplish the same tasks using non-magical abilities. In **Earthdawn**, these mundane abilities are called **skills**. Skills add a bonus to one of your character's Attribute Steps, giving him an advantage when taking actions, engaging in combat, and so on. Skills allow a character to perform certain physical actions and to make informed decisions about various courses of action during an adventure.

There are four types of skills that characters can learn: Artisan, General, Knowledge, and Language. **Artisan skills** represent the arts and crafts practiced by every Namegiver; **General skills** allow your character to perform everyday actions; **Knowledge skills** represent how much your character knows about the world of **Earthdawn**; **Language skills** determine the spoken or written languages your character is fluent in.

Skills are similar to talents, except they do not require magic to learn and use. Instead, a character must invest time, effort, and money into acquiring them. In this age of magic, skills are largely the domain of ordinary folk, though all adepts begin the game with a few skills and, over time, most adepts like to learn more skills to supplement their magical talents.

Skills Versus Talents

Many skills have a magical talent equivalent, available to adepts of different Disciplines. This chapter describes skills, but players should look at the talent description to see how the corresponding talent varies. Talents, being magical, are usually more potent than skills.

Some adepts know both skilled and talented versions of the same ability; in such cases, the player must decide which type he is using before making any tests—most times an adept will use a talent over a skill, but there are powers and spells that can suppress magic, including talents, and for this reason, many adepts like to have a mundane "backup" skill, just in case.

Learning & Improving Skills

Because it takes good old-fashioned physical and mental effort, skills take more effort to learn than talents. A character must spend money to pay an instructor, and take the time to train and practice in order to acquire a new skill or to improve a skill he already possesses.

Any Ranks that the player assigns to skills for his character during character creation reflect the assumption that the character picked up the skill during his adolescence. To add skill Ranks later in life, the character must find and learn from a suitable tutor. If your character has the Legend Points required to gain an additional Rank in a skill and access to a tutor or other source of training, he can improve that skill. See **Improving Skill Ranks**, p.238, for more information.

Using Skills

Skill Ranks add a Step bonus to one of the character's Attribute Steps, shown in the skill's description. For example, a character with the Melee Weapons skill adds his skill Rank to his Dexterity Step to find that skill's Step Number. A character with a Dexterity Step of 6 and Melee Weapons at Rank 5 would use Step 11 when wielding a melee weapon (6+5=11).

When a character uses a skill, he will usually make a test to determine how successfully he used that skill. This test often replaces other types of test, including Attribute, Damage, Initiative, or Attack Tests. The Step Number used for the test is determined by adding an Attribute Step to the skill Rank. Knowledge skills use the character's Perception Step; Artisan skills, the character's Charisma Step; and General skills, the Attribute Step listed with the skill description.

The Difficulty Number for the test is made is usually based on the target's Social, Spell, or Physical Defense. Other Difficulty Numbers appear in the individual skill descriptions. References to "Step:", "Strain:" and "Action:" are as described for **Using Talents**, p.57.

Default Skill Use

Certain skills represent abilities that every character knows. The Default Skill Use system allows characters without knowledge of these skills to perform the actions normally allowed by making an Attribute-only Test. Skills with the "Default Use: Yes" notation can be used with the Attribute normally associated with that skill. The character makes an Attribute Test in place of a Skill Test.

The minimum Result Level for the test is increased by one level, including other requirements associated with use of the skill (like Armor-Defeating Hits), to a maximum Extraordinary Result level. For example, a character who does not know the Melee Weapons skill could still swing a sword at an opponent, because the skill defaults to the Dexterity Attribute. The character makes a Dexterity Test as his Melee Weapons Test, requiring a minimum Good Result to hit an opponent.

Requirements based on Rank in the skill's description, such as duration or range, are considered to be equivalent to the character possessing the skill at Rank 1.

Moran, a dwarf Air Sailor, is negotiating for a better price on an item he wants from a local merchant. After determining whether the item is available to be bought, and a base price for it, Moran decides to attempt to bargain for the goods. He does not know the Haggle skill, but because it defaults to his Charisma Attribute, he can attempt to use it. Moran gets one chance to make a successful Charisma Test in place of a Haggle Test, but requires a Good Result—one level higher than normal—to gain anything from the attempt. Smiling, the merchant listens to the dwarf's stumbling attempt at explaining why he should be paying less for the item.

Adepts and Default Skill Use Tests

Adepts gain Karma bonuses to Attribute-only Tests at different Discipline Circles. They may spend 1 Karma Point on skills where the Default Skill Use rules are applied—use of default skills is considered to be an Attribute-only Test. While the ability to use a Karma Point on the Skill Test improves the chance of succeeding, the character still requires a test result at least one level higher than the normal level needed for success.

Skill Tests

To make a Skill Test (usually referred to by the name of the skill, for instance, an Etiquette Test), the character rolls the Action Dice indicated by the skill Step against a target Difficulty Number. For the test to be successful, the result must be at least equal to the Difficulty Number. If the result exceeds the Difficulty Number by a suitable margin, the character may have achieved an advantageous Result Level, which would increase or otherwise beneficially change the effect of the character's skill use. The Result Level becomes particularly important when making Skill Tests for Knowledge skills (also called Knowledge Tests), because the Result Level can determine whether or not a character successfully uses a particular Knowledge skill.

Replacement Effects

Some skills replace, or substitute, their Step for a Step used in another type of Test or are used instead of another type of Test. These follow the same rules as talents replacing other types of Tests, see the **Talents** chapter, p. 57.

Artisan Skills

Of the four types of skills available in **Earthdawn**, **Artisan skills** are the least commonly used. They serve primarily to help define a character and as a way to prove him untainted by the Horrors.

Using Artisan Skills

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 the gamemaster decides that a character must create a sculpture or painting in order to advance the story, the character may use an appropriate Artisan skill to do so. See **Artisan**, p.93, for some examples of typical Artisan skills.

Greeting Rituals

In many isolated regions of Barsaive, local inhabitants remain wary of the dangers posed by lingering Horrors. In such areas, inhabitants commonly require that strangers use their artisan skills to prove that they do not carry Horror taint. Consequently, player characters can expect many opportunities to demonstrate their artisan abilities.

A character using an Artisan skill as part of a greeting ritual should make his Artisan Skill Test against a Difficulty Number of 5. If successful, the character proves himself free of Horror taint and the locals will likely accept him.

Making an Impression

Gamemasters can also treat the Artisan Skill Test as a way of Making an Impression (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93) to determine how people respond to the character. The gamemaster compares the result of the character's Artisan Skill Test against the highest Social Defense among the gamemaster characters present. An Average Result improves their Attitudes by one degree. A Pathetic Result worsens their Attitude by one degree.

Practical Knowledge

Optional Rule: Gamemasters may want to incorporate practical knowledge into artisan, general, or language skills, allowing them to be used as knowledge skills. For example, they may want to make basic knowledge of melee weapon design available to all characters who know the Melee Weapons skill, or may want to allow all characters with the Singing skill to know a little about music, without requiring separate Knowledge skills be learned.

To implement this, the character simply determines an impromptu Knowledge skill Step by adding the Rank of the skill in question to his Perception Step (he uses his skill Rank as if it was a Knowledge skill Rank). The character then makes a Knowledge Test as normal.

The gamemaster should limit the applicability of these practical knowledge skills by only allowing them to cover knowledge that is at least Related to the subject.

Krarg knows the Dancing skill at Rank 5 and has a Perception Step of 6. He is an accomplished dancer and has practiced many dances, but is now in a situation where a Cathan *tribe from the Servos Jungle has invited him to join in their fertility dance – he hasn't done that one before. The gamemaster allows him to make a Knowledge Test with a Step of 11, though, allowing Krarg to use his knowledge of dance to look for typical rhythmical patterns and Steps performed by Namegivers. The gamemaster judges Krarg's skill to be Closely Related, but as the* Cathans' *and tribal dances in general are alien to Krarg, requires him to achieve at least a Good Result. Krarg needs to roll an 11 to succeed.*

This procedure is only recommended for skills, not talents. Talents in **Earthdawn** do not represent a learned aptitude, but rather an instinctive and magical ability. For adepts, the Half-magic ability (p. 39) covers most subjects of knowledge pertaining to their Discipline and its talents.

General Skills

General skills give your character certain abilities that allow him to perform certain actions. Your character might use the Acrobatic Strike skill to give him an edge in combat, or the Conversation skill to more easily worm vital information from someone. Characters often end up in situations where they might wish to use a General skill—assuming, of course, that they have the time and money necessary to acquire it. Many of the General skills described in this chapter have magical equivalents, available to adept characters as talents. Many skills and talents are similar in effect. It is important to note that there are differences. Although a skill and a talent often share the same name, characters using the "skilled" version use the rules presented in this chapter if there are differences.

KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Your character has lived in the world of **Earthdawn** for his entire life, and so he will know more it than you possibly can. **Knowledge skills** represent that experience.

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 main purposes:

- They simulate your character's knowledge of the world. The gamemaster reveals or adds to this knowledge when it will advance the story.
- They allow you to further define your character, giving him unique quirks and interests.

USING KNOWLEDGE SKILLS

Using Knowledge skills follows the same procedures as using other skills or talents, but as the exact nature of each Knowledge skill can be freely chosen with very narrow focus or broad perspective, and as knowledge of any area may cover huge amounts of information with different levels of insight, there are different ways for players and gamemasters to use Knowledge skills during the game, and different ways to interpret Knowledge skill Test Results. Your character typically uses a Knowledge skill in either one of two ways:

- To determine if he knows a specified fact.
- To see how much about a given subject he knows.

Both ways require a Knowledge skill Test to be made, referred to as a **Knowledge Test**. While learning a specific fact often simply means beating a Difficulty Number, and while finding what body of knowledge a character has often means making an open roll, with higher Test Results representing more knowledge, both ways follow the same procedure when making Knowledge Tests.

Note that the use of Knowledge skills does not reflect a character's absolute and only knowledge about any given situation. It is a combination of remembering the right thing at the right moment or drawing of conclusions between knowledge and situation. As such, a character knows things that he does not have a skill for, and may know something he failed to "remember" earlier.

MAKING KNOWLEDGE TESTS

When making a Knowledge Test, a character rolls the Step Number (Rank+PER) of the Knowledge skill against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, requiring a certain Result Level. To determine the Difficulty Number, the gamemaster examines how well the character's skill covers the subject of the Knowledge Test, how related the skill is to the subject (see **Knowledge Relation** below). He then determines how central the desired information is inside the subject, if it is a well-known fact in that particular area of expertise or information known only to a few insiders (see **Knowledge Obscurity** below).

If the character is **looking for a fact**, the gamemaster's decision results in a Difficulty Number and a Result Level to be achieved against that Difficulty Number. This can be re-interpreted into a new Difficulty Number, which will sometimes be the case in various **Earthdawn** products. For example, if a Botany (7) Test requires an Excellent Result because the information is not well-known even among botanists, a Botany (15) Test might be asked for instead (as 15 is an Excellent Result against a Difficulty Number of 7).

If the character tries to **learn as much as possible about a subject**, the Difficulty Number is determined as normal, but there is no specific Result Level required. Rather, with every Result Level achieved, the character learns additional information. **Earthdawn** products will often suggest a number of Knowledge skills and associated Difficulty Numbers along with a table of Result Levels showing what a character achieving that Result Level learns. Knowledge learned in a higher Result Level also grants access to that learned in lower Result Levels. For example, if a character tries to remember all sausages important to Throal cuisine, a Throal Cuisine (5) or a Barsaivian Cuisine (9) Test might be called for, and an Average Result with either skill would allow the character to learn the five most important Throalic sausages, while a Good Result would allow him to learn both the five most important, plus another four less important sausages, and so on for Excellent and Extraordinary Results. Although skills and Difficulty Numbers differ, the knowledge gained would be the same if identical Result Levels were achieved.



Jim, the gamemaster, has designed a scenario where the player characters are stranded in the wilderness without food. They now have to determine if a certain berry is edible, and possibly what other edible plants are available to the group in the forest they are currently traveling through. The players call out three skills they deem suitable to this task: The Swordmaster knows the Nature Lore Knowledge skill, the Scout knows the Botany Knowledge skill, and the Archer knows the Wild Animals Knowledge skill. Jim now has to determine how these skills are related to the two tasks, and then how accessible the information is within the individual areas of expertise.

Knowledge Relation

Before making a Knowledge Test, the gamemaster determines how related the Knowledge skill and the subject at hand are. The relation of skill and knowledge determines the Difficulty Number of the Knowledge Test, as shown on the **Knowledge Test Table**. There are five broad categories for the relation a Knowledge skill has to a subject:

To-the-Point Knowledge skills match the knowledge sought after exactly and are often very specialized Knowledge skills. For example, the Current Throal Politics Knowledge skill is the skill known to a character who keeps up-to-date on the day to day politics of Throal to the very detail, and the ideal source to learn about the

change in Throalic politics brought by king Neden's ascension to the throne.

Closely Related Knowledge skills cover the knowledge sought very closely, either by covering a slightly larger focus or a strongly related field of expertise. For example, the Throal Politics Knowledge skill is still a good source of knowledge about the ascension of King Neden.

KNOWLEDGE TEST TABLE

Type of Information	Difficulty Number
To-the-point	5
Closely Related	7
Related	9
Hardly Related	12
Unrelated	NA

Related Knowledge skills are the most common Knowledge skill found and cover a wider area of expertise, but skill and knowledge sought are still quite related. For example, both the Barsaive Politics and Throal History skills allow some access to knowledge about king Neden's ascension and policies.

Hardly Related Knowledge skills might contain small bits of relevant information where the desired knowledge is concerned. For example, the Throal Military Knowledge skill might cover some of the knowledge connected to Neden's ascension, as he served time in Throal's military.

Unrelated Knowledge skills cannot be used to learn anything about a given subject. For example, the Theran Cuisine Knowledge skill does not allow one to learn any facts about king Neden at all, even if he liked Theran food. They do not allow any Knowledge Tests to be made.

For the task of determining edibility of the specific berry, Jim decides that the Wild Animals skill is Unrelated, the Nature Lore skill is Hardly Related (as it covers a very wide area) and the Botany skill is Related (it is the typical skill for this task). A skill like Plants of the Woodlands would have been Closely Related, while a skill like Natural Food Plants would have been To-the-Point. For the task of determining other possible edible plants in the area, Jim decides that the Wild Animals skill is at least Hardly Related (animals have to eat), that the Nature Lore skill is Related (it covers general knowledge about typical edible plants) and that the Botany skill is Closely Related.

Knowledge Obscurity

Once the relation of Knowledge skill and the field of expertise the knowledge is part of are determined, the gamemaster decides how successful the Knowledge Test has to be to either learn a specific fact or to what extent a character's Knowledge Test Result covers it. The more obscure a piece of Knowledge, the higher a Result Level it requires on the Knowledge Test.

KNOWLEDGE OBSCURITY TABLE

Knowledge Obscurity	Result Level Required
General	Average
Detailed	Good
Intricate	Excellent
Obscure	Extraordinary

General information requires (or is available on) an Average Result. For example, the approximate date and rough circumstances of Neden's ascension are General information within the subjects of Neden's person, Throal politics, or Throal in general.

Detailed information requires (or is available on) a Good Result. For example, Neden's accurate age and the day he ascended to the throne are Detailed information.

Intricate information requires (or is available on) an Excellent Result. The stances that Throal's noble houses took towards Neden's ascension and their immediate reactions and displays during the coronation ceremony are Intricate information.



Obscure information requires (or is available on) an Extraordinary Result. Obscure information is typically secret knowledge, available only insiders. The details of king Varulus' murder and his son Neden's reactions to learning of it are only known to members of the royal family and close friends, and are obscure information.

For determining if the berry is edible, Jim decides that all skills that allow tests are General Information – you cannot get any more obscure than edible or poisonous really. So he calls for Nature Lore (12) and Botany (9) Tests from the characters, but no Animal Lore Test. Both succeed, and both characters learn that the berry is edible. To find out about other options for edible food, he calls for Wild Animals (12), Nature Lore (9), and Botany (7) Tests. Now, the Result Levels of the tests determine what the characters learn. The Difficulty Number is of no importance once the Result Level has been determined. As it so happens, both the Scout and Swordmaster do not even achieve an Average Result – they learn nothing from their test. The Archer, however, achieves a Good Result on his Wild Animals (12) Test, and learns what Jim intended to let the characters know for both Average and Good Results: that many of the trees in the area grow nuts, and that a wide variety of mushrooms in the area are edible. To tailor the information to the skill used, Jim explains to the Archer that he remembers that a lot of nut-eating squirrels live in the area and that wild boars here find mushrooms a delicacy.

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. 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 will likely yield little information. Quite simply, players cannot expect the gamemaster to know or create and catalogue every possible fact about the world of **Earthdawn**, nor every bit of knowledge they have to help them out in each and every circumstance.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Language skills allow a character to speak, read, and write different languages. All characters begin the game with Ranks in the Speak Language and Read/Write Language skills. Each Language skill Rank represents a language the character knows.

Learning new languages differs slightly from the process of learning other skills. To learn a new language, the character increases his Rank in the appropriate skill as usual (see **Improving Skills**, p.238). He must then spend at least one month studying with a teacher or native speaker of the language. If learning to read and write the language, the teacher must be literate in the language. At the end of this time, he makes a Skill Test against the Learning Difficulty of the language. If successful, he learns the language. If the test fails, he may make an additional attempt after studying the language for another month.

LANGUAGES AS INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

Optional Rule: Under the standard rules for language skills, the more languages a character speaks, the more fluent he becomes in all of them. These rules abstract and simplify languages in the **Earthdawn** game, and should be sufficient for most gamemasters. For those gamemasters who want a more realistic system of Language Skills, we offer the following optional rule.

Each language has a Speak (Language) and a Read/Write (Language) Skill. These skills are Perception-based, and are independently learned and increased the same way as any other skill (see **Learning and Improving Skills**, p.230). No tests are required to successfully learn the skill; the character need only spend the time training and pay the teacher's fee.

The character's Skill Rank reflects their fluency in the language. Generally speaking, a character with Rank 5 or higher in a language skill is considered fluent, and need not make Skill Tests to understand the language in question, though the gamemaster may require a test if he feels the situation warrants it—for example, the character encounters an obscure dialect or technical jargon. When making tests using this optional rule, increase the Difficulty Numbers for simple concepts and sentences to 6, basic conversation to 10, technical or specialized jargon to 13, and abstract or complex discussions to 17.

Instead of starting with two Ranks in the Speak Language skill and one Rank in the Read/Write Language skill, characters receive the Speak Dwarf skill at Rank 6, the Speak (Racial Language) skill at Rank 5, and the Read/Write Dwarf skill at Rank 6. The Speak Language and Read/Write Language talents do not otherwise change; they still work as described in the **Talents** chapter, on p.201 and p.196, respectively.

SKILL DESCRIPTIONS

ACROBATIC STRIKE

Step: Rank+DEX
Action: Simple
Default: No
Strain: 1

The character performs flips, jumps, swings, or other physical maneuvers during combat, making him harder to hit. It is used as described for the **Acrobatic Strike** talent, p.59.

ACTING

Step: Rank+CHA
Action: Sustained
Default: No
Strain: 0

Can be used as an Artisan skill. The character acts out other personalities to convince an audience that he 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 appearance (the character must use the 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. The character makes an Acting Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, 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 Result to convince the target of his authenticity.

When using the Acting skill during a theatrical performance, the character makes an Acting Test and compares the result against the Social Defense of each member of the audience; for large audiences, the gamemaster may choose to use the average Social Defense of the audience. The Result Level determines how much each audience member enjoys the performance.

AIR SAILING

Step: Rank+WIL
Action: Sustained
Default: No
Strain: 0

The character knows how to work the rigging, tiller, and oars of an airship. It is used as described for the **Air Sailing** talent, p.60.

ALCHEMY

Step: Rank+PER
Action: Sustained
Default: No
Strain: 0

Use requires an Alchemist's Kit or access to an Alchemist's Shop. The Alchemy skill includes an understanding of the magical principles and formulas used to create magical concoctions, the knowledge needed to gather ingredients, and the ability to test and analyze different potions a character might discover in the course of adventuring. Magicians may also use the Alchemy skill to make blood charms (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion***).

Gathering Ingredients

Most alchemical concoctions require natural herbs, roots, leaves, minerals and animal parts to be used in their creation. Gathering the materials usually requires a full day of work. To find and successfully gather rare ingredients, gamemasters may require the gatherer to make a successful Alchemy Test. The Difficulty Number is determined by the gamemaster, based on the rarity or scarcity of the ingredients being gathered. Characters may also purchase ingredients from herbalists or other alchemists at approximately 10 percent of the finished concoction's standard price. At the gamemaster's discretion, some concoctions may require exotic



ingredients that characters must travel far and wide to find. Once a character has gathered the necessary ingredients, he may begin combining them. This task requires an additional full day's work in a suitably equipped shop or using an alchemist's kit (see **Adventuring Equipment**, p.266).

Creating Potions and Salves

At the end of a potion's preparation time, the character makes an Alchemy Test against the appropriate Enchanting Difficulty as shown on the Healing Aid Table, p.261. If successful, the potion is finished and immediately usable. If the test fails, the potion is inert and useless. At the gamemaster's discretion, a Pathetic Result may produce a critical mishap, such as an explosion or a poisonous potion. Gamemasters may allow player characters with the Alchemy skill to create new potions with unique effects. Base the Difficulty Numbers for such potions on similar potions. Add +3 to the potion's Difficulty Number to reflect the difficulty of creating new potions. A character can create larger batches of potion by further increasing the test's Difficulty Number. For each extra dose desired, add +5 to the Difficulty Number.

Creating Poisons

Alchemists can also use natural ingredients to brew various poisons (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 123). The base Difficulty Number for brewing a poison is equal to the higher of the poison's Spell Defense or Step Number. The amount of time required to gather ingredients and brew the poison is the same as for potions. Most alchemists working in cities will not sell poisons openly, because most local authorities frown on poison peddlers. Many alchemists, however, will sell them under the counter to favored or known customers. This is especially true in cities like Kratas, where the skills of a capable poisoner are constantly in demand. A character can create larger batches of poison by increasing the test's Difficulty Number. For each extra dose desired, add +5 to the Difficulty Number.

Analysis

A character who possesses an elixir of unknown properties may attempt to analyze it. This analysis requires only a few drops of the substance and about an hour's time for analysis. The gamemaster makes a secret Alchemy Test for the character against the Difficulty Number used to create the potion, or the higher of the substance's Spell Defense or Step Number if it is a poison. An Average or Good Result reveals the potion's general purpose, such as for healing, harm, or an antidote. An Excellent Result reveals the exact effects of the potion or poison. A Pathetic Result tells the character that the concoction is something other than what it really is.

Animal Bond

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character creates a bond of trust with an animal, improving its Attitude towards him (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93). It is used as described for the **Animal Bond** talent, p.60.

Animal Handling

Step: Rank+WIL **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character works with domesticated animals—he might be a rider commanding horses, a driver urging mules to move, or a handler getting dogs to attack. Making an animal perform any action beyond its normal activities requires the character to make an Animal Handling Test against the highest Social Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional animal. If successful, the animal (animals) performs the action requested of it. The Animal Handling skill requires the character to have at least a Neutral Attitude with all of the animals being commanded. Animals with a Neutral Attitude will not put themselves in dangerous situations; at the gamemaster's discretion, animals with a better Attitude towards the character might.

Animal Training

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character trains an animal to obey simple commands such as "scout ahead," "smell that," and "go home," as well as the usual "stop," "heel," "fetch," and "kill." Each use requires a week of training, otherwise, it is used as described for the **Animal Training** talent, p.61.

Arcane Mutterings

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character confuses others by uttering dire and largely incomprehensible warnings. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Arcane Mutterings** talent, p.61.



ARTISAN

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

This skill serves as a template for most Artisan skills. Use of this skill requires Artisan Tools. Each Artisan skill represents an art or craft practiced by the character. Practicing an Artisan skill, however, does not necessarily make a character an artist or entertainer. For example, a character with the Artisan skill of Canvas Painting may paint pictures every other day, but they may well lack the impact of a true artist's work.

The Difficulty Number for using most Artisan skills is usually 5 or 7, making it relatively easy for novice characters to make a successful Artisan Skill Test. This ease reflects the fact that most everyone in **Earthdawn** regularly practices an Artisan skill. The Typical Artisan Skill Table lists common Artisan skills (some of which are also General skills, described separately). As with Knowledge skills, players may invent any Artisan skill they please for their character, subject to gamemaster approval.

TYPICAL ARTISAN SKILL TABLE
Artist
Acting
Basket Weaving
Body Painting
Carving
Cooking
Craftsman
Craft Armor
Craft Weapon
Dancing
Embroidery
Entertainer
Juggling
Mapmaking
Musician
Poetry
Rune Carving
Sculpting
Singing
Storytelling
Tattooing
Wardrobe and Style

ARTIST

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Can be used as an Artisan skill. Use requires Artisan Tools. Artists produce physical works of fine art that evoke an emotion in those who see it. To use the Artist skill, 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 item of art. Increase the observer's Perception Step by the artist's Artist Rank; 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 higher than the original Artist Test result as equal, then compare the Perception Test result against the observing character's Social Defense. The Result Level determines how well the character remembers the work of art. Higher Result Levels create a more memorable experience for the observer. Examples of the fine arts include painting, poetry (written), sculpture, and writing. A character may acquire the Artist skill multiple times to learn different types of art.

Vialaque is a Theran painter with the Artist skill at Rank 6. Vialaque paints what she personally judges to be one of her best works. After finishing the painting, she makes an Artist Test with a result of 17. Some time later, Poohrt the Thief acquires the painting, looking at it ostensibly to adjudge its merits before he tries to put a financial value on it. To make his Perception Test, Poohrt adds his Perception Step of 6 to Vialaque's Artist Rank of 6, ending up with Step 12. Poohrt makes his Perception Test to appreciate the painting with a result of 19, which is reduced to 17 because that is the "value" of the painting. Comparing the result of 17 against Poohrt's Social Defense of 5 results in an Extraordinary Result. Poohrt thinks Vialaque's painting is the most memorable he has ever seen, far too good to be sold to a commoner! He decides to stash it away for the moment, in the hope of finding a worthy patron to whom he can sell it later—that is, if he can bear to part with it.

AVOID BLOW

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: Yes
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character dodges blows directed at him in combat. This skill can be used only once each round, otherwise, it is used as described for the **Avoid Blow** talent, p.62.

BATTLE BELLOW

Step: Rank+CHA **Default: No**
Action: Simple **Strain**: 2

The character issues a great bellow, either bolstering the resolve of comrades or intimidating enemies. Battle Bellow is used like the **Battle Bellow** Talent (p. 62), but allows only targets within a number of hexes equal to the Rank, and causes more Strain.

BATTLE SHOUT

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character strongly intimidates a single foe. It is used as described for the **Battle Shout** talent, p.62.

BLADE JUGGLE

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1 (see text)

The character creates a whirling, flashing barrier of knives, daggers, or other bladed weapons between himself and his opponents. He takes Strain and spends his Standard Action during each round of juggling. If one of the blades is struck, it falls to the ground; it does not strike a close combat attacker. It is otherwise used as described for the **Blade Juggle** talent, p.62.

BRIBERY

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

Though most societies publicly disapprove of bribes, those same societies harbor many members more than willing to take them. Bribery is the skill of discreetly buying favors. Characters who have this skill can use any number of successful methods to disguise the exchange. The character makes a Bribery Test against



the target's Social Defense, +1 for each additional character. If successful, 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 each target. For large favors, the asking character must produce a bribe equal to a day's earnings for the target. A character willing to offer larger-than-necessary bribes may receive a bonus to his Bribery Test, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Charge

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 0

The mounted character increase the damage inflicted by a Charging attack (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233). It is used as described for the **Charge** talent, p.64.

Climbing

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character clambers up or down vertical surfaces and objects. It is used as described for the **Climbing** talent, p.64.

Conceal Object

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character hide a weapon or other object somewhere on his body, using sleight of hand. The weapon Size has a greater effect on his ability to hide it—the character subtracts the weapon's Size from the Detection Difficulty. It is otherwise used as described for the **Conceal Object** talent, p.64.

Conversation

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character can hold his own in social conversations, using quips, timing, and other verbal abilities, to make a favorable impression. It is used as described for the **Conversation** Talent (p. 64), but the effect only lasts for the conversation and a number of minutes equal to the skill Rank afterwards.

Craft Armor

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Forge Tools or access to a forge. The character creates new armor and shields. He must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment** p.266) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Outside of a forge, they can be used to make minor armor repairs, but cannot be used to create. Creating armor in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on armor creation time is determined by the gamemaster.

Forging new armor takes considerable time and effort. To make new armor takes a number of weeks equal to the armor's Physical+Mystic Armor (half this time for shields). At the end of this period, the character makes a Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the armor's Physical+Mystic Armor+5. The character may spend additional time working on the armor in order to reduce the target Difficulty Number. For each additional week the character spends working on the armor or shield, subtract –1 from the Difficulty Number. The maximum benefit gained from this is –3 to the Difficulty Number, for three additional weeks of effort.

Creating a set of hide armor (Phys 5; Myst 1) takes six weeks and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 11 (5+1+5=11). Creating a set of plate mail armor (Phys 9; Myst 0) takes nine weeks and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 14 (9+0+5=14). Creating a body shield (Phys 5; Myst 0) takes three weeks (5+0=5, 5/2=2.5, rounded up to 3) and requires a successful Craft Armor Test against a Difficulty Number of 10 (5+0+5=10).

If the character fails his Craft Armor Test, he has been unable to create the item successfully. He may try again from anew; only time has been wasted. A Pathetic Result on the Craft Armor Test, however, ruins the armor or shield completely—both the materials and effort invested are wasted. The prices for armor and shields are given in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.254. The material cost of creating a set of armor or a shield is generally half of the price shown on the Armor or Shield Table. Damaged armor and shields can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty Number equal to half that required to create the item. A separate Craft Armor Test is required for each point of Physical or Mystic Armor repaired (see **Repairing Damaged Armor**, p.256). Weaponsmiths can create armor and shields using half-magic (see **Disciplines**, p.55).

Craftsman

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Can be used as an Artisan skill. Use requires Craftsman Tools. Characters use Craftsman skills to make or repair items. The time required to make the item varies from a few hours for a simple item, to weeks or even months for large or intricate items. The character makes a Craftsman Test against the Difficulty Number of making or repairing the item. Simple, everyday items have a Difficulty Number of 2; ordinary items have a Difficulty Number of 5; unusual or exotic items have a Difficulty Number of 8 or more. If the item is unusually complex, the Result Level required may also increase at the gamemaster's discretion. The character can only make or repair an item if he has access to the proper tools and materials for the task. A successful test means the character has successfully made or repaired the item. A Pathetic Result means the attempt failed miserably, destroying the item beyond salvation. If the test is unsuccessful but the Result Level is better than Poor, the character can try again; the only thing the character has lost in the first attempt is time.

Common crafts include Baker, Blacksmith, Cooper (barrel maker), Mason, Tailor and Woodworker.

CRAFT WEAPON

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

This skill can be used as an Artisan skill. Use of this skill requires Forge Tools or access to a forge. The character creates new weapons, including ammunition for missile weapons like arrows and crossbow bolts. He must carry out his work at a properly equipped forge. Forge tools (see **Adventuring Equipment**, p.266) can only be effectively employed in a forge. Outside of a forge, they can be used to make minor weapon repairs, but can't be used to create weapons. Creating weapons in a poorly equipped forge might double or triple the time requirement, while a well-equipped forge may halve the time. The forge's quality and its effect on weapon creation time is determined by the gamemaster.

Forging new weapons takes time and effort. Making a weapon takes a number of days equal to the weapon Size plus Damage Step. At the end of this period, the character makes a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's Damage Step+5. The character may spend additional time working on the weapon in order to reduce the target Difficulty Number. For each additional day the character spends working on the weapon, subtract –1 from the Difficulty Number. The maximum benefit gained from this is –3 to the Difficulty Number, for three additional days of effort.

Creating a dagger (Size 1; Damage Step 2) takes three days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 7 (2+5=7). Creating a broadsword (Size 3; Damage Step 5) takes eight days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 10 (5+5=10). Creating a pole-axe (Size 6; Damage Step 8) takes fourteen days and requires a successful Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 13 (8+5=13).

If the character fails his Craft Weapon Test, he has been unable to create the item successfully. He may try again from anew; only time has been wasted. A Pathetic Result on the Craft Weapon Test, however, ruins the weapon completely—both the materials and effort invested are wasted. Bolts, arrows and other missiles are considered to be equivalent to the Size and Damage Step of the missile weapon. This reflects the character having to forge the arrowhead, make the shaft, and then fletch the shaft with leather or feathers, requisite to the size of the weapon used to loose the missile. A successful Craft Weapon Test produces a number of missiles equivalent to that shown for purchase in the Missile Weapons Table, p.252.

Creating medium crossbow bolts (Size 4; Damage Step 5) takes four days and requires a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 10 (5+5=10). A successful test result creates 15 bolts. Creating blowgun needles (Size 1; Damage Step 1) takes one day and requires a Craft Weapon Test against a Difficulty Number of 6 (1+5=6). A successful test result creates 10 needles.

The prices for weapons are given in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.248. The material cost of creating a weapon is generally half of the price shown on the appropriate Weapon Table. Damaged weapons can be repaired using this skill, against a Difficulty Number equal to that required to create the weapon. A separate Craft Weapon Test is required for each Damage Step repaired (see **Repairing Damaged Weapons**, p.253). Weaponsmiths can create weapons using half-magic (see **Disciplines**, p.55). Archers can create bows or crossbows and arrows or bolts using half-magic (see **Disciplines**, p.43).



DEAD FALL

Step: Rank+WIL **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character feigns the appearance of death by controlling his body and acting in a suitably realistic fashion. The result is similar enough to an illusion to require a Sensing or Disbelief Test to detect. Because shutting down the character's vital body functions for an extended period of time is hazardous, the character is not able to renew the effect without a pause to recover. He can only hope that those observing him move quickly along before they notice he is not really dead! It is otherwise used as described for the **Dead Fall** talent, p.65.

DETECT TRAP

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character detects traps of mechanical origin. It is otherwise used as described for the **Detect Trap** talent, p.65.

DETECT WEAPON

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character detects the presence of hidden weapons. Attempts to detect weapons concealed magically require one Result Level greater than normal. It is otherwise used as described for the **Detect Weapon** talent, p.65.

DIPLOMACY

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The Diplomacy skill allows a character to mitigate disputes and influence the development of mutual interests. It is used as described for the **Diplomacy** talent (p. 65), but the effects last only for 10 minutes per Diplomacy Rank.

DISARM

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character uses a combination of feints and flashing weapon-play to knock an opponent's weapon from his hand. It is used as described for the **Disarm** talent, p.65.



Disarm Trap

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 1

The character uses deduction, logic, and a deft touch to render mechanical traps inoperative. It takes longer, but is otherwise used as described for the **Disarm Trap** talent, p.65.

Disguise

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Use requires a Disguise Kit. The character uses costumes and make-up to disguise himself or another as a Namegiver of his choice, within certain limits. The disguised being can weigh no more than 150 percent, and not less than 75 percent, of the target character's body weight. The character may not vary the height, width, or length of any part of his body, limbs or torso, by more than 25 percent for the purposes of the disguise. The character requires access to a full make-up kit, clothing, jewelry, and other accoutrements for the disguise to be effective; it takes a minimum of 30 minutes to prepare the disguise. The character makes a Disguise Test, the result becoming the Detection Difficulty for any attempts made to see through the disguise. Each use of Disguise lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's Disguise Rank, or until the disguised character chooses to discard the costume. Note that the Disguise skill only alters appearance. If a disguised character is attempting to impersonate someone else, the character will likely need other abilities, such as the Acting skill or Mimic Voice talent or skill, to convince others of his false identity. The Disguise skill can be used to Disguise other characters.

Distract

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character distracts an opponent from other attackers. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Distract** talent, p.66.

Down Strike

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character uses a height advantage to inflict additional damage on an opponent in close combat. It is used as described for the **Down Strike** talent, p.66.

Emotion Song

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 1

The character sings songs that arouse an audience to a basic emotion, such as fear, love, hate, happiness, anger, or joy. Apart from the Strain, it is used as described for the **Emotion Song** talent, p.67.

Engaging Banter

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character uses his charming style and a touch of suggestion to distract others. It is used as described for the **Engaging Banter** talent, p.68.

Entertainer

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Can be used as an Artisan skill. Use may require a Musical Instrument. Entertainers are performing artists. To use the Entertainer skill, a character makes an Entertainer Test against the highest Social Defense of any observer of his work. The Result Level determines how much the observers enjoy the performance. An Average Result indicates that 25 percent of the audience enjoy and remember the performance; a Good Result affects 50 percent of the audience; an Excellent Result affects 75 percent of the audience; an Extraordinary Result means the entire audience appreciates the entertainer's performance. If he wishes, a character may acquire the Entertainer skill multiple times to learn new types of performing arts. Examples include musician (one instrument), poet (spoken), singer, and storyteller.

Etiquette

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Etiquette is the art of proper behavior in social situations. It is used as described for the **Etiquette** Talent (p. 68), except that the skill's effect lasts for a number of hours equal to the character's Conversation Rank or until the situation ends, whichever comes first.

Fast Hand

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character moves one or two small items from one place to another without being noticed. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Fast Hand** talent, p.69.

First Impression

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character favorably impresses another character he has met for the first time. It is used as described for the **First Impression** talent, p.70.

Fishing

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Susstained **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires a Fishing Kit. The character knows how to catch fish in lakes, rivers, or seas, using a variety of methods, including fishing nets and rods. The Difficulty Number for Fishing Tests ranges from 3 to 10, as determined by the gamemaster. Each use of this skill takes four hours and the character may make two such tests per day. The Result Level achieved determines the amount of fish caught. An Average Result catches sufficient fish to feed one person for one day; a Good Result for two days (or daily food for two people); an Excellent Result for three days (or daily food for three people); an Extraordinary Result catches enough fish to feed one person for four days (or daily food for four people).

Flirting

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

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. The character makes a Flirting Test against the target's Social Defense. An Average Result intrigues the target; he or she spends time with your character, trying to learn more about him or her. A Good Result completely occupies the target character's attention; he spends almost all available time with your character, more or less ignoring anyone else who might be around. An Excellent Result 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 Result smites the target with love. He or she has it bad; for one week 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+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Use requires a Writing Kit and Artisan Tools. Forgers create false papers, legal documents, and correspondence. A character with the Forgery skill might even forge artwork if he also has the appropriate Artist skill. For example, a character with the Forgery and Artist (Painter) skills could fake the work of a famous master. Creating a forgery takes two to five times as long as creating the original. For example, a letter jotted hastily in a few minutes might take nearly an hour to forge. The character makes a Forgery Test, the result becoming the Detection Difficulty for attempts to detect the forgery.

Graceful Exit

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character escapes from combat by distracting his opponents. It is used as described for the **Graceful Exit** talent, p.72.

Great Leap

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character jumps great distances. This skill is used as described for the **Great Leap** talent (p. 72), but distances are measure in feet.

Haggle

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character drives a "hard bargain" when buying or selling goods. It is used as described for the **Haggle** talent, p.72.

Heartening Laugh

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The character supports his friends against fear and Intimidation. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Heartening Laugh** talent, p.72.

Hunting

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character knows how to hunt for game animals in wilderness areas. The Difficulty Number for Hunting Tests ranges from 5 to 12, based on the terrain, as determined by the gamemaster. Difficulty Numbers for hunting in various areas of Barsaive are shown on the Hunting Table. Some barren areas may not support wildlife at all; a character cannot successfully hunt for food in such an area. Each use of the Hunting skill takes four hours. A character may make two Hunting Tests each day. The Hunting Test result determines the amount of food captured. Each Result Level, starting with Average, provides enough food to feed 1 person for 1 day. For example, an Excellent Result provides enough food for 1 person for 3 days or for 3 persons for 1 day. At the gamemaster's discretion, adept characters who follow certain Disciplines may gain a +1 to +3 bonus to Hunting Tests for

HUNTING TABLE

Terrain	Difficulty Number
Woodlands	5
Jungles	7
Poison Forest	12
Blood Wood	10
Plains	7
Hinterlands	6
Mountains, lowland	5
Mountains, highland	8



creative use of their talents and half-magic abilities. For example, Beastmasters can gain a bonus if they use their Borrow Sense, Creature Analysis, or Tracking talents. Scouts can gain a bonus for using their Tracking talent or their Enhance Senses ability.

Hypnotize

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 1

The character mesmerizes another character, making him susceptible to persuasion. The character must speak in a language known to the target—even though he may use accessories, such as flashy charms or baubles, the character must be understood to have any chance of success. It also requires a Sustained Action, but is otherwise used as described for the **Hypnotize** talent, p.73.

Impress

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 1

The character impresses onlookers with a performance of his choice. It is used as described for the **Impress** talent, p.73, but requires a Sustained Action, as it includes the test of a skill usable as an Artisan skill being made for the performance. The Impress Test Result cannot exceed the result of the skill used for the performance, use the lower of the two Test Results as the Impress Test result.

Knowledge

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

Serves as a template for all Knowledge skills. The character is knowledgeable about a certain topic. The precise definition of a Knowledge skill is determined by the player, keeping in mind that all Knowledge skills are subject to the gamemaster's approval. A Knowledge skill may cover broad areas of knowledge, meaning that the character knows a little bit about a lot of things, or he may have more focused knowledge, giving him more detailed knowledge within a smaller area of expertise. While the area of expertise is determined by the player, the gamemaster determines how applicable the knowledge is to the question at hand.

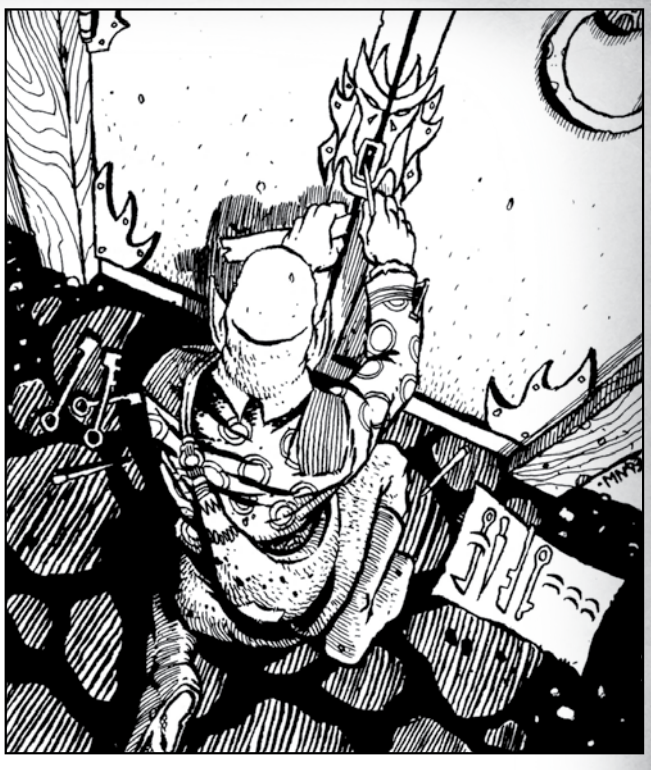
The Typical Knowledge Skill Table lists some different Knowledge skills that might be appropriate or useful for characters. See **Knowledge Skills**, p.89, for more information on how they work.

TYPICAL KNOWLEDGE SKILL TABLE
Alchemy and Potions
Ancient Weapons
Baking
Barsaive History
Botany
Court Dancing
Creature Lore
Discipline Lore
Farming
Horror Lore
Legends and Heroes
Military Organizations
Province History
Racial Lore
Scourge History
Trade Routes
Wild Animals

Lip Reading

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 2

The character eavesdrops on other characters' conversations by reading their lips. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Lip Reading** talent, p.74.



Lock Picking

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Use requires Thieves' Picks and Tools. The character opens mundane locks by using a set of lock picks (see **Adventuring Equipment**, p.266). At the gamemaster's discretion, some magical locks may be opened, but require one Result Level higher for the test to be successful. On a Pathetic Result, the character not only fails to open the lock, he irretrievably jams or breaks his picks in the lock. It is otherwise used as described for the **Lock Picking** talent, p.74, but requires more time and uses a Sustained Action.

Maneuver

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character sacrifices his Standard Action to avoid his opponent's attacks, allowing him to move into a more advantageous position. It is used as described for the **Maneuver** talent, p.75.

Mapmaking

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Can be used as an Artisan skill. Use requires a Writing Kit and Artisan Tools. To get where they want to go and avoid unsafe spots, characters traveling over land need a map. Barsaive province covers a vast distance, and current maps 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 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.

Most mapmakers in Barsaive draw their maps to be used with a device called **Shantaya's sextant**. Shantaya was an elven 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, Kratas, Sky Point, Wyrm Wood (now Blood Wood), Death's Sea, and the Dragon Mountains.

Mapmaking is a Craftsman skill that characters can learn as they might any other. Characters can create maps in two ways—by copying an existing map or drawing an original map. To draw an original map, a character must have traveled over the area he is mapping. To draw an original map, the character makes a Mapmaking (7) Test. This must be accompanied by successful Navigation Tests (p. 76) to keep track of position, except if the map is for a very small individual area. To copy an existing map, the character makes a Mapmaking (5) Test. The Result Level of the test determines the quality of the map produced. An Average Result yields a functional map with a few basic details and landmarks; a Good or Excellent Result yields a map that characters can use with Shantaya's sextant; an Extraordinary Result yields a highly accurate map that gives a +1 bonus to any Navigation Test made using it.

Melee Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character makes a melee weapon attack against a target with a hand-held weapon, like a sword, axe, or dagger. It is used as described for the **Melee Weapons** talent, p.75.

Mimic Voice

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 0

The character mimics a voice he has previously heard. It is used as described for the **Mimic Voice** talent, p.75.

Missile Weapons

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character makes a missile weapon attack against a target, using a bow, crossbow, or some other weapon that fires projectiles. It is used as described for the **Missile Weapons** talent, p.75.

Momentum Attack

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character makes an additional close combat attack while his opponent recovers from the effects of his first blow. It is used as described for the **Momentum Attack** talent, p.75.

Mount Attack

Step: Rank **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character guides his mount to increase the accuracy of its attacks. It is used as described for the **Mount Attack** talent, p.75.



Navigation

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Use of this skill requires Navigation Charts. Navigators know how to read maps, chart courses, and even guide an airship safely through the skies; circumventing storms and turbulence, flying creatures, and other hazards. The Navigation skill is used as described for the **Navigation** Talent (see p. 76), but each use takes one hour, and a character cannot make a Test during a severe rainstorm or blizzard.

Parry

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: Yes
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character deflects or blocks blows directed at him in close combat. It is used as described for the **Parry** talent (p. 76), but can only be used once per round.

Performance

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 2

The Performance skill allows a character to impress a target with actively performing a skill or talent of his choice. It is used as described for the **Performance** talent (p. 76), but causes more Strain and the effect of the skill only lasts for 10 minutes per skill Rank.

Physician

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Use requires a Physician's Kit. The character diagnoses and prescribes treatments for injuries and diseases by examining the injury for half an hour, then making a Physician Test against the condition's Difficulty Number. If successful, he learns what the exact problem is and how to treat it. The character's Physician Rank is added to the next Recovery Test his patient makes or the next resistance test against dis-

PHYSICIAN TREATMENT TABLE

Ailment	Difficulty Number
Common Cold	4
Wounds	5
Influenza	6
Mild Poison	6
Broken Bones	8
Strong Poison	11
Black Death	15

ease or poison, if applicable. The Physician Treatment Table shows suggested Difficulty Numbers for diagnosing common ailments, in order of seriousness. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number for other ailments. A physician can attempt to treat the same ailment a number of times per day equal to the patient's Number of Recovery Tests.

Treating raw damage is treating an Injury, the effect of successful treatment is a Recovery Test bonus, as noted above. The Physician skill can also be used to treat Wounds, however. Wounds are treated individually, the physician has to take time to stitch or bandage each Wound professionally. Successful treatment of a Wound does not heal it, but removes its penalty to Recovery Tests (see **Effects of Injury**, p. 220), thereby allowing to heal it faster. Treating Wounds in that way also eliminates most risks of infection.

Picking Pockets

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character combines a deft touch with sleight of hand to remove an item from someone else's pocket or pouch. It is used as described for the **Picking Pockets** talent, p.77.

Pilot Boat

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The Pilot Boat skill is used to operate the fire-engine powered riverboats of the t'skrang commonly seen on the serpent river (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion*** for more information). It is used as described for the Air Sailing skill, with the following exceptions: it is used to operate fire-engine driven boats only; 25 percent of the crew making successful tests mean the ship can hold position and does not drift, 50 percent mean the ship can maneuver against the current in straight lines, 75 percent mean the ship can navigate freely and make complex maneuvers.

Read/Write Language

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character learns to read and write different languages. See **Language Skills**, p.91, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for the **Read/Write Language** talent, p.77, but does not cause Strain.

Read/Write Magic

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character can read and write magical writing, such as that found on scrolls, or magical glyphs. This skill does not allow the learning of spells, otherwise, it is used as described for the **Read/Write Magic** talent, p.78.

Read River

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character guides a riverboat through the often treacherous waters of a river, which can be filled with sandbars, deceptive currents, and hidden reefs. (To determine how accurately the character notices hazards or anticipates features along the river, see the ***Gamemaster's Companion***.) This can also be used to track another riverboat along the river, identify approaching ships, and anticipate features of the river such as towns, t'skrang villages, or good places to fish. To track another riverboat or notice an approaching ship, the character makes a Read River Test against the target riverboat captain's Pilot Boat or Sailing Step, modified at the gamemaster's discretion.

Research

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character finds information through study and investigation, including library research and following up on rumors and legends. It is used as described for the **Research** Talent (p. 78).

Resist Taunt

Step: Rank+WIL **Default**: Yes
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character resists the effects of social attacks directed against his Social Defense. This skill can be used only once each round, otherwise, it is used as described for the **Resist Taunt** talent, p.78.

Rhetoric

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character discerns the true intentions of a Namegiver who they have been conversing with for at least ten minutes. When told that a player character is using this skill, the gamemaster makes a secret Rhetoric Test against the target's Social Defense on the player's behalf. If successful, the gamemaster reveals the target's true feelings about the matter being discussed to the player. "The character doesn't know what to feel," or "The character hasn't made any plans yet," are both valid answers, though if the character is leaning one way or another on an issue, the gamemaster should specify which. If the test fails, the gamemaster should give the player an inaccurate reading.

The gamemaster may rule that player characters cannot use Rhetoric against each other. If gamemaster characters use Rhetoric on player characters, the gamemaster character may learn the gist of out-of-character comments made by the players about their own character's intentions. A character with Rhetoric may substitute his Rhetoric Step for his Social Defense when targeted by another character using Rhetoric or the skills of Acting, Disguise, Flirting, or Seduction.



Riposte

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 2

The character blocks an opponent's melee attack, possibly turning it back on his erstwhile attacker. This skill can be used only once each round, otherwise, it is used as described for the **Riposte** talent, p.78.



SAILING

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

The character sails (or helps sail) watercraft, whether muscle-powered (by rowing, rather than sailing) or wind-powered, but not fire-powered vessels, like the legendary t'skrang riverboats (see **Pilot Boat**, p. 100), or propelled by magic, like airships (see **Air Sailing**, p. 60). The Sailing skill works as described for the Air Sailing skill, with the following exceptions: it is used to operate waterborne craft propelled by wind or muscle power; 25 percent of the crew making successful tests prevents the ship from drifting, 50 percent allow to sail with the wind, 75 percent allow to sail against the wind and perform maneuvers.

SEARCH

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 1

The Search skill allows an adept to detect hidden vaults, secret doors, or disguised characters trying to avoid attention. It is used as described for the **Search** Talent (p. 79), but can only be used within short range of visibility.

SECOND ATTACK

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 2

The character makes an additional close combat attack in the same round. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Second Attack** talent, p.79.

SECOND SHOT

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 2

The character makes an additional ranged attack in the same round. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Second Shot** talent, p.79.

SECOND WEAPON

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character attacks with two different melee weapons in the same round. It is used as described for the **Second Weapon** talent, p.79, but the off-hand weapon must be smaller than the character's one-handed Size Limit.

SEDUCTION

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

Characters use the Seduction skill to convince members of their preferred sex to become romantically involved with them. In addition to making a successful Seduction Test, seduction requires convincing roleplaying. A seduction has four stages: First Impression, Intriguing Conversation, Move To Intimacy, and the Suggestion.

First Impression can be a glance, a striking outfit, a dramatic entrance, an opening line—all the pieces that fit together to make a good impression. To make a successful First Impression, a character needs an Average Result.

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, at the same time presenting your character as an attractive partner. To be successful, Intriguing Conversation requires a Good Result.

With a **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 Result. 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 Result. Your character gets only one chance to make the Suggestion.

Each stage usually requires 10 minutes of interaction before the test is made, the gamemaster may modify this for the target's Attitude or the player's roleplaying. After that time, the character makes a Seduction Test against the target's Social Defense. If achieving the required Result Level, the seduction moves to the next stage; a Pathetic Result means the seduction falls back to the previous stage, a Result Level in-between means the stage has to be repeated (requiring more time). Each stage can be repeated a number of times equal to the character's Seduction Rank per day. For each Result Level above that required for moving to the next stage, the character gains a +1 bonus to all Seduction Tests made during the next stage of the process. 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.

Shield Charge

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character bashes an opponent with a shield. It is used as described for the **Shield Charge** talent, p.79.

Silent Walk

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character muffles the sound of his passage by moving carefully and cautiously. He actively focuses on avoiding making any noise, requiring him to take a Standard Action when moving. It is otherwise used as described for the **Silent Walk** talent, p.79.

Slough Blame

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: Yes
Action: Standard **Strain**: 2

The character temporarily diverts suspicion and blame from one character to another. Apart from the Strain cost, it is used as described for the **Slough Blame** talent, p.80.

Speak Language

Step: Rank+PER **Default**: No
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

The character learns to communicate with others in different languages. See **Language Skills**, p.91, for details on how the skill differs from the talent. It is otherwise used as described for the **Speak Language** talent, p.80, but does not cause Strain.

Sprint

Step: Rank **Default** No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 3

Sprint allows a character short bursts of fast movement. It is used as described for the **Sprint** Talent (p. 81), except that it causes more Strain and applies a character's Initiative Penalty as a penalty to the skill Rank.

Streetwise

Step: Rank+CHA **Default**: No
Action: Sustained **Strain**: 0

A character with the Streetwise skill knows the ins and outs of urban environments, particularly the seedier side of cities. Streetwise is used like the Etiquette skill for scenarios where the character tries to fit into criminal or street subculture, but modifiers to the Difficulty Number are not applied as frequently. Additionally, Streetwise allows a character to gain the trust of other characters living apart from society who would otherwise not speak to him (and thus not allow an Etiquette Test). The character makes a Streetwise Test against the highest Social Defense among a target group, +1 per additional character. If successful, the targets are convinced that the character is a local street element and not sent by the authorities or otherwise out to disrupt their trade. They will now interact with the character, but are not necessarily friendly.

Streetwise can also act as a Knowledge skill when trying to find information typically available to local underground characters, such as the location of black markets. The character does not have any knowledge, but can emulate a Knowledge skill by asking around, dropping a few silvers into the right palms. This follows the rules for **Making Knowledge Tests** (p. 89).

Sure Mount

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 0

The mounted character avoids being dismounted. It is used as described for the **Sure Mount** talent, p.82.

Surprise Strike

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: No
Action: Free **Strain**: 1

The character takes advantage of the element of Surprise against an opponent, increasing the damage of his attacks. It is used as described for the **Surprise Strike** talent, p.82.

Swift Kick

Step: Rank+DEX **Default**: No
Action: Simple **Strain**: 1

The character makes a bonus unarmed attack against an opponent by kicking him, or using his tail if he is a t'skrang. It is used as described for the **Swift Kick** talent, p.82.

Swimming

Step: Rank+STR **Default**: Yes (see text)
Action: Standard **Strain**: 0

All t'skrang, and many other Namegiver races who live near water, learn to swim as a method of movement, but also as part of their basic survival skills. Characters use the Swimming skill to move through the water by making a Swimming Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the condition of the water around them, as given in the Water Condition Table. Swimming uses a Standard Action in every round spent swimming, but a Swimming Test is only made when the water condition changes or at the gamemaster's discretion. While swimming, a character's Movement Rate is reduced (see **Races and Swimming** below). When swimming with or against a strong current, the gamemaster may grant a bonus or a penalty to the Movement Rate. Characters who fail their Swimming Test make no appreciable progress. On a Pathetic Result, the character starts drowning (see **Drowning** in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109).

WATER CONDITION TABLE

Water Condition	Difficulty Number
Calm water	4
Small waves	5
Slow river current	7
Moderate river current	9
Major river current	13
Open ocean	15

Races and Swimming

Obsidimen cannot swim. If an obsidiman falls in the water he sinks and must find another way to quickly climb out. Obsidimen never possess knowledge of the Swimming skill and cannot even use it as Default Skill.

Windlings only swim if they have no other option, as getting their wings wet cripples their flying ability. Windlings never use Swimming as a Default Skill, although intrepid members of this race can learn it. Windlings use half their ground Movement Rate when swimming.

T'skrang are at home in the water and use their normal Movement Rate when swimming.

All other races move at half their normal Movement Rate while swimming.

TACTICS

Step: Rank+PER
Default: No
Action: Standard
Strain: 0

The character directs combat to the advantage of his soldiers. It is used as described for the Tactics Talent, but the commanded characters must be Loyal to the commander, and he can only command a number of troops equal to his Tactics Rank × 10.

TAUNT

Step: Rank+CHA
Default: No
Action: Standard
Strain: 1

The character distracts a target character by teasing or humiliating him. This requires the character to spend a Standard Action throwing insults at the target or making openly snide remarks about him. It is otherwise used as described for the **Taunt** talent, p.83.

THROWING WEAPONS

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: Yes
Action: Standard
Strain: 0

The character makes thrown attacks against a target, by hurling a rock, dagger, spear, or other object. It is used as described for the **Throwing Weapons** talent, p.84.

TRACKING

Step: Rank+PER
Default: Yes
Action: Standard
Strain: 1

The character follows the trails left by people and animals across great distances, using his natural senses—in particular, sight and smell—to find traces of their passage. A trail can be followed for an hour before requiring another Tracking Test. It is otherwise used as described for the **Tracking** talent, p.84.

TRAP INITIATIVE

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: No
Action: Free
Strain: 1

The character reacts more quickly to avoid mechanical traps. Against magical traps, he must achieve a Good Result when comparing his Initiative Test result against the trap's Initiative. It is otherwise used as described for the **Trap Initiative** talent, p.84.

TRICK RIDING

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: No
Action: Simple
Strain: 1

The character performs mounted acrobatics. This skill can only be used to avoid one attack made against the rider or his mount each round. It is otherwise used as described for the **Trick Riding** talent, p.84.

UNARMED COMBAT

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: Yes
Action: Standard
Strain: 0

The character makes unarmed attacks against a target with his hands, feet, or another part of his body, or to make a Grappling attack against an opponent in an attempt to restrain him. It is used as described for the **Unarmed Combat** talent, p.85.



WHEELING ATTACK

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: No
Action: Standard
Strain: 2

The Wheeling Attack skill allows a character to use **Charging Attacks** (see p. 233) more effectively. It is used as described for the **Wheeling Attack** talent (see p. 85), except for the higher Strain.

WHEELING DEFENSE

Step: Rank+DEX
Default: No
Action: Simple
Strain: 1

The adept urges his mount into a whirling circle, confusing his attackers by presenting a constantly moving target. It is used as described for the **Wheeling Defense** talent (see p. 86), except that the mount's Movement Rate is reduced to 0.

WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Step: Rank+PER
Default: Yes
Action: Sustained
Strain: 0

The character learns to survive in the wild. He is able to locate or build shelter, start a fire, find water, or forage for edible vegetation, such as berries, roots, fruits, mushrooms, and other plants. This skill is used as described for the **Wilderness Survival** talent (p. 86), but one use takes four hours, and only two tests can be made per day.

WOUND BALANCE

Step: Rank+STR
Default: No
Action: Free
Strain: 0

The character improves his ability to resist being knocked down. It is used as described for the **Wound Balance** talent, p. 86.

CHAPTER EIGHT

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 remnants of 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 unfolds, magic will play a central role.

This chapter describes how magic came to the world, the theory behind how it works, and how characters can manipulate it to their advantage. It also describes **astral space**, the parallel realm from which adepts draw their magical power.

Later chapters are devoted to other types of magic: **thread magic,** which allows characters to use the magical treasures scattered across Barsaive; **blood magic**, which is a special use of magic that allows characters to strengthen their magic-wielding powers; **spell magic**, which allows characters to shape and power spells by drawing magical energy from astral space to the physical plane; and **enchanting**, which allows characters to create magical items; and **summoning**, which allows characters to summon and interact with spirits and elementals (information on spirits is covered in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 210)**. Enchanting**, covered in the ***Player's Companion*** allows characters to create magical items.

THE CYCLE OF MAGIC

Over the course of time, the magic level of the world 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 cycle, the Horrors cross into the physical world, laying waste to the land in an orgy of destruction known as the Scourge.

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 that Scourge ended, eventually disappearing altogether. Scholars in Barsaive projected that the same thing would happen during the most recent Scourge; the world's magic level would fade, driving the Horrors back to their native astral domain. To their surprise, the Scourge ended earlier than predicted, and instead of steadily ebbing away, the magic level stopped dropping and remained steady.

The magic level has remained stable and relatively high for the past 90 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 their 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.

The following extract is from the 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.*

—Merrox, Master of the Hall of Records

MAGIC IN OUR WORLD

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 magic to reach their goals. 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.

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, True patterns, Names and Naming,

Pattern Knowledge, pattern items, and threads. The first five apply mostly to heroes using magical treasure. While threads play a part in the use of magical treasure, they are also used by magicians to cast spells. Each of these concepts is described below.

PATTERNS

Our world is alive with magical energy, which is ordered into **patterns**. Every person, place, and thing has a pattern. A pattern can be viewed as a magical blueprint for what the pattern represents (like a builder's plan for a house). Patterns not only reflect physical nature, but metaphysical nature as well—how a person, place, or thing is formed by and interacts with the magical world. Any being that wants to use magical energy to cast spells or use other magical abilities must form a tiny part of magical energy into a pattern. The pattern holds the form of the magical ability, defining its structure and use.

Everything in the world can be connected to magical energy through its pattern. Patterns are static in nature, however. Left to themselves, they do not change over time. A pattern only changes by interacting with the magical energies of the world (and other patterns) in significant ways. When a pattern interacts with magic in an important way, the pattern grows in complexity and power.

TRUE PATTERNS

As stated above, everything in the world has a pattern, and as a pattern interacts with magic in significant ways, it grows in power and complexity. If the magical interaction is significant enough, it creates a **True pattern**.

In contrast to common patterns, a True pattern identifies an entity, place, or object as a unique individual, separate from others of its type. This is most easily demonstrated using people as an example. My brother and I are both dwarfs, but each of us is a unique individual with our own knowledge, mind, and spirit; each of us has a unique True pattern. Each True pattern represents only one specific person, place, or thing. Likewise, each person, place, or thing can have only one True pattern.

A person's True pattern defines his abilities, talents, skills, knowledge, psychology, and history. The same holds true for places and 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.

A True pattern also defines everything magically important about the individual; what the individual has done or can do that is important to magic, and what magic has done or can do that is important to the individual. In brief, the True pattern of a person, place, or thing is the sum total of its interactions with magic.

Because True patterns represent things that interact with magic, they are dynamic, changing as they continue to interact with the magical energies of the world.

NAMES AND NAMING

The difference between patterns and True patterns is largely a matter of degree, but one thing that all True patterns have that common patterns do not is a **Name**.

You may have a name for the stand of common trees behind your house such as "the grove" or "those trees out back," but there is nothing magically important about those trees. The stand has its own pattern and like everything else in the world is inherently magical, but the inherent magic is so weak you do not notice it.



Giving something a Name (called **Naming**) focuses the world's magical forces into a True pattern. From that moment on the Named person, place, or thing is magically important in the world. Naming only occurs in conjunction with the interaction of magic and a person, place, or thing.

This magic can be introduced deliberately with a ritual (such as a child's coming-of-age Naming ritual), or introduced accidentally. The use of powerful magic near a person, place, or thing might also spontaneously Name something.

Returning to the grove of trees behind your home, let's say that one terrible night a pack of gate hounds chases the wounded hero Samaran into that grove of trees. There, despite all the courage, strength, and magic he can muster, Samaran is slain. The death of a great hero is a sufficiently powerful 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.

The following information describes those things most likely to be Named.

People

As intelligent, aware beings who are Namegivers, people must always have a Name. After all, how can one give a Name without having one? By definition, all Namegivers have Names.

People can be Named, and re-Named, at various stages of their lives. 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 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 True pattern. If that person is re-Named, his 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, as described above, a person's True pattern defines his interactions with magic, including any magical talents he may have. If the True pattern changes, those abilities disappear. The person may also lose the teachings of his chosen Discipline, as well as any special abilities or protection it brought him. 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. He has a new Name, and has become a new person.

Because re-Naming changes virtually everything about the person, very few people choose to be re-Named. More often, people take on nicknames, monikers, and the like. While these additional titles help shape and define a person's True pattern, they do not truly re-Name the person.

Legends tell of spells and abilities that allow people to be re-Named without losing what they were, but these remain merely tales.

MAGIC ITEMS

Named or not, magic items come in a variety of categories. Most items, while they have a pattern like everything in existence, do not have a True pattern. **Common magic items** and **Blood Charms** are indeed able to create magical effects, but this is only due to spells powering them or uses of magical materials in their construction. These simple enchanted items do not possess a True pattern of their own.

Pattern items, are items that act as bridges or links to True patterns to which they are associated. While a pattern item does not have a True pattern of its own, it is magical due to the special connection it has with the True pattern of a significant person or place.

Thread items are what most mean when they speak of magical items. These items have True patterns that belong solely to themselves. An adept can bond with them to access their magic. Some thread items are designed and intentionally enchanted, being distinguished from others of their kind by their individual Names, even if their magical abilities are identical. Other thread items are truly unique, and such **legendary items** are created by their partaking in significant deeds of powerful heroes.

Places

A place is usually Named for its association with an important event or powerful magic. 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 magic 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 magic was used, even if only once, can also 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. Typically only the highest-ranked spells (Fourteenth or Fifteenth Circle) 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. Such Naming is discouraged 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. Knowledgeable magicians or adepts can use this association to gain insight into the individual's True pattern, and use that insight to gain an advantage over the individual.

Things

Important items and objects are commonly Named when created. Creation of many magical items demands a Name, since 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. As with places, this kind of Naming also poses a disadvantage; the item becomes associated with the individual, and that association can be taken advantage of.

PATTERN KNOWLEDGE

As previously mentioned, a True pattern defines everything about the history and magical interactions of a person, place, or thing. This information is known as the **Pattern Knowledge**, and consists of three basic, intertwined parts:

- The Name associated with the pattern, usually what we would refer to as a proper noun.
- A history of that pattern; its interactions with magic, significant events, and important behaviors.

- Rules or ways in which the pattern uses, is affected by, or interacts 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 the 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.

The Name of a True pattern is always one of the Key Knowledges, but otherwise Key Knowledges can take many forms. For example, the Key Knowledges of a certain place might include the Name of the last person to die in that place, the date the place was built, or the winner of a battle fought there. The Key Knowledges of a person might include his place of birth, his strong hatred for another person, or 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, these are 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.

Troubadours sing many stories of unusual pattern items, which seem to have little connection with the person or place they represent. 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.

Proximity to or association with a True pattern is what infuses an item with the magic making it a pattern item. Because the vagaries of magic are responsible, a magician or adept rarely controls which items become pattern items.

Magical study and examination of a pattern item yields insights into the True pattern that influenced it. Think of a pattern item as a window through which a True pattern is viewed. Though restricted, such a view can enable a magician or adept to grasp the Key Knowledges of a True pattern.

Because a pattern item contains a bit of a True pattern's Pattern Knowledge, anyone trying to affect the True pattern must have a pattern item. The pattern item serves as a material source of Key Knowledge, and as a connection to the True pattern.

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 because their link to the True pattern is so tenuous. A Minor pattern item has no distinctive physical appearance. The proper magical inquiry will reveal its magical nature, but it has no increased resistance to damage or any other special properties.

Minor pattern items are almost always created spontaneously by the whims of magic. These objects gain magical power 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 the 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 they would be if they 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 are almost always deliberately created. They rarely occur spontaneously, and only then in connection with significant events or magic. A Minor pattern item can become a Major pattern item if it gains greater significance in relation to its True pattern. This only happens if the Minor pattern item has existed for at least one season (three months) prior to the transformation and has remained 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, with 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.

As 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.

A Major pattern item can transform into a Core pattern item, 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 people or places, representing who or what they are in almost every respect. For example, a king's crown could be a Core pattern item for the king to whom it belongs.

Threads

The magical energy flowing through our world can be separated into strands called **threads**. Threads can be woven into an existing pattern, whether the pattern of a spell, magical item, or ability, to power and strengthen that pattern. The magical energy fed into the pattern through a woven thread enhances the pattern and increases its potential.

Magicians use threads to supply the power needed for their more complex spells. Adepts also use threads to activate magical items' special powers and capabilities. In this case, knowledge of an item's history—its Pattern Knowledge—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. The use of threads in this manner, giving power to complex spells and magical items, is called **thread magic**.

Threads 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.

Each talent a hero possesses has a pattern that is part of his 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.

Astral Space

Any discussion of magic must include an explanation of **astral space**. Astral space is a limitless region that coexists with the physical world. Though both realms exist on different planes, the astral and physical worlds are intricately connected and interdependent; neither could exist without the other. 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 beings—a glow that represents their life energy. Living beings include not only people and animals, but also plant life, elemental air, earth, fire, water, and wood, and the magical energy of the world itself.

At the same time that the dimension of astral space mirrors the physical world, the astral realm functions as a world unto itself, subject to its own laws of reality. As a result of its paradoxical nature, astral space remains the source of much conjecture and speculation among even the most knowledgeable scholars and magicians across Barsaive and the Theran Empire.

Astral space also serves as a gateway between the physical world, the netherworlds, and the elemental planes. It is the cosmic fabric that binds together all worlds, and the medium through which magical energies travel. Whether astral space is the actual source of that power or simply a conduit for magical energy is only one of the countless mysteries that the astral realm continues to hold for Namegivers.

The people and creatures who use magic do so by drawing energy from astral space into the physical world. In order to do this, however, they must be able to perceive astral space, an ability known as **astral perception**. Only through astral perception can magical energy be manipulated, as magical energy is only visible in astral space. All the talents available to characters in **Earthdawn** are magical in nature and allow adepts to perceive and manipulate magical energy.

The Nature of Astral Space

Astral space has no native landscape of its own. It has no ground or sky, and no source of illumination such as the sun. Without its ties to Barsaive and the rest of the physical world, astral space would appear as a limitless void of inky black. It would contain nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to feel. Any being appearing within this void would be lost in an ocean of darkness. The interdependence of the astral and physical worlds, however, provides the astral realm with features that mirror the features of the physical realm. Every location in astral space directly corresponds with some physical location, because everything in the physical world possesses an astral imprint that reflects the physical object's pattern. In other words, astral space is like a giant mirror held up to the physical world. Though astral space does contain some apparently featureless areas where the void—known as the deep astral or high astral—seems to exist, these areas are simply the astral imprints of extremely bleak physical locations.

There is another effect of the interconnection of the physical and astral worlds. During the approximately 400 years of time known as the Scourge, the Horrors roamed the physical world, leaving it ravaged and scarred, populated by twisted creatures, and a pale reflection of its former splendor. Because the astral world is a reflection of the physical world, the harm the Horrors did to the physical plane was reflected in astral space. Because the Horrors are astral in nature, they also damaged the fabric of astral space itself.

While every living thing and inanimate object that exists within physical reality possesses an astral counterpart, astral space contains objects and living things that exist only within astral space itself, with no physical representations. Indeed, some parts of astral space—specifically the various realms known collectively as the netherworlds—seem to exist outside the "standard" astral/physical continuum and contain features that have no counterparts in the physical world.

The Astral Landscape

On viewing (or entering) astral space, an adept sees the astral imprints of all the people, physical objects, and creatures that lie within his sight. In addition, the adept sees astral creatures, such as spirits and Horrors, and any other astral patterns. These astral imprints, creatures, and patterns comprise the astral landscape.

Other features of the astral landscape include the ever-present tufts and swirls of astral energy and the areas of magical corruption left by the Horrors. Astral energy rarely impedes a character's movement or perception. It usually appears as lightly shimmering wisps eddying in and around everything. Occasionally, a bit of energy swirls together, forms a spell pattern and is unleashed moments later. This phenomenon is created when magicians cast spells (for more information, see **Observing Spellcasting** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.133).

In contrast, the magical corruption present in astral space, one of the more devastating after-effects of the Scourge, may seriously affect astral explorers. This pollution may obscure a Namegiver's vision and perception, cause him damage and impede his magical abilities. For rules on these effects, see **Astral Regions**, p.110. The nature of the astral landscape precludes physical beings (including Namegivers) from using their senses of smell, taste, and touch.



ASTRAL AND PHYSICAL FORMS

All Namegivers, creatures, living things and inanimate objects exist in either astral or physical form. The only exceptions to this rule are dual-natured Horrors, which simultaneously exist in both physical and astral forms. In fact, the physical and astral bodies of a dual-natured Horror can actually work independently of one another, though most are connected in some way. This dual nature makes such entities extremely powerful and especially difficult to kill, because it enables most of them to forge new physical bodies to replace destroyed ones and create new astral forms by simply entering astral space.

A specific subject's place of origin (physical world or astral plane) most often determines whether it possesses a physical or astral form. Normally, physical beings cannot directly affect or interact with objects or beings in astral space, though some spells and certain magical powers allow them to do so. Likewise, astral beings cannot normally interact with objects or beings in the physical world without the use of magic spells or powers. Because Namegivers rarely enter astral space, most everything and everyone characters are likely to encounter in **Earthdawn** possess physical forms.

The forms of creatures and objects can be changed from astral to physical or from physical to astral. When a character from the physical world enters astral space, his physical form merges with his astral imprint to create an astral form. When the character returns to the physical world, he reverts to his physical form—which is mirrored by his astral imprint, since all things in the physical world are reflected in the astral. This means that physical objects can be taken into astral space, just as creatures from astral space can enter the physical world. This also means that physical objects and beings can be left in astral space (perhaps the perfect hiding place), and astral objects or beings can be trapped in the physical world.

Subjects are usually identified by their current forms. The term **physical beings** is used to denote both naturally physical beings such as Namegivers as well as astral creatures that have assumed physical forms, such as manifested spirits. Likewise, the term **astral beings** is used to denote native denizens of astral space as well as Namegivers that have assumed astral forms.

ASTRAL IMPRINTS

There are two distinct types of astral imprints: those of inanimate objects, and those of living beings and magical items. The magical energy of living beings and magical items provide their astral imprints with considerably more substance than those of inanimate objects. Inanimate astral imprints typically possess form but no true substance. The astral imprint of a book can be seen, but the pages of the imprint cannot be turned. An adept may look through the astral imprint of a window, but not the imprints of opaque physical objects. The astral imprints of walls, dead trees, or any non-magical objects created by Namegivers appear nearly identical to their physical counterparts. Though an astral imprint resembles the physical object that produces it, most astral imprints appear nearly colorless and tend to blend into a dull mass when viewed by a casual observer.

Because the astral imprints of inanimate physical objects are insubstantial, astral beings (including Namegivers in astral space) can pass through most of them. However, the sensation of passing through the astral imprint of solid matter (or at least what a character recognizes as solid matter) is very disconcerting and confusing to most Namegivers. For this reason, most Namegivers in astral space prefer to walk around imprints of solid obstacles rather than through them. To reflect this disorientation, any Namegiver who passes through an astral imprint of solid matter suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests he makes within two minutes of passing through the imprint. Spirits, Horrors, and other astral entities do not suffer this penalty.

In contrast to the dull, insubstantial imprints of inanimate objects, the astral imprints of living things, such as plants, animals, and Namegivers, display a distinctive aura. These auras glow with an ethereal nature and give living imprints vivid appearances. The imprints of Namegivers display particularly strong auras because of the intricate details of their True patterns. The imprint of the earth produces an aura as well, because the entire world is a living entity. It produces a fairly constant glow that resembles twilight. This aura provides light in almost all areas of astral space, except in areas completely enclosed by the astral imprints of inanimate matter.

The imprints of living things also possess substance. Since they are "solid," astral beings cannot pass through them. Because the earth also has a living imprint, astral beings cannot penetrate through ground level in astral space. They may pass through the imprints of freestanding rocks or cobblestone roads, and may even venture below ground through caves, tunnels, or mine shafts where the living earth has been removed. The imprint of the earth itself, however, blocks their passage. This was one of the main reasons that so many Namegivers built their kaers below ground. The surrounding earth created a solid imprint that served as a barrier in astral space. This earth, further protected by wards and elemental earth, created astral barriers that saved hundreds of thousands of Namegivers from the Horrors even during the worst of the Scourge. In the same manner, obsidimen were protected from the Scourge by their Liferocks, living stones that also reflect a living astral imprint.

Magical items and spells also produce vibrant, "living" astral imprints. All magical items are created by directly investing them with magical energy, and so they create astral imprints with auras and substance. Spells reflect living astral imprints in the same way. Most spell imprints take on shapes that reflect their functions. Pattern items also possess living imprints, because they contain parts of True patterns and are invested with magical energy.

Because of the nature of astral imprints, it is relatively easy to determine whether an item is "magical"—if it displays a living aura, it is magical. The aura does not usually give any clue as to the nature of that magic, only that magic is present in some form. To learn about the nature of the magic, one must study its pattern. This process is described later, under **Astral Sensing**.

True to Form

Because a living thing's astral imprint reflects its pattern, the astral imprint naturally resembles the thing's truest form. While they have no effect on a living being's pattern, illusory spells or abilities mask both the being's physical form and astral imprint until Sensed or Disbelived (see **Illusions** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.139) or their effect expires.

Generally, only two situations produce discrepancies between the true physical appearance and the astral imprint of a living being. The first is a radical change in the being's physical form, such as the loss of a limb. In such cases, the astral imprint will simultaneously reflect the change and the being's original appearance. For example, the imprint might retain an ethereal, ghostlike vestige of the amputated limb.

The second situation occurs when a thing or being's pattern is directly altered. In this case, the subject's astral imprint and its physical appearance would reflect the change in its pattern. In such a scenario, the being's astral imprint would become a blurred combination of the altered and original imprint, forcing any viewer to focus on one or the other. Altering the pattern of a living thing requires extremely powerful magic.

The astral imprint of a living being's pattern often offers clues to the nature of the person. The more magic a person uses, the more complex his pattern, and the more significant his astral imprint will be. The astral imprint of a farmer who uses half-magic to increase his yields and care for his land will be more complex than the pattern of a merchant who uses no magic at all. The pattern of a multiple-Discipline adept will show greater interweaving and denser latticework effects than the astral imprint of a single-Discipline adept's pattern.

Astral Regions

The corruption of astral space significantly handicaps magicians and astral travelers. Magicians who cast raw magic in corrupted regions of astral space risk injury or even death, fates that also threaten astral travelers and beings who move through such areas.

The mere sight of these corrupted areas proves bloodcurdling to most astral beings because looking at these Horror-tainted regions is tantamount to gazing into madness. The astral landscape of these regions appears physically warped—stretched and smeared as if reality were no more than a delicate painting that a Horror could transform with the wipe of a bloody hand.

In game terms, astral regions fall into four classifications: Safe, Open, Tainted, and Corrupt.

Safe regions are areas of astral space untouched by Horrors. Only areas surrounding unbreached kaers are considered Safe. Astral beings who pass through Safe areas suffer no ill effects. Additionally, Horrors tend to avoid Safe regions; a phenomenon that suggests the powers of Horrors may be weaker in these areas.

Open regions correspond to areas in the physical world where Horrors simply passed through or performed only minor magic. The scant attention these Horrors paid to the area or the small amount of torment they caused only slightly warped the astral landscape in these regions. Typically, the astral landscapes of Open regions appear creased and wrinkled, like a sketch crumpled and only partially smoothed out. Most of astral space is comprised of Open regions.

Tainted regions correspond to places where the Horrors caused great suffering and torment. As a result, large clouds of poisoned astral energies pollute these regions, and the landscapes are twisted and warped almost beyond recognition.

Corrupt regions are the most dangerous regions of astral space. These areas correspond to the places where Horrors committed terrible atrocities, possibly scarring the astral landscape forever. Dark and violent emotions emanate from these areas in overwhelming surges.

The foul energies in Corrupt regions may corrupt the use of magic by an adept. Spells may affect characters other than their targets, the spellcaster may suffer Warping damage, and so on (for more information on Warping damage, see the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.136). The gamemaster determines the exact effect of magical corruption, which can occur whenever an adept achieves an Average or worse result on magical tests in a Corrupt region.

The Warrior Jefro is walking through the astral space corresponding to Parlainth (most definitely a Corrupt region) when he encounters a Horror, which he decides to smite using his Melee Weapons talent. Jefro makes his Attack Test against the Horror's Physical Defense of 12 and achieves a result of 14—an Average result. The attack hits the Horror, but Jefro suffers Warping damage. If Jefro's Attack Test had yielded a Good result, he would have avoided any negative effects of using his magically powered talent in the Corrupt region.

A Corrupt region almost invariably indicates the presence of a Horror lurking nearby that is likely to notice any use of magic in the area. If the gamemaster chooses, whenever an adept uses a talent or magical ability (including spending Karma Points) in a Corrupt region of astral space, the gamemaster may make a Perception Test for any nearby Horrors against the adept's Spell Defense (subject to the normal modifiers for astral perception). If the test succeeds, the Horror notices the use of magic and investigates.

Effects of Astral Corruption on Astral Sensing

Astral corruption obscures astral sensing. When a character makes an Astral Sensing Test (as described on p.110), the Difficulty Number is modified based on the level of astral corruption present, as shown on the Astral Sensing Table.

Astral Sensing

Astral perception can be a dangerous activity. To fully perceive astral space, a character (or being) must concentrate on forming an image of himself in astral space. This astral form can be noticed by creatures who inhabit astral space, as well as by others actively perceiving astral space, making the character vulnerable to astral attacks.

In addition, the polluted nature of astral space is 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 characters from even attempting astral perception. Fortunately, the talents, spells, and abilities characters use provide a limited type of astral perception called **astral sensing**. Astral sensing allows a viewer to sense the magical energies and astral imprints of people, places, and things present in astral space, but does not force him to see astral space itself. Most adepts—especially those who follow the magician Disciplines—use astral sensing, and it often provides an adept with his first glance into astral space.

Astral sensing can be performed using one of three methods: the Astral Sight talent; the Astral Sense spell; and Thread Sight, a limited form of astral sight granted by the Thread Weaving talent. These methods provide varying degrees of detail when viewing astral space. Specific rules for using each of these methods are provided below.

Using Astral Sensing

Astral sensing is used to detect the astral imprints of spell effects, wards, astral creatures, magical items, even people and animals. Astral sensing enables an adept to determine if a given object is

magical, and may help the character discover information about the nature of a subject by closely studying its magical pattern.

Note that studying a magic item with astral sensing is different from studying it to learn Key Knowledges. Adepts must use the Item History talent (see the **Talents** chapter, p.73), or the Thread Sight ability (see **Thread Sight**, p.112) to learn a pattern's Key Knowledges. For more information on learning Key Knowledges, see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.113.

ASTRAL SENSING TABLE

Region Type	Difficulty Modifier
Safe	NA
Open	+2
Tainted	+5
Corrupt	+12

The first stage of astral sensing is to successfully perceive astral space and the imprints of nearby objects. The character makes an Astral Sensing (6) Test—the Spell Defense of astral space. This base difficulty is modified by the classification of astral space, as shown in the Astral Sensing Table. If the test succeeds, the character sees the astral imprint of everything within the range of the astral sensing ability being used. The character can tell whether the imprint is a magical or mundane object, and can also determine the classification of astral space in the area. If the test fails to beat the modified target number, but still exceeds the base target Difficulty Number of 6, the character knows that the failure was because of astral interference or corruption.

Non-magical or non-living objects only partially obscure the imprints of objects behind them, due to their insubstantial nature. If the character achieves a Good result on his initial Astral Sensing Test, he can sense the imprint of an object that would otherwise be obscured.

While searching the ruins of an old kaer, the elven Nethermancer Mestoph finds a small secret door. Mestoph has already encountered numerous traps while exploring this kaer, so he decides to use astral sensing to check for any magical traps protecting the door. The player makes an Astral Sight Test with a result of 13—an Excellent result against a Difficulty Number of 6, the Spell Defense of astral space. Mestoph successfully perceives astral space and the imprint of the door. He also notices that there is no corruption—astral space in the kaer is "safe." There are no magical imprints in astral space at the door, but he does detect the imprint of a small magical presence behind the door with his Excellent result.

While detecting the astral imprints of nearby objects is generally sufficient, sometimes an adept wishes to study an object's pattern in greater detail. To do this, he makes a second Astral Sensing test against the Spell Defense of the object. A successful result means the character can see the object's pattern, and may learn things about the subject based on what he sees.

The character may examine the pattern more closely by making additional Astral Sensing Tests. Each test must yield a higher result than the previous test to provide more detail. If any subsequent test fails to equal or exceed the target's Spell Defense, the character has lost sight of the pattern and must start over.

Astral sensing abilities do not normally enable an adept to detect the imprints or patterns of subjects hidden behind or within other magical objects (such as enchanted chests). To detect a subject hidden in this manner, the adept must achieve an Excellent result or better on an Astral Sensing Test against the masking object's Spell Defense.

After opening the secret door, Mestoph discovers a cubbyhole that contains a small chest, which Mestoph concludes is the source of the magical presence. He picks up the chest and hears something small shift about inside, suggesting that the chest holds some valuable and perhaps even magical item. Unfortunately, the chest is magically sealed, so Mestoph decides to make a second Astral Sensing Test to try and see what is inside. The test yields a 22, an Average result against the chest's Spell Defense of 20. Mestoph can see the pattern of the magical seal on the chest, but fails to learn anything about the object inside. If the test result was 34 or higher—an Excellent result—he would have seen the astral imprint of the object inside.

In all cases of astral sensing through another object, success only allows the adept to sense the astral *imprint* of the hidden object. The adept cannot examine the object's pattern—the masking pattern interferes with in-depth examination.

PATTERNS IN ASTRAL SPACE

Adepts may encounter several types of magical patterns during their adventures. Living creatures such as Namegivers and Horrors, magical items, and spells and other magical abilities (including dragon or Horror powers) all possess different types of patterns. Each type of pattern appears slightly different from the others, just as each individual pattern differs from others of the same type. These types of patterns only obscure astral sensing of other imprints and patterns if they are specifically designed to do so.

When viewed astrally, the pattern of any living subject—adept, creature, or non-adept Namegiver—appears in the same form as the subject's astral imprint. The imprint is roughly the same size and shape as the subject. A subject's pattern, however is much more complex and provides much more information about the subject. For example, an adept's astral imprint is the same size and shape as the adept, has a glowing presence that swirls around the imprint, but provides no other information about the adept. On the other hand, the adept's pattern might show the adept's Discipline, any threads woven to the adept's pattern, and signs of injury or blood magic use.

While the patterns of most Namegivers and creatures occupy the entire astral imprints of their subjects, the pattern of a magical item may occupy only a small portion of the item's imprint. This phenomenon usually results from the method used to enchant the item. The astral imprint of a magical sword, for example, will be shaped like a sword, but its pattern may occupy only the hilt of the imprint.

Spells and other magical abilities produce the most unusual type of patterns. (As it is used here, the term "magical abilities" includes talents, dragon and Horror powers, and unusual magical effects such as the corruption of the Blood Wood and the existence of life within the Poison Forest.) Patterns produced by these magical abilities most often resemble clouds of magical energy that encompass the spell or ability's area of effect and represent its effect. For example, the pattern of a Chilling Circle spell would appear as a cloud of astral energy that radiates out 5 yards from the magician who cast the spell. The pattern of a Mind Dagger spell might appear as a dagger of astral energy that flies from the caster to the target.

Astral sensing allows adepts to view the patterns of spells cast during combat, but most adepts use it to detect and study the patterns of extended-duration spell effects, such as those produced by magical traps or wards. The patterns of these magical effects usually appear as small pockets of astral energy. Close examination of such a pattern may reveal its effect, the type of spell, its Circle, or even clues about the magician who cast the spell.

When using an astral sensing ability to study the pattern of a spell, the adept makes an Astral Sensing Test against the spell's Spell Defense, which is the same as the spell's Dispel Difficulty.

The gamemaster determines the specific details of a subject's pattern, based on the subject's nature. He also determines what information a character can learn from studying a subject's pattern, based on the result of the Astral Sense test.

Astral Sensing Methods

To illustrate the differences between each of the three astral sensing methods— the Astral Sight talent, the Astral Sense spell, and Thread Sight—each of the following sections includes an example of an adept using one of the methods to examine the same magical item: an enchanted dagger that contains a small shard of orichalcum in its pommel. The orichalcum shard is from the ruins of Kaer Jalendale, where Lorm the troll (the wielder of Lorm's Axe) died. This orichalcum shard, now used to power the dagger, possesses great magical power and also traces of the corruptive powers of the Horror that claimed Kaer Jalendale.

Astral Sight Talent

The **Astral Sight** talent enables characters to look into astral space and directly view astral imprints and patterns. This is perhaps the best overall method of astral sensing available in **Earthdawn**. The talent enables adepts to view the patterns of subjects with high Spell Defense ratings and detect considerable detail in a pattern. In addition, because Astral Sight is a talent, a character may improve his Astral Sight rank over time, which allows him to detect more obscure magical patterns.

Of course, the Astral Sight talent is not without its drawbacks. The adept takes 1 Strain each time he uses the talent, with the effect lasting for a number of rounds equal to his Astral Sight rank. As such, using this talent for extended examinations of magical patterns can be quite taxing. After detecting a pattern, an adept can make subsequent Astral Sight Tests to see more details in the pattern, as described in **Using Astral Sensing**, above. These tests do not cause the character additional Strain if they are performed during the talent's duration. When the duration expires, or if any of the subsequent tests fail to equal or exceed the subject's Spell Defense, the character loses sight of the pattern and must make a new Astral Sight Test to redetect the pattern, taking 1 Strain in the process.

During his initial astral examination of the dagger, Mestoph sees the orichalcum shard in the dagger's astral imprint and realizes that it contains the dagger's pattern. Mestoph then makes another Astral Sight Test to study the pattern. The test yields a result of 19, a Good result. Mestoph sees the form of a diamond, which contains storm clouds seemingly made up of faces, all twisted in pain. The diamond's border is lined with teeth that seem to bleed a dark, evil-looking green substance that pools into a disk shape at the lower end of the diamond. At the diamond's opposite end, several teeth enlarge and extend outward in a row of spikes. Small human forms, writhing in agony, are trapped between each pair of teeth.

Astral Sense Spell

The **Astral Sense** spell enables an adept to detect and study magical presences in astral space. While the spell has a range of 30 yards (15 hexes) and a duration of 10 or more minutes, the view of the subject's pattern the spell provides is not as effective for studying patterns as the Astral Sight talent. Adepts using the Astral Sight talent actually see the item's astral imprint and pattern. The Astral Sense spell puts an image of the imprint and pattern in their minds. Because the information is essentially second-hand, like seeing a photograph rather than the object itself, certain details simply cannot be discerned.

To detect astral patterns with the Astral Sense spell, an adept makes a Spellcasting (6) Test—the Spell Defense of astral space. If successful, the adept makes an Effect Test, detecting the pattern of one creature, object or magical effect with a Spell Defense no greater than the Effect Test result. Only one pattern may be detected per Effect Test, which means that an adept must make several Effect Tests to detect all the patterns within range of the spell. Once a pattern has been detected, the adept can focus the spell on that pattern, making subsequent Effect Tests to see more detail. As described above under **Using Astral Sensing**, each test must yield a higher result than the previous test to provide more detail.

For more information on the Astral Sense spell, see the **Spells** chapter on p.150.

Ardiss Foarr uses the Astral Sense spell to study the dagger. He successfully casts the spell, and after a few moments of scanning the area he senses the dagger's pattern with an Effect Test of 13, an Average result. The dagger's pattern, emanating from the orichalcum shard in the blade's pommel, appears to him as a simple diamond shape, long and slender, with a cross set into its interior. The boundaries of the diamond are made up of jagged teeth of various shapes and sizes, shiny ebony daggers tinged with green. He sees four eerie, green lightning bolts snaking inward from each point on the diamond and forming a cross and a dark point in the diamond's center. The diamond's quadrants are filled with dark storm clouds, as well as lines that Ardiss believes might represent high winds.

Thread Sight

Adepts receive **Thread Sight** along with the Thread Weaving talent (p.83). Generally, characters use Thread Sight to see the patterns of items in order to weave threads to them. Like the Astral Sense spell, Thread Sight gives the user a mental picture of the pattern, but with even less precision. Thread Sight does not allow an adept to see detail in or glean information from a pattern. It simply allows an adept to sense enough of the pattern to weave threads to it. Using Thread Sight in this manner does not require a separate test—it takes place as part of the adept's Thread Weaving Test. Thread Sight cannot be used to sense the magical patterns of creatures, Namegivers, or other magical auras.

Confident that it is safe to use the dagger, Ardiss Foarr decides to weave a Rank 1 thread to its pattern. Ardiss has already learned the Key Knowledge required, so he simply makes a Thread Weaving Test against the dagger's Weaving Difficulty. As he does so, an image of the dagger's pattern forms in his mind. Using his Thread Sight, Ardiss sees the pattern's simple diamond shape, long and slender, with a cross in its center.

CHAPTER NINE

THREAD MAGIC

Humans have a phrase, "Knowledge is power." As usual they miss the mark. Knowledge alone is insufficient. You also need training in the rigors of magical thought. In particular, you must know how to use threads. Threads connect what you know to the magic contained in what you know. Threads are what turn your knowledge into power.

• Del Rieka, Dwarf Wizard, to his Apprentice •

One of the unique applications of the workings of magic in **Earthdawn** is the use of thread magic. Thread magic is the process by which a thread of magical energy is woven to an existing True Pattern, thereby strengthening and enhancing that pattern. High-Circle magicians can weave threads to any True Pattern, such as those possessed by any Named person, place, or thing.

These rules cover weaving threads to magical items, as well as the more complex process of weaving threads to Named people and places. They also address a special use of thread magic: Group Patterns.

Before delving into the information presented here, players and gamemasters may find it helpful to review **Magic in Our World**, p.104.

NATURE OF THREADS

Thread magic enables characters to manipulate magic using strands of magical energy called threads. Two types of magical threads exist: spell threads and pattern threads. Characters create both types of threads using the Thread Weaving talent (p.83), and both share certain traits.

Spell threads represent finite strands of magical energy that are used to power certain spells. As described in the **Spell Magic** chapter (p.129), most spell patterns are too complex to fit entirely in a spell matrix. In such cases, a magician must complete a spell's pattern before he can cast the spell. Completing a spell's pattern is accomplished by weaving spell threads into the pattern of the spell. Unlike pattern threads, all spell threads offer the same quantity and quality of magical energy, regardless of the Circle of the magician, his Thread Weaving Rank, or the Circle of the spell.

Characters use **pattern threads** to connect the magical patterns of two or more people, places or things. Two types of pattern threads exist: temporary threads and permanent threads. To weave temporary pattern threads, a character performs an act of will to create the thread, and usually suffers Strain damage to use it. Temporary threads are primarily used with talent knacks based on the Thread Weaving talent (see the **Talent Knacks** chapter of the ***Player's Companion***).

The rules presented in this chapter discuss permanent threads, the type created when weaving threads to magical treasure or Pattern Items.

USING THREAD MAGIC

To use thread magic, a character requires a Pattern Item for the True Pattern he wants to weave a thread to and has to learn Key Knowledges pertaining to the True Pattern. The Pattern Item is the conduit for both Key Knowledges and threads woven—it contains a fracture of the True Pattern and its history. Although it does not usually provide the full Pattern Knowledge even after intensive research and study, a Pattern Item has a strong enough connection to a True Pattern to use thread magic on that True Pattern without the True Pattern being present. Note that while places and people have Pattern Items that are independent objects, threaded magical items and treasures are their own Pattern Items—the power they allow access to comes from their legend, and the physical item allows access to that legend's power.

Having obtained a Pattern Item pertaining to a particular True Pattern and learning its Key Knowledge, a character can create a thread connecting his True Pattern to the target True Pattern by weaving a thread to the pattern item. This thread carries magical energy from the target's True Pattern to the character's, making his talents more powerful when interacting with the target True Pattern. Alternatively, a character can use the threads he creates to bolster the strength of the True Pattern to which his thread is connected. Whichever option is employed, the character who wove the threads must retain possession of the Pattern Item, keeping it on his person to provide the desired benefit.

Each character must perform the following basic Steps to use thread magic:

1. Obtain the Key Knowledge.
2. Spend a number of Legend Points based on the Thread Rank being woven.
3. Make a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank.

How each Step relates to different uses of thread magic is described in greater detail later in this chapter.

THREADS AND LEGEND POINTS

Weaving permanent threads requires a character to spend a number of Legend Points based on the type of item to which the thread is being woven and the Rank of the thread being woven. This expenditure of Legend Points creates the permanent thread.

Characters should take the Legend Point cost required to weave permanent pattern threads into careful consideration for two reasons. First, any Legend Points spent to weave permanent pattern threads reduces the number of Current Legend Points available for the character to increase his talent and skill Ranks. Second, unless specifically noted, Legend Points spent on a permanent pattern thread can never be recovered, even if the thread is unwoven, displaced, or otherwise destroyed. Though weaving permanent pattern threads does offer significant advantages, the

character must consider that he may spend the Legend Points and ultimately have nothing to show for it.

Limits on Threads

At any one time, a character can have a maximum number of threads active (attached to True Patterns of people, places, or items) equal to his highest Thread Weaving talent rank. This limit does not include spell threads, as those are temporary in nature. The character's Thread Weaving talent rank also marks the maximum rank to which he can increase any of his threads.

Jerreck knows the Thread Weaving talent at Rank 4. Until he increases his Thread Weaving Rank, Jerreck can have a maximum of four threads active at any one time (connected to four different items), none of which may be higher than Rank 4.

Losing Threads

All of the threads a character currently has active are usually lost when that character dies. Most magical effects that bring a character back to life (like the Life Check talent or Death Cheat blood charm) actually prevent the character from dying in the first place, so there is no risk of losing threads. 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 and effectively disconnects the character's thread.

Weaving Threads to Magic Items

Many magic items in **Earthdawn** are unique, produced by a conjunction of magical energy and emotion that imbues the item with magical powers. 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 more significant events an item has been a part of, and the greater its legend, the greater its powers. The person wielding or using such an item rarely sees the full force of that power manifest. Some example thread items are provided in the **Goods and Services** chapter (p.275) and the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** (p. 130). These items possess magical abilities and the power to enhance the user's abilities. A character who obtains the item can manifest those powers by empowering the item with a thread of magic. Magic items that are empowered in this way are commonly referred to as **Thread Items**, in order to distinguish them from items empowered in other ways.

Pattern Knowledge

Thread items, by virtue of their creation (whether coincidence or design) all have True Patterns. Unfortunately, an item's True Pattern is a tangled mystery of history, facts, and magic. Before an adept can use the item he must unravel some of the mystery of that item. He does that in part by using one of his own mystical talents, and in part by old-fashioned, mundane research.

All Thread Items 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. By studying an item's history, a character can learn its **Pattern Knowledge**, which represents the events of its history and its True Pattern. Pattern Knowledge includes the item's Name, the Name of its maker, and significant events in its history. Learning this knowledge allows the character to bring the item's magic alive and make it work for him.



The character does not need to learn all of the Pattern Knowledge, however—the details he needs to learn vary from item to item. He may need to learn the Name of the item's creator for one magic sword, but not for another.

An item's Pattern Knowledge is made up of several parts, known as Key Knowledges. An item may have any number of Key Knowledges. Most thread 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 magic ring may have three Ranks of powers: Ranks One, Two, and Three. Each Rank provides a unique power and is tied to a Key Knowledge that the character must know to unlock that power. Each Rank's Key Knowledge must be used in succession. The Rank One Key Knowledge must be used before the Rank Two Key Knowledge, and the Rank Two Key Knowledge before the Rank Three Key Knowledge—each at the Thread Rank it is listed for.

Key Knowledges

Characters can learn an item's **Key Knowledges** through talents such as Item History or by researching legends, libraries, tavern lore, and other sources to find the information they need.

Each of a magical item's Key Knowledges has two distinct elements: the general type of information the Key Knowledge represents, called the Test Knowledge, and the specific details of that information, called the Research Knowledge.

The **Test Knowledge** for a Key Knowledge represents one or more general "questions" that can be determined only by making a successful Item History Test (p.73). Each Test Knowledge tells the character what he needs to discover in order to use the item. For example:

- The character must learn the Name of the fire elemental that helped to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The character must learn the Name of the mountain that produced the iron ore used to forge Kegel's Sword.
- The character must learn the last event in which Kegel's Sword was wielded.

The **Research Knowledge** for a Key Knowledge represents specific "answers" to the Test Knowledge "questions" that can only be learned 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 Theran War, when Kegel used it to kill General Timyo, leader of the Theran forces.

First Key Knowledge

The first Key Knowledge of an item is always listed at Rank One. 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 information:

Test Knowledge

- How many Thread Ranks the item has.
- The Maximum Threads that may be woven to the item.
- Whether or not the item has any Deeds associated with it.
- That the character must learn the item's Name.

Research Knowledge

- The Name of the item.

A successful Item History Test reveals the number of Thread Ranks the item or weapon has, how many threads can be woven to the item (how many individuals can weave threads to it), whether or not the character is required to perform any Deeds (see below) to attach a thread to the item or increase the Rank of a thread, and that he has to learn the item's Name as the Research Knowledge.

Deeds

Some items require characters to perform Deeds in order to weave threads to the item. A Deed usually relates to the history of an 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. Whether an item requires any Deeds is learned with the Rank One Test Knowledge, but the Test Knowledge of the Deed can only be learned at the Thread Rank with which the Deed is associated. Deeds must be researched in the same way as Research Knowledge.

Any Deeds associated with 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 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 (the Test Knowledge). Performing the Deed provides the Research Knowledge.

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. For example, if a Deed is listed for an item at Thread Rank Four, the character must have learned all of the Key Knowledges for that item from Thread Ranks 1 through Four before attempting the Deed. As Deeds are treated as Key Knowledges for the purpose of Test and Research Knowledge, it is not usually possible to learn the Deed before learning all previous Key Knowledges anyway.

Obtain the Key Knowledge

To learn an item's Key Knowledges, characters must first learn the Test Knowledges by making Item History Tests.

Test Knowledge

A character who uses his Item History talent discovers the Test Knowledge for a particular Key Knowledge at a specific Rank. If the result of the test is exceptional, the character may learn the Test Knowledge information for the Key Knowledges of several Ranks. This information does not give the character any advantage, however, until he learns the full Key Knowledge (Test Knowledge and Research Knowledge) of each Rank.

Test Knowledges are the general "questions" required for the Key Knowledges, not the specific answers.

> *The Test Knowledge for a specific Rank's Key Knowledge might be that the character has to learn the Name of the item's creator. He does not actually learn the Name by making a successful Item History Test, only that he must learn this Name before he can weave a thread at that Rank. The specific information required, in this case the Name itself, is the Research Knowledge, and must be discovered by more conventional means.*

To learn the Test Knowledge, the character makes an Item History Test against the item's Spell Defense. If successful, the character learns one Key Knowledge for each Result Level achieved. A character can learn a maximum number of Test Knowledges from an item equal to his Item History Rank.

> *Thom Hammerblade is using his Rank 3 Item History talent to study a magic sword he found during his last adventure. After a week of study, he makes his Item History Test against the sword's Spell Defense rating of 12 and rolls a 29—an Extraordinary Result! This should allow him to learn the first four Test Knowledges of the sword, but because Thom only knows the Item History talent at Rank 3, he can only learn a maximum of three Test Knowledges. If he wants to learn more of the sword's Key Knowledges, he must improve his Item History Rank.*

With a successful Test Result, the character learns what he must research before he can weave the threads for those Ranks. When a character learns the Test Knowledge of an item's Key Knowledge, he also learns the magical effect granted at that Thread Rank. The gamemaster is free to determine whether the character learns the exact details at this stage or if he learns the general type of effect only.

> *Thom might know that at Rank Three, "the sword inflicts even greater damage than usual" or he might learn that the Damage Step is increased by +1.*

Research Knowledge

Once the character learns a Test Knowledge, he must discover the Research Knowledge—the specific information required that will allow him to know the entire Key Knowledge for that Rank, and subsequently allow him to weave a thread.

The Research Knowledge must be learned through successful use of the Research skill or by adventuring. Characters cannot solely use the Item History talent to learn this information. They 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. Learning this information can occur as part of an adventure and integrated into a story, or it can be something that takes place between other adventures. In either case, the research required should not be completely resolved through a series of Research Tests, but should also occur through adventuring and roleplaying. The process can be simple and quick, or complex and arduous, depending on the nature of the item, the information to be learned, and the style of campaign the gamemaster is attempting to run.

In short, finding the Research Knowledge answer for a Test Knowledge question, thus completing the Key Knowledge, requires effort on the part of those seeking the knowledge. For example, a character may 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 for the caretaker (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93).



In the process of learning the Research Knowledge, the character must also understand how it fits into the history of the item, thus properly understanding the Key Knowledge. For example, if a character must learn the Name of the jungle that produced the wood used to create a staff, it is not enough for him to guess the Name of the jungle, even if he manages to guess correctly. The character may need to research different kinds of wood to pinpoint the exact 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.

Finding the information required to learn a Key Knowledge should be a challenge, but not an impossible one. (More information and guidelines for the gamemaster on how to handle research and research-based adventures are presented in the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** on p. 99.)

Spend Legend Points

Once he has learned the Key Knowledge for the next Thread Rank, the character can prepare to weave a thread to the item by spending Legend Points. This Legend Point investment represents the experience and effort the character puts into weaving the thread. The Legend Point Cost characteristic of a thread item shows the progression of Legend Point costs to weave to subsequent Thread Ranks, it is usually identical to one of the progressions used to increase talent Ranks, but exactly which progression (Novice, Journeyman, Warden, or Master) is used depends on the item.

Ardis Foarr, a dwarf Wizard, finds a Counterspell Staff in the ruins of a citadel. After studying the item for a time, he successfully learns its first Key Knowledge. Now he must spend Legend Points to weave a thread. The gamemaster checks the staff's description and finds that it uses the cost progression of Journeyman talents, which means that Ardis must spend 200 Legend Points to weave a Rank One thread to the staff. If he later wants to increase the Thread Rank to Two—assuming he learns the Key Knowledge—he must spend an additional 300 Legend Points to weave the Rank Two thread.

Weave the Thread

Once the character has spent the appropriate Legend Points, he can attempt to weave a thread to empower the item at the appropriate Rank. The thread can be woven to a Rank no greater than the Key Knowledge Rank known by the character. Also, the maximum Rank to which a character can weave a thread is equal to his Thread Weaving Rank.

To weave a thread, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table. If successful, the character attaches a 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 old.

If the test fails, the character cannot make another attempt at weaving a thread to that item for one day, unless he spends one of his remaining Recovery Tests to fuel another attempt that day. The old thread—if one existed—remains in place. The Legend Points spent on weaving the new thread remain allocated to the new Thread Rank; the character cannot use them for anything else. As soon as a day has passed, he can make another attempt to weave the thread. This time he does not need to spend any further Legend Points, as they have already been allocated from his previous attempt.

Jerreck makes a Thread Weaving Test to increase the Rank of the thread he has woven to Drea's Magic Pouch from Rank Two to Rank Three. The Difficulty Number of his Thread Weaving Test is 13. He fails his test, rolling only a 9. Jerreck, who is out of Recovery Tests, must now wait for one day before he can again attempt to reweave that thread. His Rank Two thread remains in place, however, along with the Legend Points invested in his Thread Weaving attempt. A day later, he tries again to increase the Rank of the thread attached to the pouch, following the same Steps he performed previously, but this time he does not need to spend any additional Legend Points.

Once a character weaves a thread to an item, he can continue to weave a new, stronger thread to each Rank beyond the first. As noted, this new thread replaces the old, but maintains the powers and abilities of the old thread. A new thread cannot be woven until the character learns the appropriate Key Knowledge for the new Rank.

WEAVING THREADS TO PATTERN ITEMS

While weaving threads to magic items is the most common use of thread magic in the world of **Earthdawn**, it is not the only use of thread magic. As described above, thread magic allows a character to connect his True Pattern to another True Pattern via a magical thread. A Pattern Item is simply a conduit to another True Pattern, allowing the connection to be made. Pattern items do not have True Patterns of their own; they are only a part of a True Pattern. Thus, a character cannot weave threads to his own Pattern Items, as a character's True Pattern gains no benefit from being further connected to itself.

The basic process for weaving threads to Named people and places is similar to the process used for weaving threads to magic items. The character wishing to weave a thread first learns a Key Knowledge of the target True Pattern, and then weaves a thread to the True Pattern. There are some significant differences, however, and these are detailed in the following sections.

THREAD WEAVING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Thread Rank	Weaving Difficulty
1	9
2	11
3	13
4	15
5	16
6	17
7	18
8	20
9	21
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26
14	28
15	29

OBTAIN THE KEY KNOWLEDGE

The first Step in using thread magic is to obtain a part of the Pattern Knowledge of a True Pattern. Just like magic items, this Pattern Knowledge will consist of several individual Key Knowledges. Each Key Knowledge is one piece of information about the True Pattern. Through an understanding of a True Pattern's Key Knowledges, one can affect that pattern with magic.

This 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.

Obtaining a Pattern Item

Pattern items are obtained through adventuring. Through reasoning and roleplaying, a character can use his talents to find 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. It is also a known (and sometimes exploited fact), that to benefit from the use of a Pattern Item the one who wove the threads must keep the item in his possession.

Number of Pattern Items

A True Pattern can have between zero and five Pattern Items. Only a character or place with a True Pattern can have a Pattern Item. The more powerful a character or place, the more Pattern Items are likely to exist.

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 only be created after the creation of a Major Pattern Item.

The sequence is flexible because it never requires the creation of Major or Core Pattern Items. Nor does it require that Minor Pattern Items be "upgraded" to Major or Core Pattern Items. Death's Sea, for example, might have five Pattern Items, all of them Minor. For Blood Wood, on the other hand, a withered birch might be the only Pattern Item for the whole Wood, and it might be a Core Pattern Item.

Key Knowledge

Each Pattern Item holds one Key Knowledge about a True Pattern (this is different from Thread Items, which contain multiple Key Knowledges). The relationship between the Key Knowledge and the True Pattern is based on the type of Pattern Item the Key Knowledge comes from. 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 Pattern Item's association with the True Pattern. Core Pattern Items hold knowledge that is an essential part 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 Horror construct that has badly injured the Archer, Delthrien. While in the village he hears a story about how a young woman managed to ward off the creature with a willow-branch talisman. Grolk now knows that willow somehow affects this Horror construct, and reasons it is the kind of information associated with a Pattern Item. The ability of willow to drive off the construct sounds like a magical interaction derived from the nature of its True Pattern. Grolk now needs the specific talisman that drove off the construct; it is most likely a Minor Pattern Item for it.

The knowledge in a Pattern Item always represents at least a portion of the target's True Pattern. When trying to discover what knowledge is linked to a Pattern Item, a character should look for the types of knowledge a True Pattern contains:

- The Name associated with the True Pattern.
- Ways the Name uses, is affected by, or interacts with magic.
- The Name's history of events, behaviors, and interactions with magic.

Knowing that a Troubadour visited the Kaer Cache Tavern last week 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 Troubadour is now, where he might be in the future, or even his preference in taverns. However, if the character learns that the Troubadour performs at the Kaer Cache Tavern every Thursday, that is something useful. Repetition of this behavior may have worn the habit into the Troubadour'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 than other clothes. Again, repetition may have worn the fact into Lord Malban's True Pattern.

Remember that the knowledge alone is not enough. A character must also have a Pattern Item that exemplifies what he has learned about the owner of a True Pattern. Using the previous examples, a character might discover that a mug from the Kaer Cache Tavern is the Pattern Item. To weave a thread from the knowledge of Lord Malban's clothes, a character would most likely need to obtain one of Lord Malban's favorite robes.

Studying a Pattern Item

Once obtained, a Pattern Item can be studied in order to use the Key Knowledge that it contains. Learning (or confirming) the Key Knowledge of a Pattern Item is the same as learning the Key Knowledge of a magic item. The character studies the item using the Item History talent, p.73. The item's Spell Defense is determined by the gamemaster, based on the specific type of Pattern Item studied. The Pattern Item Spell Defense Table shows the typical Spell Defense range for each class of Pattern Item.

If the character's Item History Test succeeds, he has learned the Test Knowledge held by the Pattern Item. The Test Knowledge is always related to the relationship between the Pattern Item and the Pattern it represents. Because of this, further research may not be necessary; the research has already been done to figure out what the Pattern Items might be. However, the Item History talent may be used to confirm that an item is a Pattern Item and that the research done to identify the item as a Pattern Item already holds the Research Knowledge. If no research was done to identify a Pattern Item, Research Knowledge must be learned as normal.

Repeated 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 attempts he 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, and the weaker its connection to the parent True Pattern becomes. Therefore, the character must be careful not to imprint his 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 the character makes, the longer he must wait in-between study attempts to not risk contaminating the Pattern Item. The Study Time Table lists the waiting time required to study a Pattern Item again after failed attempts. The time required waiting increases after each failed attempt, as the Pattern Item has more and more contact with the studying character, and cumulative contact requires more time to dissolve the link between studying character and Pattern Item. Each day of study requires that the character examine the Pattern Item for at least one hour each day (as per the description for the Item History talent, p.73). Once the character succeeds at an Item History Test (as appropriate to the item), the character has learned the Test Knowledge for that Pattern Item, and no further tests are required.

Research

People, places, and things important enough to have True Patterns also tend to be remembered by those who interact with them. For example, 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 Research Knowledges. Keep in mind that this research may have some time limits. Some legends tell of Wizards spending years researching a True Pattern, only to discover that the pattern had changed so much before they could use the Key Knowledges obtained that all their research was wasted.

To research a True Pattern the character may use the Research skill (p.78). To obtain information, he makes a Research Test against the Difficulty Number of the information sought. The gamemaster determines this number by estimating how hard the task should be.

Spend Legend Points

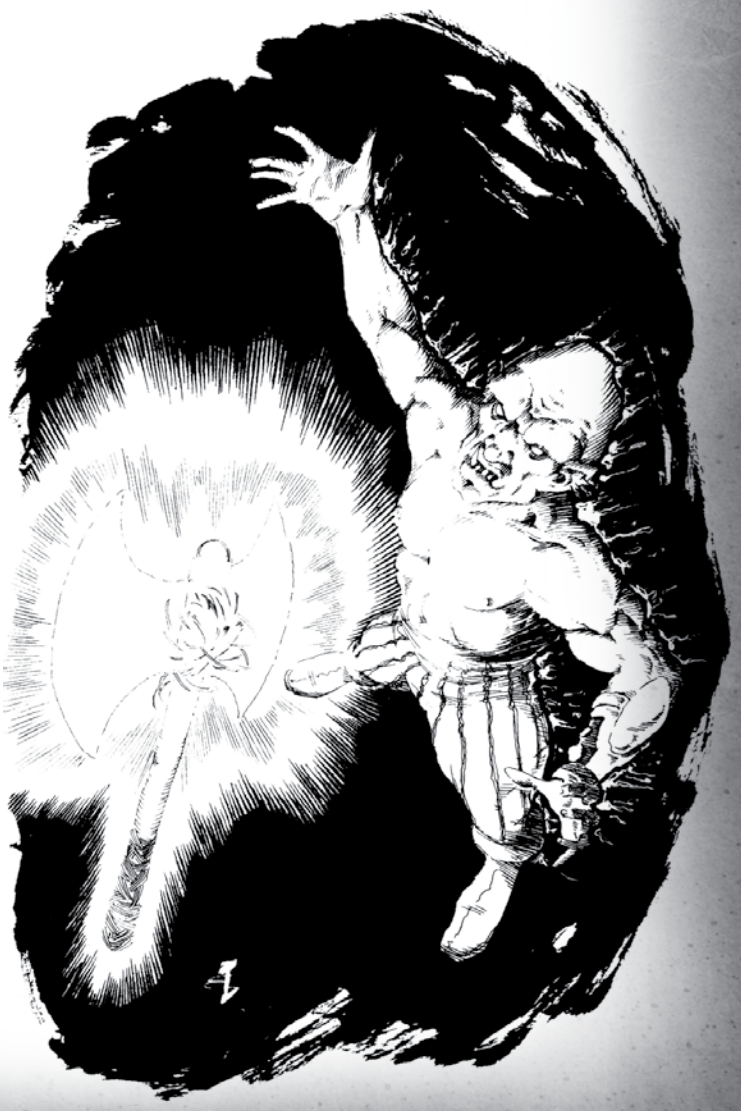
Once a character knows one or more Key Knowledges of a True Pattern, it becomes possible for him to weave a thread to the True Pattern. However, he must spend Legend Points to buy the required number of Thread Ranks. As opposed to magic items, where the cost is determined by the item, the Legend Point cost of Thread Ranks woven to the True Patterns of people and places is the same as for improving Ranks of a Novice talent (see **Spending Legend Points**, p.237). Thread Rank costs are determined just like Ranks for talents. The cost for increasing the Rank of a thread depends on the new Rank.

Farliv wants to buy a Rank 1 thread to connect to the True Pattern of a foe. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, his player sees that this would cost Farliv 100 Legend Points.

Jerreck wants to increase the Rank of a thread he has attached to the True Pattern of Blood Wood. The thread is currently Rank 3. Consulting the Talent Rank Cost Table, his player finds that the cost of increasing the Rank from 3 to 4 is 500 Legend Points.

Thread Rank Limits

The maximum Rank for a thread woven to the True Pattern of a person or place depends on the class of Pattern Item used. A Minor Pattern Item can have a maximum Rank 5 thread attached to it; Major Pattern Items can support up to Rank 9 threads; Core Pattern Items can support up to Rank 15 threads. The maximum Thread Rank is still limited by the Thread Weaving Rank of the character weaving the thread. If the character's Thread Weaving Rank is lower, that lower limit applies.



WEAVE THE THREAD

Once a character has spent Legend Points for the Thread Rank, he can weave the thread to the subject's True Pattern. If the character learned the Key Knowledge from a Pattern Item, the character must be in possession of the Pattern Item he studied in order to successfully weave the thread and benefit from it. 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 Result.

To weave the thread, the character makes a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number based on the Thread Rank, as shown in the Thread Weaving Difficulty Table. If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the character has woven a thread to the True Pattern.

As with Thread Weaving Tests for Thread Items, if the test fails the character can make no further attempts at weaving the thread for a day unless he spends one of his remaining Recovery Tests to fuel another attempt that day. Neither the Legend Points nor the old thread (if one existed) is lost, however.

PATTERN ITEM SPELL DEFENSE TABLE

Pattern Item	Spell Defense Range
Minor	7–12
Major	13–18
Core	19+

STUDY TIME TABLE

Attempt Number	Required Waiting Time
2	1 week
3	2 weeks
4	3 weeks
5	4 weeks
6	5 weeks
7	6 weeks
8	7 weeks
9	8 weeks
10+	3 months

Using Woven Threads

When a character weaves a thread to a True Pattern, that act establishes a link between the character's True Pattern and the True Pattern of the target. The weaving character can use that link to boost one or more of his own abilities when interacting with the subject of the True Pattern. To do this, he attaches the thread to one of the following abilities:

- Any one Talent
- Physical Defense
- Spell Defense
- Social Defense
- Wound Threshold
- Mystic Armor

When the character interacts with the True Pattern to which he has woven a thread, the Thread Rank increases the ability to which it is attached. In the case of talents, this increases the Rank and affects everything that is based on the Rank, such as the final Step, or duration of the talent. The increased Rank does not, however, count when checking to see if the character qualifies to advance to the next Circle (see **Advancing Discipline Circles**, p.239). 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. This thread increases her Melee Weapons talent by 2 Ranks when interacting with Noraim (which usually means using her Melee Weapons talent to attack the Wizard).

Jerreck weaves a Rank 3 thread from the True Pattern of the Horror Verjigorm to his Spell Defense, thus increasing his rating whenever he is interacting with the Hunter of Great Dragons (which usually means when Verjigorm uses an ability that targets Jerreck's Spell Defense). Good thing, too. He's going to need all the help he can get!

The number of abilities that can be increased by a single thread is based on the type of Pattern Item used to create the thread. A thread woven from a Minor Pattern Item can only increase one ability. A thread woven from a Major Pattern Item can increase up to three abilities. A single thread woven from a Core Pattern Item can increase up to five abilities. When increasing multiple abilities, all attached abilities are increased by the thread's Rank.

After successfully studying a Major Pattern Item belonging to a Theran Wizard of Vivane, Me'gana weaves a Rank 3 thread to three abilities: her Melee Weapons talent, her Physical Defense, and her Spell Defense. When interacting with the Theran Wizard, Me'gana's Melee Weapons talent is increased by +3 Ranks (also increasing the Step Number), while her Physical and Spell Defense are each increased by +3.

People

When a character weaves a thread to the True Pattern of another person, the weaver can use the link created in one of two fashions. First, he can use it to boost his abilities when interacting with the subject (this generally means targeting or being targeted by, but specific exceptions may be determined by the gamemaster), or it can be used to boost the abilities of the subject all the time; the subject's True Pattern draws energy from the weaver's True Pattern through the thread, thereby strengthening it. Either way, the character must retain possession of the pattern item for the benefit to apply.

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 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 first creates it. Once he has chosen, 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 to boost her Spell Defense. Once the thread is in place, Me'gana's Spell Defense increases by +1.

Places

A character can use threads woven to the True Pattern of a place in one of two ways. Just like threads woven to people, the character must choose at the time the thread is first woven and, once chosen, cannot be changed.

First, a character can use the Thread Ranks to boost abilities, as described above. The thread strengthens the character as long as he remains in that place. For example, if a character has a thread woven to the True Pattern of Blood Wood, the Thread Rank would boost the character's abilities as long as he was in Blood Wood. Once the character leaves Blood Wood he loses the benefit of the thread. He will regain the benefit as soon as he re-enters the Wood.

Second, the character can increase various game ratings associated with a place. For example, a Wizard might increase the Armor Rating of the walls of his tower, the Difficulty Number to open the locks on his doors, or even simply enhance the appearance of his library. As noted above, the Thread Rank determines the rating increase.

Either way, the character must retain possession of the pattern item for the benefit to apply.

The Wizard Noraim weaves a Rank 5 thread to the True Pattern of his laboratory. He decides to use the thread to make opening locks in his lab a harder proposition for potential intruders. The Difficulty Number for Lock Picking Tests in Noraim's lab increases by +5 with the help of the thread.

Items

Some items have True Patterns of their own, and in these cases, the item is its own Pattern Item. Rules for weaving threads to these magic items are presented above in **Weaving Threads to Magic Items**.

Groups

It is also possible to weave a thread to a group of Namegivers which have created a Group True Pattern (see below).

Members of a Group gain special benefits because of the inherent connection between their own True Pattern and the True Pattern of the group. These benefits are gained whenever the character is acting with the group or towards the goals of the group. A character can also weave a thread to a group that he is not a member of. In this case, the benefits gained are similar to weaving a thread to the pattern of a Namegiver, but apply whenever interacting with (generally targeting or being targeted by) any member of that group.

In either case, a character cannot enhance the power of a group as a whole, he can only use the group's pattern to enhance his own abilities (as the group's pattern is an entity separate from its members, and does not have the abilities a pattern thread can increase).

Thread Magic and Group True Patterns

Thread magic can be used by groups of people in a special, unique way. By deliberately creating a True Pattern for the group, the members of that group can weave threads to the Group True Pattern and strengthen their abilities when interacting with the group by acting as a part of it. This use of thread magic is generally practiced by adventuring groups, but other groups are free to use it as well. It is believed, for example, that the Hand of Corruption has created its own True Pattern, enabling its members to enhance their abilities with thread magic when acting for the Hand's purposes. This works because the Group True Pattern is a separate entity, independent from any of its members, so it can grant magical benefit to those interacting with it via thread magic.

Creating a Group True Pattern

Just as people, places, and things can have Names, so can groups of people. If all the members of a group can agree upon a Name for the group, that Name can form a True Pattern that represents all that the group is, just like other True Patterns of people, places, and things. This process is not easy, and requires that the group fulfill the following conditions, in order:

1. The group chooses a Name for itself which represents the group's past, present, and future.
2. The group's members create a symbol which represents the group and its history.
3. Each of the member of the group creates an item representing the group and that character's role in the group; this item becomes a Minor Pattern Item for the group over the course of the following ritual and swearing of the oath.
4. The group is Named during a specific Naming ritual, beginning the formation of the group's True Pattern.
5. The group's members perform a Group Oath of Blood Peace, concluding the formation of the Group True Pattern.

Each of these conditions is described in greater detail below.

Choose a Group Name

The group must choose a Name for itself. All the members must agree to the chosen Name. The Name can be anything, but will always represent a part of the group's past, present, or future. Many groups are Named for the character who first gathered the group together.

Thom Hammerblade and his companions wish to create a Name for their group. The group decides that they will be Named "Thom's Adventurers" because Thom was the one who first gathered them together.

Choose a Group Symbol

A group symbol is a small picture or diagram that is a visual representation of the group. Like a group Name, the symbol must represent the group in some way.

Thom's Adventurers decide that the symbol for their group will be that of a sword shattering a stone disk that bears the sigil of a Horror. This symbol represents one of the group's first adventures, in which they destroyed a Horror that had consumed several kaers.

Create Symbolic Items

Once the group chooses a Name and symbol for itself, each member must create an item that represents the group and his role in it. Carving the group symbol into the item is one way to ensure that the item represents the group.

Unweaving Threads

Optional Rule: Adepts may wish to remove, or "unweave," threads they have previously woven for a variety of reasons. An adept who has unwittingly woven a thread to a cursed or Horror-marked item may want to unweave the thread to escape the effects of the curse or Horror mark. An adept may simply have reached his thread limit but still feel the need to weave a thread to a different pattern. Rather than increasing his Thread Weaving Rank or allowing one of his threads to be displaced, he may simply want to unweave a thread.

The optional Unweaving Threads rule provides adepts with a means to do so. To unweave a thread under this rule, an adept must take 5 Strain Points of damage and achieve an Excellent result on a Thread Weaving Test against a Difficulty Number equal to his unlowered Spell Defense plus the thread Rank. For example, if a Wizard with a Spell Defense of 10 wants to remove a Rank 5 thread he has attached to a thread item, he would require an Excellent result on a Thread Weaving (15) Test.

Adepts cannot unweave threads woven by others. By unweaving a thread, an adept does not recover the Legend Points he originally spent weaving the thread. Legend Points spent on threads are gone forever and cannot be regained.

Farliv is an elven Archer and a member of Thom's Adventurers. Farliv must create an item that represents the group and his role in it. He chooses one of his arrows for his symbolic item. The arrow is one that Farliv used to slay a creature during the first adventure he shared with Thom Hammerblade. The arrow represents Farliv's role in the group (Archer) and the group itself, because the arrow was used in his first adventure with the group.

The example above is just one possibility of a symbolic character/group item. Players are encouraged to use their imagination when creating these items. Though almost any item is viable, the gamemaster is the final arbiter of whether it is an acceptable item, as it will become a Pattern Item for the Group True Pattern.

Perform the Naming Ritual

Once the group Name and symbol are chosen and each member has created his symbolic item, the group performs the Naming ritual. The ritual involves one member acting as the leader, who states the Name of the group and that its symbol will represent the group. Then each member, starting with the leader, presents himself and the item he has chosen to the group. The exact ritual varies widely, but a commonly used ritual goes as follows:

GROUP TRUE PATTERN LEGEND POINT COST TABLE

Thread Rank	Legend Point Cost
1	300
2	500
3	800
4	1,300
5	2,100

"This assembly shall be Named [Group Name]. This symbol represents our present, past, and future, and will be known across all of Barsaive as that of [Group Name]."

"I am Named [character Name]. This [character's item] represents my loyalty to this assembly. I am forever a part of [Group Name]."

Each member in turn recites his Name, symbolic item, and his loyalty to the group. After the last member has done so, the leader then invites the members to swear an oath of Blood Peace.

Group Oath of Blood Peace

The last Step in creating a Group True Pattern involves Blood Magic. Each of the members must swear a special oath of Blood Peace to the group. The **Blood Magic** chapter, p.123, provides information about the Blood Peace oath, but a few important distinctions need to be made here. The oath is made to the group as a whole, not to each individual member of the group. This means that each member only takes a total of 2 points of damage from the oath of Blood Peace, not 2 points for every member of the group.

Once all the members of the group take the oath of Blood Peace, the group's True Pattern is formed, and the individual characters' symbolic items become Minor Pattern Items for the Group True Pattern. From then on it is the same as any other True Pattern in that it represents everything about the group, it can be accessed via one of its Pattern Items, and threads can be woven to it.

Group Continuation

To continue to benefit from the Group True Pattern, characters have to keep true to their oaths of Blood Peace and renew their oath in the presence of other members of the group at the end of its duration. If a member fails to renew the oath, he has to re-join the group (see below). At least two members must renew the oath, otherwise the Group True Pattern becomes inaccessible.



If a character dies and his death is not prevented (see **Losing Threads**, p.114), his oath to the group remains for its duration or until the Group True Pattern dissolves, whichever comes first. If he is not brought back to life within that time, he loses threads woven to the Group True Pattern and has to re-join the group and re-weave threads to the Pattern Item to benefit from it. Note that the death of a member does not change the nature of a Pattern Item for the Group True Pattern—a villain killing a member and taking his Pattern Item can use it against the group.

While the oath of Blood Peace with a group has to be re-sealed yearly just like a regular Blood Peace oath, characters never gain a bonus to Death Rating as they gain from normal Blood Peace oaths.

Adding New Members

If a group decides to add new members to its True Pattern, its members must perform the Naming ritual again, this time including the new members in the rite. New members must create a symbolic item and then take the Group Oath of Blood Peace. After the Naming ritual, the Group True Pattern is changed to reflect the new members.

Just the same, members who missed a renewal ceremony or died and lost their threads to the Group True Pattern can re-join the group as if they were new members, but need not create a new Pattern Item.

Current members of the group do not take additional Blood Magic Damage from performing the ritual again, as they do not actually join the group they are already a part of again, although any new members joining the group do (see **Group Oath of Blood Peace**, p. 120).

Key Knowledges of Group Pattern Items

Because the members of a group must create Pattern Items of the group, those Pattern Items hold Key Knowledges about the True Pattern of the group. This has two important consequences. First, members of the group already know the Key Knowledges in order to weave threads to the Group True Pattern, because they already know the Key Knowledges held by the item.

The second consequence is that non-group characters can use these Pattern Items against the group, just as with Pattern Items of people and places. If another character obtains a Group Pattern Item, that individual can learn the Key Knowledges held by the item, which always contain the following information:

- The Name of the group.
- The Names of each of the group's members.
- The Name of the character who created the Pattern Item.

If a character loses his Group Pattern Item, he cannot weave any more threads to the Group True Pattern, and any already woven threads will cease to help him until he recovers the item.

Weaving Threads to Group True Patterns

Members of a group that have created a Group True Pattern can weave threads from their individual True Patterns to the Group True Pattern. These threads can be used to enhance a character's talents or some characteristics, while they are interacting with the group. This is possible because the magical energy of the Group True Pattern is empowering those who weave threads to it through its Pattern Items. However, when the character is acting on his own, such as for personal gain unrelated to any intentions of the rest of his group, he gains no benefit from threads he has woven to the Group True Pattern.

The Steps for weaving threads to the Group True Pattern are the same as for weaving threads to other True Patterns, except that a character already has the necessary Key Knowledge. This leaves only two Steps for weaving threads: **Spending Legend Points** and **Weaving the Thread**.

Spending Legend Points

When a character wants to weave a thread from his True Pattern to a Group True Pattern, he must first prepare the thread by spending Legend Points. The Legend Point cost for Thread Ranks woven to Group True Patterns is the same as for a Warden talent, as shown in the Group True Pattern Legend Point Cost Table. Once a character spends the required Legend Points, he can attempt to weave the thread to the Group True Pattern.

Weaving the Thread

Weaving threads to Group True Patterns is done in exactly the same way as weaving threads to other True Patterns. The Difficulty Number is determined by the Rank of the thread that must be woven. If the Thread Weaving Test succeeds, the thread is attached; if the test fails, the character must wait for a day (or spend a remaining Recovery Test) before he can try again. Because the Pattern Items for a Group Pattern are Minor Pattern Items, a Good Result is needed on the Thread Weaving Test to successfully weave the thread, just like Minor Pattern Items for other people and places.

Group True Pattern Thread Limits

Though thread magic usually has a limit of one thread per Pattern Item, this limit does not apply when weaving threads to a Group True Pattern. Because a character is integral to the pattern of his group, he can have a maximum of five threads woven to his own Group True Pattern. Someone acquiring a pattern item for a group he is not a member of is still restricted to a single thread.

In Friendly or In Enemy Hands

Unlike other Pattern Items, Pattern Items for Group True Patterns work differently for different characters.

Characters that are members of the group gain their bonuses while interacting with the group (acting as a part of it or on its behalf), but cannot boost the effectiveness of the group as a whole. This is because there is no ability to which the thread could be "attached." For normal Pattern Items used to boost someone else's abilities, there is a specific target for the thread. For example, an Archer weaving a thread to the Pattern Item of his Warrior friend can specify that Warrior's Physical Defense as a target to boost it. In case of a group, though, there is no specific target for that thread. The Group True Pattern does not have a Physical Defense, it is not a Physical being, but an immaterial and intangible entity. And although its members boast viable target's for such a thread (they all have a Physical Defense, for example), the thread could not be attached to all these targets (one thread cannot be attached to all their Physical Defense Ratings). In other words, a Group True Pattern is something a member can draw power from and channel it toward his own ends, but power cannot be channeled into a Group True Pattern.

Characters that are not members of the group can use its Pattern Items similarly to normal Pattern Items, but with greater efficiency. If an enemy or outside ally of the group obtains the Group Pattern Item of just one of its members, and then weaves a thread to it and ties it to one of his abilities, that ability is boosted when interacting with any member of the group. For example, a Nethermancer tying the thread to his Spellcasting talent gains a bonus to his Spellcasting talent whenever he casts a spell against a member of the group. If this is a good or bad thing depends on the Nethermancer's attitude towards the group. An enemy Nethermancer can use the bonus to better attack the group, but a friendly Nethermancer would use it to better cast spells such as Recovery on its members.

Members of a group are well advised to keep a close watch on Group Pattern Items of previous members. Even if a previous member dies, his Pattern Item is still a Pattern Item for the whole group. It can be given to allies, but must be kept away from enemies.

CHAPTER TEN

BLOOD MAGIC

Everyone bleeds: You. Me. Even Horrors. But in this world, blood is a powerful weapon, and you best not forget that when all other weapons might fail you.

• Lorm, Troll Sky Raider •

Blood magic draws its power from small sacrifices, usually a small amount of blood. The sacrifice is represented by the character taking a few Damage Points to strengthen the magic of a talent, ability, or promise.

Blood magic offers a vivid reminder of the torments people inflicted on themselves in the days before and during the Scourge. As a result, ordinary citizens often feel deeply suspicious of adepts who use blood magic. Most Barsaivians work hard at putting the devastation of the Horrors out of their minds, and choose to reject everything that blood magic represents—even its potential for helping those still battling the remnants of the Horrors.

Those who accept blood magic as a necessary means to achieve the greater good of destroying the Horrors often refer to this practice as "life magic" to stress the positive aspect of this magic and cultivate tolerance among the mainstream for those Namegivers who use it.

A third faction has seen blood magic used for both good and evil. Though places like the Blood Wood offer an ever-present example of blood magic gone horribly wrong, others have benefited from life magic and suffered no ill effects. These individuals agree that blood magic offers great power, but also stress that such power demands great responsibility of those who would use it.

Characters in **Earthdawn** may use blood magic in a variety of ways. Characters most commonly use blood magic to power certain talents, spells, knacks, blood charms and living armor. Characters may also use blood magic to enhance their talents or abilities, swear oaths or perform rituals. Characters may even use a special form of blood magic, known as sacrifice magic, to perform heroic feats, lay curses, or create True patterns.

Every use of blood magic requires a character to make a sacrifice, which may take the form of Strain, Blood Magic Damage, Permanent damage, one or more Wounds, or even his life. Unless otherwise noted, a character taking a Wound as required by certain uses of blood magic need not make a Knockdown Test for that Wound. The sacrifice required for the different uses of blood magic appears in the descriptions in this section.

Strain damage suffered as a result of blood magic is recorded and healed in the same manner as other damage (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220). Blood Magic Damage and Permanent damage, however, are recorded separately, in the Blood Magic space on the Character Record Sheet. Blood Magic Damage and Permanent damage are not healed by standard Recovery Tests, and are not counted as damage for the purposes of healing Wounds, increasing talent Ranks, or other situations where the character must be uninjured. After its duration has elapsed, specified by the type of blood magic, Blood Magic Damage reverts to regular damage and may be healed normally. Often the duration of Blood Magic Damage is year and a day, but for minor things, such as blood charms, the period may only be a day or until the charm is used. However, Permanent damage is just that, permanent, and is recorded as a reduction in the character's Death and Unconsciousness Ratings that is never recovered.

BLOOD WOUNDS

Many types of blood magic cause Blood Magic Damage that may only be healed under certain conditions. In addition to this damage, some blood magic can cause a Blood Wound that can only be healed after a certain length of time, or by the use of a magical healing potion. Unless specifically noted, any Wound caused by the use of any form of blood magic is considered to be a Blood Wound, and can be healed after a year and a day.

Blood Wounds, like other long-term Blood Magic Damage, do not prevent the character from increasing his talent Ranks or advancing to new Circles. Blood Wounds are otherwise treated as normal Wounds, affecting the character's Action Tests and ability to heal damage (see **Wounds** in the **Combat** chapter, p.221).

Use of a healing potion (or other similar healing aids) does not automatically heal a Blood Wound and may only be attempted after all other normal Wounds (for example, those inflicted in combat) have been healed. A single dose of healing potion will heal only one Blood Wound. The character drinks the potion, and makes a Recovery (24) Test—the Spell Defense of a Blood Wound; the healing potion's +8 bonus is applied to this Recovery Test, as normal. If the test succeeds, the Wound heals, leaving a runic scar. If the test fails, the Blood Wound remains, but the potion works normally, healing a number of Damage Points equal to the Recovery Test result, minus the number of Wounds (including Blood Wounds) the character currently has.

Successfully using a healing potion in this manner does not heal any other damage the character may have; the potion's magic is entirely consumed in the attempt to heal the Blood Wound. Some legends say that questors can heal Blood Wounds, but no evidence has yet been found to substantiate these tales.

The runic scar from a healed Blood Wound is permanent, though it may be concealed with clothing, make-up, or illusionism magic. Reading a runic scar using the Read and Write Magic talent reveals the reason for the Blood Wound scar.

COMMON BLOOD MAGIC

The following are all examples of "common" blood magic, practiced by adepts across Barsaive. Because the details vary from use to use, only a general overview is provided here.

POWERING TALENTS AND SPELLS

Many **Earthdawn** talents, spells, and Discipline abilities require blood magic in their use. The specific requirements are noted in the talent, spell, or ability description. Most blood magic in this category only causes Strain, but some abilities cause Blood Magic Damage, or even Permanent damage.

Powering Blood Charms and Living Armor

Blood magic is also used to power blood charms and certain types of living armor. These applications of blood magic usually cause the user Blood Magic Damage that cannot be healed until the item is used or removed.

Pushing Talents and Abilities

Characters are sometimes called on to perform acts of heroism beyond even their extraordinary abilities. In these instances a character may temporarily enhance, or "push," one of his talents or abilities by using blood magic to tap into the power of his own life force.

A character gains a +3 bonus to a single Action Test by taking Strain equal to his Wound Threshold. This damage may be healed normally, and does not cause a Wound.

A character gains a +7 bonus to a single Action Test by inflicting a physical Wound on himself and drawing blood (for example, slicing his hand with a knife). The resulting damage may be healed normally, but the Blood Wound leaves a noticeable scar and may not be healed for a year and a day. The Wound may otherwise be healed in the same manner as other Blood Wounds (p.123). For example, a Sky Raider using this form of blood magic cuts himself with a large knife. The Sky Raider has a Wound Threshold of 12, so he takes 12 Damage Points and a Blood Wound. The Sky Raider can heal the 12 points of damage normally, but the Blood Wound cannot be healed until a year and a day has passed.

The character takes the damage immediately after performing the enhanced test, and any damage resulting from the test is applied at the same time. It is possible for a character to suffer additional Wounds or even die from pushing himself too hard. After a character has pushed a talent or ability, he cannot push that talent or ability again until the resulting damage is healed. The Wound caused by the stronger push need not be healed before another push. Characters may combine a blood magic push with a dying act (see **Dying Act**, p.126).

Ritual Blood Magic

In ritual blood magic, a character draws magical power from a donor's blood. In this rarely used form of blood magic, the power derived from the donor's blood is used to create specific effects rather than enhancing other uses of magic. Examples of ritual blood magic include the Nethermancer spells Create Life and Alter Life.

Blood Oaths

Blood oaths are one of the most significant uses of blood magic in **Earthdawn**. When swearing a blood oath, characters use blood magic to seal a promise. A character may swear a blood oath with any other character who holds at least an Unfriendly attitude towards him, though some blood oaths require a more favorable attitude. With the gamemaster's permission, two player characters may swear a blood oath between themselves.

Blood oaths can only be sworn between two characters at a time. There is one exception to this rule: a group of adepts can swear an oath of blood peace to their group as a whole as part of the ceremony to create a Group True Pattern (see **Thread Magic and Group True Patterns** in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.120). If two characters wish to swear a blood oath with three dwarfs, for example, each character would have to complete the oath three times, once with each dwarf.

Blood oaths must be sworn voluntarily, but if a character swears a blood oath while under the influence of magical charms, spells, or drugs (including strong drink) he is considered to have done so voluntarily. Blood oaths possess great power—regardless of intent or circumstance, magic binds those who swear such pledges.

While blood oaths typically involve an even exchange of abilities or deeds, equally binding vows, or unceasing and active loyalty to one another, they may also be used to strike other important bargains. Legends speak of scoundrels who somehow deceived others into swearing unevenly advantageous blood oaths, but these bounders always fared badly as a result. Blood magic always punishes the unjust user.

Most blood oaths last for a year and a day. At the end of the oath's duration, it may be renewed. Details on the duration and renewal terms of the different types of blood oaths are included with the descriptions below.

Blood Peace

A blood peace oath seals a truce between two characters. Any two living characters may swear a blood peace oath. A character may swear separate blood peace oaths with as many characters as he wishes, limited only by the number of points of damage the character must take for each oath.

To swear blood peace, each character draws blood from their dominant weapon arm (t'skrang draw blood from their tails), suffering 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed as long as the blood peace remains in effect and can never be healed (becoming Permanent damage) if a character violates the oath (the violator also suffers a Blood Wound, see below).

Each character presses his weapon into the other character's blood, and swears the oath as the blood dries on the weapon. The exact wording of the oath varies according to area, but all versions include the elements contained in the following example.

> *"As the sun shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my deeds. All people shall see that I mean no harm to [other character's name]. I shall take no action to bring harm to him or those of his blood, or knowingly allow harm to befall [other character's name] or those of his blood."*
>
> *"As the moon shines upon the earth, so shall light illuminate my intent. All people shall see that I honor my promise."*

By swearing a blood peace oath, two characters promise that they will never harm one another or allow harm to come to the other through inaction. A character who violates a blood peace oath releases the other from the vow. In addition, the violator suffers a Blood Wound on the part of his body he drew blood from and the Blood Magic Damage taken becomes Permanent. This Wound lasts for a year and a day from the time it appears, and may be healed as described under **Blood Wounds**, p.123.

If both characters keep their vow for a year and a day, the Damage Points taken for swearing the blood peace may be healed as normal damage. In addition, the scar on each character's body from which he drew the blood for the oath becomes the color of gold or silver. Each character adds +1 to his Death Rating as long as both characters maintain their vow of peace. The characters lose this Death Rating bonus if either breaks the vow, but neither suffers any additional penalty for breaking the blood peace after the duration ends.

If they choose, the characters may re-swear the blood peace oath after the first year and a day. If the oath is re-sworn, the 2 Blood Magic Damage may not be healed, and breaking the oath will cause the damage to become Permanent and a Blood Wound, as described above. While simply maintaining the blood peace may seem more advantageous than re-swearing the oath, re-swearing the oath represents a stronger commitment between the characters. Characters may continue to renew blood peace oaths indefinitely, but the +1 bonus to the characters' Death Rating is only applied once.

Blood Promise



Characters who swear a blood promise oath pledge to perform certain dangerous or heroic deeds. Any two living Name-giver characters with at least Unfriendly attitudes toward each other may swear a blood promise oath. Characters may only swear one blood promise at a time.

To swear a blood promise, each character cuts their forehead, and their chest over the heart, drawing blood. Each character takes 4 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed until both parties fulfill their promise. The damage becomes Permanent for characters who do not fulfill their sworn promise within a year and a day.

Each character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and the blood from his chest with his right hand. Facing each other, the characters press their hands together, mixing the blood. As the blood dries on their hands, the characters state their Names and recite their promises to each other.

The characters should state their promises as similarly as possible. Each character must describe his pledged deed, identifying a talent or skill he will use while accomplishing it. The characters must also state the time period, not exceeding a year and a day, within which they must perform their deeds and meet after fulfilling their promises.

Delthrien, the elven Archer, finds himself negotiating with Filtch, a windling Thief of poor reputation. Delthrien needs Winter Fury, a magical arrow hidden somewhere in the caverns belonging to the dragon Icewing. Filtch needs bits of three magical plants—olis eye, moonreed and floating palm, all rumored to grow in the Mist Swamps. Filtch knows the secrets of Icewing's caverns, but he refuses to sell his knowledge or lead a team. He also does not want to go mucking about in a marsh, so Filtch and Delthrien strike a deal. They agree to swear a blood promise and make the following oaths:

"I, Delthrien, elven Archer, promise to travel to the Mist Swamps. There I shall obtain leaves from three magical plants: olis eye, moonreed and floating palm. I shall be diligent in my efforts in the swamps. I shall slay the dangerous beasts that dwell there with my True Shot. I shall not tarry nor accept any other deed until I have secured the leaves. I shall find these before the start of winter season. I shall then return to this tavern and deliver the leaves to Filtch the Thief. With Filtch I mix my blood in promise."

"I, Filtch, windling Thief, promise to travel to the caverns of the dragon Icewing. I shall use my Silent Walk to tread through his caverns more softly than snow falling on a quiet night, and there I shall obtain the arrow Winter Fury. I shall be diligent in my efforts. I shall not tarry nor accept any other deed until I have secured Winter Fury. I shall find the arrow before the start of winter season. I shall then return to this tavern and deliver Winter Fury to Delthrien the Archer. With Delthrien I mix my blood in promise."

The blood magic of the oath supports the talent or skill named in the blood promise by granting a +1 bonus to it. In the example above, Delthrien would gain a +1 bonus to his True Shot talent, while Filtch would gain a +1 bonus to his Silent Walk talent. The bonus lasts for the duration of the promise, or until the promise is broken. The character applies the bonus whenever he uses the talent for the duration of the oath, whether the character is using the talent to fulfill the promise or for some other purpose. The characters must fulfill the promise within the agreed time or the oath is violated.

If a character violates a blood promise oath he manifests two Blood Wounds, one on the forehead, the other on the chest. These Wounds last for a year and a day from the time the blood promise is broken, and will not heal naturally during this time. A character may attempt to heal the Blood Wound with a healing potion as described above.

If both characters keep their promise, the skin (or scales or rock) on the characters' chests from which they drew blood becomes the color of rubies or emeralds. When they meet after fulfilling the promise, the characters may immediately heal the 4 Damage Points that making the promise cost them. If they choose to heal this damage, they lose the bonus to the talents used to fulfill the blood promise. The characters may instead agree to heal only 2 Damage Points and make the increase to the talents used in their blood promise permanent. The remaining 2 Damage Points become Permanent damage and can never be healed; subtract –2 from each character's Death and Unconsciousness Rating.

Blood Sworn

The most potent blood magic oath is the blood sworn oath. Only characters with Loyal attitudes toward each other may be blood sworn. Each character must have demonstrated the depth of his loyalty to the other at least three times by taking considerable risks for the benefit of the other character or otherwise behaving in a manner generally recognized as loyal. At least three years of loyal behavior must pass between the first loyal action and when the characters become blood sworn. A character may be blood sworn to only one other character.

The characters begin the blood sworn ritual by cutting their forehead, and their chests over the heart, drawing blood. This causes 4 Permanent damage that can never be healed—each character subtracts 4 from his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings.

One character wipes the blood from his forehead with his left hand and presses his blood-smeared hand to the forehead cut of the other character while reciting the first part of the oath. The other character repeats this gesture and the oath. The first character then wipes the blood from his chest with his right hand and gently presses that hand against the cut in the other character's chest while reciting the second part of the oath. The second character repeats the gesture and the oath. The exact wording of the

oath varies according to area, but all include the same elements as the following example:

First Oath

"As the sun rises each day, I shall think of you. As the stars shine each night, so shall you be constantly in my thoughts. As night follows day, so closely shall we share our separate lives. I shall know you as completely as you shall know me. This I swear to you."

Second Oath

"As the blood of my heart touches yours, so shall I touch your feelings. As your heart beats against my hand, so shall your feelings touch mine. My loyalty shall be yours. My courage shall be yours. The strength of my heart shall flow through your veins. When there is need, I shall be strong for both of us. This I swear to you. We are blood sworn."

The blood sworn oath lasts for a lifetime. Blood sworn characters must be loyal to each other, protect each other and serve each other for the rest of their lives. As with all blood oaths, the gamemaster determines whether the characters fulfill their oath. A blood sworn character who violates his oath receives seven Blood Wounds that last for three years and three days after the oath is broken. After this time, six of the Wounds can be healed normally. One of the Blood Wounds, usually over the heart, remains unhealed. No known magic can heal this final Wound. The character may attempt to heal the other six Blood Wounds using healing potions as described above.

Blood sworn characters who remain loyal friends gain several advantages for the duration of their friendship. First, each character adds +2 to one Attribute value and +1 to a second Attribute value. They also do not count toward the limits for Attribute improvement (see the **Building Your Legend** chapter, p.237). Second, each character gains +1 Rank in the Blood Share talent, even if the character is not an adept. Blood sworn characters use the talent to transfer damage between themselves, rather than between a character and a mount. This version of the talent can only be used to transfer damage between the blood sworn characters. If a character already possesses the Blood Share talent, he gains it again as a separate talent. Characters can purchase Ranks for this version of the Blood Share talent as a Journeyman level Talent, but these Ranks do not count toward the requirements for Circle advancement.

The Blood Share between two blood sworn characters provides more power than the ordinary talent by enabling one character to raise his friend from the dead. The character's Rank in the blood sworn version of the Blood Share talent must equal or exceed the number of days his friend has been dead. One use of the talent must reduce the damage to the deceased to less than his Death Rating. The character cannot try again. Using this talent to raise a dead friend permanently reduces both characters' Death Ratings by –1. Finally, blood sworn characters add +1 Rank to their Thought Link and Empathic Sense talents when using them to communicate with each other. If the characters do not possess the Thought Link or Empathic Sense talents, they gain them at Rank 1, but cannot increase the Rank of these talents and may only use them to communicate with the person to whom they are blood sworn. For blood sworn characters, the range of Thought Link is 100 yards. They also add a +3 Rank bonus to the talent Rank to determine the range in miles of the Empathic Sense talent between them. If one of the blood sworn characters died and is not revived for a year and a day, any Talents gained from being blood sworn are lost. Also, the surviving character may enter into another blood sworn oath with someone after this, provided three years of loyal behavior have passed between them since his former blood sworn friend died.

SACRIFICE MAGIC

Sacrifice magic is the most extreme form of blood magic practiced by player characters. All sacrifice magic must be performed by characters who are conscious and capable of action. A character sacrifices his own life, channeling his entire life force into a single magical act. There is no known means to restore life to someone who dies through the use of sacrifice magic. Even magical life-restoring methods such as last chance salves and death cheat charms have no effect.

The following text describes some of the possible uses of sacrifice magic. As always, the gamemaster has the final say on the effects of any specific act of self-sacrifice and may modify or expand on the effects described here.

DYING ACT

A dying act is a final, heroic feat aided by sacrifice magic. The character must declare his intention to perform a dying act and describe the act before performing it. On his next action, the character rolls his Step dice for the test and adds 1 Karma die for each Karma Point he has remaining. After the character performs the action, he dies. Once a character makes the Dying Act Test, he cannot turn back. Whether or not the test succeeds, he dies.

If a character declares his intention to perform a dying act but changes his mind before making the Dying Act Test, he immediately suffers 3 Blood Wounds which will not heal for a year and a day. The character may attempt to heal these wounds with healing potions, however, as described above. Characters may also push talents or abilities while performing dying acts.

DYING CURSE

Characters may use sacrifice magic to pronounce a dying curse on an enemy, a place, or an item. Treat all dying curses as Major curses (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 112). The Step Number of a dying curse equals the cursing character's Thread Weaving or Perception Step, whichever is higher.

Possible curse effects include reducing the target's skills, talents, or attributes, scarring or transforming the target, blighting areas of land, or diminishing the usefulness of a weapon or other magical item. A dying curse may also seal off a specific location (usually where the character died) in the same way as a magical trap or ward. In these cases, the curse's Detection Difficulty, Disarming Difficulty, or other appropriate characteristic equals the higher of the cursing character's Thread Weaving or Perception Step. Curses need not take effect immediately; the effects may not occur for years or even generations after their pronouncement. The cursing player and the gamemaster should work together to come up with a suitable curse effect. After the curse is pronounced, the character using the dying curse dies.

DYING LEGACY

When creating a dying legacy, a character uses sacrifice magic to create a True pattern. The True pattern may belong to an item or a place (usually the place where the character dies). Characters typically invoke dying legacies to imbue some item with the True pattern needed to make it a Legendary item. Many Legendary items were created through dying legacies during the early days of the Scourge, when numerous adepts died fighting Horrors.

To create a dying legacy, a character declares his intention to do so and describes the legacy. When the character dies, the True pattern forms. The Key Knowledges and Deeds associated with a True pattern created by a dying legacy will always be associated with the character who created the pattern and the manner of that character's death. For example, a character mortally wounded by a Horror may use a dying legacy to create a True pattern for his



sword before he dies. One of the Key Knowledges for the sword will include the Name of the Horror that slew the character. Similarly, one of the sword's Deeds will involve defeating the Horror.

A character may also use a dying legacy to impart a True pattern to a particular place. The place must be intimately associated with the character, such as his birthplace, home, or the site of his death. This True pattern means that the place will develop pattern items, and characters possessing these and learning the appropriate Key Knowledges may weave threads to the place. See the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.114, for more information on Key Knowledges, and Legendary and pattern items.

Dying Oath

A dying character can also use sacrifice magic to extract a dying oath from another character, usually to perform a specific deed such as avenging the dying character or finishing a task or quest that the dying character is forced to leave undone. The dying oath binds the surviving character to perform the deed and provides that character with additional ability to do so.

Both characters must willingly and knowingly enter into the dying oath. Once the surviving character has sworn the oath, the character calling for the oath dies.

The surviving character receives the dying character's remaining Karma Points. The player marks these points in a separate place on the surviving character's record sheet, as these Karma Points may only be used for tests related specifically to the task that the character has sworn to perform. This Karma may be used for any test that the surviving character performs to fulfill the oath, even if the character cannot normally spend Karma Points on those tests. These Karma Points cannot be replenished after they have been spent, and once the oath is fulfilled the points are lost.

The surviving character must fulfill his oath within a year and a day. If a character fails to fulfill a dying oath, he loses the Karma Points he received from the oath. In addition, the character loses the ability to regain any Karma Points for a year and a day.

Familiars

Many legends describe creatures and spirits that serve adepts. Known as familiars, these companions most commonly serve magician adepts, but adepts of any Discipline may acquire a familiar. For example, Beastmasters often acquire animal familiars from among the creatures loyal to them, and many Cavalrymen perform a familiar ritual with their mounts that strengthens the bond between mount and rider.

Almost any non-Namegiver creature or spirit can become a familiar, provided that the creature or spirit is well disposed toward the character. Named spirits and sapient creatures (such as dragons) cannot become familiars. Some rumors claim that mad and corrupt magicians have chosen unintelligent Horrors as familiars, but no evidence supports such claims.

Acquiring a Familiar

To acquire a familiar, an adept first must find the creature or spirit that will become the familiar. The potential familiar must be well-disposed toward the adept and willing to undergo the familiar ritual. In game terms, the creature or spirit must have the equivalent of a Loyal attitude toward the character. Adepts may use the Animal Bond talent to develop a relationship with an appropriate animal.

A spirit may only become a familiar if the magician who chose it has established a working relationship with the spirit through repeated summoning, and has treated it with respect in all instances. A magician cannot choose as a familiar any spirit with whom he has engaged in a Contest of Wills (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p.XX).

After choosing the creature or spirit, the adept swears a blood oath to declare his intent to take the creature or spirit as his familiar. The adept formally Names the familiar, and cuts his chest over the heart, drawing blood. The cut causes 4 Blood Magic Damage, which cannot be healed as long as the familiar bond continues. The adept then uses his right hand to mark the familiar's head with his blood, swearing to protect and care for the familiar in exchange for the familiar's aid and service. The exact oath varies according to the adept's Discipline and training, but most include the following elements:

> *"I [adept's Name], take you [familiar's Name], to be my companion. As I now offer my blood, so do I swear to give my aid and protection. My loyalty and patronage shall be yours. Our strength and our thoughts will be as one. This I do swear, now and forever."*

An adept may bond only one familiar at any time. The magic of the familiar bond lasts until the adept or familiar breaks the blood oath or dies. An adept may break the blood oath by allowing the familiar to come to harm or by failing to take proper care of the familiar. As with other blood oaths, the gamemaster determines whether or not a character has broken the oath.

An adept who breaks a familiar blood oath suffers 3 Blood Wounds that cannot be healed for a year and a day. He may attempt to heal these wounds with healing potions as described above. At the gamemaster's discretion, the adept may re-establish the familiar bond if he makes sufficient reparation for his mistake, but a familiar will never return to a master who deliberately abused or mistreated it. An adept cannot bond with a new familiar until he has healed any Wounds caused by breaking a previous familiar blood oath.



Benefits of a Familiar

The familiar bond grants the character and his familiar several benefits. The master gains a special version of the Blood Share talent at Rank 1, which may only be used to transfer damage between the master and the familiar. This talent may be increased as a Journeyman level talent, but does not count for circle advancement. If the master uses this ability to transfer an amount of damage that exceeds the familiar's Death Rating, he automatically breaks the familiar blood oath and suffers the standard consequences when the familiar dies. Magicians with spirit familiars may also use this ability, but the spirit must be physically manifest and touching the adept. Spirit familiars unable to manifest cannot offer this ability to their masters. The familiar bond also creates a mental link between master and familiar. The master learns a special version of the Thought Link talent at Rank 1, which may only be used to communicate with his familiar. This talent may be increased as a Journeyman level talent, but does not count for Circle advancement. This ability enables both master and familiar to sense the general feelings and location of the other, including if the other is in danger. More detailed information can be gained with a successful Thought Link Test.

In addition to the Blood Share and Thought Link abilities, characters with familiars may purchase other "bonus" talents for use with their familiars. These talents are purchased and increased as Journeyman level talents, but do not count toward Circle advancement (just like talents learned through Versatility). Masters can purchase the Animal Possession talent for use with the familiar only. The talent allows the master's spirit to possess the familiar and use its senses. The Animal Possession talent has no effect on spirit familiars. A magician may use his familiar as an additional spell matrix by purchasing an additional Spell Matrix talent. To use the spell stored in the familiar's matrix, the familiar must be within 2 yards of (in a hex adjacent to) the magician. The spell matrix possesses all of the usual spell matrix characteristics and limitations (see Spell Matrix Talent in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.80). Lastly, the master may purchase the Familiar Durability Talent for his familiar, increasing its Death and Unconsciousness Ratings. The Familiar Durability Talent is purchased and increased as a Journeyman level talent, but does not count toward Circle advancement. All such Talents purchased for one's familiar are lost if the familiar dies and his death is not prevented. These Talents arise from the Blood Magic ritual and are invested into that particular familiar, and must be purchased afresh for any future familiars.

Additionally, the familiar bond creates a link between the patterns of the familiar and master. This link enables the master to weave threads to his familiar's pattern, improving the familiar's abilities and his own as if they were minor pattern items for each other. Any improvements in talents or abilities the master gains in this manner apply only when he is dealing with the familiar. For example, a magician who weaves a thread to his familiar and attaches it to his Spellcasting talent gains the Rank increase only when casting spells on his familiar, which makes using certain beneficial spells on the familiar easier. However, any improvements made to the familiar apply in all cases, just as if the master were weaving a thread to a friend's pattern item to improve the abilities of his friend.

The pattern link may also be a drawback, however. Anyone who gains access to a character's familiar can use it to weave threads to that character's pattern as if the familiar were a minor pattern item. This bond lasts only while the familiar lives, but the bond remains even after the blood oath uniting the master and familiar has expired. See the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.113, for more information on pattern items and thread magic.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

SPELL MAGIC

The way of the magician is both power and danger. A spell, like any 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, and 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 chapter 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 of spellcasting, **raw magic** casting, is the most dangerous. Using this method, a magician draws energy directly from astral space and channels it through his body. Raw magic casting usually serves as a last-resort method of casting spells. For example, a magician has spell matrices available, but the spells attuned to the matrices are not the ones he needs. If he has no time to realign his spells, even by Reattuning on the Fly, he might risk casting raw magic simply to survive.

Casting raw magic can (and usually does) inflict physical damage on the magician. In addition, a magician casting raw magic momentarily abandons the teachings of his Discipline that allow him to draw only pure magical energy into his spells. The polluted energy the caster draws from the astral plane allows Horrors to locate magicians casting such spells and mark them.

The last method is called **grimoire casting**. As its name implies, this method enables a magician to cast spells directly from a grimoire, rather than using a spell matrix. It is a slower and more difficult method than either matrix casting or raw magic. It is safer than raw magic, but still carries its share of risk. The various methods of spellcasting are detailed later in this chapter.

TALENTS FOR CASTING SPELLS

A magician uses the Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents to power a spell by shaping its pattern and casting it. The magician also needs the Spell Matrix talent, or one of the variants, to provide a safe conduit for transferring magical energy from astral space to the physical world, minimizing the danger from the Horrors. As a magician gains experience, he learns to channel more magical energy into his spells and uses the Willforce talent to increase their power. The information below summarizes these basic spellcasting talents. Full descriptions can be found in the **Talents** chapter, p.57.

SPELLCASTING TALENT

Each of the four magician Disciplines—Elementalist, Illusionist, Nethermancer, and Wizard—have the Spellcasting talent available to them. This talent allows them to channel magical energies in the proper way to create a spell. Spellcasting Ranks are added to a character's Perception Step to make Spellcasting Tests, so a character created with a high Perception 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 Casting Difficulty. Often this is the target's Spell Defense, though in some cases another value is used. Each spell description lists the Casting Difficulty for that spell. If the result of the Spellcasting Test is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds.

In combat, Spellcasting Tests are considered Attack Tests. If the spellcaster achieves an Excellent result, that spell attack defeats the appropriate armor, physical or mystic, with an **Armor-Defeating Hit**, p.218.

THREAD WEAVING TALENT

Each magician Discipline has its own Thread Weaving talent. These are known, respectively, as Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, and Wizardry. The Thread Weaving talent allows a magician to weave spell threads into a spell's pattern. A magician also uses Thread Weaving to place a spell pattern into a spell matrix. A magician may only cast or learn spells if he knows the Thread Weaving talent for that Discipline.

Each Thread Weaving talent is unique, and can only be used with spells from that Discipline. If a magician purchases the Thread Weaving talent from another Discipline, he can cast and learn spells from that Discipline.

SPELL MATRIX TALENT

In the early days of this magical age, magicians worked their spells with raw magic, channeling astral energy directly through their own patterns and shaping that energy into spells. In the years leading up to the Scourge, however, magicians discovered that these traditional techniques of spellcasting created flares in astral space that often attracted the attention of nearby Horrors. As a result, the very spells magicians used to defend themselves and others often brought about their destruction. Many magicians died terrible deaths before the phenomenon was understood and a countermeasure devised.

Magicians needed a means to conceal the flares caused by forming spells from raw magic. They also needed a way to filter the increasingly corrupted astral energy and ensure that their spells would function properly. Magicians reasoned that this filter would need to be a magical pattern that came between the magician and astral space, providing concealment and protection.

Several magicians discovered they could produce such filters by using their Thread Weaving talents to alter the patterns of physical



objects. Magicians most commonly used items they carried at all times, such as staves, rings, wands and their ever-present robes. By "reweaving" these items with magical spell patterns, these items could be used to hold the essential "matrix" of one or more spells. The magician could then use the item to cast the spell without fearing the attention of the Horrors or risking harm from polluted astral energy. This system worked well enough, but if these matrix objects were lost or destroyed, a magician could be left with no safe means of casting spells.

Not long after the end of the Scourge, Nethermancer adepts discovered a way to create a filter purely from magical threads woven to the magician's True pattern. The magician could then use his Thread Weaving talent to "attune" the filter to mimic the pattern of any spell he wished to store. This technique developed into the Spell Matrix talent now used by magicians all over Barsaive and the Theran Empire. With these portable, personal and flexible matrices, the use of "magician's robes" and other matrix items quickly fell into disuse.

Once a spell has been placed in a spell matrix, the magician can repeatedly cast the spell by drawing magical energy through the matrix. If the magician wishes to cast a different spell using the same matrix, it must be reattuned to reflect the new spell. Magicians can have multiple spell matrices, attuned as they wish, depending on their personal abilities.

Some spells are too complex for a simple spell matrix. When a spell matrix is attuned to reflect more complex spells, the mimic-pattern of the matrix is compressed into a sort of "shorthand". This compression allows the matrix to reflect the complex spell's pattern, but the magician cannot directly cast the spell with this form of the matrix. The magician must weave additional threads of power into the matrix (the exact number depends on the complexity of the spell). These threads power the matrix and temporarily expand its capabilities so the spell can be properly cast. Once the spell is cast, the matrix returns to its "compressed" state. Each time the magician casts that spell, he must weave the required threads again to provide the power for the spell.

In the world of **Earthdawn**, magicians rarely cast spells without first placing them in a spell matrix. The other methods of casting a spell, casting from a grimoire, or casting raw magic, are dangerous and unreliable.

The use of spell matrices comes with a few drawbacks. The Spell Matrix Rank represents the maximum Spell Circle the individual matrix can hold. Also, to properly attune a spell matrix, the magician must know the intricacies of the type of spell—a level of understanding limited by the magician's Thread Weaving Rank appropriate to the type of spell (Elementalism, Nethermancy, etc.). Lastly, the magician must have a strong enough pattern to attune the matrix, represented by the highest Discipline Circle he has achieved. Even though learned spells become part of the magician's pattern, he may not be able to attune these more powerful spells into the matrix, regardless of the Rank of the matrix or his Thread Weaving Rank. For example, a Rank 3 Spell Matrix can hold a single First, Second, or Third Circle spell. However, a Second Circle magician or one with the appropriate Thread Weaving Talent at Rank 2 is not able to attune a Third Circle spell—he must resort to using raw magic or a grimoire to cast it.

More details about the different types of spell matrices and how they are used in the game is provided later in this chapter.

Willforce Talent

The Willforce talent provides additional energy to increase a spell's effect. Magicians do not normally have access to the Willforce talent until they reach at least Fifth Circle in their Discipline. Until a magician learns the Willforce talent his spell effects are based solely on his Willpower Step.

Spell Threads

As explained previously, 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 fit completely into a spell matrix. Before such a spell can be cast, the magician must add magical energy in the form of threads. Threads used to power spells are usually referred to as **spell threads**, to distinguish them from threads used to power magical items. A magician creates these spell threads from energy in astral space and weaves them into the spell pattern. The spell threads expand, strengthen, and define the spell, fully empowering it. A spell that requires threads is incomplete and cannot be cast without all of its threads.

A magician weaves threads with his Thread Weaving talent. If a magician fails a Thread Weaving Test, the only harm he suffers is wasted time; any spell threads already woven into the spell remain intact. Once a magician starts to weave a spell's threads, he must finish the spell or abandon it entirely. Once the weaving is complete, he must cast the spell during the next round. 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 already woven are lost.

Learning Spells

Magicians learn additional spells as they advance through the Circles of their Discipline. The magician often wishes to learn more than this bare minimum, however. A magician must learn new spells from another magician or from a grimoire other than his own. If a magician knows the appropriate Thread Weaving Talent, he can learn spells of any Circle, even those higher than his own, though he may not be able to cast those spells using his spell matrices.

A magician uses the Read/Write Magic talent to learn spells from a grimoire, reading the spell and copying it into his own. The magician makes a Read/Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. The Learning Difficulty is based on the

Spell Circle, as shown in the Spell Learning Difficulty Table. If the test succeeds, the magician reads and correctly interprets the spell, and writes it into his grimoire.

Once a magician has successfully placed a spell in his grimoire, he has learned the spell. Though a magician may cast a spell from a grimoire without first learning it (see **Casting From a Grimoire**, p.136), he must write the spell's symbols and patterns into his own grimoire in order to properly learn the spell. The magical act of manipulating spell symbols on paper (or on wood, metal, or stone) is necessary for the magician to lock the spell in his memory, merging the spell's pattern with his own.

SPELL LEARNING DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Learning Difficulty
1	9
2	11
3	13
4	15
5	16
6	17
7	18
8	20
9	21
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26
14	28
15	29

The magician may only use the Read/Write Magic talent once each day, though he may sacrifice available Recovery Tests to earn additional tests. For each Recovery Test sacrificed he may make an additional Read/Write Magic Test for attempting to learn a spell (other uses of the Read/Write Magic Talent do not count against this limit). The magician must be rested and in good health before he makes any Read/Write Magic Tests; a character suffering from any damage or Wounds may not learn a new spell.

A magician can more easily learn a spell with assistance from the owner of the grimoire he is copying the spell from. Before attempting to learn the spell, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. If successful, he adds his teacher's Thread Weaving Rank to his Read/Write Magic Test. For example, a magician learning an Illusionism spell from a teacher with Illusionism at Rank 4 adds +4 to his Read/Write Magic Test, increasing the likelihood of successfully learning the spell.

UNTUTORED SPELL LEARNING

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters may feel that learning spells is too easy for magicians, particularly those receiving assistance from others. This rule provides an option that makes learning spells more challenging for a magician. Other elements of the process, such as silver piece and Legend Point costs (if those optional rules are being used), remain unchanged.

A magician attempting to learn a spell without the assistance of a teacher requires a Good Result on his Read/Write Magic Test to learn the spell. While the character may be adept at reading magical writing, many magicians intentionally go out of their way to include codes and other written tricks in their writing to make it more difficult for others to copy their work. Without knowing these tricks, the task of transcribing spells from one grimoire to another is somewhat harder. If a grimoire's owner is willing to assist the magician to copy a spell, the task is made easier. The magician does not need to make a Spellcasting Test when using this optional rule. However, he does not add a Thread Weaving Rank bonus to his Read/Write Magic Test. Instead, he makes a Read/Write Magic Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty, but requires only an Average Result to learn the spell.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, is learning the Fifth Circle Fireball spell. The gamemaster has decided to use the optional Untutored Spell Learning rule in place of the normal rules for learning spells. If he was attempting to copy the spell without assistance, Broomé would need to achieve a Good result on his Read/Write Magic (16) Test—this would mean a roll of 24 or more! Thankfully, Broomé has the assistance of the grimoire's owner, and simply needs to make a standard Read/Write Magic (16) Test.

GRIMOIRES

Once a magician has successfully learned a spell, he can cast the spell from memory, simply by channeling magical energy through a properly attuned spell matrix. So why should a magician keep a grimoire? There are several reasons for doing so, most of which relate to training and teaching. A grimoire is more than a collection of the spells a magician has learned. It is a record of a magician's growth in his Discipline, through Novice (First through Fourth Circle), Journeyman (Fifth through Eighth Circle), Warden (Ninth through Twelfth Circle), and Master (Thirteenth Circle onwards).

Magicians also use their grimoires to record other information, such as spell research and runic carvings for later study. As magicians advance to higher Circles, they learn methods for incorporating various effects into new spells they design. All of this information is recorded in their grimoire.

When considering new students, many magicians want to review a candidate's grimoire. This enables the teacher to examine the student's past experiences and gauge his knowledge of the Discipline's spells. Some magicians refuse to instruct adepts who do not maintain grimoires or treat their grimoires poorly, because they believe such students lack respect for the traditions of their Discipline and the craft of spellcasting.

Grimoires also enable magicians to share spells with other adepts of their Discipline. An adept learning a spell must be able to copy the spell from a written document, so any magician who wishes to share spells or take on students must keep a grimoire.

Additionally, a magician's grimoire almost always becomes one of his pattern items. Though grimoires typically begin as a Minor pattern item, they may eventually become a Major or even Core pattern item. By keeping his grimoire with him at all times, a magician can ensure that at least one of his pattern items cannot be used against him (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.117, for more information on pattern items).

Although it is often a pattern item, the Spell Defense of a grimoire is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see **Dispelling Magic**, p.138).

Though a grimoire is often defined as a book of spells, implying a bundle of paper, grimoires come in many shapes and sizes and can be written on almost any type of material. 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, the spells appearing only under moonlight. The shape of a grimoire is limited only by the knowledge and idiosyncrasies of its owner.

Although it is an uncommon practice, magicians are known to write down single spells onto paper or other materials. Spells written down in this manner can be sold or stored as backup copies in case the magician's grimoire is lost or destroyed.

Spell Learning Cost

Optional Rule: Many magicians allow others to copy a spell from their grimoires by charging for it. Some magicians' guilds even sell written copies at their guildhouses, or allow their members to copy them for free for a monthly tithe. The standard price for learning a spell is equal to the spell's Circle×100 silver pieces. This cost may double, or even triple, if the character is seeking personal tuition to learn a spell.

High-Circle spells—Thirteenth Circle or greater—cannot normally be purchased this way. These spells are usually powerful ritual spells, and some even possess Names (see the ***Player's Companion***). The gamemaster determines the silver piece cost associated with learning these spells, if they are available to be learned at all.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, has finally found a magician who knows Fireball, a Fifth Circle spell. It has taken him some time to convince the other Elementalist that a flying fire cannon can be a good thing, so he quickly pays the 500 silver piece fee before the other magician changes his mind. Broomé starts copying the spell into his own grimoire. Although under no obligation to do so, the other Elementalist has kindly decided to assist Broomé, helping him to transcribe the spell into his grimoire. Broomé makes a Spellcasting (16) Test—the Learning Difficulty for a Fifth Circle spell—and achieves a successful result. His teacher knows Elementalism at Rank 6, so Broomé gains a +6 bonus to his Read/Write Magic Test, which he makes against the spell's Learning Difficulty of 16. Adding the tutoring bonus, Broomé makes a successful roll and copies the spell into his grimoire, effusively thanking his teacher.

Casting Spells

Magician characters who have learned spells by creating and using a grimoire, and who know the appropriate talents, can weave spell threads and cast spells. The process of spellcasting is straightforward, as shown below, but has the following limitations:

Your character cannot cast every spell in this book. To cast a spell your character must first have learned the spell or else must cast it from a grimoire. Your character must also have the appropriate Thread Weaving talent for the Discipline of the spell.

In most cases, the spell should be in a spell matrix. The other ways to cast spells—using raw magic or casting from a grimoire—are more difficult or carry higher risk to the caster and are not generally recommended except in extreme circumstances.

To cast a spell from a matrix, your character must have achieved a Circle and have the appropriate Thread Weaving Talent at a Rank at least equal to the Circle of 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.

Concentration

Once a spell has been successfully cast, the magician cannot usually end its effect until the spell expires. He must resort to other means (such as the Dispel Magic spell) to end the effect prematurely. Some spells, however, require that the magician (or spell target) concentrate in order to control the spell—either to direct the spell's effect, or to maintain the spell and prevent it from expiring. If a magician concentrating on a spell tries to make an Action Test other than those specified in the spell description, he breaks his concentration.

Injury to the magician may also break his concentration. If a magician suffers damage while concentrating on a spell, he must make a Willpower Test against the number of Damage Points taken. The magician may use his Willforce talent to add a bonus to this test, just as he can with spell effects. If the test succeeds, the magician keeps control of the spell. If the test fails, or the magician is knocked unconscious or killed, his concentration is automatically broken.

A spell that expires through a loss of concentration may be cast again, but the magician must reweave any required spell threads, as normal.

Human Versatility and Spellcasting

The human racial Versatility talent, p.85, enables human magicians to learn the Thread Weaving talents of other magician Disciplines. This allows human magicians to cast spells of several Disciplines, though the range of spells a magician may cast in this manner is limited.

When casting spells using a spell matrix, a magician may still only cast spells of Circles equal to his current Circle or his Rank in the appropriate Thread Weaving talent, whichever is lower. For example, a Fifth Circle human Nethermancer uses his Versatility talent to learn Elementalism (the Elementalist form of the Thread Weaving talent) at Rank 4. The magician may cast Nethermancy spells of Fifth Circle and lower, but his Elementalism spells are restricted to a maximum of Fourth Circle.

This restriction does not apply to magicians casting from a grimoire or using raw magic, as those methods do not have Circle restrictions under normal circumstances.

Human magicians attempting to learn spells of other magician Disciplines usually have problems finding willing teachers. Most magicians are reluctant to teach the spells of their Discipline to an adept of a different Discipline. Indeed, many magicians feel it is a betrayal of the traditions and customs of their Discipline to do so. Such teachers may demand a higher payment in silver (at least twice what they would charge a follower of their own Discipline), require the potential pupil to perform some sort of task or deed for the teacher, or even require the student to swear a blood oath of some sort.

Targeting Spells

Spells aren't like rocks thrown blindly in the dark, hoping for a hit; spells travel in an astral arc between the caster and the target. The caster can only create that arc if he can see (or otherwise sense) the target. Without the proper astral arc, the spell veers harmlessly into astral space, and may draw the attention of astral denizens, including Horrors.

Sight is not the only way of targeting a spell, though it is the most common. Creatures whose primary sense is not sight may create the proper astral arc using that sense. Any method that makes the magician certain of the target's location allows the creation of the proper astral arc. For example, a magician who is touching a target when casting a spell is certain of the target's location, even if he can't see the target. In the same manner, a magician can place an area effect spell at the end of his outstretched fingertips. Material objects between the caster and the target will not prevent a spell from reaching the target unless they block the magician's line of sight. Targets receive a bonus to their Spell Defense for Cover,

p.226, to reflect the increased difficulty of targeting them successfully. If the Spellcasting Test succeeds, however, any physical manifestation that accompanies the spell follows the astral arc, avoiding physical obstacles to strike the spell's target.

Since most spells can only be directed at targets the magician can see, magicians must possess some sort of astral sight ability to cast spells at astral targets. If a magician successfully uses an astral sensing ability (other than the Astral Sense spell), he may target that being with any spell that affects astral beings. As a general rule, spells resisted with Mystic Armor affect astral beings. Spells resisted by Physical Armor cannot be used by a caster in the physical world against targets in astral space. For example, a Wizard using Astral Sight could cast a Mind Dagger spell at a spirit in astral space, but he could not cast a Flame Flash spell on the spirit. The effect of Flame Flash is physical—it will not affect the immaterial spirit.

Magicians in astral space may cast spells against astral targets as if both the caster and the target were in the physical world. Magicians in astral space, however, cannot cast spells at targets in the physical world. See **Astral Space**, p.108, for more information on astral sensing and the interactions between the astral and physical realms.

Observing Spellcasting

When a magician casts a spell, he uses his strength of will and awareness of astral space to gather the energies found there and weave them into a predetermined form—a pattern—for a particular spell. The spell takes form on the astral plane, so an observer in the material world simply sees the magician concentrate, speak a few words and make some simple gestures to cast a spell.

An observer with the Astral Sight ability, or an observer in astral space can see the spell form around the magician as he gathers threads of magical energy and weaves them into the spell's pattern. The patterns of simple spells form and execute their effects almost instantly. More complex spells take time to form, and astral observers can see the magical energy building as they are prepared.

If the character is familiar with the spell being cast (either by knowing it himself or having seen it cast before), he may recognize it by making a successful Perception or Astral Sight Test against the spell's Learning Difficulty. These observations may warn of a magician's intentions, but generally they do not give an observer enough time to prevent a magician from casting a spell.

When a spell leaps through astral space toward its target, it moves very rapidly—too rapidly for characters to interfere with it. However, some Horrors and dragons have abilities that can counter spells.

Spellcasting Sequence

The following summary outlines the Steps necessary to cast a spell. More details on each Step follow the summary. When using matrix casting, remember that the caster must have a spell in one of his spell matrices before he can cast it.

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 (Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry). To weave a spell thread, the magician makes a Thread Weaving Test against the thread's Weaving Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the thread is woven.

Spell Legend Point Cost

Optional Rule: In order to complete the process of copying a new spell into his own grimoire, the magician pays a number of Legend Points, based on the Spell Circle, in order to cement his knowledge of the new spell. After he makes a successful Read/Write Magic Test the magician reduces his Current Legend Point total by the Legend Point cost of the spell. The costs of spells are equivalent to the cost of increasing a Novice Talent to a Rank equal to the Spell Circle. The magician must have sufficient Current Legend Points available to him when he makes his Read/Write Magic Test.

Broomé successfully transcribes the Fireball spell to his grimoire. Now he just needs to reinforce his new knowledge, which he does by deducting 800 Legend Points—the cost for a Fifth Circle spell—from his Current Legend Points total. Broomé has now learned the Fireball spell.

The magician may attempt to weave more than one thread in a round. He multiplies the Weaving Difficulty by the total number of threads he wants to weave, and makes a Thread Weaving Test against this higher Difficulty. If successful, the desired number of spell threads is woven. If the test fails, the magician weaves no threads; he may try again next round, as normal.

If the magician achieves an Excellent result on his Thread Weaving Test, he weaves an additional thread to the spell. This is the case whether he is weaving one or multiple spell threads that round.

A magician cannot normally weave spell threads and cast a spell during the same round. Having woven the required threads, the magician must cast the spell during the next round. Some high circle talents may allow a magician to weave threads and cast a spell in the same round.

Cymric's companions are in a jam, and Cymric knows the perfect spell to get them out. The spell requires three spell threads, each with a Weaving Difficulty of 7. Cymric recognizes the need for speed and attempts to weave all three spell threads in a single round, giving him a target Weaving Difficulty of 21 (3×7=21). To successfully weave all three threads, Cymric's player must make a successful Thread Weaving (21) Test. This is risky—if he fails his Thread Weaving Test, Cymric does not weave any threads that round, and the time advantage he hopes to gain is lost. Also, after weaving all of the required spell threads, Cymric must still wait until the next round to cast the spell.

Make Spellcasting Test

The Spellcasting talent or skill is used to cast spells. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spell's Casting Difficulty. If the test succeeds, the magician has successfully cast the spell. The Difficulty Number is often the target's Spell Defense, but may sometimes be a fixed value. Most living creatures base their Spell Defense on their Perception value. Some creatures are more resistant than others to magic and, as a result, have a higher Spell Defense. Dull-witted creatures and most inanimate non-magical objects have a Spell Defense of 2. Magical items generally have a higher Spell Defense, which varies based on the potency of the object.

Lowering Spell Defense

Even beneficial spells must overcome the target's Spell Defense. A character may take an action to voluntarily lower his Spell Defense, increasing the chances of receiving the benefit of the spell. The character makes a Perception Test and reduces his Spell Defense by the result, to a minimum of 2. The character's new Spell Defense is used to defend against all spells cast against him that round. His Spell Defense returns to its original value at the end of the round.

When a character chooses to lower his Spell Defense, he forfeits his Standard Action for that round. He may not use a talent that requires an action in the same round he voluntarily lowers his Spell Defense. Unless the spell description states otherwise, a magician may automatically lower his Spell Defense to 2 for any spells he casts on himself. This occurs during the same round in which he casts the spell, and does not cost the magician his Standard Action that round. For the remainder of the round, the magician subtracts –2 from his Spell Defense for spells directed at him from other sources. Note that regardless of the target's Spell Defense, the minimum Casting Difficulty for all Spellcasting Tests is 6. Result Levels are still based on the target's Spell Defense, however (see **Spells**, p.141).

Check Success

If the Spellcasting Test result is at least equal to the Difficulty Number, the spell succeeds. If the Spellcasting Test is less than the Difficulty Number, the spell fails. A combat spell that does damage may achieve a high-enough Result Level to qualify as an Armor-Defeating Hit, negating the advantages of Physical or Mystic Armor (see **Armor-Defeating Hits**, p.218).

Determine Spell Effect

Each spell's effect is given in its description. Some spells have a predetermined effect that occurs on a successful Spellcasting Test. Other spells have random effects described in a form such as "WIL+5". If one of these spells is successfully cast, the magician makes an Effect Test. The Effect Test of a spell is usually equal to the magician's Willpower Step plus the bonus given (+5 Steps in the example above).

Some spells use the target's Willpower Step instead of the magician's, or another random determinant. This is noted in the spell description. Magicians with the Willforce talent, p.86, may use it for spell Effect Tests. Spells that cause damage to targets often use their Effect Step as the Damage Step.

Determine Duration

After determining the spell's effect, the caster determines its duration. Most combat spells last less than a single combat round; once the spell has affected the target, its duration ends. Non-combat spells list the spell duration in rounds, minutes, hours, or some other time period. In the spell descriptions, "Rank" refers to the magician's Spellcasting Rank.

Variable Duration

If a spell has a variable duration, the magician rolls the Action Dice indicated in the description to determine the spell's duration.

Spellcasting Methods

The general Steps above apply to all methods of spellcasting—matrix casting, casting raw magic, and casting from a grimoire. Matrix casting, more commonly referred to as spellcasting, employs spell matrices and is the safest method. Because of the inherent danger in casting raw magic, magicians generally resort to this method only in dire emergencies. Magicians generally use a grimoire only when casting an unfamiliar spell. Directions for using each method appear below.

Bypassing Cover

Optional Rule: If a target has taken cover behind a non-magical barrier (like a stone wall), the magician may use an astral sensing ability to bypass the target's cover. If the magician successfully detects a target with an Astral Sensing Test (see **Astral Sensing**, p.257), he may cast spells on the target as if it were in astral space (see above). The target's Spell Defense is not modified for cover, as the spell travels solely through astral space and through any physical objects. Physical spells (those resisted by Physical Armor) do not bypass cover with this method, though the spell may still be targeted with astral sensing. Living astral presences (those with "substance" in astral space) also provide cover from astral targeting.

Spellcasting (Matrix Casting)

Magicians with the Spell Matrix talent can create spell matrices. Each Spell Matrix talent purchased represents one spell matrix. Spell matrices have Ranks, just like any other talent. New Ranks are purchased with Legend Points, at the same cost as for other talents of the same Circle.

To cast a spell from a spell matrix, the magician must first place the pattern of the spell into the matrix. This is called **attuning a matrix**. Simple spells, those that do not require threads, fit entirely into a spell matrix. Most spell matrices can only hold one spell.

Spell Matrix Types

The four types of spell matrices available to magicians as talents are the Spell Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Armored Matrix, and Shared Matrix. Unless specifically noted, all general references to a "spell matrix" in these rules refer to any of these types of matrix.

The **Spell Matrix** is the standard matrix used by most magicians. An **Enhanced Matrix** can hold one of a spell's required threads in addition to the spell pattern. When a magician attunes a spell to an Enhanced Matrix, the magician also weaves one of the spell's threads into the matrix. This thread remains woven in the spell's pattern and reduces the number of threads required to cast the spell by one. An **Armored Matrix** holds the spell and one of the spell's threads, just like an Enhanced Matrix. It also has its own mystic armor, allowing it to better withstand attacks that can damage a matrix. The **Shared Matrix** does not hold a thread the way an Enhanced or Armored Matrix does, but it can hold more than one spell at the same time. The total Spell Circles in a Shared Matrix must not exceed the Shared Matrix Rank.

The Spell Matrix Table summarizes important game information for the different types of spell matrices. For more information on each

SPELL MATRIX TABLE

Matrix Type	Death Rating	Holds Threads?	Maximum Available
Spell	10	No	5
Enhanced	15	Yes	4
Armored	25	Yes	3
Shared	20	No	3

of the different matrix types, see their entries in the **Talents** chapter (p. 57) and the ***Player's Companion***.

The Circle column indicates the Circle a magician must hold in order to purchase that type of matrix. Also use the Circle column to determine the Legend Point cost for increasing Ranks in the different types of matrix talents (see **Spending Legend Points**, p.237).

Attuning and Reattuning Matrices

A magician uses his Thread Weaving talent to attune a spell to a matrix. Once attuned, a spell will remain in the matrix until:

- The owning spellcaster dies; *or*
- The owner reattunes the matrix to hold another spell; *or*
- 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 a simple meditative exercise through which they place spells in their spell matrices. The exercise takes 10 minutes, allowing the magician to attune (or reattune) a number of spell matrix Ranks equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. No Action Test is required for this type of attuning. For example, a Wizard who knows the Thread Weaving (Wizardry) talent at Rank 3 can attune or reattune up to three Ranks of spell matrices with each meditative exercise.

If a meditation exercise is interrupted, the spells being attuned are not placed in the matrix. There is no effect other than wasted time.

Reattuning on the Fly

On occasion a magician may discover he does not have the spells he needs in his matrices, and can't afford 10 minutes of peaceful meditation to reattune them. In this case, the magician can hurry the process by **Reattuning on the Fly**, each attempt taking one round and causing him 1 Strain. The character makes a Thread Weaving Test against the Reattuning Difficulty of the spell he is trying to put into the matrix. If the test succeeds, the new spell replaces the old. If the test fails, the new spell is not placed in the matrix, though the magician may continue trying in subsequent rounds.

Working with spell matrices is a delicate business and requires concentration. Once a magician begins to reattune matrices on the fly, he should not take any other actions until successful. If the magician fails a Concentration Test, p.132, or if the magician takes an action other than reattuning, the new spell is not placed in the matrix, and all of his currently attuned spells are dislodged from their matrices. The magician can still cast spells using other methods (raw magic or grimoire casting), but matrix casting is unavailable until the matrices are reattuned using the 10-minute meditative exercise.

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 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 damage to their spell matrices, just as they keep track of damage to themselves. Some talents and spells allow an opponent to damage a character's spell matrix. Damage does not gradually make the matrix work less well; a spell matrix either works or it does not.



As long as the Current Damage of the matrix is less than its Death Rating, the matrix works. When the Current Damage equals or exceeds the Death Rating, the matrix no longer functions.

To restore function to a matrix, the magician may use his Willpower to heal it. He spends a Recovery Test, then makes a Willpower Test as a Standard Action. The result is subtracted from the current Damage Points of the matrix. Once the Damage Points are lower than the Death Rating of the matrix, it functions again, but needs to be re-attuned.

Spell Matrices and Multi-Discipline Magicians

In **Earthdawn**, magicians may learn other magician Disciplines. A magician learning other spellcasting Disciplines may not learn the full amount of spell matrix talents available to the other Discipline. The number of spell matrix talents that any adept's pattern may support is listed in the Spell Matrix Table under the Maximum Available column.

Both Nethermancer and Wizard adepts may learn up to four Spell Matrix Talents (depending on the Talent Options selected), but a Nethermancer who also learns the Wizard Discipline is limited to a total of five Spell Matrix Talents.

Using Spell Matrix Objects

Magicians in Barsaive still make occasional use of spell matrix objects—magical items that contain one or more spell matrices. Despite their limitations, these items allow magicians to maintain a greater variety of spells "on hand." In fact, many traditional Wizards continue the practice of wearing robes that contain spell matrices, represented by various colorful and intricately embroidered designs.

Matrix objects are thread items (p.275). The Rank of the thread woven to the matrix object determines the maximum Circle of spells it can hold. For example, a matrix object with a Rank 3 thread attached can hold spells of Third Circle or less.



Spell matrices contained in matrix objects are used like standard spell matrices. The magician must be touching or wearing the object to use the matrix within it. If the magician loses physical contact with the object while spellcasting (if it is snatched away or dropped, for example), the spell is disrupted unless the magician chooses to finish casting it using raw magic (see below).

Like other matrices, the matrices contained in matrix objects may be attacked and damaged in astral space. If a matrix object is "killed" in astral combat, the item's enchantment is ruined. If a matrix object is physically destroyed, the spell matrices stored within it are lost. Minor physical damage to matrix objects can be repaired, and spell matrices damaged in astral combat can be healed through application of the magician's Willpower, just as with regular spell matrices.

Casting Raw Magic

The most infrequently used method of spellcasting is known as raw magic casting. The magician channels magical energy for the spell directly through his body. This almost always damages the magician, and can also have other harmful side effects. A magician can use raw magic to cast any spell he knows, that is, any spell he has successfully transferred to his grimoire, regardless of Circle.

To cast raw magic, the magician weaves spell threads and casts the spell as normal. Note that no attuning Step is necessary when casting raw magic. Learned spells become part of a magician's pattern, resembling that of an attuned matrix for the purposes of casting raw magic. Spells cast with raw magic have the same effect and duration as spells cast using spell matrices. The differences are the potential consequences to the magician: Warping, Damage, and Horror Mark Tests. The likelihood and seriousness of these side effects depend on the extent to which astral space in the vicinity of the magician has been corrupted by the Horrors.

RAW MAGIC TABLE

Region Type	Warping Step	Damage Step	Horror Mark Step**
Safe	Circle*	Circle + 4	NA
Open	Circle + 5	Circle + 8	Circle + 2
Tainted	Circle + 10	Circle + 12	Circle + 5
Corrupt	Circle + 15	Circle + 16	Circle + 10

* Circle refers to the Circle of the spell being cast.
** The Horror Mark Step cannot exceed the Horror's Spellcasting Step.

Warping and Damage

The degree of Warping and Damage a magician suffers when casting raw magic is based on the Circle of the spell being cast, and the classification of astral space where the spell was cast. The Raw Magic Table shows the specific game information for the four classifications of astral space. For more information on the different astral regions, see **Astral Space**, p. 108.

After a magician casts a spell using raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the base Spell Defense of the magician. Because warping is an internal process, any items, spells, and armor that increase the magician's Spell Defense do not provide any bonuses. If the test succeeds, the gamemaster makes a Damage Test using the Step shown in the Raw Magic Table. Because this damage is internal, only the character's natural Mystic Armor provides protection.

Cymric wants to cast a First Circle 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 Step is equal to the Spell Circle+10, for Step 11. Cymric's base Spell Defense is 9. The gamemaster makes a successful Warping Test, rolling a 10. The twisting of astral space has warped Cymric's spell, and so his use of raw magic damages him. The gamemaster makes a Step 13 Damage Test and gets a result of 14. Cymric's natural Mystic Armor is 2, so he takes 12 Damage Points from the backlash.

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 which your character may prefer to remain hidden. Before the Scourge, many 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.

In addition to the Warping and Damage Tests, any time a character uses raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test against the base Spell Defense of the caster. A successful result means a Horror has noticed the caster and marked him. A Horror Mark is a Horror's personal gateway to a character; the Horror may use the gateway any time it wishes, though range may restrict a Horror's options. Horrors may use the mark to locate their victim at any time. Many Horrors have ways of communicating with marked victims who are hundreds of miles away, and some can cast spells on their victims from a great distance.

A Horror Mark lasts for a year and a day. At the end of this time, 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. For more information on Horror Marks, see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 273.

Casting From a Grimoire

Magicians occasionally need to cast spells from a grimoire. A magician uses this spellcasting method when he finds a grimoire and needs to use one of the spells within it before he has had a chance to learn the spell. He may also use this method when he is unable

GRIMOIRE DAMAGE EFFECTS TABLE

Result Level	Damage Effect
Average	The spell being cast is destroyed.
Good	One tenth of the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast.
Excellent	One quarter of the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast.
Extraordinary	Half the spells in the grimoire are destroyed, including the spell being cast. If the grimoire has been previously damaged it is destroyed, along with any remaining spells.

(or unwilling) to cast a spell he does know using other methods. A magician may cast any spell from a grimoire, including spells of a higher Circle than his own.

Casting from a grimoire is more difficult than matrix spellcasting, and poses risks similar to those of raw magic. As a result, grimoire casting is rarely used in Barsaive. These difficulties, however, will rarely prevent a magician from doing so in a crisis. For example, 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 lore house of the abandoned kaer, and he's facing the Horror to which it refers right now, the magician will likely attempt to cast the spell no matter what the risk.

A grimoire is more than just a book—it also contains the pattern of every spell scribed in it. Spell matrix objects (and spell matrices) were originally modeled after the way grimoires stored spell patterns; when a magician casts a spell with a grimoire, he channels magical energy through the grimoire in much the same way he channels it through a spell matrix.

Unlike spell matrices, grimoires are not designed to filter out corrupted magical energy. They also lack the ability to conceal the astral flares caused by forming spells. As a result, grimoires may be damaged by polluted energy being channeled through them, and spells cast from a grimoire may attract Horrors in the same way as raw magic.

Casting a spell from a grimoire differs slightly from the normal sequence for casting spells, as follows:

1. Attune the Spell
2. Weave any required Spell Threads
3. Make a Spellcasting Test
4. Determine the spell's Effect and Duration
5. Resolve Raw Magic Effects

Attune the Spell

The magician must attune the spell he wishes to cast. Attuning prepares the grimoire to channel magical energy. Like reattuning a spell matrix on the fly, the magician makes a Thread Weaving Test against the spell's Reattuning Difficulty. Instead of suffering Strain damage, the magician incurs a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving Test. If the test succeeds, the magician attunes the spell, and can begin casting the spell.

The magician must attune the spell each time he wishes to cast it. If his Spellcasting Test fails, he must reattune the spell again before attempting to recast it.

Belgaras, a troll Nethermancer, is trapped in a dead-end cave occupied by some nasty creatures. Unfortunately, his companions have already fallen victim to the foul beasts and there is only one way of escape. The troll pulls out an ancient grimoire he found earlier in the cave. It contains a Step Through Shadow spell, which he had intended to study later at his leisure. His first two attempts to attune the grimoire fail, but on his third Thread Weaving Test (with a -2 penalty) he manages to equal the spell's Reattuning Difficulty of 24 and attunes the spell.

Weave Spell Threads

After he successfully attunes the spell, the magician weaves any spell threads the spell requires, incurring a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving Tests for weaving spell threads to a spell cast from a grimoire.

Belgaras closes his eyes to form the pattern of the Step Through Shadow spell. He needs to weave the five threads required by the spell against a Weaving Difficulty of 12 with a –2 penalty to his Thread Weaving Tests. However, there is little time to worry about this—if he doesn't act quickly, the creatures will find him before he can get away!

Make a Spellcasting Test

After weaving the necessary spell threads, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test, incurring a –2 penalty to his Spellcasting Test for casting a spell from a grimoire.

Right before the first creature rounds the corner, Belgaras finishes weaving his spell. Even with a –2 Spellcasting Test penalty, he has little trouble casting the Step Through Shadow spell.

Determine Effect and Duration

The effect and duration of spells cast from a grimoire are determined normally, as though the spell were cast from a spell matrix.

The shadows open before Belgaras, and the troll prepares to enter them and make his getaway through astral space.

Resolve Raw Magic Effects

After a magician successfully casts a spell from a grimoire, the gamemaster determines any Warping and Damage Effects the grimoire may suffer from channeling the magical energy of the spell. As with casting raw magic, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the grimoire's Spell Defense (see **Grimoires**, p.131) using the Warping Step from the Raw Magic Table. If the test succeeds, the grimoire takes damage depending on the Result Level of the Warping Test, as shown in the Grimoire Damage Effects Table.

The damage effect destroys some of the magical writing contained in the grimoire. The spell being cast from the grimoire is always damaged first, with other damaged spells being determined randomly. There is also a physical effect, depending on the nature of the grimoire: pages or wooden tablets might go up in flames, spells inscribed on stones might melt away, the stones may shatter, and so on.

The damage to the grimoire may be repaired. This takes one day of work, and requires a successful Read/Write Magic Test against the highest Learning Difficulty of the spells remaining in the grimoire. Until the damage is repaired, new spells may not be written to the grimoire (this includes spells lost due to warping). In addition, if the magician casts another spell from the grimoire before it is repaired, the warping results are shifted up one level on the Grimoire Damage Effects Table. If an Extraordinary result is rolled against a damaged grimoire, the entire grimoire is destroyed.

Spells lost to warping must be rewritten to the grimoire using the Read/Write Magic talent as normal. Rewriting a spell into a grimoire from memory takes the same amount of time and effort as learning the spell for the first time (see **Learning New Spells**, p.238). Because he is relying on memory, however, the magician may not benefit from the presence of a tutor. If using the optional rules for Spell Learning



or Legend Point Cost, the character does not need to pay or expend any further Legend Points to reinscribe the spells.

Magicians carrying damaged grimoires earn a social stigma; some magicians might shun the magician for the lack of respect he shows towards the traditions of his Discipline. At the gamemaster's discretion, damage to a grimoire may constitute a talent crisis for the owner (see the ***Player's Companion***).

As with raw magic, a spell cast from a grimoire may attract the attention of a Horror. The Horror could decide to mark the grimoire instead of marking the caster, allowing the Horror to use its abilities against anyone using the grimoire from this point on. It is not unknown for characters to come across such Horror-cursed tomes in their adventures. The gamemaster makes a Horror Mark Test as described under **Casting Raw Magic**, p.136. If the Horror is attempting to mark the grimoire instead of the character, the Difficulty Number is the grimoire's Spell Defense.

After Belgaras successfully casts the Step Through Shadow spell, the gamemaster makes a Warping Test against the grimoire's Spell Defense of 23 (The highest Circle spell in the grimoire is a Tenth Circle spell with a Dispel Difficulty of 23). The gamemaster determines that the cave is a Tainted region. The Warping Test is made with Step 17 (Circle 7+10), and achieves a Good result! The ancient grimoire suddenly sparks and catches fire, turning a tenth of the book's pages into ashes, including those describing the Step Through Shadow spell. The gamemaster also checks if the casting attracts a Horror, making a Step 12 Horror Mark Test. Fortunately, he fails to beat Belgaras' Spell Defense. Hastily patting out the fire and openly bemoaning the loss of the spells, Belgaras leaps into astral space. His primary concern now is whether the creatures decide to follow him or not.

Dispelling Magic

Many spells have durations longer than a single round. It is possible to prematurely end such a spell, disrupting its effect. This is known as **dispelling**. The primary means of dispelling spells is through use of the Dispel Magic spell, though some spells may also be dispelled with a Willpower Test (the spell's description indicates whether it can be dispelled this way). Unless otherwise noted, the Difficulty Number for dispelling a spell is based on its Circle, as shown on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

DISPEL DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Dispel Difficulty
1	9
2	11
3	13
4	15
5	16
6	17
7	18
8	20
9	21
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26
14	28
15	29

The Dispel Magic spell can also be used to dispel magical effects produced by talents and talent knacks, Discipline abilities, magic items, or creature powers (including those of spirits, dragons and Horrors). Only magical effects with an extended duration—measured in rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on—can be dispelled. Permanent effects cannot normally be dispelled. For example, the Wood Skin talent grants an adept an increase to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings that lasts for one or more hours. At any point during this period, the effect of the Wood Skin may be dispelled by the Dispel Magic spell. The effects of the Durability talent, on the other hand, are permanent and cannot be dispelled.

The Dispel Difficulty for creature powers is based on the Power Rank, the Dispel Difficulty for talents or talent knacks is based on the Talent Rank, and the Dispel Difficulty for Discipline Abilities is based on the Circle at which the ability is first eligible to be gained. The Rank or Discipline Circle is equivalent to the Spell Circle listed on the Dispel Difficulty Table.

In most cases, the Dispel Magic spell serves to either cancel the target spell, or to neutralize the magical effect. This does not prevent the ability from being used again, although any criteria for minimum periods between uses of the ability must still be honored.

ILLUSIONS

Illusions can be very effective, but it is possible for opponents to see through or otherwise sense the deception by way of Disbelief and Sensing Tests.

DISBELIEVING ILLUSIONS

A character who has reason to suspect the nature of an object, creature, or effect may be illusory, can make a **Disbelief Test** as a Standard Action. The character takes 1 Strain and makes a Willpower Test against the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty, based on the Spell Circle as shown on the Disbelief Difficulty Table. Some spells determine their Disbelief Difficulty in other ways; these exceptions are noted in the spell description. For illusions created by abilities other than spells, the Disbelief Difficulty is based on the Rank of the power, the talent Rank, or the Discipline Circle at which the ability is learned. The Rank number or Discipline Circle is equivalent to the Spell Circle value listed on the Disbelief Difficulty Table. **If the Disbelief Test succeeds, the effect of the illusion ends—but only for that character.** A successful Disbelief Test does not end an illusion for anyone else affected by it (though they might become suspicious enough to disbelieve the illusion themselves).

DISBELIEF DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Disbelief Difficulty	Sensing Difficulty
1	6	13
2	7	15
3	8	16
4	9	18
5	10	20
6	11	21
7	12	23
8	13	25
9	14	26
10	15	27
11	16	28
12	17	30
13	18	31
14	19	33
15	20	34

SENSING ILLUSIONS

An unsuspecting character may also sense an illusion whenever he acts against or reacts to it. Any Action Tests made against an illusion are considered **Sensing Tests**. The Sensing Difficulty for most spells is an Excellent Result on the Disbelief Difficulty (as shown on the Disbelief Difficulty Table), though some spells may use a different Sensing Difficulty, listed with their description. A successful Sensing Test ends the illusion for the character as if he had made a successful Disbelief Test.

Vole the Thief is trying to pick the lock on an illusory door. The illusion is equivalent to a Second Circle spell, so has a Sensing Difficulty of 15. Vole rolls a 23 on his Lock Picking Test—a successful Sensing Test. His talent at picking locks gives Vole the feeling something is wrong with the door. The door disappears before him even as Vole is thinking this thought.

A character who has disbelieved an illusion may help others disbelieve it. His companions receive a bonus to their Disbelief (but not Sensing) Tests based on the Result Level he achieved on his own Disbelief or Sensing Test. An Average result grants a +1 bonus; a Good result grants a +2 bonus; an Excellent Result grants a +3 bonus; an Extraordinary result grants a +4 bonus to Disbelief Tests. These bonuses are cumulative; the more people who disbelieve the same illusion, the easier it is for others to disbelieve.

Vole tries to convince his friend Weaver that the door is an illusion. Because he achieved a Good Result on his Sensing Test, Vole's efforts grant Weaver a +2 bonus to his Disbelief Test.

Illusions are not just visual, but can affect all senses, including the heat sight ability of some races and astral sensing methods as well.

ILLUSIONS AND DAMAGE

The effectiveness of an illusion depends on the credulity of those it is intended to deceive. For this reason, spells that are pure illusions cannot cause the viewer's death, they knock him into a coma-like state instead. Damage taken from pure illusions can never exceed a character's Unconsciousness Rating; any excess damage is ignored. A character knocked unconscious by an illusion cannot be further affected by it; illusions only affect the conscious mind. The damage taken from illusions is still real damage and is healed the same way as normal damage (see **Recovering From Damage**, p.220). Any Wounds inflicted by the illusion are healed automatically after a full night's rest without the need to spend a Recovery Test (see **Healing Wounds**, p.221).

ILLUSIONS AND THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Illusions affect the physical world, but only to the extent that they manipulate the viewer's perception of what is real. The mark of a great illusion is that it restricts the opportunities for those perceiving it to disbelieve it. Illusions are rarely tangible, and their presence reflects that. For example, an illusory bridge crossing a chasm would hold no weight—a character attempting to cross would simply fall through it, taking Falling damage and (assuming he survived the fall) wondering why he was so clumsy as to "Step off" the bridge. However, an Illusionist might cast the same illusory bridge over a narrow span. In this case, a character attempting to cross the bridge might be lucky and stay on the span without falling off. Or the gamemaster might ask for a Dexterity Test to stay on the span, which could act as a Sensing Test against the illusion. If the character sees through the illusion, he can try to convince his companions that the bridge is not real, or perhaps suggest that it is unsafe, and carefully guide them across the span. The number of ways in which characters can interact with illusions are too numerous to describe here. A general rule of thumb is that the bodies of characters interacting with an illusion will react as if the illusion is real if it can, stubbing its own toe or bumping into and off of an illusory wall, even though it isn't actually solid. The gamemaster should allow additional Sensing Tests at this discretion based on how the characters interact with the illusion.

CHAPTER TWELVE

SPELLS

Spells are expressions of intent. They reflect the caster's designs on the world.

• Carnadan, Dwarf Wizard •

The following section describes many of the spells available to magicians in **Earthdawn**, organized by Discipline and Circle. The spell's **Type** determines the Thread Weaving talent (p.83) the magician must have in order to attune a spell or weave spell threads. The **Circle** describes the relative power of the spell and determines the spell's Learning and Dispel Difficulty. Each listing shows the spell's game statistics and its description. These statistics are: **Threads**, **Weaving**, **Range**, **Duration**, **Area of Effect**, **Effect**, and **Casting**.

THREADS

The **Threads** notation shows 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 a "0" notation.

The Doom Missile spell requires three spell threads to be woven before it can be cast. The Air Armor spell requires no threads, and can be cast from a matrix in just a single round.

Some spells are noted as being ritual spells. These generally have specific requirements related to how long it takes to weave threads for these spells, and limitations on the number of threads that can be woven.

WEAVING

The "Weaving:" notation presents the spell's Weaving Difficulty as two numbers separated by a slash. The first number (to the left of the slash) is the Difficulty Number for weaving spell threads into a spell pattern. "NA" means the spell requires no spell threads and so has no Weaving Difficulty. The second number (to the right of the slash) is the Reattuning Difficulty, used when a magician is attempting to **Reattune on the Fly**, p.135.

The Doom Missile spell is "Weaving: 10/21." This spell has a Weaving Difficulty of 10 and a Reattuning Difficulty of 21. The Air Armor spell has a Weaving Difficulty of "NA/10". This spell has no Weaving Difficulty ("NA" means the spell does not require any spell threads). While it requires no spell threads to be woven before casting, attempts to reattune this spell are made against a Reattuning Difficulty of 10.

RANGE

The **Range** of a spell is usually given in yards and hexes. A range of "self" means the spell only works upon the caster. A range of "touch" means the caster must be able to touch the recipient of the spell, which could also be the caster himself. A touch range spell cast on an unwilling target does not require an additional Action Test—like a Dexterity or Attack Test—to touch the target. A successful Spellcasting Test means the caster has also successfully touched the target.

The Doom Missile spell allows the magician to cast the spell on a target within 40 yards (20 hexes) distance from the caster. The Air Armor spell requires the magician to touch the target, whether himself or another character—this does not require the magician to make an unarmed attack against the target, just a Spellcasting Test.

DURATION

Duration is the length of time the spell remains in effect. A spell's duration is usually given in combat rounds, but can also be measured in minutes, hours, weeks, or longer. Unless the description says otherwise, "Rank" refers to the magician's Spellcasting Rank. Thus, a duration listed as "Rank+10 minutes" is a number of minutes equal to the character's Spellcasting Rank+10.

A magician knows the Spellcasting talent at Rank 10. If he casts the Doom Missile spell it will be effective for 10 rounds (Rank rounds). If he casts the Air Armor spell it will be effective for 15 minutes (Rank+5 minutes).

Once cast, spells continue for their full duration even if the caster is killed or falls unconscious. Some spells require concentration (p.132), and end if that is broken, or expire under other conditions noted in the spell's description.

Unless specifically noted, a magician cannot end his own spell before the duration expires. The magician (or another magician) could use the Dispel Magic or an equivalent spell to do so, however.

AREA OF EFFECT

The **Area of Effect** (AoE) characteristic is present on spells that affect an area or extension of space, rather than a single individual. Unless specifically noted otherwise in the spell's description, everyone and everything in the area of effect is affected by the spell.

The area of effect extends from the point of origin detailed in the spell description (often its center, if expressed as a radius; often a corner, if expressed as a rectangular area), which must lie within the spell's range.

The area of effect is most often indicated as a radius in yards and hexes. If a hex layout is used, this radius is centered in a hex chosen by the magician (sometimes on a target) with the radius (in hexes) being counted outwards. Thus, a spell with a radius of one hex affects the targeted center hex and each hex adjacent to it, for a total of seven hexes affected.

The Fireball spell has a range of 40 yards (20 hexes) from its point of origin. The blast radius extends 4 yards (2 hexes) from the point of impact. The Ethereal Darkness spell has a range of Touch and the sphere of darkness extends in a 4-yard (2-hex) radius from the point of origin and lasts for a Duration of Rank+6 rounds. If using a battlemap, both spells will affect an area out to 2 hexes away from the origin, totaling 17 hexes.

Effect

The spell **effect** varies with the spell. The most common use of the Effect Step is to generate a number. This number then represents another value, such as the amount of damage the target takes, a creature's Attribute Values, the Difficulty Number for other Action Tests made by the spell's target, and so on. When a character needs to generate such a number, the spell description instructs the player to make an Effect Test.

When a spell requires an Effect Test, the Step Number is indicated as, for example, "WIL+4." In this example, if the magician successfully casts the spell, he adds +4 to his Willpower Step to determine the Effect Step. A magician player should calculate and record the Effect Steps for all of his character's spells to save time during play. Some spells allow or require a character other than the magician to make an Effect Test. Unless noted, the character uses their own Willpower Step to determine the Effect Step.

Some spells use the Effect Test to determine success or failure. Use the spell Effect Step to make an Effect Test against the Difficulty Number given, which is often the target's Spell Defense (TSD), but may be another value noted in the spell description. Magicians with the Willforce talent (p.86) may use it to improve their spell's Effect Step.

If the Effect causes damage, the type will be followed by /Physical, /Mystic, or/NA. This means that Physical Armor, Mystic Armor, or No Armor provides protection against this damage.

A magician has a Willpower Step of 7. If he casts the Doom Missile spell, his Effect Step is 12 (WIL + 5). If he casts the Air Armor spell, the fixed spell effect (+3 to Physical Armor) applies. If the magician learns the Willforce talent at Rank 4, and uses it, the Doom Missile spell will have an Effect Step of 16 (WIL+5+4). If he casts the Air Armor spell, there is no change to the spell effect—Willpower is not used in the spell effect. The Doom Missile spell's Effect Step of WIL+5 is followed by /Mystic. This means that Mystic Armor provides protection against the damage caused by the Doom Missile spell.

Unless noted in the spell description, a magician may have a maximum number of castings of the same spell equal to his Spellcasting Rank in effect at the same time. Unless otherwise stated, only one casting of a spell can affect a single character at any one time; multiple effects do not stack.



Casting

The "Casting:" notation gives the Difficulty Number used for the magician's Spellcasting Test. For most spells, particularly those that cause damage, this will be the target's Spell Defense (TSD). For other spells, it is a predetermined number given in the spell description. **The minimum Casting Difficulty for spells, regardless of modifiers, is 6.**

The term target can refer to the recipient of a beneficial spell as well as to an opponent.

The Doom Missile spell requires the magician to make a successful Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. Casting the Puddle Deep spell requires the magician to make a Spellcasting (6) Test.

Description

The **spell description** explains the spell's effect or any special information for the spell. It also describes any requirements for the spell to be cast, such as gestures, supporting objects or access to a particular environment, Difficulty Numbers for Effect Tests, and other conditions and restrictions.

The Doom Missile spell requires the magician to gesticulate wildly. The Air Armor spell requires the magician to blow over the target's body, and also requires the target to be clothed or armored to constrain the spell's effect.

Gestures

Some spells include gestures in their descriptions, which need to be completed for the spell to be threaded or cast. Gestures include both physical movement and verbal speech.

The Mind Dagger spell requires the magician to whip his hands forward as if throwing a dagger when casting the spell. If the magician's hands are both bound and restrained, he cannot cast the Mind Dagger spell because he cannot complete the physical movement. The Flame Flash spell requires the magician to mimic fanning a flame with his hands and arms and to making whooshing, crackling sounds. If the magician is silenced or gagged—stopping the verbal component—or bound and

restrained—stopping the physical component—he cannot complete the thread or cast the spell. The Ignite spell requires the magician to snap his fingers. Even if the magician's wrists were bound, unless the captor ties the magician's individual fingers and thumbs together, the magician can still cast the spell.

Prerequisites

Some spells have prerequisites that must be met before they can be threaded or cast.

The Earth Darts spell requires a source of dirt to form into crystalline darts while threading. A magician without dirt to use could not cast this spell. The Air Mattress spell requires a blanket and the Flying Carpet spell requires a rug or carpet. A magician without a blanket has no anchor for the air for the Air Mattress spell to work and a magician without a rug or carpet has no target for the Flying Carpet spell. The Earth Blend spell requires the target to stand on earth or stone. If the target were standing on a wooden raft, the spell would fail.

Elements

All elemental spells start their description with a note of their *element*. The five elements are *Air*, *Earth*, *Fire*, *Water*, and *Wood*. Some elements have subtypes. Air has the subtype Electric, denoted as *Air–Electric*. These spells manipulate electricity, such as the Lightning Bolt spell. Earth has the subtype Metal, denoted as *Earth—Metal*. These spells manipulate the metal element, such as Metal Scream. Water has the subtypes Acid and Cold, denoted as *Water—Acid* and *Water–Cold*. Acid spells cause damage through caustic liquids, such as the Death Rain spell. Cold spells manipulate snow, ice, and freezing temperatures. Note that not all elemental spells are governed by Elementalism.

Illusions

All illusory spells start their description with a note that they are *illusions*. See **Illusions**, p.139, for more information about illusions and making Sensing and Disbelief Tests. Note that not all illusory spells are governed by Illusionism.

Result Levels

A number of spells designate special uses for the Result Level achieved on either the Spellcasting or the Effect Test. Unless otherwise noted such effects start counting with an Average Result equal to 1, a Good Result equal to 2 and so on, as appropriate for the spell.

Discipline Spell Lists

Each of the magician Disciplines comes with its own list of spells. Not all spells are available to all followers of each Discipline. Some spells are more common than others, subject to the gamemaster's discretion. The following lists show to which Disciplines each spell is typically available, as well as the spell Circle.

Elementalism Spells

Elementalists use their magic to manipulate the magical elements. Elementalism spells most often affect one or more elements, but can also also affect the weather and nature. Through their spells, they are able to speak with the elemental spirits that inhabit the world.

First Circle

Air Armor (p.146)
Crunch Climb (p.160)
Earth Blend (p.165)
Earth Darts (p.165)
Flameweapon (p.171)
Heat Food (p.175)
Moonglow (p.185)
Plant Talk (p.189)
Purify Earth (p.190)
Purify Water (p.190)
Resist Cold (p.192)
Resist Fire (p.192)

Second Circle

Air Mattress (p.146)
Billowing Cloak (p.152)
Boil Water (p.154)
Detect Elementalism Magic (p.162)
Flame Strike (p.170)
Gills (p.174)
Hunter's Sense (p.176)
Ice Spear (p.176)
Icy Surface (p.177)
Path Home (p.188)
Shield Willow (p.196)
Slow Metal Weapon (p.197)
Small Slayer (p.197)
Sterilize Object (p.201)
Stick Together (p.202)

Third Circle

Behind Eye (p.152)
Dispel Elementalism Magic (p.163)
Fingers of Wind (p.169)
Fuel Flame (p.173)
Grounding (p.175)
Ice Mace and Chain (p.176)
Lightning Bolt (p.182)
Plant Feast (p.189)
Porter (p.190)
Puddle Deep (p.190)
Repair (p.192)
Rust (p.194)
Sky Lattice (p.197)
Smoke Cloud (p.198)
Snuff (p.198)
Sunlight (p.203)
Thrive (p.204)
Throne of Air (p.204)
Winds of Deflection (p.209)

Fourth Circle

Air Blast (p.146)
Blizzard Sphere (p.154)
[Element] Spear (p.166)
Falcon's Cloak (p.168)
Fire Whip (p.170)
Great Sticky Vines (p.174)
Lighten Load (p.182)
Lightning Shield (p.182)
Lightning Step (p.182)
Liquid Arrow (p.182)
Lodestone's Touch (p.183)
Root Trap (p.193)
Shield of Warping (p.196)
Spirits of Death's Sea (p.200)
Suffocating Paste (p.202)
Uneven Ground (p.206)
Weapon Back (p.208)

Fifth Circle

Balloons of Mist (p.151)
Earth Staff (p.165)
Fireball (p.170)
Inflame Self (p.178)
Ironwood (p.179)
Metal Scream (p.184)
Metal Wings (p.185)
Nutritious Earth (p.187)
Resist Poison (p.192)
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Stone Cage (p.202)

Sixth Circle

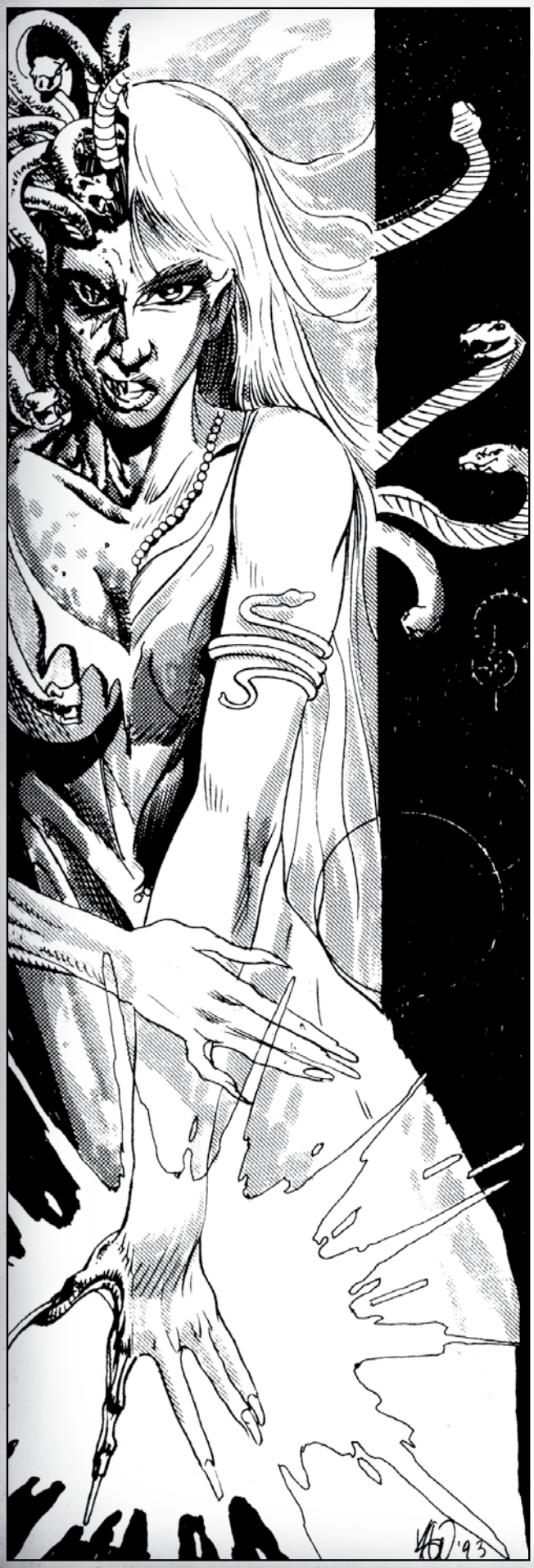
Drastic Temperature (p.164)
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Seventh Circle

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Flame Darts (p.170)
Grasping Hand of Earth (p.174)
Storm Manacles (p.202)
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Eighth Circle

Blade Fury (p.153)
Crushing Hand of Earth (p.160)
Earth Wall (p.166)
Perimeter Alarm (p.189)
Silence Metal (p.196)
Silver Shadow (p.197)
Waterspout (p.208)



ILLUSIONISM SPELLS

The Illusionist works with deception magic, casting spells that create things which 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.

First Circle

- Assuring Touch (p.148)
- Bellow of the Thundras (p.152)
- Best Face (p.152)
- Blazing Fists of Rage (p.153)
- Catseyes (p.157)
- Disguise Metal (p.163)
- Displace Image (p.163)
- Fun With Doors (p.173)
- Light (p.181)
- Pauper's Purse (p.188)
- Rope Guide (p.193)
- True Blazing Fists of Rage (p.205)
- Unseen Voices (p.206)

Second Circle

- Blindness (p.153)
- Crafty Thought (p.160)
- Disaster (p.163)
- Encrypt (p.166)
- Ephemeral Bolt (p.167)
- Impossible Knot (p.178)
- Innocent Activity (p.178)
- Monstrous Mantle (p.185)
- Remove Shadow (p.192)
- Send Message (p.195)
- Tailor (p.203)
- True Ephemeral Bolt (p.205)
- Weather Cloak (p.208)
- You Got Me (p.210)

Third Circle

- Alarm (p.146)
- And Then I Woke Up (p.147)
- Blinding Glare (p.153)
- Dampen Karma (p.161)
- Detect Illusionism Magic (p.162)
- Dispel Illusionism Magic (p.163)
- False Floor (p.169)
- Impossible Lock (p.178)
- Mind Fog (p.185)
- Nobody Here (p.187)
- Phantom Warrior (p.189)
- See the Unseen (p.194)
- Soothe the Savage Beast (p.198)
- Suffocation (p.203)

Fourth Circle

- Aura (p.151)
- Bleeding Edge (p.153)
- Circle of Well Being (p.158)
- Clarion Call (p.158)
- Conceal Tracks (p.159)
- Eyes Have It (p.168)
- Great Weapon (p.175)
- Hunger (p.176)
- Improved Alarm (p.178)
- Memory Blank (p.184)
- Multi-Missile (p.186)
- Nightmare of Foreboding (p.187)
- Stop Right There (p.202)
- Unmask (p.206)

Fifth Circle

- Awaken (p.151)
- Bond of Silence (p.155)
- Clothing Gone (p.158)
- Enter and Exit (p.167)
- Eye of Truth (p.168)
- Flesh Eater (p.171)
- Flying Carpet (p.171)
- Illusion (p.177)
- Improve Karma (p.178)
- Noble Manner (p.187)
- Phantom Fireball (p.189)
- Pleasant Visions (p.189)
- Switch (p.203)
- Wall of Unfire (p.208)

Sixth Circle

- Astral Shadow (p.150)
- Bouncing Blaster (p.156)
- Chosen Path (p.157)
- Dancing Disks (p.161)
- Foreseeing (p.172)
- Illusory Missiles (p.177)
- Memory Scribe (p.184)
- Spotlight (p.200)
- Stench (p.201)

Seventh Circle

- Dream Sight (p.164)
- Drunken Stagger (p.165)
- False Enchantment (p.168)
- Rebel Limb (p.191)
- Reversal of Passion (p.193)
- Silent Stampede (p.197)
- Stampede (p.201)
- Time Flies (p.204)
- Twisted Tongues (p.206)
- Vertigo (p.206)
- Walk Through (p.207)

Eighth Circle

- Astral Nightmare (p.149)
- Dreamsend (p.164)
- Form Exchange (p.172)
- Leaping Lizards (p.181)
- Massive Missiles (p.184)
- Other Place (p.187)
- Shadow Spell (p.195)



Nethermancy Spells

Nethermancers deal with the netherworlds and their inhabitants. Nethermancy magic often involves 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

- Astral Spear (p.150)
- Bone Dance (p.155)
- Chilling Circle (p.157)
- Command Nightflyer (p.159)
- Detect Undead (p.162)
- Dry and Wet (p.165)
- Experience Death (p.168)
- Insect Repellent (p.178)
- Mount Scare (p.185)
- Putrefy (p.191)
- Spirit Dart (p.199)
- Spirit Grip (p.199)
- Undead Struggle (p.206)

Second Circle

- Bone Circle (p.155)
- Detect Nethermancy Magic (p.162)
- Ethereal Darkness (p.167)
- Fog Ghost (p.171)
- Life Circle of One (p.181)
- Pocket Guardian (p.189)
- Repel Animal (p.192)
- Shadow's Whisper (p.196)
- Shield Mist (p.196)

Third Circle

- Arrow of Night (p.148)
- Dark Messenger (p.161)
- Death Trance (p.161)
- Death's Head (p.162)
- Dispel Nethermancy Magic (p.163)
- Fog of Fear (p.172)
- Grave Message (p.174)
- Pack Bags (p.188)
- Pain (p.188)
- Preserve (p.190)
- Shadow Meld (p.195)
- Spirit Double (p.199)
- Summon Bone Ghost (p.203)

Fourth Circle

- Animate Skeleton (p.147)
- Astral Flare (p.148)
- Blood Servitor (p.154)
- Dark Spy (p.161)
- Evil Eye (p.167)
- Fatal Food (p.169)
- Friend or Foe (p.173)
- Last Chance (p.181)
- Nightflyer's Cloak (p.186)
- Spirit Servant (p.200)
- Viewpoint (p.207)
- Visions of Death (p.207)

Fifth Circle

- Animate Spirit Object (p.147)
- Astral Horror (p.148)
- Astral Mount (p.149)
- Astral Whisper (p.150)
- Blind (p.153)
- Circle of Astral Protection (p.157)
- Incessant Talking (p.187)
- Pass Ward (p.188)
- Sculpt Darkness (p.194)
- Sense Horror (p.195)
- Shadow Hunter (p.195)
- Spiritual Guidance (p.200)
- Star Shower (p.201)
- Target Portal (p.203)
- Tears of the Scourge (p.203)
- Whisper Through the Night (p.209)
- Wither Limb (p.209)

Sixth Circle

- Blessed Light (p.153)
- Bone Puppet (p.155)
- Bone Shatter (p.155)
- Bone Walker (p.156)
- Dust to Dust (p.165)
- Foul Vapors (p.172)
- Friendly Darkness (p.173)
- Recovery (p.191)
- Soul Armor (p.198)
- Wall of Darkness (p.208)

Seventh Circle

- Astral Beacon (p.148)
- Astral Maw (p.149)
- Banquet of Dis (p.151)
- Bone Pudding (p.155)
- Cold Storage (p.158)
- Constrict Heart (p.159)
- Damage Shift (p.161)
- Marathon Run (p.184)
- Restrain Entity (p.192)
- Reverse Withering (p.193)
- Spirit Bolt (p.199)
- Spirit Portal (p.200)
- Steal Strength (p.201)
- Step Through Shadow (p.201)
- Wit Friend (p.209)

Eighth Circle

- Control Being (p.159)
- Globe of Silence (p.174)
- Horror Call (p.176)
- Netherblade (p.186)
- Restrain Horror (p.193)
- Shadow Tether (p.195)
- Translator Spirit (p.205)
- Visit Death (p.207)
- Wall of Bones (p.207)
- Wither Away (p.209)

WIZARDRY SPELLS

Wizards are the most scholarly of all magicians, primarily concerned with the workings of magic. Their spells usually deal with magic and its effects, but they do operate through the interaction of magic with a, usually living, target. Wizardry spells cover those areas that other magicians are not able to affect.

First Circle Spells

- Astral Sense (p.150)
- Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis (p.152)
- Crushing Will (p.161)
- Dispel Magic (p.163)
- Divine Aura (p.164)
- Flame Flash (p.170)
- Ignite (p.177)
- Iron Hand (p.179)
- Mind Dagger (p.185)
- Silent Converse (p.197)
- Triangulate (p.205)
- Wall Walker (p.208)

Second Circle Spells

- And His Money (p.147)
- Astral Shield (p.150)
- Clean (p.158)
- Dodge Boost (p.164)
- Rope Ladder (p.194)
- Seal (p.194)
- Vines (p.207)
- Wake-Up Call (p.207)

Third Circle Spells

- Aura Strike (p.151)
- Catwalk (p.157)
- Combat Fury (p.158)
- False Aura (p.168)
- Healing Sleep (p.175)
- Identify Spell (p.177)
- Leaps and Bounds (p.181)
- Levitate (p.181)
- Notice Not (p.187)
- Ork Stoke (p.187)
- Quicken Pace (p.191)
- Seeking Sight (p.195)
- Shatter Lock (p.196)
- Water Wings (p.208)
- Wizard Mark (p.210)

Fourth Circle Spells

- Ball of String (p.151)
- Binding Threads (p.153)
- Buoyancy (p.156)
- Dust Devil (p.165)
- Hair Frenzy (p.175)
- Icy Protection (p.177)
- Identify Magic (p.177)
- Inventory (p.179)
- Juggler's Touch (p.180)
- Kaer Knocking (p.180)
- Karmic Connection (p.180)
- Relax (p.191)
- Repair Lock (p.192)
- Thorny Retreat (p.204)
- Trust (p.206)
- Wizard's Cloak (p.210)

Fifth Circle Spells

- Counterspell (p.159)
- Giant Size (p.174)
- Heat Metal Armor (p.175)
- Invigorate (p.179)
- Kaer Pictographs (p.180)
- Mage Armor (p.183)
- Makeshift Missile (p.184)
- Mystic Shock (p.186)
- Sanctuary (p.194)
- Slow (p.197)
- Solo Flight (p.198)
- Study Thread (p.202)

Sixth Circle Spells

- Blood Lost (p.154)
- Displace Self (p.164)
- Doom Missile (p.164)
- Karma Cancel (p.180)
- Loan Spell (p.183)
- Makeshift Weapon (p.184)
- Mental Library (p.184)
- Multi-Mind Dagger (p.186)
- Rampage (p.191)
- Razor Orb (p.191)
- Sleep (p.197)
- Spellstore (p.199)

Seventh Circle Spells

- Astral Gift (p.148)
- Blood Boil (p.154)
- Call (p.156)
- Confusing Weave (p.159)
- Dislodge Spell (p.163)
- Lightning Cloud (p.182)
- Liquid Eyes (p.183)
- Move on Through (p.186)
- Mystic Net (p.186)
- Spell Cage (p.198)

Eighth Circle Spells

- Catch Spell (p.156)
- Compression Bubble (p.159)
- Delay Blow (p.162)
- Peacebond (p.188)
- Safe Opening (p.194)
- Spell Snatcher (p.199)
- Wound Mask (p.210)





Spell Descriptions

The following descriptions are for spells available to the magician Disciplines from the First through Eighth Circles.

Air Armor

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/10 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +3 Physical Armor; +3 Fatigue Test bonus vs. heat

Air. This spell creates a protective cushion of air. The magician exhales slowly and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, air rushes in under the target's clothing, pushing outward to create a cushion and providing padding as well as ventilation. The target adds +3 Physical Armor and gains a +3 Fatigue Test bonus against the effects of heat exposure (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 121). If the target is not wearing clothing or armor he receives no benefit—there is nothing to constrain the air cushion, so it disperses. This spell is popular with elemental fire mining crews working near Death's Sea.

Air Blast

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/16 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 60-degree arc from an origin hex adjacent to the spellcaster towards the target hex, up to the spell's range. For every 2 yards (1 hex) length away from the caster, the effect expands by 2 yards (1 hex) in width.
Effect: WIL+9

Air. This spell creates a howling blast of wind. The magician places both hands to his lips and blows hard, then flings his arms wide and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among anyone within range. If successful, a powerful blast of air surges away from the magician in a 60-degree arc in the direction he is facing. Those caught in the wind's path must make a successful Knockdown Test against the magician's Effect Test to avoid being Knocked Down.

Air Mattress

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 hours
Effect: +2 Recovery Test bonus

Air. This spell creates an air bed to promote healing. The magician anchors the corners of a blanket with something from any one of the four non-air elements—tree branches, rocks or dirt clods, and the like—then blows into his clenched fist as if inflating a balloon and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a cushion of air forms under the blanket, turning it into a comfortable one-foot-thick mattress. Those who sleep on the mattress for eight uninterrupted hours gain a +2 bonus to the first Recovery Test they make within an hour of waking. The mattress remains inflated for the spell's duration or until the blanket is moved or damaged.

Alarm

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 50 yards (25 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes

Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from point of origin
Effect: WIL+4

This spell alerts to the presence of intruders. The magician points where he wants to place the alarm, gives a small shriek, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any living or sentient being passing within the area of effect. If successful, the alarm goes off and shouts out a loud warning for a full minute, alerting anyone within earshot. The magician determines the exact warning, which may not exceed a number of words equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The spell cannot be cast on living targets.

AND HIS MONEY

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: –4 to Social Defense against Interaction Tests involving finances

This spell makes others more amenable to financial requests. The magician clinks a couple of coins together in his hand and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target subtracts –4 from his Social Defense against Interaction Tests involving finances, including Haggle Tests.

AND THEN I WOKE UP

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: +8 bonus to Perception and True Sight Tests

This spell enhances the ability to perceive the truth of things. The magician claps his hands together loudly and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he gains a +8 bonus to Perception or True Sight Tests made to detect illusions or Illusionism magic.

ANIMATE SKELETON

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+8 minutes
Effect: Animates skeletons

This spell animates the skeletal remains of the dead. If the magician has access to sufficient remains, such as found in a graveyard or an old battle site, he may animate a number of skeletons equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The magician chants aloud and makes a Spellcasting Test against the skeleton's Spell Defense, +1 for each additional skeleton to be animated. If successful, the animated skeletons rise from their resting place within one round. The magician can mentally command skeletons within line of sight—this requires his concentration. If left uncontrolled, skeletons will act on their most recent instructions. If the skeletons move beyond the spell's range, the magic that animates them fails and they crumble into a heap of lifeless bones. Skeletons are usually armed with short swords or hand-axes fashioned from spare bones by the magic of the spell. At the gamemaster's discretion, if a skeleton was buried with a better weapon, it uses that instead. Also, if the skeleton wore armor, it benefits from it when animated (although the armor will likely not provide more than half of its original protection, due to age and decay).

Animated Skeleton

DEX: 5 **STR**: 5 **TOU**: 4
PER: 4 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 5
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 6
Damage:
Bone Weapon (4): 9

Death: 27
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 6

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 11
Physical Armor: 2 (see text)
Mystic Armor: 3

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: 5
Movement: 5

Legend Award: First Circle

Armor: Old Padded Leather (Phys 2)

Weapons: Bone Short Sword or Hand-axe (Damage Step 4)

Loot: Usually nothing, but at the gamemaster's discretion, one or two skeletons wear jewelry valued at 2D6×10 silver pieces (most often the case for skeletons animated from older burial grounds)

ANIMATE SPIRIT OBJECT

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/19 **Casting**: 9
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank×10 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell summons a spirit to inhabit and animate an object, altering the item's shape to give it ambulatory and sensory capabilities, and forming limbs, eyes, and other organs as required. The object retains much of its original shape and is still recognizable as such. The magician silently points at the target object and makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If successful, a spirit is summoned which immediately takes possession of the object. The spirit provides the object's intellect, but the magician makes an Effect Test to determine the object's physical Attributes, allocating the Test Result among the object's Dexterity, Strength, and Toughness Steps. The gamemaster may exercise his discretion to decide which Attributes should have more or fewer Step Numbers allocated to them.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, successfully summons a spirit to inhabit a stone statue that he has procured for the purpose. His Effect Test roll is 16, which he allocates over the statue's physical Attribute Steps, as follows: DEX 9, STR 3, TOU 4. On review, the gamemaster rules that the statue should have a higher Toughness and Strength compared to Dexterity, and asks Caelarion's player to reallocate the Test Result. The player obliges, as follows: DEX 5, STR 5, TOU 6.

The gamemaster may also set a limit on the object's Attribute Steps. For example, he might limit small objects such as brushes, combs, or daggers, to a maximum Attribute Step of 3, but allow larger pieces of furniture a maximum Attribute Step of 7. Likewise, he may decide that a minimum Attribute Step is in order for the object.

Reviewing the Attribute Steps for Caelarion's animated statue, the gamemaster decides that the stone statue should have a minimum Toughness Step of 7. Taking into account this requirement, Caelarion's player rearranges the Effect Test and comes up with the following physical Attribute Steps for the object: DEX 4, STR 5, TOU 7. The gamemaster approves and the spell is complete.

The summoned spirit is reasonably intelligent and can follow complex commands. Although it willingly obeys its summoner, the spirit is erratic and capricious; if it can possibly create mischief while still acting within the boundaries of its instructions, the spirit

will do so. The magician can verbally control the spirit object when it is within hearing distance, although this requires his concentration. If the object is too far away to hear the magician, then the spirit will act on its most recent instructions, which may be less than perfect, depending on how mischievous it is feeling.

Spirit Object

DEX: Effect Test* **STR**: Effect Test* **TOU** Effect Test*
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

* Distribute the Test Result among these Attribute Steps (see text)

Initiative: DEX
Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR+3

Physical Defense: 5 **
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 8
Physical Armor: 4 **
Mystic Armor: 3

Death: 27
Unconsciousness: 18
Wound Threshold: 6

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: STR
Movement: 5

Legend Award: First Circle

** The gamemaster may decrease or increase these values, to reflect the spirit object's physical Attributes

Arrow of Night

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: +8 missile Damage Test bonus

This spell covers an arrow with a chilling sheath of darkness, forming a silhouette. The arrow must be loosed during the round that the spell is cast or the enchantment is lost. The magician wraps his hand around the head of the arrow and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, darkness drawn from astral space wraps itself around the arrow and adds a +8 bonus to the missile's Damage Test. Handling the shaft causes 1 Strain to the character who fires it. The spell can only be cast on non-magical arrows, and is not compatible with other spells or talents, such as Flame Arrow (p.70), which dispels the sheath. The arrow is consumed by the spell, crumbling to dust the round after it strikes. The spell also works on other missiles, including crossbow bolts, sling stones or bolts, and blowpipe darts.

Assuring Touch

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Effect: +3 to Spell and Social Defense; +3 Willpower Test bonus against fear

This spell increases resistance to fear. The magician thinks positive thoughts, then gently touches the target while murmuring some bromide like "everything's going to be okay" and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target adds +3 to his Spell and Social Defense against fear-causing attacks and gains a +3 bonus to any Willpower Tests he makes to resist the effects of fear or Intimidation (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93).

Astral Beacon

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Creates a beacon in astral space

This spell creates a bright flare of energy in astral space, exposing a character to being Horror-marked as if he had just cast raw magic (see **Casting Raw Magic**, p.136). The magician crouches down, then leaps up and throws his arms into the air, making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes a Warping Test against the target's Spell Defense using a Step Number equivalent to a Seventh Circle spell. If successful, the magician makes a Damage Test using a Step Number also equivalent to a Seventh Circle spell (the target's natural Mystic Armor provides protection). Finally, the magician makes a Horror Mark Test against the target's natural Spell Defense, using a Step Number again equivalent to a Seventh Circle spell. If successful, the target is Horror-marked, with the gamemaster determining the type or nature of the Horror involved and the Horror Mark's effect.

Astral Flare

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius
Effect: WIL+6

This spell releases an intense flare of light into astral space. The magician mutters soft "boom" sounds under his breath and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of anyone in the area of effect inside or looking into astral space. If successful, the astral flare blinds the viewer, who suffers a Complete Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests. Anyone viewing astral space while the flare is in effect makes a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, he can see into astral space normally, otherwise he is also blinded. The blindness lasts for the spell's duration or until the viewer makes a successful Willpower Test.

Astral Gift

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Gives the target Astral Sight

This spell provides the ability to view astral space. The magician squints and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains the Astral Sight talent (p.61) with an effective Talent Rank for each Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result at 1. For example, a Good Result grants Astral Sight at Rank 2.

Astral Horror

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes

Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of a Horror from a tiny bit of spiritual essence. Those who practice Nethermancy are known for conjuring abominable things from astral space (and beyond) and this spell plays on that knowledge. The fact that practitioners of Nethermancy are not normally known for creating illusions adds to the efficacy of the spell. The magician makes threatening gestures and makes a Spellcasting Test against the astral horror's Spell Defense. If successful, the astral horror appears as a fog ghost (p.171), but is far more lethal. The magician's Effect Test determines the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty (see **Illusions**, p.139). The astral horror obeys the magician's mental commands. This requires no concentration—he may perform other actions and still command the illusion. If the astral horror strays beyond range of the magician, it dissipates and the spell ends.

Astral Horror

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU** 10
PER: 7 **WIL**: 9 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 9
Actions: 2
Attack (4): 12
Damage (5): 13

Physical Defense: 15
Spell Defense: 12
Social Defense: 14
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 6

Death: 51
Unconsciousness: 44
Wound Threshold: 15

Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 8
Movement: 6*

Legend Award: Fourth Circle (1 per 2 PC)

* This value is the astral horror's flying Movement Rate

ASTRAL MAW

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/17
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes)
Effect: WIL+10/Physical

Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank+3 rounds

This spell summons a huge mouth from astral space. Rumors abound that it summons a real Horror, which does little to diminish the fearsome reputation of magicians, especially those who practice Nethermancy. The magician makes chewing noises and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, a giant fanged mouth, large enough to swallow a troll and surrounded by writhing tentacles, is summoned from the depths of the netherworlds. Each round, the maw attacks a target designated by the magician within range. It requires his concentration to maintain and direct the maw—if broken, the maw disappears and the spell ends.

Astral Maw

DEX: Magician **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: NA **WIL**: NA **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX
Actions: 1
Attack: Spellcasting Step
Damage:
Bite: Effect Step

Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: Magician
Social Defense: None
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: Magician
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA

Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: NA
Movement: NA

Legend Award: Third Circle

Rules

The following special rules apply to the astral maw:

Swallow: If the astral maw achieves an Extraordinary Result on its Attack Test, any troll-sized or smaller target is swallowed whole. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Victims may escape from the maw by making a successful Strength Test against the Effect Step. Those killed while inside the astral maw disappear into astral space.

ASTRAL MOUNT

Threads: 2 or 4 (see text)
Weaving: 11/17
Range: Touch
Effect: Conjures an astral mount

Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank+1 hours

This spell conjures a mount from astral energy. The mount's size determines the number of threads needed for the spell. Weaving two spell threads conjures an astral version of most common mounts, including riding or war horses, troajins, huttawas, kues, zoaks, and granlains; weaving four spell threads conjures an astral thundra beast, elephant, stajian, or dyre. The magician mentally calls the mount, then places his hand where its head would be and makes a Spellcasting Test against the mount's Spell Defense. If successful, wisps of energy are drawn from astral space and the astral mount coalesces in the physical plane. The astral mount has the same statistics as its physical world counterpart, and can walk or gallop on water or air when unburdened and sink into the earth in the same way a spirit mount can (p.81). The mount can be ridden by anyone designated by the magician when he casts the spell.

Astral Riding Horse

DEX: 6 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 8
PER: 4 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 7
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 7
Damage:
Trample (2): 9

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 6
Social Defense: 7
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: 44
Unconsciousness: 36
Wound Threshold: 13

Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 8
Movement: 10

Legend Award: First Circle

Powers: Enhanced Senses [Listen, Smell] (2): 6, Great Leap S (2): 8, Sprint (3)

Astral Thundra Beast

DEX: 6 **STR**: 11 **TOU**: 12
PER: 5 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 7
Actions: 1
Attack (4): 10
Damage:
Charge (8): 19;
Horn (4): 15;
Trample (2): 13

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 10
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 2

Death: 66
Unconsciousness: 58
Wound Threshold: 17

Recovery Tests: 6
Knockdown: 12
Movement: 8

Legend Award: Fourth Circle

Powers: Charge (4), Durability (1), Enhanced Senses [Listen, Smell] (2): 7

ASTRAL NIGHTMARE

Threads: 4
Weaving: 12/21
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes)
Effect: WIL+10/Mystic

Casting: TSD
Duration: Rank+3 minutes

Illusion. This spell deceives others into believing they have been sent into the astral plane. The magician brings up memories or imaginings of astral space, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target believes he has been suddenly transported into astral space. The magician concentrates to control the illusion—if he stops concentrating, the illusion fades away and the spell ends. Action or Effect Tests for effects or creatures that the magician conjures up use the spell's Effect Step. The magician may voluntarily lower the Effect Step to simulate low-power effects or the actions of small creatures. Any damage inflicted on the target by the spell allows him to make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139)

Astral Sense

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+6

This spell senses people, creatures, magic doors, magic items, and so on, in astral space. The magician rolls his eyes upward and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he is able to detect other presences in astral space. Each round, the magician compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any target within the area of effect. If successful, the target is detected. If more than one target is in the area of effect, the magician detects those with the lowest Spell Defense first. Once detected, a target stays detected as long as he remains within the area of effect. Once the spell is cast, a magician will often take a minute or two to sense nearby members of his group and verify that an astral presence is not coming from a comrade. Once his comrades have been sensed, the magician knows the next target detected is unknown to him. Making an Effect Test does not prevent the magician from taking other actions that round—sensing is a Simple Action (see **Actions**, p.215). The magician may attempt to cast spells on a target that he has astrally sensed, even if he cannot otherwise see the target. Magicians use this spell for many different reasons. It is often cast to determine if an item or object has an astral presence, or to detect the presence of nearby entities or Horrors within astral space. A magician using Astral Sense to view a magical item can sense the item's magical pattern and would learn it was magical in nature. However, he would not gain any information about the item's history or learn any Key Knowledges.

Astral Shadow

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell makes living beings in the physical world more difficult to see in astral space. The magician waves a silk veil over the target's face and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for locating the target using astral sensing abilities, such as the Astral Sight talent (p.61), or the Astral Sense spell (p.150). Apart from obscuring his presence in astral space, the target does not gain any protection against spells or Horror powers, such as Horror Mark.

Astral Shield

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: +3 to Spell Defense

This spell enhances a character's resistance to magic. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target adds +3 to his Spell Defense. The Astral Shield spell is not cumulative with other spells that increase Spell Defense.



Astral Spear

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Mystic

This spell weaves energy from astral space to form a phantom spear. The magician pulls his arm back, then hurls it forward as if throwing a spear and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, an ethereal spear forms that crosses the distance between the two adversaries and strikes the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Astral Whisper

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+8

This spell enables the hearing of sounds originating in astral space, such as those made by spirits or Horrors. The magician cups his hands to his ears and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any astral beings (including Namegivers or Horrors in astral form) within range. If successful, the magician can hear any sounds the entity makes. At his discretion, the gamemaster may ask the magician to make Perception Tests to identify specific sounds or speech. Many magicians using this spell have been driven mad, particularly in such Horror-infested areas as Parlainth and the Badlands.

AURA

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: Makes target's aura visible

This spell makes astral auras visible as a glowing halo of colors and shapes. The magician opens his eyes as wide as possible and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's aura becomes visible, allowing anyone with astral sensing abilities (p.110) to glean information from the exposed aura without the Strain cost or danger of looking into astral space. The brightly glowing aura makes the target clearly visible in the dark, negating Darkness modifiers (p.226) when attacking him.

AURA STRIKE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell channels destructive energies into weak portions of the pattern of a character who the magician has astrally sensed (p.110). The magician furrows his brows and squints his eyes, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Regardless of how much damage the target suffers, he receives a single Wound.

AWAKEN

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6

This spell awakens an unconscious or sleeping character. The magician claps his hands together three times, then lightly touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of any spell or magical ability keeping the target unconscious, asleep, drugged or otherwise unaware, or against the Step Number of the poison or drug, if the subject is unconscious from non-magical causes. If successful, the target immediately regains consciousness. If the target's Current Damage exceeds his Unconsciousness Rating, he heals sufficient Damage Points to regain consciousness (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220).

BALL OF STRING

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Varies (see text) **Duration**: Rank+3 hours
Effect: WIL+6

This spell conjures a ball from strands of mystical energy. The magician ties an imaginary knot to an object, marking the point of origin, and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a ball of magical string appears in his hand. The ball can be placed in a pouch or pocket—the string pays out automatically as the magician walks. The magician makes an Effect (10) Test once per hour. If successful, the ball reels out more string and remains untangled. If failed, the string snaps and the spell ends. When the magician wants to return to where he started, he winds the string back onto the ball. As he starts winding, the string glows with a white light. By following the glowing thread, the magician is unerringly led back to the point of origin.

BALLOONS OF MIST

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+4

Air. This spell creates several misty balloons large enough to lift things. The spell must be cast under the open sky. The magician exhales in short bursts and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a number of misty balloons form equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The magician can control balloons within the spell's range by concentrating—he can command them to return to him or float upwards or in a direction of his choosing. Each round, the balloons move at a Movement Rate equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank. Balloons that float out of range continue in the same direction and Movement Rate until the magician manages to get close enough to regain control or the spell ends. To attach a balloon to an object or character, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines the balloon's Strength Value, from which its Strength Step and Carrying Capacity are derived (see **Determine Characteristics**, p.27). Multiple balloons can be attached to carry heavy targets.

BANQUET OF DIS

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Eliminates hunger and fatigue

This spell allows survival without food, water, or sleep for extended periods. The magician rubs his stomach and licks his lips, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's eating, drinking, and sleeping cravings are suppressed. The target loses one Recovery Test per Day for each day he goes without food and water or each night he goes without sleep. If the target has only one Recovery Test per Day, he must choose which effect he ignores—food and water, or sleep. The spell has no effect on characters with less than one Recovery Test per Day. While the spell is in effect, the target suffers no lasting ill effects from deprivation and acts normally with no penalties from the lack of sustenance or sleep. The target's ability to heal is reduced, however—he suffers a –3 Recovery Test penalty.

BEASTFORM

Threads: 2
Weaving: 16/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Transforms caster into an animal

This spell allows the magician to assume the form of a non-magical animal and requires a small part of the desired animal (a tuft of hair, a feather, and so on). The magician focuses on the animal's shape and characteristics, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he transforms into the desired animal, gaining its physical Attributes and abilities, but retaining his own mental Attributes and talents. The magician's clothing and equipment disappears when he assumes animal form and reappears again when the spell ends. None of his equipment functions while the magician is in animal form, but any threads woven to magical or pattern items remain effective. While in beast form, the magician can be affected by talents or spells that affect animals. He can only cast spells with gestures that the animal is capable of performing—this limitation usually excludes any spells requiring speech. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes by spending a Standard Action.

Bedazzling Display of Logical Analysis

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: +6 bonus to verbal Charisma-based Tests

This spell reinforces the integrity of arguments or debates. The magician draws himself up to his full height and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he gains a +6 bonus to any Charisma-based Tests involving conversation, debate, argument, or other verbal forms of oratory.

Behind Eye

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+30 minutes
Effect: Step 4/D6 Perception Test to rear

Fire. This spell creates an eye in the back of a character's head. The magician chants softly as he touches a candle or torch to the target's head, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a flaming eye appears in the back of the target's head. The eye "sees" things to the target's rear with a Perception Step of 4/D6—the target sees what the eye sees. The eye has no special power to see in the dark or astral space, even if the target possesses this ability. In combat, the eye prevents the target from being Blindsided by opponents. An attacker can counter this by using a skill or talent that makes him harder to see—if the eye fails its Perception Test against the talent or skill's Detection Difficulty, the target is Blindsided, as normal.

Bellow of the Thundras

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Allows target to be clearly heard

This spell enhances voices, allowing them to be better heard. The magician mouths the opening lines of the target's speech then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's voice is amplified and can be heard clearly by those listening up to the spell's range. Magicians often use this spell at large gatherings to Make an Impression (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 93)—usually to get the attention of others—in a distracting situation.

Best Face

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+8 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to Charisma-based Tests

Illusion. This spell disguises one's identity. The magician splashes water or cologne on the target's face then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's face changes to match a face envisaged by the magician—if he is copying a specific face, he must have seen that individual within a number of months equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The target gains a +5 bonus to Charisma-based Tests when trying to convince others of his false identity and attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception. Any Interaction Tests made against the target are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139). The spell only affects the target's head and neck, including hair and ears. The maximum possible size difference between the target's face and that being mimicked is 100 percent in any dimension—the magician must find another way to disguise obvious differences. The target's voice is unchanged, so he must try to mimic the speech characteristics of the character whose face he has borrowed as best he can.



Alachrim, a human Illusionist, casts the Best Face spell on himself, assuming the visage of a local militiaman he spent time with earlier that morning. He gains a +5 bonus to his Interaction Tests when attempting to Intimidate a crowd—ordering them to disperse, or taking another appropriate action.

Billowing Cloak

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

Air. This spell enhances the ability to impress others. It can only be cast on someone wearing a cloak or who has shoulder-length or longer hair (a t'skrang's crest is considered to be "long hair" for this purpose). The magician tosses his head and flips his hair (if any) or crest back, then places his hand on the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the air behind the target becomes animated, billowing his cloak or hair out behind him. The target may make an Effect Test in place of a First Impression Test (p.70). All restrictions to First Impression still apply. If the target knows the First Impression talent or skill, he gains a +5 bonus instead. If successful, he gains a +5 bonus to any Interaction Tests he makes against his "impressed" friend.

BINDING THREADS

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+8

This spell conjures a myriad of magical threads that wrap and entangle an opponent. The magician points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a mass of brightly-colored magical threads form in the air and fly toward the target, entangling him in powerful magical bonds. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, the target may make a Strength Test against the Test Result. If successful, he breaks free and the spell ends. Bound targets cannot use their hands to attack or cast spells and are Harried for all Action Tests they make except attempts to break free of their bonds.

BLADE FURY

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+10/Physical

This spell enhances the efficacy of melee weapons. The magician shouts out a battle cry, then touches the melee weapon held by the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, the melee weapon gleams bright red and a pale-red duplicate of the weapon appears, hovering several inches away from the original. Whenever the target makes a successful melee Attack Test with his enhanced weapon, the magical double-blade also hits his opponent. The target's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted (made separately from the normal weapon's Damage Test). Any special results achieved by the normal weapon also apply to the enhanced weapon. For example, if the attack was an Armor-Defeating Hit, the double-blade also achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit.

BLAZING FISTS OF RAGE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+4 rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Physical

Illusion. This spell engulfs a character's hands or feet in illusory flames that augment the damage he inflicts with unarmed attacks. The magician touches one of the target's limbs and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the body part glows cherry-red, leaving a slowly fading after-image trailing behind. The target's body audibly "hums" with power. When he strikes an opponent with an unarmed Attack Test, brilliant red sparks fly from the area struck, accompanied by an explosive sound effect. The target's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If his opponent takes a Wound, the Knockdown Test is considered a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

BLEEDING EDGE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: +5 bonus to melee weapon's Damage Tests against the previous wielder

This spell causes a melee weapon to weep blood. The magician scratches his arm and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the weapon's Spell Defense or that of the wielder who last spilled blood with the weapon. If successful, the weapon bleeds along its edge or striking surface, the blood dripping to the ground. If the weapon is used against its previous wielder, the attacker gains a +5 Damage Test bonus.

BLESSED LIGHT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+15 minutes
Area of Effect: 6-yard (3-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: WIL+4

This spell gathers pure light from astral space. The magician squints his eyes, then points his finger in the air and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a globe of light appears, hovering a yard above his head and illuminating the area of effect. The magician makes an Effect Test. Any entity, including undead, who wishes to enter the area of effect makes a Willpower Test against the Test Result. If successful, the light goes out and the spell ends, otherwise the entity remains outside the area of effect until the spell ends.

BLIND

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 8 yards (4 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+8

This spell turns a character's eyes into empty unseeing pits. The magician claws at his own eyes and mutters under his breath, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's eyeballs disappear, leaving dark empty holes. The "blind" target suffers a Complete Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, his eyes are restored and the spell ends. Targets who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

BLINDING GLARE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: Varies (see text)
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+6

This spell creates a blinding flash of light. The magician opens his eyes as wide as possible, then covers them and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all characters in the area of effect. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against each target's Perception Step. If successful, the target is blinded and suffers a Complete Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests for 1 round per Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result. Targets who do not require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

BLINDNESS

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Obscures the target's vision

Illusion. This spell obscures vision with an inky blackness. The magician closes one eye, points at the target, blinks twice, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is "blinded" and suffers a Full Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests. The target may make a Disbelief Test as soon the illusion takes effect. Any sight-based Action Tests he

makes are considered Sensing Tests. Targets who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell.

Blizzard Sphere

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from center

Effect: WIL+8/Physical

Water–Cold. This spell conjures a small blizzard against foes. The magician shivers and rubs his shoulders, then cups his hands together as if holding a snowball and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all targets in the area of effect. If successful, freezing ice, sleet, and snow fills the sphere, which remains stationary for the spell's duration. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on any targets within the area of effect. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Blood Boil

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 4 rounds
Effect: WIL+9/Mystic

This spell makes an opponent's blood boil, causing his skin and veins to ripple and his pores to emanate steam. The magician gurgles bubbling noises and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Each round, the magician may make another Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes another Effect Test to inflict damage. If failed, the target "simmers" and takes no damage that round. The magician may not redirect the effect against another target with this Spellcasting Test. If the target manages to get out of range, the spell ends. The spell only affects living targets with blood. It does not work against most undead, plants (which have sap), stone statues, or other such creatures. If there is any doubt, the gamemaster determines the spell's efficacy.

Blood Lost

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: Target loses ability to heal Wounds

This spell worsens injuries, making them harder to heal. The magician makes wringing, squeezing actions with his hands, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is unable to naturally heal Wounds until the spell ends—he may heal Damage Points, however. Any Recovery Tests used to heal Wounds during the spell's duration are wasted, including the first Recovery Test made to heal a Wound each day if the target currently has no damage. During the spell's duration, the target's Wounds can only be healed by magic, such as from a healing potion or the questor Heal power, although even this magic's ability to heal the target is affected. If the target uses a healing potion, he makes a Recovery Test (including the +8 bonus conferred by the potion) against the magician's Spellcasting Test. If successful, he heals a Wound, but does not heal any Damage Points. If the target is treated by a questor of Garlen, the questor makes a Heal Test against the Spellcasting Test. If successful, the questor heals only one Wound, regardless of the Result Level achieved.



Blood Servitor

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: 8
Range: Rank miles **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Creates a flying servant

This spell conjures a minor servitor by combining blood with astral energy. The magician pricks his finger and drips blood to the ground, taking 3 Strain, then makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If successful, he conjures a blood servitor in the form of a small flying creature. The magician can issue simple verbal commands to the servitor with a number of words no greater than his Spellcasting Rank. Because the servitor is linked to him by blood, the magician can spend a Simple Action to use the servitor's senses to see and hear, using his own Perception Step for any Perception Tests he makes. The blood servitor can fly at a speed equal to the magician's Movement Rate. If the servitor takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, it vanishes and the spell ends.

Blood Servitor

DEX: Magician **STR**: Magician **TOU**: Magician
PER: Magician **WIL**: Magician **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX
Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR

Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: None
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: Magician

Death: Wound Threshold *
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: 6
Movement: Magician**

Legend Award: First Circle

* This value is equal to the magician's Wound Threshold
** This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

Boil Water

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: Boils water/Physical

Water–Hot. This spell heats a vessel to bringing the water it holds quickly to a boil. The magician briskly taps the vessel and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the vessel immediately heats the water within, bringing a quart of water to a boil each round—a gallon of water takes four rounds to reach boiling point. The magician can boil a maximum number of quarts of water equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Though not intended to be used in combat, the product can be quite effective. The contents of the vessel can be

hurled at an opponent by making a Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense (see **Thrown Attacks**, p.232). If successful, the boiling water inflicts Step 4/D6 damage per quart, to a maximum of Step 16/D12+D8+D6 damage.

Bond of Silence

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell prevents a character from speaking directly (though he can still make indirect hints) about a specific topic, event, or individual. The magician holds his breath and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test. Whenever the target attempts to speak about the forbidden topic, he makes a Willpower Test against the Test Result. If successful, he can speak normally and freely and the spell ends. If failed, his voice falters and he cannot speak until he changes the subject to one he can discuss freely.

Bone Circle

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 6/17 **Casting**: 9
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 months
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle around center
Effect: WIL+5

This ritual spell invites a wandering spirit to live within a circle made of bones. The bones of one or more non-sentient animals are used to construct a Bone Circle no bigger than the area of effect. The magician spends one hour per thread walking the circumference, scratching or tracing magical inscriptions and placing bones to form the circle's outline. After completing the circle, he touches the bones and makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If successful, a bone spirit is summoned to live within the circle. The spirit is not very intelligent. It cannot leave the bone circle, but will take physical action against anyone attempting to enter or already in the circle. Some spells, such as Grave Message (p.174) and Spirit Portal (p.200), require the use of a bone circle. A magician may have a number of active bone circles equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Kicking away the bones and erasing the inscriptions is not sufficient to destroy a bone circle—it just makes it more difficult to see the circle's outline and therefore avoid disturbing the spirit that dwells there. A Bone Circle can be dispelled, but the magician must touch the circle to do so, risking assault from the spirit. The bone spirit will not harm its summoner, but cannot otherwise be controlled.

Bone Spirit

DEX: Effect Step/2* **STR**: Effect Step/2* **TOU**: 8
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 7

* The magician allocates the spell's Effect Step as evenly as possible between the spirit's Dexterity and Strength Steps

Initiative: DEX **Physical Defense**: 12**
Actions: 1 **Spell Defense**: 9
Attack: DEX **Social Defense**: 14
Damage: STR **Physical Armor**: 0
Mystic Armor: 3

Death: 43 **Recovery Tests**: 3
Unconsciousness: NA **Knockdown**: STR
Wound Threshold: 12 **Movement:** 6*

Legend Award: Second Circle

* This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate
** The gamemaster may decrease or increase this value to reflect a higher or lower Dexterity Step

Bone Dance

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+4

This spell infuses a character's skeleton with an independent living force which moves him against his will. The magician does a herky-jerky jig and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength Step each round, requiring his concentration. If successful, the target haphazardly dances Step 4/D6 yards in a random direction and is Harried. If failed, the target regains control that round—he may move and act of his own accord.

Bone Pudding

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: Turns bones to sludge

This spell turns a character's bones into a pudding-like consistency. The magician eats something messy, like a pudding, porridge, or another glutinous dish, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's shin, knee, and elbow bones become the sludgy consistency of whatever the magician was eating, causing 6 Wounds (but no Damage Points) and collapsing him to the ground. The usual penalties apply for sustaining multiple Wounds (see **Wound Penalties**, p.221). Movement becomes nearly impossible for the target. The target's bones return to their original consistency and the Wounds may be healed after the spell ends.

Bone Puppet

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: WIL+4

This is a variant of the Bone Dance spell, p.155. The magician pretends to manipulate a string-puppet, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength Step each round, requiring his concentration. If successful, the target loses control of his body and imitates any moves the magician makes, acting accordingly. For example, if the magician Steps one yard to the left, the target also Steps one yard to the left; if the magician mimes hitting someone in front of him, the target hits someone to his front. If failed, the target regains control that round and may move and act normally. While the magician has control, he uses the Effect Step for the target's actions. The magician cannot use any of the target's talents or magical abilities. Each round, the target may attempt to end the spell by making a successful Willpower Test against the Effect Step.

Bone Shatter

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell splinters and cracks bones, causing horrific damage. The magician makes cracking sounds, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any targets in range. If successful, he makes one separate Effect Test per Result Level to determine how much damage is inflicted, direct-

ing no more than two Effect Tests against an individual target. A target who takes a Wound adds +3 to the Knockdown Difficulty. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, successfully casts Bone Shatter against a group of ork scorchers who have decided to attack the elf and his companions. He achieves an Extraordinary Result and can make up to four Effect Tests. Caelarion can direct one Effect Test against four different scorchers, or two Effect Tests against the ork scorcher leader and one Effect Test each against two more of his followers, or any other combination that totals no more than four Tests.

BONE WALKER

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 12/18 **Casting**: 10
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+2 days (see text)
Area of Effect: 20-yard (10-hex) radius of magician
Effect: Creates a bone walker

This ritual spell creates a large animated skeleton. The ritual must be performed within an active Bone Circle (p.155) and requires additional bones to make the walker, enough to form a troll-sized skeleton. Each day the magician spends an hour weaving a spell thread to the bones, carefully placing them in the shape of the skeleton. After weaving all of the spell threads, the magician touches the bones and makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, the bones join together and animate in the shape of a humanoid figure. The magician can mentally control the bone walker while it is within the area of effect, although this requires his concentration. Otherwise, the creature follows the last command received, such as guarding a given place, attacking any living creature that passes, and so on. If the bone walker is destroyed, the spell ends. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 3 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

Bone Walker

DEX: 8 **STR**: 12 **TOU**: 10
PER: 4 **WIL**: 5 **CHA**: 3

Initiative: 8
Actions: 2
Attack (4): 12
Damage:
Unarmed (3): 15

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: 12
Physical Armor: 10
Mystic Armor: 5

Death: 69
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 15

Recovery Tests: 4
Knockdown: 13
Movement: 5

Legend Award: Fourth Circle (1 per 2 PC)

Powers: Durability (3)

BOUNCING BLASTER

Threads: 4
Weaving: 9/20 **Casting**: 6 (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 days
Area of Effect: Up to 12-yard (6-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell "seeds" an area of earth with magical bombs, creating a minefield through which travelers may pass at their peril. The magician makes motions as if throwing seeds onto a field, then touches the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a patch of ground up to the area of effect in size is seeded with magical blasters. The magician can plant a number of blasters equal to his Spellcasting Rank and determines exactly where within the minefield each bomb is planted. Once seeded, if any character, including the magician, moves within 2 yards (1 hex) of a blaster, it bounces into the air, trailing fiery orange sparks, and explodes. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted to all characters within 2 yards (1 hex) of the blaster.

BUOYANCY

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: +3 bonus to Swimming Tests

Water. This spell makes a character more buoyant. The magician throws his arms wide as if floating on his back and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 Swimming Test bonus. Characters who cannot swim, such as obsidimen, do not benefit from this spell.

CALL

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 miles **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Delivers a message

This spell delivers a message over a great distance. The message must contain no more words than the magician's Spellcasting Rank and must be sent to someone the magician knows within range. The magician opens and closes his mouth as if talking, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target sees and hears a magical image of the magician speaking the message. The target receives only the information that the magician chooses to send, whether a threat, a warning, a cry for help, or a simple greeting. The spell allows only one-way communication—the magician knows if the spell succeeded but cannot tell if the target understood the message, nor can he learn anything about the target's current location and condition.

CALM WATER

Threads: 4
Weaving: 8/19 **Casting**: 6+ (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 500 square yards of water
Effect: WIL+9

Water. This spell lowers the severity of waves created by a storm. The magician stands at the highest point of a ship or shoreline and shouts at the water, then makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the storm's origin and intensity. Against natural storms the Difficulty Number is 6; especially severe storms carry a Difficulty Number of 9 or more; magical or elemental storms use their own or their creator's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test, reducing the height of all waves within the area of effect by a number of inches equal to the Test Result. The spell may be cast multiple times on the same section of water to further reduce the storm's ferocity.

CATCH SPELL

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+12

This spell captures other spells. The magician mimics catching an object, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he may make an Effect Test against the Spellcasting Test of any spell the target casts directly at him. If



successful, the magician catches the spell and may hold it until his Catch Spell ends or he makes a Spellcasting Test to cast the caught spell at a legitimate target within the caught spell's range, including the original caster. When recast, the caught spell's effects use the original caster's statistics. If the magician is holding a caught spell when his Catch Spell ends, the spell affects him normally. The magician cannot cast any other spells until he recasts the caught spell or his Catch Spell ends.

CATSEYES

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/10 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: Target gets Low-Light Vision

This spell grants the ability to see in near-darkness. The magician blinks several times, then touches the target lightly on his eyelids and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains the Low-Light Vision ability (p.20)—his pupils become vertical slits, like those of a cat, reflecting incoming light and appearing to glow in the dark. The spell has no effect on targets with Low-Light Vision.

CATWALK

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+8 rounds
Effect: +6 bonus to Action Tests involving climbing or balancing

This spell improves balance. The magician mutters "meow" several times, then lightly strokes the target's head and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's sense of balance and coordination is markedly improved and he gains a +6 bonus to Action Tests involving climbing and balance, including Climbing and Knockdown Tests.

CHILLING CIRCLE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from magician
Effect: Causes Step 4/D6 cold damage to those in the circle/Mystic

Water–Cold. This spell creates a circle of cold. The magician spins round in a circle, then suddenly stops to kneel and touch the ground and compares his Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of all characters inside the area of effect, including himself. If successful, the character takes Step 4/D6 damage each round they remain within with the circle.

CHOSEN PATH

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+3 hours
Area of Effect: 60 yards (30 hexes)
Effect: WIL+8

This spell makes others follow a path of the magician's choosing when they are presented with a choice of directions. The magician considers a path (a set of doors, a branch in the road, and so on) visible to him, then indicates his choice and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, when others are faced with a choice of direction at the same location, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense among all targets in the area of effect. If successful, the target group believes they have chosen otherwise, but in reality they select the path determined by the magician. The deception becomes apparent once they are out of range or the spell ends. Should the target group decide to backtrack and take the correct path from the same point, the magician makes another Effect Test to see if they are diverted down the wrong path again.

A magician stands at a three-way intersection. He chooses left, then casts the Chosen Path spell. A few hours later a group of seven merchants walks by. The magician has an Effect Step of 18, and makes a test against a Difficulty Number of 14 (highest Spell Defense of 8, +6 for the six additional merchants). He rolls a 21. The merchants 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 more than 60 yards (30 hexes) from the intersection, they notice that they are not heading in their intended direction. They backtrack to the intersection and try again. The magician makes another Effect Test, and unfortunately rolls a 12. This time, the spell fails to divert the merchants and they proceed down the right-hand corridor.

CIRCLE OF ASTRAL PROTECTION

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+8

This spell creates a circle of magical protection. The magician walks the circumference of the circle, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of all characters inside the area of effect. If successful, he makes an Effect Test. The Mystic Armor of all characters within the circle is equal to the Test Result. If a character leaves the circle, his Mystic Armor returns to its original value.

CIRCLE OF WELL BEING

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank×10 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL

This spell creates a zone which cools and refreshes those who repose within. The magician walks the circumference of the circle, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the circle's area of effect glistens like ice, cooling the air within, but not uncomfortably so. The magician makes an Effect Test against the natural Spell Defense of any character resting within the circle for at least 10 minutes. If successful, the character adds the Effect Step as a bonus to any Recovery Tests he makes while inside the circle. A character may benefit multiple times from the effect, as long as one hour passes between Recovery Tests (see **Recovering From Damage**, p.220).

CLARION CALL

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Effect: WIL+4

Illusion. This spell creates an illusory voice that persuades others to do the magician's will. The magician talks quietly to himself, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, an illusory voice of considerable authority translates the magician's words into a language appropriate to each target. The magician's Effect Test is compared against each target's Social Defense. On an Average Result, the target acts according to the voice's suggestions, as long as the action is not obviously harmful to others; on an Excellent Result, the target is fooled into taking the suggested course of action, even if it is harmful to someone else. If convinced to follow a course of action that would hurt another, the target makes a Disbelief (10) Test as a Free Action before he carries out the command. If successful, it destroys the suggestion's influence on the target (see **Illusions**, p.139). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. The target will not harm himself and suggestions to do so immediately end the spell's effect on him.

CLEAN

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: WIL+4

This spell removes visible stains, dirt, or foreign substances from objects. The magician makes wiping motions, then sprinkles water on the objects and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target objects. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test. The Test Result is the number of square yards cleaned—3 square yards is sufficient to nicely clean a dwarf-sized character, 4 square yards is enough for a human or t'skrang, while 6 square yards is needed for an obsidiman or a troll. The spell does not clean substances that are not visible to the magician.

CLOTHING GONE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 5 rounds
Effect: Harries the target

Illusion. This spell makes a character believe his clothes and armor have vanished, leaving him naked and vulnerable. The magician removes an item of his own clothing, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is so distracted (and perhaps also embarrassed) by his clothing and armor disappearing, that he is Harried. Any Action Tests the target makes are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

CLOUD SUMMON

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/20 **Casting**: 8+ (see text)
Range: 1 mile (see text) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+7

Air. This spell summons cloud cover as a precursor to casting another spell, such as Death Rain (p.161), or simply to achieve impressive weather effects. The magician makes gestures mimicking the swirling pattern of rapidly-moving clouds, then tosses some water into the air and makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the cloud type. Summoning normal clouds carries a Casting Difficulty of 8; stormy weather carries a Casting Difficulty of 13; gale-force storms carry a Casting Difficulty of 20 (or more, at the gamemaster's discretion). If successful, the water billows into a wispy fragment of cloud, rising rapidly into the sky where it acts as a beacon drawing other clouds to it. Under normal circumstances, the clouds summoned take one hour to arrive—storm clouds may take longer to gather, at the gamemaster's discretion. The magician makes an Effect Test, subtracting the Test Result in minutes from the clouds' arrival time. The spell may be cast multiple times to hasten the clouds' arrival. The effect centers on the magician's position at the time of his first casting—it does not move with the magician. The range also determines the radius of ground area covered by the clouds. The magician can summon any type of natural cloud formations he has witnessed or experienced. If he has not been outside during a storm, he cannot summon that type of weather.

COLD STORAGE

Threads: 8 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: 8
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank months
Effect: Preserves organic matter

Water–Cold. This ritual spell keeps bodies or food from rotting and is often used during magical experiments or on lengthy journeys. All of the items must be in an active Bone Circle (p.155). Weaving each spell thread takes one hour, during which time the magician must describe, stack, and sprinkle water over the items. After weaving all the threads, he throws a last handful of water into the Bone Circle and makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If successful, the items stop decaying and can be moved from the bone circle. Food preserved by this spell cannot be eaten until the spell ends.

COMBAT FURY

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: +4 bonus to close combat Attack Tests

This spell creates a state of battle fury, energizing a character into a frenzy in combat. The magician rants and gesticulates violently, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +4 bonus to close combat Attack Tests. The target may only make close combat attacks during the spell's duration.

Command Nightflyer

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+2

This spell allows conversation with and command over nocturnal flying creatures, such as owls, bats, and krilworms. The magician imitates the animal's sounds, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he may converse with the creature and give it simple commands. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the creature obeys his commands. The creature's survival instincts cannot be overridden, nor can it be ordered to behave against its basic nature. For example, a bat could not be forced to scout around during daylight hours when it would normally be resting.

Compression Bubble

Threads: 3
Weaving: 15/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: WIL+10/Physical

Air. This spell traps a character inside a magical bubble. The magician cups his hands together as if holding a ball, then releases them and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a flexible, but resilient, bubble forms around the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted, as the bubble squeezes the target and constricts his actions. Each round, the magician must concentrate on squeezing the bubble to inflict additional damage to the target, or he may choose to move away and leave the target trapped until the spell ends. The bubble may be torn open from the outside by reducing its Death Rating to zero. Only an Extraordinary Result on an Attack Test defeats the bubble's Physical or Mystic Armor. The target may break out of the bubble by making a successful Strength (17) Test. Weapons or spells wielded by the target have no effect against the bubble's interior. While constricted inside the bubble, the target is Harried.

Compression Bubble

Physical Armor: 10 **Physical Defense**: 7
Mystic Armor: 10 **Spell Defense**: 7
Death: 10 (see text) **Social Defense**: NA
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold**: NA

Conceal Tracks

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+5

Illusion. This spell disguises the spoor of one or more characters with magic, confusing anyone attempting to track the group. The magician brushes the ground around him, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, his Effect Test determines the Sensing Difficulty of the targets' tracks. Any Perception or Tracking Tests made to discover tracks concealed by this spell are considered Sensing Tests.

Confusing Weave

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+3

This spell confounds a magician's ability to weave spell threads. The magician shakes his head from side to side and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against each target's Thread Weaving Step. If successful, affected targets fail to weave threads into their own spells—they lose all of the spell threads they are weaving or have woven. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Constrict Heart

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+6/NA

This spell constricts a character's heart with astral force. The magician extends his hand in a grasping motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's heart is squeezed in a vice-like grip. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The magician must concentrate to inflict damage each round or the spell ends. The target is immobilized unless he makes a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, the spell ends. Some creatures are not affected by this spell, because they are undead and feel no pain or have no heart or similar organ to constrict.

Control Being

Threads: 3
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell controls another character. The magician holds his body still, eyes closed, then opens his eyes, flings his arms out and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he takes control of the target's body. The target still controls his thoughts and speech, but the magician dictates all movement. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Test Result. If successful, he regains control of his body and the spell ends. The magician must concentrate to force the target to move, but broken concentration does not end the spell. While affected, the target moves and acts with his own Attribute Steps. The magician cannot use any of the target's talents or spells, but can direct him to use any physical skills he possesses.

Counterspell

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/11 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Improves magical defense

This spell bolsters magical defenses. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group. If successful, the targets add +2 to their Spell Defense per Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Crafty Thought

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 2 yards (1 hex) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+5

Illusion. This spell plants a thought in a character's mind, distracting or confusing him. The magician talks conversationally to the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he plants a simple visual image in the target's mind. The thought may incorporate the effect of small gestures, such as those used to emphasize speech. The image cannot contain more than a single round's worth of activity and the image area "seen" cannot be larger than the common room of a typical tavern, with no more than four characters acting out their parts in the illusion. The target does not have to act on the thought, but the idea has now been planted. Each round, the magician may make the previous thought recur in the target's mind as a Free Action. He may also modify the thought by concentrating and making an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician can modify the original thought, though the setting must remain primarily the same. The original principal characters must also remain the same, but any of them can change their actions in the modified image. If failed, the spell ends. If the spell fails or expires early, the magician may attempt to recast it against the same target. However, because of the conversational requirement, if he fails to weave the spell thread or cast the spell, the target may make a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139) using an applicable skill or talent or a Perception Test. If successful, he knows the magician is trying to ensorcel him and can no longer be affected by this spell for one day.

Crunch Climb

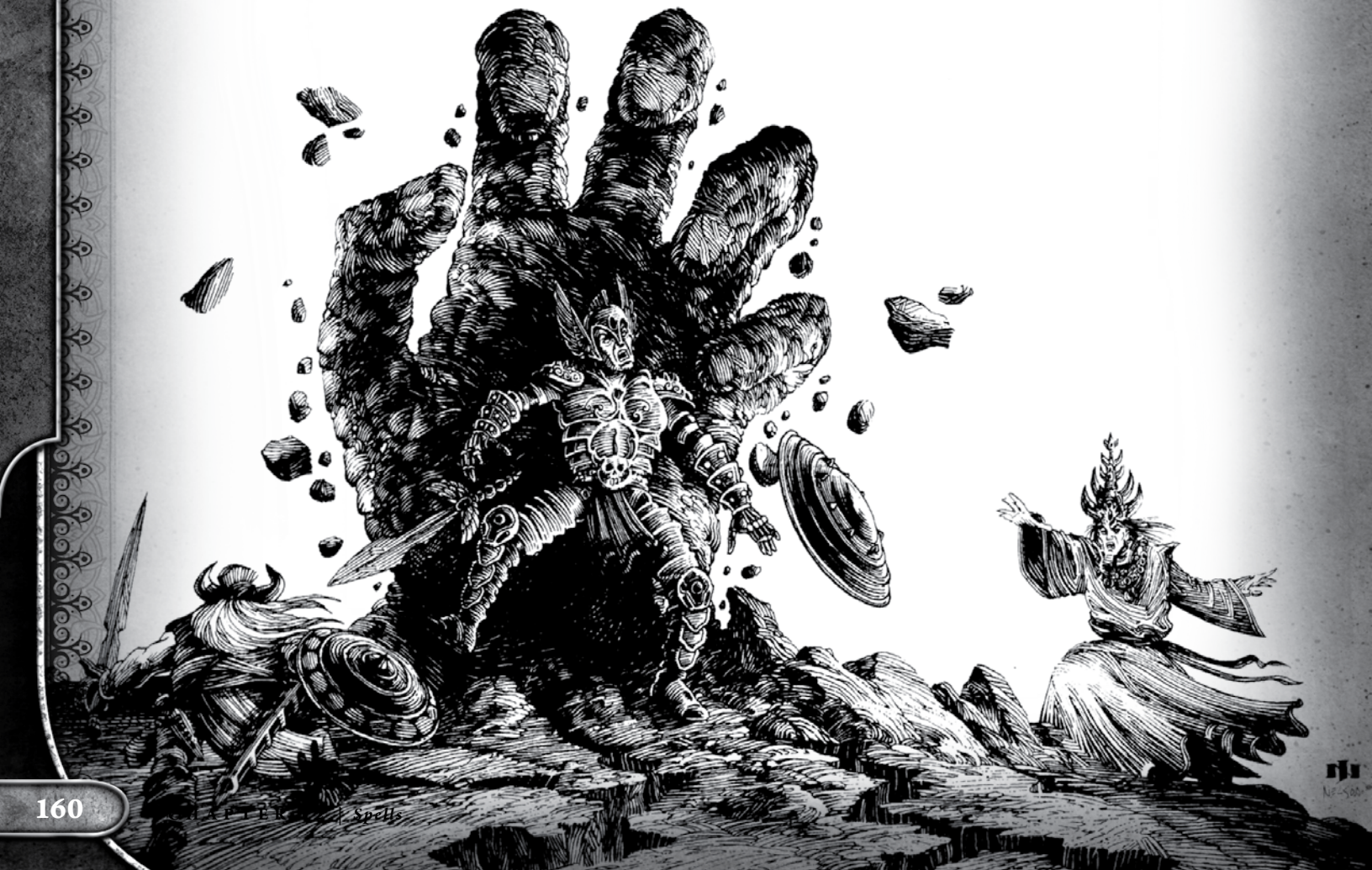
Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +3 Climbing Test bonus

Earth. This spell enhances climbing ability. The magician crouches down on all fours, then touches the target as he begins to climb and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 Climbing Test bonus.

Crushing Hand of Earth

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Earth. This spell works similarly to the Grasping Hand of Earth spell, p.174, but instead of holding a character, it exerts injurious crushing force on him instead. The target must be standing on earth or stone. The magician shakes a fist at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a huge hand formed from stone or earth rises from the ground and clasps the target, crushing him with a terrible intensity. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted—this requires his concentration or the spell ends. Each round, the target may make a Strength Test against the Effect Test to break free, otherwise, he may perform no other actions while held in the spell's grip.



CRUSHING WILL

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell directly attacks a character's will. The magician furrows his brows and peers at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

DAMAGE SHIFT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: 3 rounds
Effect: Shifts damage to target/Mystic

This spell shifts damage from the magician to another character. The magician shakes his clothing vigorously, then taps his forehead and makes a Spellcasting Test against his own natural Spell Defense. If successful, he may attempt to shift any damage he takes to another target within line of sight. After the Damage Test made against the magician has been resolved, he may make a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, any damage taken by the magician from that Damage Test shifts to the target.

DAMPEN KARMA

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: –3 Karma Step penalty

This spell reduces a character's ability to use Karma. The magician must spend a Karma Point on his Thread Weaving or Spellcasting Test. He holds up his open palm, then closes it and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target suffers a –3 penalty to his Karma Step. Targets who do not use Karma are unaffected.

DANCING DISKS

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

This spell creates spinning disks under the feet of one or more characters. The magician spins around in increasingly tight circles, then stops and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, several glowing violet or green disks appear under the targets' feet. Any time an affected target's Action Test is less than the magician's Effect Test, the target is spun around 180 degrees on his disk. Characters unaffected by the spell gain wonderful opportunities for making Blindsided attacks. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

DARK MESSENGER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Sends nightflyer to deliver a message

This spell commands a nocturnal flying creature to deliver a message. It must be cast after sunset and only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, by being a familiar or through use of the Command Nightflyer spell, p.159. The message must be short—no more than twice his Spellcasting Rank words in length. The magician strokes the nightflyer, whispers his message to it and names the recipient, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the creature's Spell Defense. If successful, the creature flies off, unerringly seeking out the designated recipient and delivering the message in a whispery version of the magician's own voice. If the nightflyer cannot reach the recipient before the spell ends or sunrise (whichever comes first), the message is lost.

DARK SPY

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Sees through a nightflyer's eyes

This spell allows the magician to see and hear through a nightflyer's senses. It must be cast after sunset and only on a nightflyer already under the magician's control, by being a familiar or through use of the Command Nightflyer spell, p.159. The magician closes one eye and makes a Spellcasting Test against the creature's Spell Defense. If successful, he takes control of the creature's senses, allowing him to make Perception Tests as if he were the nightflyer. The maximum distance to which the magician can use the nightflyer's senses equals his Spellcasting Rank in miles. The magician's own senses are numbed, leaving him unable to react properly to external stimuli—he is considered Harried for any Action Tests other than Perception Tests using the creature's senses.

DEATH RAIN

Threads: 1
Weaving: 15/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius of magician
Effect: Step 5/D8 acid damage (WIL+5; see text)/Mystic

Water–Acid. This spell causes acid rain to fall from the sky. It requires cloud cover, either natural or summoned or produced by magic, such as the Cloud Summon spell, p.158. The magician calls out the Names of those friendly to him, then compares his Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of each un-Named target within the area of effect. If successful, corrosive rain falls from the clouds onto the target. Each round of exposure to the acid causes Step 5/D8 damage to the target. The magician is unaffected, as are those whose Names were shouted when the spell was cast. If the magician chooses to concentrate, the acid's intensity increases and he adds his Willpower Step to the rain's Damage Test that round. Once he breaks concentration, he cannot regain it again without recasting the spell. Even if the magician loses concentration, the spell continues until it ends. Should the magician move, the area of effect remains stationary.

DEATH TRANCE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 hours
Effect: Puts target into hibernation

This spell places a willing or unconscious character into a state of suspended animation. The magician holds his breath, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target enters a state of hibernation, during which his heart stops beating and he does not breathe or exhibit any signs of life. Because the target is not dead, he does not decay or suffer the normal symptoms following death. The target remains in suspension and awakens with no ill effects when the spell ends. The

magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 4 Blood Magic Damage. This damage can be healed after the spell ends. This spell is sometimes made permanent as a curse, with a Pattern Item, certain Key Knowledges, or a Deed necessary to end the spell. The exact circumstances for the target to wake are defined by the magician when the spell is made permanent.

Death's Head

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/14 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self (see text) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+5

This spell transforms the magician's head into a gore-spattered skull, terrifying those whom he sets his gaze on. The magician touches his face and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he may target one character within line of sight each round, making an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense as a Simple Action. If successful, the target flees from the magician at his fastest possible Movement Rate until out of line of sight. An affected target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, he throws off the effect of the fear, otherwise he continues to flee. Once out of sight of the magician, the target may act normally, however, if the magician comes into view again, he will react in fear until he makes a successful Willpower Test or the spell ends.



Delay Blow

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: WIL+15/Physical

This spell enchants a melee weapon to have a delayed attack effect. The magician stands still, then touches the weapon and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If successful, the next successful melee attack that the wielder makes with the enchanted weapon becomes subject to a bonus attack, struck at the same time. After making a Damage Test, but before determining the outcome of any Knockdown Tests or effects, the attacker makes another Attack Test using the same talent or skill employed for his previous Attack Test. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on the target from the delayed blow. Once the delayed blow occurs, whether the attack was successful or not, the spell ends.

Detect Elementalism Magic

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+6

This spell detects Elementalism magic. Magicians find this spell useful when trying to determine if an item is magical because many magical items are enchanted with True Elements by Elementalists. The spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, p.150, but only on the physical plane.

Detect Illusionism Magic

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+6

This spell detects Illusionism magic. Magicians use this spell to detect the effects of Illusionism spells or the presence of magical illusory effects. The spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, p.150, but only on the physical plane.

Detect Nethermancy Magic

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+6

This spell detects Nethermancy magic. Magicians use this spell to detect the effects of Nethermancy spells, spirit powers, and other nethermantic magic. Magicians can also use the spell to detect items enchanted with bound spirits. The spell otherwise works in the same manner as the Astral Sense spell, p.150, but only on the physical plane.

Detect Undead

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from target
Effect: WIL+5

This spell detects undead creatures. The magician smears the target's brow with dust or dirt, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is able to detect the presence of undead entities by making an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense among any undead within the area of effect. If successful, he determines the number—but not the exact position—of the undead. This requires the target's concentration during the round it is used, however, a break in concentration does not end the spell.

DISASTER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of a disaster happening just beyond normal sight. The magician glances around casually, then stops and stares hard at a fixed point on the horizon, saying out loud something like "Oh, Passions, look over there!" or "What in the world can that be?" and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the illusory evidence of a disaster of the magician's choosing is created: a plume of smoke rising from the roofs of a village, the sounds of people screaming, or some other minor, but distracting, effect. The magician's Effect Test is compared against the Social Defense of each target. If successful, the target's attention is drawn to the supposed disaster and is sufficiently distracted to allow the equivalent of a Blindsided attack against him. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. The spell cannot be cast inside small, enclosed environments, such as rooms with no windows. If used against a target engaged in combat, or another equally engaging activity, the magician must achieve a Good Result on his Effect Test for the spell to affect him.

DISGUISE METAL

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 minutes
Effect: WIL

Illusion. This spell disguises one type of metal as another. The magician imagines the two types of metal involved, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the metal's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test. The Test Result is multiplied by 10 pounds to determine the maximum quantity of metal disguised by the illusion. The disguised metal has a Spell Defense of 6 against magic that identifies metal (such as the Gold Sense talent from the ***Player's Companion*** if the metal is precious). Only the metal's appearance, not its shape, is transformed by the spell. For example, disguising a steel sword as mercury would be useless because the blade wouldn't flow at room temperature like real mercury does.

DISLODGE SPELL

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+10

This spell disrupts a random spell from a spell matrix. The target must have one or more spell matrices, including matrix objects. The magician squints his eyes and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices. The magician makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the chosen spell matrix's Rank (see **Dispelling Magic**, p. 138). If successful, the matrix is wiped clean of all spells it currently contains, leaving it empty. If a spell in the affected matrix is currently in the process of being cast, the target can choose to abort the spell or complete it using raw magic. This spell can target any type of spell matrix—Spell, Enhanced, Armor, or Shared—or matrix object. The spell matrix wiped by this spell may be reattuned to hold a new spell or the spell it previously contained.

DISPEL ELEMENTALISM MAGIC

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL

This spell dispels Elementalism spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell, p.163.

DISPEL ILLUSIONISM MAGIC

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL

This spell dispels Illusionism spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell, p.163.

DISPEL MAGIC

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/13
Casting: 6
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes)
Duration: 1 round
Effect: WIL

This spell disrupts the pattern and threads of another spell. The magician gestures as if pulling apart an object, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty. If successful, the effect is dispelled and the spell ends. Unless its description notes otherwise, consult the Dispel Difficulty Table to determine the Dispel Difficulty for spells at each Circle. This spell can also be used to dispel other forms of magical effects, such as talents, Discipline abilities, and creature powers—including spirit, dragon, and Horror powers. Only magical effects with an extended duration can be dispelled (see **Dispelling Magic**, p.138).

DISPEL DIFFICULTY TABLE

Spell Circle	Dispel Difficulty
1	9
2	11
3	13
4	15
5	16
6	17
7	18
8	20
9	21
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26
14	28
15	29

DISPEL NETHERMANCY MAGIC

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL

This spell dispels Nethermancy spells. It otherwise works in the same way as the Dispel Magic spell, p.163.

DISPLACE IMAGE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: Projects image of the target

Illusion. This spell makes a character "invisible" by displacing the image that others see and shifting it a short distance. The magician quickly traces an outline of the target, then touches the "shoulder" of the outline, followed by the shoulder of the target, and

makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, an outlined figure shrouded in a shimmering blur appears drifting 4 yards (2 hexes) away, quickly transforming into an identical image of the target. The target 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 the illusion. Attacks made against the image have no effect, but if the target does not concentrate that round to mimic the response to a blow made against him, the attacker may make a Disbelief Test. Attack Tests made against the image count as Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

DISPLACE SELF

Threads: 2
Weaving: 9/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+7

This spell moves the magician away from harm. The magician hops frantically up and down, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his own natural Spell Defense. If successful, the magician is imbued with a magical "sixth sense" that detects attacks targeted directly or indirectly at him (including Blindside attacks) and automatically moves him out of harm's way. The spell only avoids physical attacks which occur after the magician has acted that round. Each time he is attacked, the magician makes an Effect Test against the Attack Test. If successful, he moves 2 yards (1 hex) in a random direction. If there are any intervening obstacles, the magician moves as far as he can, then stops. If the distance moved is insufficient to evade the attack (against a collapsing ceiling or a Fireball spell, for example), he must defend against the attack normally. The spell's displacement effect can be used against a number of attacks each round equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank and requires no concentration on his part to trigger.

DIVINE AURA

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell detects aspects of the aura of living beings. The magician peers intently at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he chooses what he wishes to divine from the target's aura—this could be anything from an emotional state, like anger or fear, to hurt or fatigue. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he determines the target's state. The magician may concentrate to divine the same or different aspects of the same target aura, each attempt requiring a separate Effect Test.

DODGE BOOST

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/8 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to Avoid Blow Tests

This spell improves a character's ability to dodge attacks in combat. The magician sways sideways, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 bonus to his Avoid Blow Tests.

DOOM MISSILE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell creates a magical missile which engulfs the target with a series of ongoing explosions. The magician gesticulates wildly, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test each round to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. An Armor-Defeating Hit with a Doom Missile spell can be a very ugly way to die…

DRASTIC TEMPERATURE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: 6
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: WIL+3/NA

Fire or *Water–Cold*. This spell causes a radical change in ambient temperature. The magician wraps his arms about him and shivers as if cold, then points toward the spot where the sphere of effect will be centered and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the temperature inside the area of effect rises above the boiling point of water or drops below the freezing point of water, at the magician's discretion. The temperature change takes thirty seconds to reach the final temperature, after which each round that a character is caught in or passes through the sphere of effect, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Once the spell has been cast, the sphere of effect cannot be moved. This spell is commonly used to create a barrier to discourage others from passing a given point.

DREAM SIGHT

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank+8 minutes
Effect: WIL+8

This ritual spell allows eavesdropping on a character's dreams. The target must be asleep in a location known to the magician and he must also possess something personal that belongs to the target—the object does not need to be a Pattern Item, just something that the target has used or worn recently. The magician weaves one spell thread each hour, sprinkling a little fine dust over the object as he does so. After weaving all of the threads, the magician picks up the object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Step. If successful, the magician can view the target's dreams—he cannot interact with them, only see them played out. A Namegiver's dreams might give insights into his hidden traits, secrets, hopes, or fears. The gamemaster determines what the magician sees and what useful information is imparted by the viewing.

DREAMSEND

Threads: 3 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 11/24 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This ritual spell allows interaction with a character's dreams. The target must be asleep in a location known to the magician and he must also possess something personal that belongs to the target—the object does not need to be a Pattern Item, just something that the target has used or worn recently. The magician weaves one spell thread each hour, sprinkling a little fine dust over

the object as he does so. After weaving all of the threads, the magician picks up the object and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Step. If successful, the magician can create dreams for the target while the spell is in effect. The dreams created cause different effects. If they are used to soothe and relax, the target adds one bonus Recovery Test per Result Level achieved to those he normally receives after a full night's sleep. If the dreams are used to frighten, the target loses a number of Recovery Tests equal to the Result Level achieved. When the spell is cast, the target makes a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139). If successful, he immediately wakes up and the spell ends. This spell can only be used once against the same character each day.

Drunken Stagger

Threads: 4
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 days
Effect: Penalizes target's actions

This spell causes a character to become inebriated. The magician drinks some water or ale, directs a slurred comment at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target becomes drunk, incurring a –1 penalty per Result Level achieved to all Action Tests.

Dry and Wet

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/8 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 14 yards (7 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+4

Water. This spell dries soaked items or soaks dry ones. The magician gathers saliva in his mouth, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If he spits, "wet" is cast; if he swallows, "dry" is cast. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines the number of pounds of goods that can be soaked or dried.

Dust Devil

Threads: 2
Weaving: 9/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Area of Effect: 32-yard (16-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: Causes a Harried penalty to targets' Action Tests requiring sight, hearing, or smell

Air and Earth. This spell conjures a whirling dust storm, blurring and irritating those caught in it. The magician throws a handful of dust into the air, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group. If successful, a dust storm billows outward from the magician, enveloping a 32-yard (16-hex) radius sphere. Those within the dust storm, except for the magician, become Harried for all Action Tests requiring sight, hearing, or smell, including Knockdown Tests. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Dust to Dust

Threads: Varies (see text)
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+11/Mystic

This spell destroys large groups of undead. The magician weaves one spell thread for each undead creature he wishes to target, then swallows hard and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, he makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each. Undead that take damage in excess of their Death Rating immediately crumble to dust. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. This spell does not affect disembodied spirits, corrupt Namegivers, or Horrors, but it does affect undead Horror constructs, such as cadaver men. If there is any doubt, the gamemaster determines whether the creature is undead and therefore affected by this spell.

Earth Blend

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+7

Earth. This spell makes a character blend into his surroundings, making it more difficult to spot him. Both magician and target must be standing on stone or earth. The magician throws a stone at, rubs some dirt on, or touches a pebble to the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for attempts to see the target. Those using magical sight or senses must make a successful Perception Test against the target's Spell Defense to perceive him. The target must remain stationary—if he moves, the spell ends.

Earth Darts

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Earth. This spell transforms earth into crystalline darts that fly toward a foe. The magician flings a handful of dirt into the air and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. This potent spell is not an uncommon one. Knowledgeable foes will often retreat out of range as they see the crystal darts forming.

Earth Q'wril

Threads: 4
Weaving: 16/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Move through earth

Earth. This spell allows the magician to move through the earth in a similar manner to the earth q'wril, a burrowing creature. The magician digs at the ground with his hands or a tool, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he may move freely through the earth at the same Movement Rates as an earth q'wril, with a Movement Rate of 3. Care should be taken to avoid getting stuck underground when the spell ends.

Earth Staff

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+10/Physical

Earth. This spell creates a quarterstaff from a handful of earth or a piece of stone. The magician grasps a clod of dirt or a small pebble in his hand, then makes a Spellcasting Test. If successful, the dirt or stone expands into a five-foot-long quarterstaff that can be used as a melee weapon in combat. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on an opponent from a successful attack. Only those with knowledge of

Elementalism may wield the earth staff. If a character without Elementalism wields an earth staff in combat, the spell ends as soon as his opponent is struck, inflicting no damage, and reverting back to its original components.

Earth Surfing

Threads: 4
Weaving: 10/22 **Casting**: 6 (10; see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 hour
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from center of animated earth. This effect extends down 4 yards (2 hexes) below the ground.
Effect: Creates earth wave

Earth. This spell creates a wave of earth that hastens travel. The magician must be standing on earth or rock, then kneels down and moves his hands over the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the area of ground on which he is standing becomes a wave of soil on which he can ride with a Movement Rate of 9. A number of characters equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank may ride safely on the wave—anyone else who attempts to ride the wave must make a Knockdown (10) Test. If failed, the character falls from the wave and is Knocked Down, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage (no armor provides protection). The magician need not concentrate to control the wave's movement. However, he must make a successful Spellcasting (10) Test to change direction, or to stop or start the wave to allow those traveling on it to alight safely. If the wave hits a solid obstacle, such as a large tree or rock, the spell ends and all those traveling on the wave take Step 10/2D8 damage from the collision (Physical Armor provides protection).

Earth Wall

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) tall, 2-yard (1-hex) thick, 2-yard (1-hex) wide wall section
Effect: WIL+12/Physical

Earth. This spell summons an earthen wall. The magician must be standing on earth or stone making shoveling actions, as if digging a dirt palisade, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the wall's Spell Defense. If successful, he summons up to Spellcasting Rank contiguous wall sections, each an area of effect in size. Summoning and positioning a section takes the magician one round and requires his concentration. The wall may not be placed on a living being—doing so immediately destroys that section, which still counts toward the maximum number of wall sections summoned. The wall can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against a section of earth wall has still struck it, but his blow has no effect. Only an Extraordinary Result can defeat the earth wall's Armor Rating. A section of wall may be toppled. The magician makes an Effect Test to determine how well-anchored the section is. The toppling character makes a Strength Test against the Effect Test. If successful, he topples the wall over. Anyone unfortunate enough to be within 4 yards (2 hexes) of the wall in the direction it falls, must make a successful Dexterity (8) Test to avoid being struck. If failed, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Earth Wall (1 Section)

Physical Armor: 12* **Physical Defense:** 8
Mystic Armor: 10* **Spell Defense:** 10
Death: 70 **Social Defense:** None
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold:** NA

* Requires an Extraordinary Result to defeat

Ease Passage

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 hours
Effect: WIL+10

This spell placates elementals, allowing easier travel through or in difficult terrain or weather. The magician whispers words of praise, declaring the target to be a friend of the elements, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his words are translated into the correct elemental language (see **Elemental Tongues**, p.67) and the elemental forces involved yield to the target. The adverse effects of terrain or vegetation on the target's movement are negated: loose sand compacts underfoot, sharp stones roll aside, brambles part to ease passage. The negative aspects of weather on the target are also nullified: mud hardens as he passes, rain or hail falls to either side of him, leaving him dry, and so on. Any movement penalties the target suffers due to terrain or weather are ignored. The magician may make an Effect Test in place of any Dexterity-, Strength-, or Toughness-only Tests that the target makes when traversing or surviving travel through the terrain or weather. The gamemaster determines the Difficulty Number of any Action Tests, based on the circumstances of the situation (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 89).

[Element] Spear

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+7/Physical

Element [Air, Earth, Fire, Water, or *Wood]*. This spell forms a spear from one of the elements. Each version of the [Element] Spear spell is learned separately, one for each element: air, earth, fire, water, and wood. To make a wooden spear, the magician must touch a piece of dead wood, not a live plant; making a fire spear requires the magician to touch an open flame or glowing coals, and he may take damage based on the size of the heat source; making a water spear requires the magician to have a bottle of water or to touch a small puddle; making an earth spear requires the magician to be kneeling on the ground or holding a rock; making an air spear is easy, as the magician only needs to be standing up and breathing deeply. While touching the element, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a spear is formed from the element, which hurtles toward the target, striking him. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Regardless of the result, the spear dissipates after the attack—an air spear disappears, an earth spear crumbles into dirt, a fire spear burns out, a water spear falls in a puddle to the ground, and a wood spear crumbles into splinters.

Encrypt

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/11 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+4

Illusion. This spell makes a selected tract of text jumbled and unreadable. The magician runs his hands over the text, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the book or paper on which it is written. A grimoire's Spell Defense is equal to the Dispel Difficulty of the highest-Circle spell it contains (see **Grimoires**, p.131). If successful, the text becomes incomprehensible to anyone other than the magician. The magician's



Effect Test determines the illusion's Sensing Difficulty. Anyone attempting to read the encrypted text must make a successful Perception or Read/Write Magic Test against the spell's Sensing Difficulty to read it.

ENGULF [ELEMENT]

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL/NA

Element [Air, Earth, Fire, Water, or *Wood].* This spell envelops and smothers a character in an element. Each version of the Engulf [Element] spell is learned separately, one for each element: air, earth, fire, water, and wood. To encase his foe in wood, the magician must touch a piece of dead wood, not a live plant; to surround his opponent with fire requires the magician to touch an open flame or glowing coals, and he may take damage based on the size of the heat source; drowning his opponent in water requires the magician to have a bottle of water or to touch a small puddle; smothering his foe with earth requires the magician to be kneeling on the ground or holding a rock; suffocating his opponent by withdrawing the air from him is easy, as the magician need only be standing up and breathing deeply. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test each round to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. The magician must concentrate to ensure his foe remains engulfed by the element—if his concentration is broken, the spell ends. While affected by the spell, the target is Harried.

ENTER AND EXIT

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Area of Effect: 60-yard (30-hex) radius from magician
Effect: Shows quickest entrance and exit

This spell shows the quickest way into or out of a location. The magician looks about, first to the left, then to the right, and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he unerringly finds the most direct route into or out of the target location within the area of effect. The route revealed must be one that the magician can traverse (in the gamemaster's judgment), though it may not be the easiest. The spell does not reveal the locations of traps or guards, nor does it provide passwords or other means of entry or exit, but if a route that avoids these things exists, the spell shows it. The spell also reveals hidden passages that might not otherwise have noticed—the magician may make a Spellcasting Test against the passage's Detection Difficulty. If successful, he finds the passage.

EPHEMERAL BOLT

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/9 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+7/Physical

Illusion. This spell creates a wriggling, glowing green bolt that squirms its way through the air toward an opponent. The magician wriggles his finger and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target takes a Wound, his Knockdown Test is considered to be a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

ETHEREAL DARKNESS

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/16 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from target's center
Effect: Creates magical darkness

This spell draws a piece of darkness from another dimension. The magician cups his hands together, then touches the target character or object, commands the darkness to billow forth, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the darkness summoned expands to fill a 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere, centered on the target. The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the area of effect to suffer a Complete Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests. Ordinary light does not penetrate Ethereal Darkness. Attempts to banish the darkness with magical light or to dispel it with the Dispel Magic spell are made against a Spell Defense of 9. Those with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by Ethereal Darkness—they can see normally, as if the spell had never been cast.

EVIL EYE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Causes a –5 penalty to target's Action Tests

This spell causes the magician's pupils to shimmer with a flickering greenish flame. The magician stares intently at his intended target, then closes one eye and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is cursed by the evil eye and suffers a –5 penalty to his Action Tests. Each round, the target can attempt to break the curse by making

a Willpower Test (not subject to the curse's penalty) against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, the curse lifts and the spell ends.

Experience Death

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+5

This spell allows a magician to see and experience a character's dying moments. By doing this, the magician touches the spirit world to recreate the events of the character's death. The magician closes his eyes, then points his palms out toward the corpse and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense (as if he were still alive). If successful, the last few rounds of the target's life are played out to the magician, ending with the target's death. The magician must enter into a trance, concentrating to maintain the spell. While in this state, he senses everything from the point of view of the deceased. Unfortunately, this also includes taking any damage the deceased suffered before he died. The magician's Effect Test gives him a Spirit Pool of Damage Points. Any damage inflicted on the magician first reduces this Spirit Pool and is not added to his Current Damage. Once the Spirit Pool is exhausted, the magician takes damage normally (Mystic Armor provides protection). Wounds taken by the target are not transferred to the magician. Even if the damage the magician takes equals or exceeds his Wound Threshold he never suffers a Wound. If his Current Damage equals or exceeds his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, he still passes out or dies, however.

Eye of Truth

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +10 bonus to Disbelief Tests

This spell allows seeing beyond the veil of illusion with near-absolute clarity. The magician rubs clean, clear water over his eyes, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, the magician gains a +10 bonus to any Disbelief Tests—but not Sensing Tests—that he makes against illusions for the spell's duration.

Eyes Have It

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell temporarily blinds one or more characters. The magician touches his eyelids with his fingers, then touches his clothes and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a number of pairs of stylized, mirror-like eyes equal to his Spellcasting Rank appear on the magician's clothing. Each round, the magician may concentrate his gaze on a character, making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician transforms one pair of the mirror eyes into a duplicate of the target's eyes. The target's eyes become glazed, turning opaque white in color—he is blinded and suffers a Complete Darkness penalty to sight-based Action Tests. The magician's Effect Test determines how effective the blinding is. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Test. If successful, his "mirrored" eyes disappear from the magician's clothing and the target can see again.

Falcon's Cloak

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Turns caster into a falcon

This spell transforms the magician into a falcon, an eagle, or a similar bird of prey. It requires a falcon's or eagle's tail or wing feather, which the magician waves from side to side, then touches to his forehead and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he transforms into a falcon or eagle, with all of the bird's normal physical abilities, but his own mental abilities. The magician can fly at the bird's normal Movement Rate and uses its senses and methods of attack. Any equipment he is carrying, along with his weapons, armor, and clothing, disappears when the spell is cast and reappears when it ends. While in avian form, the magician can only cast spells that do not require speech or gestures. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes by spending a Standard Action.

False Aura

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell masks a character's aura, confusing those attempting to assess him astrally. The magician visualizes a change to the target's aura, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's aura changes to match that visualized by the magician. To see the target's true aura, a viewer must make a successful Astral Sensing Test against the magician's Effect Test. If failed, the viewer sees the fake aura instead. The false aura can conceal threads, talents, the target's state of health, magical ability, or any other characteristics that can be viewed astrally.

False Enchantment

Threads: 5
Weaving: 8/20 **Casting**: 6 (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 days
Effect: Gives an item fake magical abilities; +5 to the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty

Illusion. This spell imbues an item with an illusory magical power. The fake power cannot be activated, but others can detect and be deceived by it. The magician imagines the fabulous properties he wishes the item to have, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he may choose a new Spell Defense for the item no greater than the Spellcasting Test. The item's Spell Defense is used as the Difficulty Number for magically obtaining information about it.

> *Magaja casts False Enchantment on a broadsword. She rolls an 11 on her Spellcasting Test and chooses to give the sword a Spell Defense of 8. If a Weaponsmith were to use his Item History talent on the sword, he would require a successful Item History (8) Test to gain the (false) information about the sword.*

If magical investigation succeeds against the item's Spell Defense, the investigator obtains the fake information planted by the magician. The false enchantment makes it more difficult than usual to determine the veracity of the spell. The magician adds +5 to the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty. The item's Spell Defense and false Key Knowledges should be noted at time of casting, along with the enchantment's Disbelief

Difficulty. Tests made to magically examine the item are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139). The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

FALSE FLOOR

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 6-yard (3-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of an obviously disguised fake floor, or other similar trap, in a normal floor section, up to a maximum 6-yard (3-hex) radius area. The magician imagines the type of trap concealed by the floor, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his Effect Test determines the spell's Sensing Difficulty. Characters encountering the illusion make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139). If successful, the illusion is revealed. If failed, the character believes something is wrong with the floor. The gamemaster indicates that a trap might be triggered if the character were to cross the floor section, with potentially disastrous results. Regardless of the Sensing Test, if a character crosses the illusory floor, nothing is triggered. This spell may also be cast on wall sections or ceilings—its use is not limited to floors.

FATAL FOOD

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+6/Mystic

This spell creates an effect in different foods, causing an explosive reaction when they are ingested and combined. The magician points at three different types of food, envisaging the end result on the target. Each thread is woven to a different piece of food—the foods cannot be touching or mixed together. For example, the spell cannot be cast on a bowl of soup because the ingredients are already combined. If even a taste of each type of food is eaten, thus mixing them together, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the meal explodes three times, once for each food type. The magician makes three Effect Tests to determine how much damage is inflicted on the target. Food left uneaten after the spell ends returns to normal and can be consumed safely.

FINGERS OF WIND

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL

Air. This spell creates a pair of invisible hands which can lift and manipulate objects. To observers, a faint breeze seems to move the target item. The magician wiggles his fingers and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his Effect Test is allocated over the hands' Strength and Dexterity Values as desired. Regardless of the Test Result, no Attribute Value may exceed 30. The hands can reach anywhere visible to the magician within the spell's range. While they have a tangible effect when carrying or moving objects, they cannot be used to attack, nor can they be attacked.

FIRE HOUNDS

Threads: 1–6 (see text)
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Summons one or more fire hounds

Fire. This spell summons one or more fire hounds from a fire at least the size of a campfire. The magician can summon more than one hound by weaving additional spell threads before casting the spell. Each thread woven after the first, to a maximum of six spell threads, summons an additional fire hound. The more hounds summoned, the greater the risk that the magician loses control of them. If he fails any Thread Weaving Test after the first, a number of hounds equal to the number of threads woven to that point appear and immediately attack the magician. The magician crouches on all fours and howls loudly, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the hound's Spell Defense, +1 for each additional hound. If successful, one or more large flaming hounds leap from the fire. The magician can mentally control the hounds as long as they remain within 4 yards (2 hexes) distance, although this requires his concentration. If the hounds move beyond this range, they act on their most recent instructions. The hounds disappear if killed or when the spell ends.

Fire hounds resemble large dogs, standing more than four feet high at the shoulder, and bear a passing resemblance to gate and hell hounds. Their stocky, muscular bodies are covered with short dark-brown fur that seems to absorb light and rows of sharp teeth fill their jaws. A fire hound can easily tear a limb from a human or an elf. A fire hound's eyes seem to burn—deep within the sockets are twin balls of flame. In darkness, their eyes glow like candle flames.

Fire Hound

DEX: 8 **STR**: 8 **TOU**: 6
PER: 3 **WIL**: 4 **CHA**: 4

Initiative: 8
Actions: 2
Attack (3): 11
Damage:
Bite (5): 13;
2×Claws (2): 10

Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 6
Physical Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 3

Death: 59
Unconsciousness: 47
Wound Threshold: 9

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 9
Movement: 8

Legend Award: Third Circle

Powers: Astral Sight [T] (5): 8, Breath Weapon [Fire] (6): 10, Durability (4), Spellcasting (7): 10

Rules

Astral Sight: Fire hounds can see into the astral plane using an ability equivalent to the Astral Sight talent, p.61. The fire hound makes a Spellcasting Test in place of the Perception Test it would normally make. Each use of this ability causes the hound 1 Strain.

Breathe Fire: The fire hounds' ability to breathe fire makes them extremely dangerous. They can use this power only once per summoning. To spit a gout of fire, the hound makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target takes Step 10/2D8 damage (Physical Armor provides protection). The fire burns for three more rounds, inflicting Step 6/D10 damage each round (no armor provides protection) unless somehow extinguished, by diving into a pool of water or suffocating the flames by other conventional or magical means.

Fire Whip

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Fire. This spell creates a fiery melee weapon from a pliable strip of cloth, leather, or even plant material at least one yard long. The magician 'cracks' the whip and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the material extends to three yards in length and bursts into flame. The wielder makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on an opponent by the whip. Fire whip attacks may also set flammable targets such as dry straw or cloth ablaze, inflicting normal fire damage (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109).

Fireball

Threads: 1
Weaving: 12/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from point of impact
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

Fire. This spell creates an explosive ball of flame from a source of fire, such as a torch or campfire. The magician places one of his hands to the side of the fire, waving it in a circular motion over the top of the flame, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group in the area of effect within a 4-yard (2-hex) radius of the point of impact. If successful, a small globe of fire erupts from his hand, which quickly expands to the size of a beach ball, before exploding in an intense gout of flame at the point of impact. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on those affected.

Fireweave

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL/Physical

Fire. This spell creates a protective cloak of flames from a source of fire, such as a torch or campfire. The magician makes stitching motions, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a cloak of fire wraps around the target. Anyone standing within 2 yards (1 hex) of the wearer or attacking him in close combat suffers damage each round from the intense heat thrown off by the cloak. The wearer makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted. The cloak's heat does not affect the wearer.

Flame Darts

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle
Effect: WIL+7/Physical

Fire. This spell creates fiery darts that are hurled at opponents. The magician cups his hands together to hold the darts, then "flings" them at his opponents and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all those within a chosen 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on each character in the area.

Flame Flash

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+4/Physical

Fire. This spell fires a burst of flame at an opponent. The magician makes wild, fanning gestures and crackling, whooshing sounds, then extends his hands outward and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, flames flash from his fingertips, bathing the target in fire. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Flame Strike

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/11 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Fire. This spell creates a bolt of flame from a source of fire, such as a torch or campfire. The magician points with both hands and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Flameshaw

Threads: 4
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+7

Fire. This spell conjures a hulking fire spirit from a large source of fire, like a campfire, to cart the magician from place to place. The magician makes pulling motions, as if tugging at the leads of an animal, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a fiery spirit is summoned from the flames, appearing at the magician's behest anywhere within the spell's range. The back half of the spirit appears in the shape of a two-person rickshaw pulled by the spirit's front legs and torso. The magician and a passenger may ride in the rickshaw, unharmed by the flames, although the ride is a warm one. The spirit only responds to verbal commands given to it by the magician while he is within 40 yards (20 hexes). At the gamemaster's discretion, issuing these commands may require the magician to speak the elemental language of fire (see **Elemental Tongues**, p.67). The flameshaw has wheels, but does not actually touch the ground. Instead, it travels a few inches above the ground and can rise as high as 100 yards (50 hexes) above the earth if commanded, rising 2 yards (1 hex) vertically for every 2 yards (1 hex) of horizontal movement. The flameshaw may be instructed by the magician as a Simple Action to run over an opponent, trampling him under its fiery wheels. Those riding in the flameshaw do not benefit from its Armor Rating—only direct attacks against the flameshaw cause the flames to coalesce and toughen to form armor. If the flameshaw takes damage equal to or in excess of its Death Rating, the spell ends and it immediately vanishes.

Flameshaw

DEX: Magician **STR**: Effect Step **TOU**: 7
PER: Magician **WIL**: 14 **CHA**: NA

Initiative: DEX
Actions: 1
Attack: DEX
Damage: STR

Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: Magician
Social Defense: None
Physical Armor: 12
Mystic Armor: 10

Death: 40
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: NA
Movement: 6

Legend Award: Fifth Circle

FLAMEWEAPON

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/14
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes)
Effect: Weapon adds D6 Bonus Die to Damage Tests/Physical
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank+10 rounds

Fire. This spell enflames a weapon. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If successful, a flame leaps from his fingers and engulfs the weapon in fire, except for the part where it is held. The wielder adds a D6 Bonus Die to the fiery weapon's Damage Test. The weapon is hot, but bearably so. However, whenever the Bonus Die is greater than 6, the wielder takes 1 Strain from the heat. The spell can be cast on weapons made from any material—wood, metal, bone, and so on. The flame inflicts no physical damage to the weapon.

FLESH EATER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 14/21
Range: Touch
Effect: Causes target to be Harried
Casting: TSD
Duration: Rank+5 rounds

Illusion. This spell makes flesh look as if it is rotting and failing off. The magician shakes his head, then scratches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target goes into a state of mild shock as he sees his flesh crawling with maggots and rotting away before his eyes and is Harried—this also affects his Social Defense. Any Action Tests the target makes are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

FLYING CARPET

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/18
Range: Touch
Effect: WIL+5
Casting: 7
Duration: Rank+1 hours

This spell enchants a carpet or other piece of cloth, no bigger than four square yards in size, to become a flying platform. The magician vigorously shakes the carpet or cloth, then makes a Spellcasting (7) Test. If successful, the material animates, floating several inches above the ground. The magician's Effect Test determines the flying carpet's Strength Value and, in turn, the weight it can carry. A carpet carrying more than its Carrying Capacity allows cannot fly (see **Determine Characteristics**, p.27). Those riding on the flying carpet do not benefit from its Physical Armor. If the carpet takes damage equal to or in excess of its Death Rating, the spell ends. The magician can verbally control the carpet, requiring his concentration. He may turn over command of the carpet to another character, who may verbally command it the same way. The magician may regain control of the carpet with a successful Spellcasting (7) Test. The carpet is not intelligent and is easily confused, so commands issued to it must be simple, limited to a couple of words at best. The carpet normally flies a few inches above the ground, but can fly as high as 100 yards (50 hexes) if commanded to do so, rising 2 yards (1 hex) vertically for every 2 yards (1 hex) of horizontal movement. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the carpet is destroyed or the spell ends.

Flying Carpet

DEX: Magician
STR: Effect Test*
TOU: 4
PER: 5
WIL: 4
CHA: 4

* The Effect Test determines the carpet's Strength Value, which determines its Strength Step

Initiative: Magician
Actions: 1
Attack: NA
Damage: NA
Physical Defense: Magician
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: None
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: 30
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA
Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: NA
Movement: 9*

Legend Award: First Circle

* This value is the carpet's flying Movement Rate

FOG GHOST

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/15
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes)
Effect: Summons fog ghost
Casting: TSD (see text)
Duration: Rank+3 rounds

This spell coalesces fog from the surrounding air and coaxes a maleficent spirit to inhabit it. The magician blows openly into the air and makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the fog ghost appears where the magician wishes within the spell's range, whereupon it immediately attacks the nearest character (even the magician himself). The fog ghost continues to indiscriminately attack whoever is nearest to it during each round of its existence, until it is destroyed or the spell ends. Destroying the fog does not harm the spirit, which simply returns



to its netherworld and waits for another chance to harm the living. A fog ghost will not attack undead or other spirits. The spell cannot be cast in desert or other very dry environments, nor can it be cast when the temperature is below freezing. Fog ghosts are vulnerable to damage from normal weapons—their high Physical Defense represents the difficulty of hitting the "thick" areas of fog that house the spirit.

Fog Ghost

DEX: 7 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 5
PER: 6 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 7
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 8
Damage:
Unarmed (3): 10

Physical Defense: 14
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 12
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 4

Death: 31
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 8

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: 7
Movement: 6*

Legend Award: Second Circle

* This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

Fog of Fear

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+5

This spell conjures a mist that causes fear in those wrapped in its misty tendrils. The magician wraps his arms about him as if cold, then points to where the fog will appear and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a luminous, wispy-gray, and slightly cold fog coalesces into a 2-yard (1-hex) radius sphere around the position. Once conjured, the fog cannot move. The magician's Effect Test is compared against the Spell Defense of each character—friend or foe—within the fog. If successful, the target flees away from the cloud at his fastest Movement Rate. Each round, an affected target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, he throws off his fear, otherwise he continues to flee. Once out of sight of the fog, the target may act normally. However, if he sees the mist again he will react in fear until he makes a successful Willpower Test or the spell ends. Under no circumstances will an affected target voluntarily enter the cloud.

Foreseeing

Threads: 2 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: 9
Range: Self **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+3

This ritual spell allows the future to be read in cryptic visions. It requires a suitable divination tool, such as a deck of elven path cards, bones, dice, or the like. Weaving each spell thread requires one hour of meditation, which requires the magician's concentration. Once all of the spell threads have been woven, the magician makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster, based on the information he is seeking. If successful, the Result Level determines the number of days in the future that the magician can foresee. If the magician wishes to see the fate of a particular target, he makes another Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the Result Level indicates the clarity of the vision—an Average Result being vague, an Extraordinary result being clear. Foreseeing should provide information couched



in symbols, strange visions, and riddles that the magician must decipher. The gamemaster should use the information provided by this spell as a source of adventure hooks or a way to drive the campaign plot forward, rather than allowing it to easily solve any problem the magician faces.

Form Exchange

Threads: 4
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 minutes
Effect: WIL+10

Illusion. This spell swaps the location and appearance of the magician and another character. The magician looks intently at the target, noting his appearance and position, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's highest Attribute Step. If successful, the magician exchanges form with the target—he now looks like the target and stands where the target originally stood, while the target now occupies the magician's position and looks like him.

Foul Vapors

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Area of Effect: 20-yard (10-hex) radius sphere from magician
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell taps into the uglier regions of astral space, drawing vapors to the physical plane. The magician holds his breath and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group within 10 yards (5 hexes) from the caster. If successful, vapors brought forth from astral space completely fill the area of effect. The vapors do not move once conjured. The

magician is immune to the vapors' effect. Those affected by the fumes do not have to breathe them, only contact is necessary—the spell affects both living and undead creatures. Each round, the magician makes an Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted on each character.

Friend or Foe

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell makes it nearly impossible for anyone to tell the difference between friend or foe in a fight. The magician drags his nails over his face, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all combatants—friends and enemies—within range. If successful, they all take on the appearance of corpses with the same height and build as the magician. The magician's Effect Test determines the illusion's Disbelief Difficulty. All Action Tests made during the fight, including Attack, Damage, and Knockdown Tests, are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

Friendly Darkness

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank rounds
Area of Effect: 6-yard (3-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: Creates magical darkness; +5 bonus to one type of Action Test for friendly characters

This spell draws darkness from another dimension, extinguishing nearby light. The magician cups his hands together, touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the darkness conjured fills a 6-yard (3-hex) radius sphere centered on the target. The darkness extinguishes all light, causing those within the area of effect to incur a Complete Darkness penalty to their sight-based Action Tests. The magician may nominate up to Spellcasting Rank characters within the darkness' radius of effect to gain a +5 bonus to one type of Action Test—Attack Test, Spellcasting Test, Recovery Test, and so on. This bonus serves to negate the Complete Darkness penalty for friendly characters within the area of effect. Ordinary light does not penetrate the darkness. Attempts to banish the darkness with magical light or dispel it are made against a Spell Defense of 11. Those with knowledge of Nethermancy are unaffected by this spell.

Fuel Flame

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+3

Fire. This spell creates a momentary rift into the Elemental Plane of Fire, increasing the intensity of a nearby fire source. The magician points at the target fire and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the fire's Damage Step. If successful, the fire's Damage Step increases by +2 per Result Level achieved, starting with an Average Result. The fire burns hotter and consumes fuel more quickly while the spell is in effect, but will go out normally once it exhausts all of the fuel available to it.

Fun With Doors

Threads: 2
Weaving: 5/10 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: Creates/alters door illusions

Illusion. This spell creates different illusory effects, all based around the use of doors. The magician must be able to see the target door, trapdoor or archway. He gestures in the air as if painting the door with an imaginary brush, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician may create a variety of illusions involving the target.

> *Hamvel, an ork Illusionist, casts the Fun With Doors spell against the entry door to his local tavern. He can make the door look like a wall as people run for the exit, apparently move the door up to 4 yards (2 hexes) in any direction, make an illusion of the door opening or shutting as people turn to look at the entrance, or make the door appear to be made of solid orichalcum or some other material.*

Any Action Tests made while interacting with the illusion are treated as Sensing Tests. Illusory doors created with this spell may be no bigger than 3 square yards in size. New doors cannot be created further than 4 yards (2 hexes) away from the original. And obviously, you can't run through an illusory door…

Gadfly

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+4 rounds
Effect: Harries target

This spell summons a tiny, glowing spirit that buzzes annoyingly, shouts taunts, and insults characters in a high, squeaky voice. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, the gadfly appears, harassing and taunting a designated target while he remains within the spell's range.

Gadfly

DEX: 11 **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: 7 **WIL**: NA **CHA**: 7

Initiative: 11
Actions: 1
Attack: NA
Damage: NA

Physical Defense: 16
Spell Defense: 10
Social Defense: NA
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: Wound Threshold *
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA

Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: NA
Movement: 8*

Legend Award: Second Circle

* This value is equal to the magician's Wound Threshold
** This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

Powers: Annoy Target (2): 9

Rules

Annoy Target: The gadfly makes an Annoy Target Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the gadfly is so distracting that the target is Harried while the spirit continues to annoy him. Once the target is affected, the gadfly need not use its Annoy Target power against that target again—it simply continues to be annoying. The magician can direct the gadfly against a different target within range by making a successful Spellcasting (10) Test. The gadfly can be attacked,

but is immune to abilities that target Social Defense. If the gadfly takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, the spell ends and it disappears.

Giant Size

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+2 rounds
Effect: +5 bonus to Strength- and Toughness-only Tests

This spell causes a character to grow larger. The magician stands on tip toes or puffs out his clothing, making himself look bigger, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target immediately grows 50 percent larger than his normal size, gaining a +5 bonus to his Strength- or Toughness-only Tests during the spell's duration. The target's clothing and armor also change size, returning to normal when the spell ends. Weapons and other equipment do not change size, however. Care should be made when using this spell in confined spaces, such as kaers or tunnels.

Gills

Threads: 2
Weaving: 4/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Allows target to breathe underwater

Air. This spell allows a character to breathe underwater. The magician makes fishlike mouthing gestures, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, small gills appear behind the target's ears (or neck, if the target has no external ears, such as obsidimen). While still able to breathe air normally, the target can also breathe underwater for the spell's duration.

Globe of Silence

Threads: 3
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: 6
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+2 minutes
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere
Effect: WIL+8

This spell creates a zone which completely smothers all sound. The magician pulls out a glass or crystal bead or other hard object, then shatters it on the ground at the spot where the spell is intended to take effect and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere is conjured, inside which no sound can be heard. This makes verbal communication impossible and prevents the casting of spells that require speech. The magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Dampening Difficulty. Sound-based talents, such as Battle Shout and Emotion Song, are affected, but can end the spell if their Test Result equals or exceeds the globe's Dampening Difficulty.

Grasping Hand of Earth

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Earth. This spell causes a massive hand to rise out of the ground and seize a character who is standing on earth or stone. The magician clutches at the air, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a huge earthen hand rises from the ground and clasps the target. The magician's Effect Test determines the hand's Strength Value. Each round, the target may make a Strength Test against the hand's Strength Value to break free. The target may perform no other actions while held in the hand's grip, and is considered Harried while held, except for attempts to break free.

Grave Message

Threads: 4
Weaving: 7/19 **Casting**: 6+ (see text)
Range: 100 miles **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Sends message to a Nethermancer

This spell magically sends a message to a practitioner of Nethermancy. The magician speaks a message no longer than fifty words inside a Bone Circle (p.155), a cemetery, or a place where spirits are active, then makes a Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number based on the distance to the target, as shown in the Spell Distance Difficulty Table. If successful, the message is successfully sent to a specific bone circle, cemetery, or place in which spirits are active, and addressed to a Named magician or "any magician who happens by." The target must possess knowledge of Nethermancy or the message will not be delivered. The message is spoken to the target in a quavering spirit voice only once.

SPELL DISTANCE DIFFICULTY TABLE

Distance	Difficulty Number
Up to 5 miles	6
6–10 miles	8
11–25 miles	11
26–50 miles	14
51–100 miles	17

Great Sticky Vines

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/20 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+4

Wood. This spell allows shoots and retracts enormous sticky vines from the magician's hands. The magician rubs plant juice or sap on both wrists, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, small plant tendrils sprout from his wrists, leaking sap as they wriggle forth. Each round the magician may ensnare a target by making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a vine shoots from his outstretched hand and wraps itself around the target. If three or more vines are thrown around the same target, it is considered grappled (see **Grappling**, p.230). The magician's Effect Test determines the Grappling Difficulty. The ensnared target must make a successful Strength or Dexterity Test against the Grappling Difficulty to escape.

The vines may drag ensnared objects that weigh no more than the magician's Carrying Capacity (p.29) toward him with a Movement Rate of 3. Grappled targets may also be dragged toward the magician, if he is strong enough. To resist, the target must make a successful Strength Test against the Effect Step—this is independent of any attempts to break free of the vines holding him. The vines can be attacked. The magician makes an Effect Test, the result of which is the vine's Death Rating. Should a vine be severed, however, the magician can simply drop it and shoot out a new one. The magician can maintain up to Spellcasting Rank vines.

Sticky Vine

Physical Armor: 0 **Physical Defense:** Magician
Mystic Armor: 0 **Spell Defense:** Magician
Death: Effect Test **Social Defense:** None
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold:** NA

GREAT WEAPON

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+2 rounds
Effect: Harries opponents

Illusion. This spell makes a Size 2 or larger melee weapon appear bigger and more dangerous than it actually is. The magician makes threatening overtures, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the weapon's or its wielder's Spell Defense. If successful, opponents facing the weapon become Harried for the spell's duration. Any Action Tests made in combat against the wielder or weapon are considered Sensing Tests.

GROUNDING

Threads: 2
Weaving: 4/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: +6 Physical and Mystic Armor vs. electricity; +6 Knockdown Test bonus

Earth. This spell earths a character from the effects of electricity. Both magician and target must be touching the ground. The magician shoves the target, causing his muscles to tense, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target adds +6 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against electrical effects, such as the Lightning Bolt spell (p.182) or the Lightning creature power. The target cannot break contact with the ground without the spell ending—his Movement Rate is halved during the spell's duration. As a side-effect, the spell also makes it harder for the target to be lifted off the ground, granting him a +6 Knockdown Test bonus. Talents or spells that move or lift the target, such as the Levitate spell (p.181), increase the Result Level required for success by one level (from Average to Good, and so on).

HAIR FRENZY

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Harries target

This spell causes a character's hair to fly wildly about in a distracting manner. The magician grabs at his own hair and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's hair whips back and forth around his face—he becomes Harried for the spell's duration. The spell only works on characters who possess hair (t'skrang and obsidimen are not affected unless they are wearing a hairpiece or a wig, for some reason).

HEALING SLEEP

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 8 hours
Effect: Bonus Recovery Test; +4 Recovery Test bonus

This spell puts an injured character into a deep magical sleep, intensifying his natural healing processes. The target must have Current Damage greater than his Wound Threshold, but does not need to have any Wounds. The magician makes soft crooning overtures, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target falls into a deep magical sleep for eight hours. On waking, he immediately makes a bonus Recovery Test with a +4 bonus—the bonus is applied to any other Recovery Tests he makes that day. While asleep, attempts to rouse the target are difficult. Only if he makes a successful Willpower (10) Test, takes any damage, or the spell ends, can the target be woken from his slumber. If he wakes before the full eight hours have passed, he gains no benefits from the spell. A character can benefit from only one Healing Sleep spell each week.



HEAT FOOD

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/7 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Heats and rejuvenates food

Fire. This spell heats food and infuses it with beneficial magic. The magician breathes on his hands as if to warm them, causing them to glow a gentle red, then touches the food and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the glow transfers to the food which, within a minute, becomes steaming hot. Eating the food increases the effectiveness of Recovery Tests. Consumption of a heated meal adds the magician's Spellcasting Rank as a bonus to the first Recovery Test the eater makes during the spell's duration. Each successful casting may heat a number of meals equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank.

HEAT METAL ARMOR

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Physical (NA)

Fire. This spell rapidly heats up metal armor or shields. The armor's Size has no impact on the spell's effectiveness, but it must be at least 50 percent metal. The magician rubs his hands together and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the armor's or its wearer's Spell Defense. If successful, the armor quickly heats to an extreme temperature. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on those wearing or touching the armor (the wearer receives no armor protection).

Horror Call

Threads: 6
Weaving: 13/22 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+16

This dangerous spell summons a Horror from astral space. The magician must learn the Name of the Horror he wishes to call, then carefully inscribes a 4-yard (2-hex) radius circle, painting it white and gold. Casting the spell is debilitating to the magician and requires the use of Blood Magic, causing him 1 Permanent Damage, +1 Permanent Damage for each thread he fails to weave. Should the magician break off the spell before completing it, the magical backlash causes him Step 25/2D12+D10+D8 damage (Mystic Armor provides protection). The magician touches the circle, calls aloud the Horror's Name, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the Horror's Spell Defense. If successful, the Horror is summoned from astral space into the protective circle. The magician's Effect Test determines the circle's Dispel Difficulty. The Horror remains in the protective circle until it makes a successful Willpower or Dispel Magic Test against the spell's Dispel Difficulty, is released by the magician, or the spell ends. The Horror may attempt a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test once per hour—if successful, the spell ends. Many Horrors bargain with their summoner, offering great rewards in return for release into the physical plane. If their offer is accepted, the Horror will usually pay what is promised, but often return to take back any treasure at a later date. Few magicians 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. When the spell ends, the Horror returns to astral space.



Hunger

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: Increases or diminishes hunger

Illusion. This spell makes a character feel or forget his hunger. The magician mimes eating or vomiting—as desired—then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the spell induces a strong feeling of hunger or nausea. If the magician mimes eating, the target feels sudden, overwhelming hunger pangs and suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests for the spell's duration. This hunger makes the target irritable and easily distracted—he single-mindedly seeks food and continually eats, yet he still remains hungry while the spell is in effect. If the magician mimes vomiting, the target ceases feeling hungry, and does not feel hunger again until he successfully disbelieves the illusion or the spell ends. If the target eats anything while the spell is in effect, he becomes nauseous. If the target goes three days without food he grows weary and suffers a –1 penalty to his Action Tests. For each additional day without food, the penalty increases by –1. Each day, the gamemaster makes a Damage Test, using the cumulative number of days the target has gone without food as the Damage Step (no armor provides protection). Any Action Tests made by the target related to eating or resisting hunger, such as Fatigue Tests, are considered Sensing Tests.

Hunter's Sense

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell senses nearby animals and their general species. The magician touches the target's eyes, ears, and nose with water or dust, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any animals within the spell's range. If successful, he senses what the type of animals and the general direction in which they lie. The spell does not detect Namegivers, undead creatures, Horrors, or Horror constructs.

Ice Mace and Chain

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 2 rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Physical

Water–Cold. This spell creates an icy weapon that is thrown at an opponent. The magician hurls two pebbles, coins, or other objects at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the objects transform into frozen spiked mace-heads joined by an icy chain, which wrap around the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If he rolls any Bonus Dice for the Damage Test, the mace and chain shatter afterwards. If the mace and chain survive the blow, the target is Harried until he frees himself at the end of the following round.

Ice Spear

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+3/Physical

Water–Cold. This spell creates and hurls a long spear of ice at an opponent. Frost forms on the fingers of the magician

as he makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a five-foot-long spear of ice is formed, trailing frost as it arcs toward and strikes the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

ICY PROTECTION

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Reduces fire or heat damage

Water–Cold. This spell reduces flame or heat damage. The magician pinches his nose and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, the Damage Step of any fire- or heat-based attacks made against the magician is reduced by –2 Steps per Result Level achieved. The spell also provides protection from damage inflicted by hot metal, such as armor subjected to the Heat Metal Armor spell (p.175), or the hilt of a weapon under the effect of a Flameweapon spell (p.171).

ICY SURFACE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/8 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 100-square-yard area, no greater than 20 yards (10 hexes) in any dimension
Effect: WIL

Water–Cold. This spell creates a slippery, icy surface that is treacherous to cross. The magician blows on the surface he wishes to affect and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the target area is immediately covered with ice. The spot the magician blows on is one edge of the area—the ice extends from this point, to a maximum size equal to the area of effect. The magician's Effect Test determines the Knockdown Difficulty for crossing the ice without slipping. Characters negotiating the slippery surface must make a Dexterity or suitable Talent or Skill Test (creatures make a Dexterity or Knockdown Test) against the Knockdown Difficulty. If successful, they can move across the icy surface at half their Movement Rate. If failed, they are Knocked Down.

IDENTIFY MAGIC

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Identifies type of magic

This spell identifies the type of magic present on a person, place, or object. The magician peers intently at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the Result Level determines what he learns. An Average or Good Result reveals whether the target is magical; an Excellent Result reveals the general type of magic the target possesses—adept abilities, innate magic, spell magic, and so on; an Extraordinary Result reveals the exact nature of the magic—the target's Discipline and Circle in the case of adepts, or the target's powers and abilities in the case of magical items.

IDENTIFY SPELL

Threads: 0 (see text)
Weaving: NA/12 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Identifies a previously cast spell

This spell provides recognition of another spell. After the target spell has been cast, the magician must cast Identify Spell within Spellcasting Rank rounds, making a Spellcasting Test against the target caster's Spell Defense. If successful (and if he knows or has heard of the targeted spell, at the gamemaster's discretion), the magician makes a Read/Write Magic Test against the target spell's Learning Difficulty (p.130). If successful, he recognizes the spell and knows its effects. If failed (or he has no way of knowing the target spell, at the gamemaster's discretion), the Result Level determines what he learns. An Average Result allows him to recognize the type of magic involved—usually Elementalism, Illusionism, Nethermancy, or Wizardry; a Good Result identifies the spell's approximate effect—whether it causes damage, creates an illusion, and so on; an Excellent Result identifies the spell's Circle; an Extraordinary Result reveals the approximate number of threads the spell requires, as well as the best way (if any) to counter the spell's effects.

IGNITE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/11 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 2 yards (1 hex) **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: Ignites flammable objects/Mystic

Fire. This spell sets a flammable object on fire. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the object's or it's bearer/wearer's Spell Defense. If successful, a small jet of flame hovers over the target and sets it alight. If clothes are ignited, the fire inflicts Step 4/D6 damage during the first round, reduced by –1 Step per round until the fire goes out (after three more rounds) or is extinguished. The spell may only be cast on small flammable objects, such as torches, wooden furniture, and clothing.

ILLUSION

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: 6
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius from origin
Effect: Creates illusions

Illusion. This spell creates illusory effects. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he creates an illusion, filling an area up to 10 yards (5 hexes) in radius. The illusions created are simple and cannot include Namegivers or other complex images. For example, an illusory door could swing a few inches, but not open or close entirely. An illusory banner might wave in the breeze, but could not be removed. The magician can maintain the illusion beyond the initial duration by making additional Spellcasting (6) Tests up to his Spellcasting Rank in number. If any Spellcasting Test fails, the illusion disappears and the spell ends. Those who interact with the illusion make Sensing Tests using abilities appropriate to the activity. For example, a character opening an illusory door would make a Dexterity Test, which also serves as the Sensing Test.

ILLUSORY MISSILES

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+11/Physical

Illusion. This spell creates an illusory barrage of missiles. The magician throws his arm as if throwing a rock, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character in the area of effect. If successful, a hail of illusory missiles saturates the area. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage

is inflicted on each target. Any defensive Action Test a target makes is considered a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

IMPOSSIBLE KNOT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: WIL+4

Illusion. This spell ties a knot that is incredibly difficult to undo. The magician ties a knot in a rope or cord, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the knot cannot come loose and is extremely difficult to untie or break. The magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Sensing Difficulty and also becomes the knot's Physical Armor against attempts to cut or break it. Any Test made to cut or untie the knot is considered to be a Sensing Test (a Dexterity Test to untie the knot, a Damage Test to cut it, and so on).

IMPOSSIBLE LOCK

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+7

Illusion. This spell makes a lock more difficult to pick. The magician pantomimes failing to open the lock he is touching, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the lock's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Sensing Difficulty. A character attempting to pick the lock makes a Lock Picking Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139). If failed, the lock refuses to open. If successful, the lock opens and the spell ends.

IMPROVE KARMA

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: +4 Karma Steps

This spell improves a character's ability to use Karma. The magician must spend a Karma Point on his Spellcasting Test. The magician holds his closed hand in front of himself, then opens it palm up and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +4 Step bonus to his Karma Step for the spell's duration. If the target cannot use Karma, the spell has no effect.

IMPROVED ALARM

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 120 yards (60 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from origin
Effect: WIL+5

Similar to the Alarm spell (p.146), this spell discreetly alerts to the presence of others. The magician points at the object or place where he wants to place the alarm, then whispers to himself and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect Test is compared against the Spell Defense of any living or sentient being passing within 4 yards (2 hexes) of the alarm's position. If successful, the alarm goes off, quietly notifying the magician, if he is within the spell's range, that something is amiss. The magician then instructs the alarm to remain silent or shout a warning of no more than Spellcasting Rank words, alerting all those within earshot of the alarm. The spell cannot be cast on living targets.

INCESSANT TALKING

Threads: 3
Weaving: 14/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: Makes target babble nonsense

This spell conjures a mischievous spirit that forces a character to babble nonsense. The magician babbles nonsense of his own, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit takes over the target's voice, making him babble meaningless words. During the spell's duration, the target cannot use any social talents or skills, or make any Interaction Tests. A target magician may still cast spells that do not require him to speak meaningful words or phrases. Each round, the target may attempt to drive out the spirit by making a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, the spell ends and the target regains control of his speech.

INFLAME SELF

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+1 rounds
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

Fire. This spell engulfs the magician in a sheet of flame. The magician clicks his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he is enveloped in a thin layer of fire. The magician can harm an opponent by making an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The magician risks taking damage himself. Every alternate round of the spell's duration, starting on the third round, he makes a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, the magician is unharmed. If failed, the magician suffers Step 4/D6 damage from the flames (no armor provides protection).

INNOCENT ACTIVITY

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Effect: Covers up true activity

Illusion. This spell masks a character's activity. The magician waves his hands about as if painting on a large canvas, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a colorful wave spreads forth from his hands, coalescing into an image of the target performing an apparently innocent activity appropriate to the setting. If the target moves from his current location, the illusion is broken. The target may otherwise perform any action, even attacking an opponent, during the spell's duration. Any obviously inexplicable phenomena as a result of action on the part of the target, such as voices, spells, or attacks, allows those viewing or listening to make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139). If successful, the sensing character sees through the illusion, and the spell ends. If failed, the sensing character concocts some other plausible explanation for what happened.

INSECT REPELLENT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/7 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell repels insects. The magician makes a buzzing sound, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his Effect Test determines the Repellent Difficulty. Any



insects wanting to bite or attack the target must make a successful Willpower Test against the Repellent Difficulty to do so.

INVENTORY

Threads: 4
Weaving: 9/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: WIL+8

This spell compiles a catalog of items. The spell is cast on a single room that can be seen into and requires a piece of parchment. The magician's Spellcasting Test is compared against the Spell Defense of all items within the spell's range. If successful, glowing yellow or orange writing appears on the parchment, listing each item detected. The inventory is in alphabetical order and does not list insignificant items such as dust, bins, or crates, that have no real value themselves. The inventory takes one full minute to create regardless of how many items are in the room, after which the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Spell Defense of any items missed. If successful, the last note on the manifest is written "Inventory incomplete."

INVIGORATE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: +5 bonus to Recovery Tests

This spell refreshes a character, soothing him and aiding recovery from injury. The magician rubs his hands together, then touches the target on the eyebrows (or closest equivalent) and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +5 bonus to any Recovery Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

IRON HAND

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: +3 bonus to close combat Damage Tests

This spell enhances a character's ability to inflict damage. The magician mimics striking someone, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 bonus to all close combat Damage Tests he makes during the spell's duration.

IRONWOOD

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Transforms wood

Wood. This spell makes ordinary wood as strong and flexible as metal. The spell affects living wood or wooden items up to 10 square yards in size. The magician taps the wood nine times with a piece of iron or steel, the last tap giving off a metallic ringing sound, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the wood becomes as strong as metal, able to withstand greater stress and pressure than ordinary wood. Wooden weapons, armor, or shields become as strong as their metal equivalents but retain their normal weight and Initiative Penalty. Wooden walls or doors have a Physical Armor Rating of 11 and a Damage Rating of 40 (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 108). When cast on living wood, the spell does not interfere with the plant's biological processes and it continues to grow normally.

Juggler's Touch

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

This spell causes small objects to whirl around madly. The magician mimes juggling, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, any small objects within the area of effect start spinning wildly around, striking those standing in the same area. Each round, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character withing the area of effect. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. He may also shift the spell's area of effect up to 2 yards (1 hex) with a successful Spellcasting (6) Test—this means targets cannot be damaged that round. Juggling the objects requires the magician's concentration each round—the only action he can take without ending the spell is a Spellcasting Test to activate the spell's effects. If there are no small movable objects in the area of effect, the spell has no effect.

Kaer Knocking

Threads: 4
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 minute
Effect: WIL+5

This spell creates a knocking sound when it interacts with a kaer's magical defenses. The magician taps his knuckles against the kaer wall or door, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the kaer's Spell Defense. The average kaer has a Spell Defense of 18 for purposes of this spell, though its actual Spell Defense may be much higher. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test. Anyone inside the kaer within a number of yards equal to the Test Result hears the spell's knocking sound. In most cases, kaer residents will investigate the sound in the hopes that their self-imposed exile is at last at an end.

Kaer Pictographs

Threads: 4
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10 minutes
Effect: Creates pictures or written messages (see text)

This spell allows written or drawn messages to be relayed to a kaer's inhabitants. The magician traces a picture or writes a message on the wall or door of the kaer, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the kaer's Spell Defense. The average kaer has a Spell Defense of 18 for purposes of this spell, though its actual Spell Defense may be much higher. If successful, the spell reacts with the kaer's magical defenses and burns the image onto the inside wall or door of the kaer. Words and written messages can be "transmitted" by this spell, but the kaer's residents may be unable to understand the language. Also, no residents may be nearby to notice the pictograph before the spell ends. For this reason, many magicians use the Kaer Knocking spell (see above) to get the kaer residents' attention first.



Karma Cancel

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+8 rounds
Effect: Prevents use of Karma

This spell temporarily neutralizes a character's ability to use Karma. The magician snaps his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he may cancel any attempt by the target to use Karma by spending one of his own Karma Points. Neither character rolls Karma Dice, but the Karma Points spent by both parties are lost. Each round, the target may attempt a Willpower (17) Test. If successful, the spell ends and the target regains his ability to use Karma.

Karmic Connection

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+10

This spell taps into a character's Karma, using it to save his life. Because of the high Karma Point cost to the target, the spell is generally only cast on those in imminent danger of dying. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target immediately spends 5 Karma Points and makes an Effect Test in place of a Recovery Test (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220). He gains

this Recovery Test even if he has used all of his Tests that day, and rolls his Karma Dice with the Effect Test. If the target's Current Damage equals or exceeds his Death Rating, the magician must cast the spell within Spellcasting Rank minutes to have any effect. The target must have at least 5 Karma Points available for the spell to work.

LAST CHANCE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Grants +8 bonus Recovery Test

This spell pulls a character back from the brink of death. The spell must be cast within one minute of the character's death. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target makes an immediate Recovery Test with a +8 bonus. If he has used all of the Recovery Tests available to him that day, he makes a Step 8/2D6 Recovery Test instead. If the target's Current Damage is reduced below his Death Rating then he survives, otherwise he remains dead.

LEAPING LIZARDS

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/21 **Casting**: 6
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+7/Physical

Illusion. This spell creates illusory monsters. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a number of illusory monsters up to the magician's Spellcasting Rank are created. Despite its name, the spell can create monsters other than lizards. The creature's Attribute Steps are each equal to the spell's Effect Step, though the magician may choose to reduce some Step Numbers to improve the illusion's realism. The magician must stay within range of the monsters or the spell ends. The monsters are controlled by the magician and require his concentration to direct their actions. Any Action Tests made against the monsters are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139). Likewise, if damage inflicted by a monster causes a Wound, the target's Knockdown Test counts as a Sensing Test.

LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/9 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+7

This spell imbues a character with increased leaping ability. Jumping up and down, the magician calls the target to leap toward him, then touches him as he lands alongside and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains incredible bounding ability when moving. Each round of the spell's duration, instead of normal movement, the target may make an Effect Test in place of a Great Leap Test (p.72) to leap horizontally or jump vertically.

LEVITATE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius from origin
Effect: Levitate up to 1,000 pounds

This spell moves objects or characters vertically up or down on an invisible 2-yard (1-hex) radius platform of force. The magician raises and lowers his hands and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all characters or objects in the area of effect. If successful, a platform is created which lifts those on it up or down by the magician at 4 yards (2 hexes) per round to a maximum height equal to the spell's range. A single spell supports 1,000 pounds of weight. The magician may "bootstrap" Levitate spells for improved effect. He may cast another spell on an existing platform to increase the combined weight that the spell can support. The magician may also rise to the maximum height of the first Levitate spell and cast another Levitate spell (or spells) to move even higher. Bootstrapped spells must be managed carefully—as soon as any lower-altitude Levitate spell ends, all higher-altitude Levitate spells also fail. Characters and objects on top of a platform when it fails suffer Falling damage (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109) based on the height they fall from. Moving the platform up requires the magician's concentration, regardless of how many "bootstrapped" spells he is currently manipulating. If he loses concentration, the platform automatically descends to the ground at 4 yards (2 hexes) per round. The magician must make a Spellcasting Test if the number of characters or objects on a platform increases, for example, if another character jumps onto it. If failed, the spell ends.

LIFE CIRCLE OF ONE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/15 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

This spell creates a magical circle to repel undead, Horrors, or Horror constructs. The magician spits into his hand, then outlines a 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle with his fingers and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the circle resists any undead, Horror, or Horror construct attempting to enter. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the entity's Spell Defense. If successful, the circle repels and harms the entity. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on the entity. The spell can only repel a single entity each round. Numerous enemies can easily swamp the circle if they surround it. Should more than one entity enter, the circle will attempt to repel the being with the highest Spell Defense. Given sufficient preparation time, a magician may cast multiple life circles inside each other, creating concentric circles to protect those standing in the innermost one and affording some protection from multiple entities for a few minutes.

LIGHT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: 6 *or* TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Summons a sphere of light

The Light spell taps into the astral plane, releasing some energy to create a magical light. The magician holds his hand out and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a floating, glowing sphere about the size of an orange forms in his upturned palm, providing the magician with illumination in a 10-yard radius. As the magician moves, he carries the light around with him. The magician can direct the independent movement of the sphere within the spell's range, but this requires his concentration that round. He may move the light toward a character or object, placing it on or transferring it to the target if he makes a successful Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The magician can no longer move the sphere of light once he has placed it on or given it to another character or object. A magician can also blind a character by directing the movement of the light to cover the target's eyes. This is more difficult than simply placing it on the character; the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. On a Good Result, the target character is "dazzled" by the sphere's light and suffers a Partial Darkness

penalty to his sight-based Action Tests. Target characters who don't require vision to "see" are unaffected by this spell. When cast on objects, the magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 1 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

Lighten Load

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 hours
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+3

Air. This spell temporarily reduces the weight of objects within the area of effect. The magician bends and grimaces as if lifting something heavy, then stands upright and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the objects in the area of effect. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test, reducing the combined weight of all of the objects by Test Result×50 pounds, to a minimum of 10 pounds. The target objects must be stationary when the spell is cast. It cannot be directed against a falling object in an attempt to reduce its weight, for instance.

Lightning Bolt

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+5/Physical (non-metal)

Air–Electric. The Lightning Bolt spell strikes the target with bolts of electricity. The magician raises his hands toward the sky, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, crackling bolts of electricity fly from the magician's fingers, striking the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Lightning Cloud

Threads: 4
Weaving: 12/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range:48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+10/Physical (non-metal)

Air–Electric. This spell conjures a swirling black and purple cloud that crackles with electricity. The cloud finishes forming when the last spell thread is woven. The magician draws lightning from the cloud and hurls it at an opponent, making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Each round of the spell's duration, the magician may make another Spellcasting Test to gather and hurl a bolt of lightning from the cloud at the same or a different opponent within the spell's range.

Lightning Shield

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/16 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect: WIL+3/Mystic

Air–Electric. This spell charges a shield with electricity, jolting anyone who strikes it. The magician snaps his fingers, creating a spark of electricity which leaps to the target's shield, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the shield's or its bearer's Spell Defense. If successful, the front surface of the shield hisses and pops, coruscating with blue-white electricity. Close combat attacks directed against the shield risk striking it. An attacker requires a Good Result on his Attack Test to avoid hitting the front surface of the shield. On a Pathetic Result, the attacker misses his opponent, but squarely hits the front of the shield. On an Average Result, the attacker hits the shield's bearer, but also strikes the shield's surface. If the shield is struck, the bearer's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on the attacker. An attacker can use the Going Inside a Shield combat option (p.224) to bypass the shield. If successful, he avoids the spell's effect that round. A character with a Lightning Shield spell cast on his shield and who is using the Shield Charge talent or skill to attack an opponent, makes a separate Effect Test to determine the electrical damage inflicted from a successful Attack Test. Knockdown Test bonuses from a successful Shield Charge still apply to Knockdown Tests made as a result of damage received from this spell.

Lightning Step

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+2

Air–Electric. This spell electrically charges the magician, enhancing his movement. The magician must be standing under the open sky with wet feet. He rubs his feet back and forth on the ground, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, coruscating green lightning surrounds the magician's feet. The magician moves around on a sizzling, one-foot-wide lightning bolt that *pop*s with every Step, jumping him around from place to place, and adds +2 to his Movement Rate and Physical Defense for the spell's duration. In combat, he makes an Effect Test in place of his Initiative Test while the spell is in effect (normal Initiative modifiers apply).

Liquid Arrow

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 32 yards (16 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+9/Physical

Water. This spell forms a missile from a small quantity of water. The magician scoops up a handful of water, then hurls it at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the liquid transforms into an arrow which strikes the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Liquid Eyes

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Blinds target

Water. This spell directs a blinding gel at a character's eyes. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's eyes fill with a liquid gel, rendering him blind for the spell's duration. The Result Level determines the severity. On an Average Result the target suffers a Partial Darkness penalty to his sight-based Action Tests; a Good Result imposes a Full Darkness penalty; an Excellent Result imposes a Complete Darkness penalty. Each round, the target may make a Willpower (18) Test. If successful, the spell ends, restoring his eyes (and sight) to normal.



LIVING WALL

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: Up to 4-yard (2-hex) high, 20 yard (10-hex) wide, 2-yard (1-hex) thick wall
Effect: WIL+3

Wood. This spell creates a barrier of living plants and thorny vines. The magician cuts a line in the earth, then touches the ground and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a wall of plants and thorny vines sprouts from the line, up to the area of effect in size. The barrier inhibits physical and astral passage with Physical and Mystic Armor Ratings equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank. The magician's Effect Test determines the wall's Death Rating. Damage equal to or in excess of the wall's Death Rating allows egress through the wall for one character that round, before the plants grow to cover the gap. Any character trying to push his way through a gap in the wall suffers Step 4/D6 damage from the sharp thorns and branches (no armor provides protection).

Living Wall (1 Section)

Physical Armor: Rank* **Physical Defense**: 5
Mystic Armor: Rank* **Spell Defense**: Magician
Death: Effect Test **Social Defense**: NA
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold**: NA

* Requires an Extraordinary Result to defeat

LOAN SPELL

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+4 rounds
Effect: Loans spell to another

This spell gives a character temporary access to a spell matrix. The magician designates which of his current spell matrices is being loaned, then hands the target a small object, such as a coin or token, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target can cast the spell attuned to the "loaned" matrix. The target uses his own Spellcasting and Thread Weaving talents to cast the loaned spell. He must be capable of weaving any necessary threads for the loaned spell or have them woven already, as in the case of a "loaned" Enhanced Matrix. If the target does not know the Spellcasting talent or skill, he makes a Perception Test in place of a Spellcasting Test. While the spell matrix is on loan, the magician cannot use it to cast or reattune the spell stored in it.

LODESTONE'S TOUCH

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius around target
Effect: WIL+3

Earth—Metal. This spell magnetizes the target. The magician taps two metal objects together, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target becomes powerfully magnetized and attracts all loose iron or steel objects within 2 yards (1 hex). Items stuck to the target may weigh down or encumber him. The magician's Effect Test determines the effective Strength Value of the magnetic force. Those within the area of effect must make a successful Strength Test against the spell's Strength Step to hold on to metallic items or resist being drawn toward the target if they are wearing metal armor (and the spell's strength is sufficient to move their body weight). Any opponents directing metallic missile or throwing weapons at the target gain a +3 bonus to their ranged Attack Tests. Any opponents using metallic weapons to make melee attacks against the target gain a+3 bonus to their melee Attack Tests, but may need to make a successful Strength Test against the spell's Strength Step to pull their weapon free.

MAGE ARMOR

Threads: 1
Weaving: 12/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+7 minutes
Effect: +4 Physical Armor

This spell enhances the toughness and resilience of armor. The magician punches the armor, uttering a soft "thudding" sound, as if an ineffectual blow had landed, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the armor's or its wearer's Spell Defense. If successful, add +4 to the armor's Physical Armor for the spell's duration. Armor that has been enchanted with this spell has a faint violet glow that is noticeable in the dark or with astral sight. Natural Armor cannot be enhanced by this spell.

MAKESHIFT MISSILE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+2 rounds
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

This spell enchants a small object into a wickedly sharp throwing weapon. The item weighs the same as it did before the enchantment, so the spell is normally cast on small objects that can be easily thrown, such as rocks, tankards, and the like. The magician touches the item and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target object's Spell Defense. If successful, the object may be thrown at an opponent with a thrown Attack Test, as normal. There is no penalty for throwing an unbalanced or improvised object as the spell "streamlines" the missile (see **Thrown Attacks**, p.232). If the opponent is struck, the attacker makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for the weapon. The object reverts to its original form when the spell ends.

MAKESHIFT WEAPON

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

This spell enchants a small object into a slim, extremely keen, melee weapon. The object weighs the same as it did before the enchantment, so the spell is normally cast on light objects that can be wielded easily. The magician touches the item and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target object's Spell Defense. If successful, the object may be wielded against an opponent with a melee Attack Test, as normal. There is no penalty for using an improvised weapon as the spell "balances" the weapon (see **Melee Attacks**, p.229.) If the opponent is struck, the wielder makes an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for the weapon. The object reverts to its original form when the spell ends.

MARATHON RUN

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 32 yards (16 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: Forces target to flee

This spell summons a spirit to force a character to run wildly away. The magician runs on the spot and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit temporarily possesses the target, who runs at his fastest Movement Rate away from the magician for the spell's duration. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, he regains control, banishing the spirit and ending the spell.

MASSIVE MISSILES

Threads: 4
Weaving: 12/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+12/Physical

This spell increases the size and effectiveness of missile weapon projectiles. The magician holds an arrow, bolt, or sling bullet from each target benefiting from the spell, and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets make an Effect Test in place of a Damage Test for their missile attacks for the spell's duration. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

MEMORY BLANK

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 2 yards (1 hex) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+4

Illusion. This spell temporarily suppresses memories. The magician looks at the target and asks, "what was that?," then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Step. If successful, the target forgets the events of one minute per Result Level. A target can be affected in the middle of a sentence or action, in which case he likely forgets what he was doing and why. A successful Disbelief Test ends the spell, after which the target recalls everything that he forgot. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 3 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

MEMORY SCRIBE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell alters a character's memory, making him recall things differently from how they really occurred. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Step. If successful, the magician may change one fact that the target remembers about a particular topic or event per Result Level. A successful Disbelief Test ends the spell. The target also makes a Perception Test as a Sensing Test each time he "recalls" the false memory. If successful, or when the spell ends, the target's memory returns to normal. The magician may extend the spell's duration to a year and a day by taking 3 Blood Magic Damage. This damage cannot be healed until the spell ends.

MENTAL LIBRARY

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: +10 to Book Memory Rank

This spell greatly increases the magician's capacity for memorizing text using the Book Memory talent (p.63). The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he adds +10 Ranks to his Book Memory Rank, also improving his Book Memory Step. During the spell's duration, the magician should copy down any memorized texts in excess of his normal Book Memory Rank limit if he wants to retain them. Otherwise, he cannot retrieve them once the spell ends, even through use of the Book Recall talent (p.63).

METAL SCREAM

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/17 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 rounds
Effect: WIL+5

Earth—Metal. This spell causes metal objects to scream and wail. The magician grimaces and silently mouths horrible cries, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, all metal objects carried or wielded by those affected begin to scream and shriek with a piercing, unnerving effect. Affected targets make a Willpower

Test against the Effect Step. If failed, the target flees away from the magician at his fastest Movement Rate until out of range of the spell. If successful, the target suffers a –5 penalty to Willpower-based Tests from the high-pitched screaming while he remains within range. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

METAL WINGS

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+20 minutes
Effect: Flight; +5 bonus to lifting Strength Tests

Earth—Metal. This spell creates shiny metal wings, which sprout forth from a character's shoulders, allowing him to fly. The magician touches the shoulder of the target, then spreads his arms wide and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, gleaming silver metal wings appear on the target's back. The wings allow him to fly at a Movement Rate of 8.



MIND DAGGER

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic

This spell attacks an opponent by sheer force of will. The magician whips his arm forward as if throwing a dagger and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

MIND FOG

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+6

This spell makes a character forget what he was about to do. The magician scratches his temple as if trying to remember something, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target can only react to actions made against him, until he remembers what it is he wants to do. The magician's Effect Test determines how effective the spell's masking effect is. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Test Result. If successful, the target recovers his wits and can act normally again.

MONSTROUS MANTLE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Increases the combat prowess of a target character

Illusion. This spell improves a character's combat prowess. The magician makes snarling and growling sounds, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, twin helixes of light form around the target, rotating and spinning into the form of a monstrous creature. The target gains a +3 bonus to his Attack and Damage Tests and adds +3 to his Physical Defense. The illusion does not give the target any special attack forms or abilities. For example, if the magician places the illusion of a giant crakbill onto a Swordmaster, the target does not get the breath attack, nor can he make the running attack, of a crakbill. The illusion of the "breath attack" appears to those viewing it, but the Swordmaster can only inflict damage by striking an opponent with his sword—the "breath attack" does no damage at all, illusory or real. This illusion is most effective if the magician has fought the creature depicted. If this isn't the case, those interacting with the illusion gain a +3 bonus to their Sensing and Disbelief Tests. If the magician has never encountered this type of creature, those interacting with the illusion gain a further +3 bonus to their Sensing Tests. Any Attack Tests made against the target are considered Sensing Tests.

MOONGLOW

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/10 **Casting**: 6
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: Creates sphere of light

This spell creates a small sphere of light. The magician points where the spell is centered and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a globe of softly glowing light fills a 10-yard (5-hex) radius sphere. The light is bright enough to see by at night or in Complete darkness—equivalent to torchlight. It does not provide adequate illumination to read or execute precise work for an extended period.

MOUNT SCARE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Spooks mount

This spell scares an opponent's mount. The magician snorts loudly, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the rider's or his mount's Spell Defense. If successful, the target mount

runs away from the magician in fear at its fastest Movement Rate for the spell's duration. On an Extraordinary Result, the animal bucks its rider off before bolting. The rider makes a Knockdown Test against the Spellcasting Test. If failed, he falls off the mount and is Knocked Down, taking Step 5/D8 Falling damage (see **Mounted Combat**, p.233). Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, the mount overcomes its fear and the spell ends. The spell works equally well against tame and wild animals, though it was originally designed to be used against mounted troops during times of war.

Move On Through

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: WIL+4

This spell forces a character into continuous movement. The magician nods his head at a moving target, then bows low in a mocking fashion and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Strength Step. If successful, the target is forced to continue his current movement during the next round in the same direction and at the same speed.

Multi-Mind Dagger

Threads: Varies (see text)
Weaving: 9/22 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic

A variant of the Mind Dagger spell (p.185), this spell attacks multiple targets at once. The magician declares up to Spellcasting Rank targets within range and line of sight, before he begins weaving spell threads. He must weave one thread for each declared target. Once all the threads have been woven, the magician compares his Spellcasting Test against each target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Targets that move out of range or line of sight cannot be affected, although the magician must still weave the declared number of spell threads to be able to be cast the spell against any remaining targets.

Multi-Missile

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Creates four missiles

Illusion. This spell adds a number of illusory missiles to a character's missile attack. The magician mimics loading a missile weapon of the same type that the target is wielding, then touches the target's weapon and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wielder's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, four additional missiles of the type appropriate to the weapon are added to those fired by the target. The target makes an Attack Test as normal. If the real missile hits, so do all of the illusory missiles; if the real missile misses, so do all of the duplicates. Each of the four duplicate missiles inflicts Step 4/D6 damage on the target, rolled separately for each missile (Physical Armor provides protection). The defender's Avoid Blow Test (or similar defensive Action Tests) is considered a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

Mystic Net

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+2 minutes
Area of Effect: 16-yard (8-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+8

This spell is an area-effect version of the Binding Threads spell (p.153). The magician mimics tying several lengths of string together in a complex knot, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any character within the area of effect. If successful, a mass of glowing magical threads leaps from his hands, forming a net to entangle the targets. Bound targets struggle to use their limbs and are Harried, except for Strength Tests to break free. The magician's Effect Test determines the net's Strength Value, used to determine the Strength Step for any Strength Tests made to escape the bonds. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Mystic Shock

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+10/Mystic

This spell damages a character by channeling astral energy through an object or surface. The spell does not require line of sight and can be cast through any object or surface, including floors and walls, that both magician and target are touching. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Netherblade

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/17 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This spell magically enhances a melee weapon so it can be used against opponents in astral space. The magician touches the melee weapon and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wielder's or the weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the weapon's Damage Step+the wielder's Strength Step. If successful, the melee weapon takes on a dark, smoky luster. During the spell's duration the weapon cannot be used against targets in the physical world—it simply passes through them, leaving them slightly chilled but unharmed. The wielder must be able to see a target in astral space to hit it. Most often, this means the wielder must use the Astral Sight talent, or a similar ability or spell.

Nightflyer's Cloak

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Transforms caster into a nightflyer

This spell allows the magician to assume the form of any creature able to be affected by the Command Nightflyer spell (p.159). The magician must know the Command Nightflyer spell as a prerequisite. The magician mimics pulling on a cape or cloak, then whispers the type of creature he is attempting to turn into and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he transforms into the designated type of nightflyer. Clothing or equipment worn by the magician is transformed with

him—it reappears when the spell ends. While in nightflyer form, the magician can use all of that creature's normal abilities, including flight and enhanced senses. He cannot speak or cast spells, however, but he can use talents and other abilities requiring only thought or eye contact. Because the magician "becomes" a nightflyer, he also becomes vulnerable to Command Nightflyer spells cast by others against him. The magician may dispel the transformation anytime he wishes by spending a Standard Action.

Nightmare of Foreboding

Threads: 5
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: –6 to target's Wound Threshold

This spell dramatically weakens a victim through the sending of sinister dreams. The magician must be able to see the sleeping target. He faces the target and throws sand and soot into the air, then draws an "X" in the falling debris and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target experiences a terrifying nightmare of helplessness and weakness in the face of danger. When the target wakes, he subtracts –6 from his Wound Threshold (to a minimum of 1) for the spell's duration. This spell is often used as a death threat or to cause convenient "accidents." Rumor has it that the spell was first created and used by members of the Hand of Corruption—a secret society—and those who use it are often suspected of working with the group.

Noble Manner

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/10 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: +5 bonus to target's Interaction Tests

Illusion. This spell makes a character appear of a higher social status than he actually is. The magician adopts a haughty expression, slowly softening it to a smile, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +5 Interaction Test bonus during the spell's duration, as long as he acts as if he were from a superior social station. The target may be arrogant, gracious, friendly, condescending, etc, but he must behave as if he is from a social class a cut above the listener or any Interaction Tests made against him are considered Sensing Tests.

Nobody Here

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+8 minutes
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+8

Illusion. This spell hides characters from others. The magician concentrates on the thought of "nobody here" and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any targets (including himself) within the area of effect. If successful, those affected become invisible to anyone outside the area of effect able to view them. Once cast, the spell's effect does not move with the magician. Targets who exit the area of effect become visible to others—they regain their invisibility by moving back inside the circle. The magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Sensing Difficulty. A character who walks into the area of the illusion makes a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139). The viewing character adds a +3 bonus to his Perception Test if a concealed target manipulates the environment in a way that requires explanation, such as moving books in plain sight, opening or shutting doors, and so on; the viewing character gains a +5 bonus to his Perception Test if a concealed target makes physical contact with him. If successful, the illusion is revealed. If failed, the viewing character's sensory feedback is magically suppressed—his senses detect any characters that would normally be visible, but the knowledge is suppressed by the spell. If a concealed target causes damage to another character, the spell ends.

Notice Not

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to stealthy Action Tests

This spell masks a character, making him less noticeable to others. The magician quietly touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +3 bonus to any Action Tests he makes that are aimed at concealment or stealth, such as Silent Walk Tests.

Nutritious Earth

Threads: 4
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: A year and a day
Area of Effect: 100-yard (50-hex) radius circle from magician
Effect: Makes land fertile

Earth. This spell uses Blood Magic to enhance the rate at which land grows food. The magician pricks his hand with a sharp object and lets a drop of blood fall on the earth, taking 1 Blood Magic Damage (this damage can be healed after the spell ends), then makes a Spellcasting Test against the ground's Spell Defense. (usually 6) If successful, an area of soil up to 100 yards (50 hexes) in radius is enriched by magic, making the land especially fertile for a year and a day. Plants grow in this soil at roughly double their normal rate—the gamemaster determines the exact effects of this growth. Many kaers survived the Scourge by using this spell and it enabled many towns rebuilt in areas prone to bad weather to thrive on the surface. Rumor has it that questors of Jaspree from the town of Trosk are attempting to heal the Badlands through liberal use of the Nutritious Earth spell.

Ork Stoke

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Instant
Effect: Sets off orkish *gahad*

This spell sets off an ork's *gahad* in response to any comment, subject, or situation. The magician mutters under his breath, then openly makes a rude comment or gesture and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the ork's *gahad* is stirred, but does not force them to succumb to it. The target may resist *gahad* as normal, incurring the usual penalties for doing so (p.22). The spell can overcome the conditions which never set off an ork's *gahad*. Obviously, the spell only affects orks.

Other Place

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/21 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: Rank+3 hours
Effect: Links two doorways

Illusion. This spell connects two entrances that are no more than a mile apart. The spell must be cast twice within a two-hour period, first on the destination portal and then on the departure portal. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his own natural Spell Defense for each portal. If both Tests are successful,

characters passing through the departure entrance instantly cross the distance to the destination. The portals are linked by a warping of astral space. The warping is real, but the spell takes a number of illusory "shortcuts" that can be broken to disrupt the link. A successful Disbelief Test destroys the links and ends the spell.

PACK BAGS

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/11 **Casting**: 6
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL–1

This spell summons small spirits to pack the magician's belongings for him. The magician gathers all the items to be packed, ensuring the chests, satchels, or other containers to be packed are open, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the air fills with swarming, multi-colored points of light—tiny spirits come to pack the bags. The magician's Effect Test determines the combined Strength Value of the spirits, which can pack a total weight of goods equal to their Carrying Capacity (p.29).

PAIN

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/11 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL

This spell inflicts excruciating agony on a character. The magician makes stabbing motions with his hands and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is racked with crippling waves of agony. Each round, the magician concentrates to make an Effect Test against the target's Willpower Test. If successful, the target is overcome by the pain and cannot perform any actions that round. While doubled over in agony, the target is considered Knocked Down. The spell has no effect on creatures that don't feel pain or are used to or inured against it. This includes undead, most Horrors and Horror constructs, and blood elves. If used against cadaver men (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 278) it immediately sends them into a frenzy, but doesn't immobilize them.

PASS WARD

Threads: 5 (6, 7; see text)
Weaving: 13/21 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank weeks (see text)
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+12/Mystic

This difficult spell places a ward on an area. The duration is determined by the number of spell threads woven. The minimum number of spell threads required is 5. If the magician weaves 6 threads, the duration is Spellcasting Rank months. If he weaves 7 threads, the duration is Spellcasting Rank years. The magician must weave all of the spell threads in seven rounds or less. If he fails, the spell fails, and the magician takes 5 Strain. The magician touches the area to be warded and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the ward is created with a Spellcasting Step equal to that of the magician at the time of casting. The magician may attach a key word or phrase to the ward when it is created, allowing those who speak it aloud to pass without triggering it. Whenever someone comes within 4 yards (2 hexes) of the ward without first uttering the correct key word or phrase, the ward makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the ward places a white star on the target and tells him to "halt" (or some other command chosen by the magician when the ward was created). Unless the target immediately stops or backs away, the ward makes another Spellcasting Test. If successful, the ward's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The ward can affect any number of targets in the same round—if a character enters the warded area in the same round as another target, the ward targets him as well. Once it has discharged, the ward expires at the end of the round.

PATH HOME

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/14 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 60 yards (30 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+20 minutes
Effect: Summons spirit wings to guide the caster home

This spell summons a pair of spirit wings to guide the magician to a familiar place. The magician closes his eyes and envisions where he last slept, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a pair of shimmering wings appears, translucent and sparkling green or gold, which fly at a Movement Rate of 8 toward the last place the magician slept. The wings slow down or speed up on verbal command, but never stray beyond spell range of the magician.

Spirit Wings

Physical Armor: 0 **Physical Defense:** 10
Mystic Armor: 0 **Spell Defense:** 10
Death: 1 **Social Defense:** NA
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold:** NA
Movement: 8*

* This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

PAUPER'S PURSE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell makes a container hold less money than it really does. The magician touches the purse, cash box, or other container holding the money, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wearer's or the item's Spell Defense. If successful, a number of coins are temporarily transferred from the container into an extra-dimensional pocket, invisible to those without any means of astral perception. The magician makes an Effect Test, transferring Test Result×10 coins into the pocket. Those able to see into astral space can see the pocket if they make a successful Perception Test against the Effect Step. Even if successful, the coins remain inaccessible until the spell ends.

PEACEBOND

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+10/NA

This spell enforces peace. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is peacebonded for the spell's duration. Whenever a successful attack is made against the target, he makes an Effect Test against the attacker's Spell Defense. If successful, the attacker takes the same damage from the attack as he inflicts on the target. The peace works both ways, however. If the target attacks someone, he makes an Effect Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. If successful, the target suffers the same damage inflicted from his own attack. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 2 Blood Magic Damage. This damage can be healed when the spell ends.

PERIMETER ALARM

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+4 hours
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+12

This spell creates an alarm that alerts to activity within the area of effect. The magician walks the perimeter of the area that he intends to alarm, then stands in the center and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the area of effect glows briefly red and sounds twice to indicate it is armed. Whenever someone or something crosses this zone, the magician makes an Effect Test against the trespasser's Spell Defense. If successful, the trespasser is detected and the spell sounds an alert audible to every character within the perimeter, including the intruder. Those outside the perimeter hear nothing. The magician may freely pass the area defined by the spell without setting it off, as may those characters present when the spell was cast and who were standing within the area of effect. The magician may also define the minimum and maximum size of creature that the alarm will react to at the time of casting, thus ensuring the alarm is not accidentally set off by the normal activities of local fauna.

PHANTOM FIREBALL

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from point of impact
Effect: WIL+8/Physical

Illusion. This spell creates an illusory ball of flame, similar to that produced by the Fireball spell (p.170). The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character in the area of effect. If successful, a small globe of fire erupts from his hand, moving quickly to the designated point of impact, expanding to the size of a beach ball then suddenly exploding in an intense gout of flame. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target. If any target suffers a Wound, his Knockdown Test is considered a Sensing Test.

PHANTOM WARRIOR

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: Creates three images of the target

Illusion. This spell forms three phantom images of a character, making him more difficult to hit in combat. The magician moves his hands in slow, abstract patterns, then points at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, three identical images of the target appear, remaining within 1 yard of the target at all times, occasionally overlapping with him as they move around. The images do not move in complete sync with the target—one image may swing a sword high, another swing low, and the third thrust home, while the target adopts a defensive stance. The images confuse opponents—the target adds +3 to his Physical Defense during the spell's duration. Attacks made by the target are more difficult for opponents to avoid or defend against—a –3 penalty is applied to any Avoid Blow, Parry, Riposte, or other defensive Action Test made in response to the target's attack. These Tests are considered Sensing Tests.

PLANT FEAST

Threads: 3
Weaving: 6/16 **Casting**: 6
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+8

Wood. This spell converts any kind of plant material into a tasty feast. The spell requires three intact plants, no matter how scrawny. The magician cuts or tears the plants into small pieces, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his Effect Test determines the number of meals produced. Each meal has the following parts: appetizer, soup, salad, bread, entree, vegetable, and dessert. All of the meals are identical. Although they can appear to contain meat, none actually do. They are as nutritious and tasty as their "real" counterparts, however. The spell only creates types of food that the magician has tasted within the last year and a day—a good reason for him to occasionally eat to excess on fine gourmands. Uneaten meals vanish when the spell ends.

PLANT TALK

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: Allows conversation with plant spirits

Wood. This spell allows conversation with plants. The magician puts his ear to the target plant and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he can converse with the spirits who inhabit the plant, rather than with the plant itself. Plant spirits vary widely in intellect, but are a considerable Step up from the plants they inhabit. They vary in temperament as much as characters do—some may be willing to talk, or grumpy and taciturn, or even sleepy from lying in the sun. Plant spirits are only aware of events that happen within 4 yards (2 hexes) of their roots. The spirits only inhabit living plants. When their old host dies, they must seek a new plant.

PLEASANT VISIONS

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: Creates visions that prevent targets from acting

Illusion. This spell distracts characters with pleasant thoughts and fantasies. The magician remembers a pleasant scene or experience, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets' heads are filled with pleasant thoughts and sensations. They will not take any actions, other than Disbelief Tests, until the visions are dispelled or they take damage. An affected target who suffers damage makes a Willpower Test with a +5 bonus as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p. 139). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

POCKET GUARDIAN

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/13 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: Summons diminutive spirit guardian

This spell summons a diminutive spirit to guard the magician's pocket or pouch. The magician pats his pocket or pouch and makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a guardian spirit is summoned to reside within the pocket, often appearing as a small rat or large stinging insect. It will permit the magician to insert and remove items from the pocket, but cannot leave it. The spirit attacks anyone else who reaches into

the pocket, making as much noise as possible to alert the magician. Unless the character is forewarned of the guardian's presence, the spirit usually gains Surprise (p.228) against the pickpocket.

Pocket Guardian

DEX: 5 **STR**: 3 **TOU**: 3
PER: 5 **WIL**: 3 **CHA**: 3

Initiative: 7 (Surprise)
Actions: 1
Attack (1): 6/D10
Damage:
Bite (1): 4/D6

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: 26
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 6

Recovery Tests: 1
Knockdown: NA
Movement: NA

Legend Award: First Circle

PORTER

Threads: 2 (see text)
Weaving: 9/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 15 yards **Duration**: Rank days
Effect: WIL

This spell creates a semi-sentient being to carry gear. The magician spends half an hour making an earthen mound, molding it into a humanoid shape. Running his hands over the length of the figure, he makes a Spellcasting Test against the porter's Spell Defense. If successful, the mound becomes animated, lifting its body up from where it lies and standing upright. The porter travels with its feet still attached to the ground, which ripples under and around it to let it pass. Once the porter is animated, the magician's Effect Test determines its Strength Value, from this the porter's Strength Step and Carrying Capacity are derived (see **Determining Characteristics**, p.27, and **Carrying Capacity**, p.29). The porter must remain within range of the magician at all times or the spell ends. While animated, the porter obeys the magician's commands to "halt" or "follow." It understands and carries out simple instructions involving loading and unloading goods. The magician must provide suitable containers (backpacks, sacks, and so on) to hold goods he wants the porter to carry.

Porter

DEX: 4 **STR**: Effect Test* **TOU**: 12
PER: 2 **WIL**: 2 **CHA**: 3

* Effect Test determines Strength Value, from which the porter's Strength Step is derived

Initiative: 4
Actions: NA
Attack: NA
Damage: NA

Physical Defense: 6
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 9
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 4

Death: 59
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: 17

Recovery Tests: 5
Knockdown: STR
Movement: 4

PRESERVE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/12 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank days
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle of item touched
Effect: Stops target decaying

This spell keeps inanimate matter from spoiling or decaying. The magician touches an item and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, all items within a 2-yard (1-hex) radius of the item touched are held in stasis and do not decay or rot for the spell's duration. Magicians often use this spell to preserve cadavers for study, as well as for more mundane tasks such as preserving alchemical ingredients.

PUDDLE DEEP

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius, 2-yard (1-hex) deep puddle
Effect: WIL/NA

Water. This spell increases the depth of a small puddle. The puddle must be a body of water no bigger than the area of effect. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of anyone standing in or attempting to cross the puddle. If failed, the puddle as treated as a normal puddle. If successful, the target falls into the puddle, which increases in depth by Effect Step yards, and must climb out or risk drowning. While in the puddle, the target is Harried for all actions except attempts to clamber out. Each round, the target makes a Dexterity or Climbing Test against the Effect Test. If successful, he crawls out. If failed, he remains in the puddle. On a Pathetic Result, the target breathes in a lungful of dirty water—the magician makes a separate Effect Test to determine how much damage is inflicted. Anyone in the puddle when the spell ends finds himself sitting, wet and bedraggled, in the original pool of water. The excess water in the puddle disappears when the spell ends.



PURIFY EARTH

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: 6+ (see text)
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius of earth from center
Effect: Purifies earth and soil

Earth. This spell removes any impurities or foreign materials preventing soil from supporting plant life. The magician points at the center of the spell's area of effect, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the earth's Spell Defense. Soil that is largely untainted has a Spell Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned earth resists with the Spell Defense of the disease or poison; earth that is Horror-tainted has a Spell Defense equal to that of the Horror. If successful, an area of soil is cleansed of impurities and is again able to sustain plant life.

PURIFY WATER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: 6+ (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8

Water. This spell removes impurities from water. The magician smears a drop of water on his lips, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the water's Spell Defense. Water that

is simply muddy has a Spell Defense of 6; disease-ridden or poisoned water resists with the Spell Defense of the disease or poison; water that is Horror-tainted has a Spell Defense equal to that of the Horror. Beverages with high water content, such as wine, juice, beer, or milk, can be purified by the spell, but the magician requires a Good Result. If successful, all of the flavorful "impurities" are removed, leaving behind pure water. The magician's Effect Test determines how many quarts of water or beverage are purified.

PUTREFY

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/9 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Putrefies food

This spell putrefies food with just a glance. The magician makes a swallowing noise and grimaces slightly, then looks at the food he wishes to putrefy and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the Spell Defense of the food or anyone eating it. If successful, up to 20 pounds of food immediately turns rotten. When cast on the diner, all of the food he has eaten is putrefied.

QUICKEN PACE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+4 hours
Effect: WIL+4

This spell increases walking speed. The magician walks briskly in a circle around the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Dexterity Step. If successful, the target increases his Movement Rate by +1 per Result Level achieved for the spell's duration.

RAMPAGE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Instant
Effect: Sets off orkish *gahad*

This spell is an area-effect version of the Ork Stoke spell, p.187, triggering a group of orks' *gahads* in response to any comment, subject, or situation. The magician mutters under his breath, openly making a rude comment or gesture, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the orks' *gahads* are stirred. Affected targets may resist their *gahads* as normal, incurring the usual penalties for doing so. The spell overcomes conditions which never set off an ork's *gahad* (p.22). Obviously, this spell only affects orks. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

RAZOR ORB

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+15/Physical

This spell creates a gleaming, spinning, orb of green light and force that is directed to deliver a devastating strike against a tough opponent. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. The Result Level required to deliver an Armor-Defeating Hit is one lower than normal (a Good Result instead of an Excellent Result, for instance). If the target's armor does not allow an Armor-Defeating Hit, an Extraordinary Result will bypass it. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.



REBEL LIMB

Threads: 1
Weaving: 16/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: WIL+4

Illusion. This spell takes control of a limb. The magician shakes one of his own limbs loosely at the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he takes over one of the target's limbs, controlling its movement as long as the target is within range. The limb acts with any applicable physical talents or skills possessed by the owner—an arm can attack, a leg can kick, and so on. The magician's Effect Test determines how much control he has over the target's limb. Each round, the target may regain control by making a successful Disbelief Test against the Effect Test. If his limb is attacking him, the target gains a +3 Disbelief Test bonus.

RECOVERY

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+15

This spell boosts a character's life force. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target makes an Effect Test in place of one of his own Recovery Tests. If he has no Recovery Tests available, the spell has no effect.

RELAX

Threads: 3
Weaving: 9/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+4

This spell reduces the amount of time a character must wait between Recovery Tests (see **Recovering From Damage**, p.220). Both magician and target must be sitting or lying down. The magician runs his hands over the target's body, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test, reducing the time that the target waits before he can make his next Recovery Test (usually an hour) by Test Result minutes. The target gains a +4 bonus to his next Recovery Test. If he has no Recovery Tests available, the spell has no effect.

Remove Shadow

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Removes target's shadow and reflection

This spell removes a character's shadow. The magician touches the target, pulling away what appears to be a fine veil of silky gray material that seems to fold in on itself and vanish, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target casts no shadow, even in strong light, and shows no reflection in mirrors or other reflective surfaces. During the spell's duration, the target gains a +1 bonus to any Action Tests he makes to remain unseen or hidden. He also becomes immune to spells and powers that affect someone's shadow or reflection, such as the Shadow Tether spell, p.195. Unfortunately, those without shadows or reflections are often believed to be Horror-touched.

Repair

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/16 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 months
Effect: WIL+5

This spell uses elemental force to temporarily mend broken mundane objects. The magician touches the target object and imagines it whole, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the pieces of the object rearrange themselves into their original shape. The magician's Effect Test determines the Strength Value of the bond holding the object together. Any missing parts remain missing, though generally, as long as the object has most of its pieces bound together, it can still function as it was originally intended.

Repair Lock

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Permanent
Effect: WIL+8

This spell fixes broken mundane locks, such as those forced open by the Shatter Lock spell, p.196. The magician makes a clicking sound, then touches the broken lock and makes a Spellcasting Test against the lock's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage to the locking mechanism is repaired. 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; metal bars start at a Death Rating of 18. Once the lock's Death Rating is restored to its original level, the mechanism may be locked.

Repel Animal

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+6

This spell creates a glowing white magical circle to keep out animals. The magician draws a circle on the ground, then touches the center and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his Effect Test determines the circle's Repulsion Difficulty. Any animal attempting to enter the circle makes a Willpower Test against the Repulsion Difficulty. If successful, the animal enters unhindered. If failed, the animal is gently pushed away from the circle. Any animal that leaves the circle must make another Willpower Test to re-enter. Only animals are affected by this spell—undead, Horrors, Horror constructs, or sentient beings can enter the circle freely.

Resist Cold

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes
Effect: +3 Physical and Mystic Armor vs. cold

Water–Cold. This spell allows a character to better handle sudden or prolonged drops in temperature. The magician conjures frost upon the palm of his hand and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the frost melts away as he touches the target. The target adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against cold-based damage.

Resist Fire

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes
Effect: +3 Physical and Mystic Armor vs. fire

Fire. This spell allows a character to better handle sudden or prolonged rises in temperature. The magician conjures a small flame on the tip of each index finger and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he touches the target on the eyebrows (or ridge above the eyes)—a bright flash singes the target's brows, but does no harm. The target adds +3 to his Physical and Mystic Armor against fire-based damage.

Resist Poison

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: +8 Toughness Test bonus vs. poison

This spell enhances a character's resistance to poison. The magician prepares an infusion of herbs and fresh water, then administers it to the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target gains a +8 bonus to his Toughness Tests against the effects of poison for the spell's duration. The spell is ineffective against poisons that do not require a Toughness Test to resist, nor does it provide any benefit against corrosive substances such as acid.

Restrain Entity

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+12

This spell traps an undead creature, Horror, Horror construct, or physically manifested spirit. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a brilliant circle of red light, limned with gold writing, encircles the target, preventing it from moving. The target can still communicate, assuming the magician wishes to talk to such a creature. Each round, the target may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, the restraint is broken and the spell ends.

RESTRAIN HORROR

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+16

A quicker, more powerful version of the Restrain Entity spell, p.192, this spell traps a Horror (not a Horror construct). The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target Horror's Spell Defense. If successful, a brilliant circle of red light encircles the Horror, preventing it from moving. The spell has a short duration, so a backup plan is advised. The magician's Effect Test determines the spell's Dispel Difficulty. Each round, the Horror may attempt to free itself by making a Willpower or Dispel Magic Test against the Dispel Difficulty. If successful, the restraint is broken and the spell ends.

REVERSAL OF PASSION

Threads: 2
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+8

This spell reverses a character's emotions. The magician mimics the target's facial expressions, then abruptly changes his expression to the opposite of what he is displaying and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's emotions are reversed so that he feels the opposite of whatever he was feeling when the spell took effect—hate becomes love, greed becomes generosity, and so on. The target acts in accordance with the new emotion during the spell's duration. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Test result. If successful, he regains control of his emotions and the spell ends. If the target is a questor, he may add his Questor Rank as a bonus to his Willpower Test.

REVERSE WITHERING

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: Restores withered limb

This spell reverses the effects of the Wither Limb spell, p.209, restoring the injured limb. The magician touches the limb, infusing it with energy from another plane, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the limb returns to its normal condition. The withered limb is not instantly restored to full health. The target still suffers a –3 penalty to Action Tests made using the limb until the Wound associated with the withering is healed. After this Wound is healed, the limb returns to full strength.

RICOCHET ATTACK

Threads: 1+ (see text)
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+12/Physical

This spell creates a ball of energy filled with glowing, glass-like shards which ricochet to hit multiple characters. The magician decides how many spell threads he will weave, which determines how many attacks he makes and which targets he intends to affect. He may weave a maximum number of threads equal to his Thread Weaving Rank. The magician conjures a glowing shard, which he gingerly pushes into the shape of a ball, then makes a Spellcasting Test and compares the result against each target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the number of attacks exceeds the number of declared targets, the ricocheting shards



may attack the same target again. At least one attack must be directed against each target before the shards ricochet back into a target that has already been attacked. The Result Level required to hit the same target increases by one level for each successive attack above the first, to a maximum of an Extraordinary Result. The magician uses the same Spellcasting Test to determine the success of each additional attack. He must make a second attack against each target, even if unsuccessful, before he can make a third attack, and so on.

ROOT TRAP

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/20 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+2

Wood. This spell creates a living trap from the roots of a nearby tree. The magician points at the tree, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the tree roots become animated, attempting to grapple any character standing on them. A tree's roots usually grow out to a radius equal to the height of the tree—the bigger the tree, the larger the area of effect. The magician makes an Effect Test in place of an unarmed Attack Test as a Grappling attack (p.230) against the target's Physical Defense. If successful, the tree roots grapple the target.

ROPE GUIDE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from magician
Effect: WIL+4

This spell animates the movement of a piece of rope. The magician touches the target rope and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the rope animates to wriggle along the ground within

the area of effect at a Movement Rate of 5. By concentrating, the magician can direct the rope's movement. The rope uses the spell's Effect Step in place of its Dexterity Step if it is required to tie itself off or tie something up. The rope cannot pull any weight. A magician could direct the rope to tie itself around the bars of a window, but characters would still have to climb up or down the rope themselves.

Rope Ladder

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Area of Effect: 50-yard (25-hex) radius from magician
Effect: Create ladder from rope

This spell creates a ladder out of a length of rope. The magician uncoils the rope, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the rope moves at a Movement Rate of 5 to a location of the magician's choosing within the area of effect. The magician cannot control the rope with precision—it cannot tie itself off on the bars of a window, for example. The rope simply moves directly from point A to point B. Those climbing the rope gain a +4 bonus to their Climbing Tests. The rope can hold a maximum weight of 600 pounds.

Rust

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Reduces a weapon's Damage Step or an armor/shield's Physical Armor

Water—Acid. This spell rapidly corrodes mundane metal items, generally those made of iron, steel, or other ferrous metals. The magician flings a handful of water at the target item, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the item's or its bearer's Spell Defense. If successful, the object quickly rusts away, permanently reducing a weapon's Damage Step, or a set of armor or a shield's Physical Armor, by –1 per Result Level. If the item's Damage Step or Physical Armor is reduced to zero, it rusts completely away to a gritty powder. If the item remains intact, it can be repaired using the Craft Weapon (p.95) or Craft Armor skill (p.94). A successful repair requires a week of work and a Good Result against a Difficulty Number equal to the item's original Damage Step or Physical Armor Rating. The effect of this spell on other metal objects is determined by the gamemaster.

An Elementalist casts the Rust spell against Thom Hammerblade's favorite broadsword, which even though it has been enhanced using the Forge Blade talent to a Damage Step of 7, is still considered a mundane weapon. The Spellcasting Test succeeds with an Excellent Result (three Result Levels) and the spell reduces the broadsword's Damage Step by –3, to Damage Step 4. When Thom attempts to repair the sword, the Craft Weapon Test is made against a Difficulty Number of 7—the weapon's "unrusted" Damage Step—and will require a Good Result.

Safe Opening

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+8

This spell protects against traps or wards on doors or chests. The magician mimics opening the door or chest, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the object's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the highest Disarm Difficulty or Spell Defense of any traps or wards protecting the object from being opened. If successful, any wards or traps on the object are frozen for the spell's duration—they are not disarmed, merely temporarily inactive.

Sanctuary

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+8

This spell magically seals all portals and entrances to a building, reinforcing them to keep out intruders. The spell must be cast inside a dwelling or other building no bigger than 100 square yards in size. The magician touches a window or door and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he adds his Effect Test to the building's Death Rating and his Spellcasting Rank to the building's Physical Armor.

Sculpt Darkness

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+4 minutes
Effect: +4 bonus to stealth-based Action Tests

This spell molds an existing area of darkness or shadow into any shape the magician desires. The darkness cannot change in volume, nor can actual objects be formed from it—only the shape of a given shadow can be made. The magician moves his hands as if shaping or sculpting an invisible medium, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the darkness is molded into the desired shape. The spell masks the activity of anyone hidden within the darkness's depths—the character gains a +4 bonus to any stealth-based Action Tests he makes and adds +4 to the Detection Difficulty for Perception Tests made to detect him while he hides in the sculpted shadow. A shadow can only hide one character. At the gamemaster's discretion, this spell also adds a bonus of up to +4 to Spellcasting or Effect Tests for other shadow/darkness spells, such as Shadow Hunter or Ethereal Darkness, cast by a magician hiding in the sculpted shadow.

Seal

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/11 **Casting**: 6
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+8 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell magically closes and locks doors, windows, gates, or sealable containers. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the target door, gate, window, or container shuts and remains closed for the spell's duration. The magician's Effect Test determines the Difficulty Number for Strength Tests made to open the sealed object. This spell cannot be cast on empty doorways or gateways—its use requires an actual door or container lid.

See the Unseen

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: +8 bonus to sight-based Perception Tests

This spell allows a character to better see hidden things. The magician lightly touches the target's eyes, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he gains a +8 bonus to sight-based Perception Tests made to detect hidden objects or characters. The spell does not enable the

target to see things that cannot normally be seen, such as Horrors lurking in astral space, although it will help when combined with a talent or ability that allows such astral viewing.

SEEKING SIGHT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: +3 bonus to ranged Attack Tests made against the target

This spell marks a character, making him easier to hit with ranged weapons. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, glowing circles appear on the target. Anyone firing missile weapons at the target add a +3 bonus to their ranged Attack Tests.

SEND MESSAGE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self (see text) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: Passes a paper message to a chosen target

Illusion. This spell creates and transfers a message to a character within line of sight of the magician. The magician makes tiny, rapid gestures in the air to represent writing the note's text, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, an illusory paper message is conjured in the target's hand, pocket, pouch, or elsewhere on his body (according to the magician's choice). The note may contain no more than a few short sentences, with a maximum number of words equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank×10.

SENSE HORROR

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes

Area of Effect: 30-yard (15-hex) radius from caster
Effect: WIL+8

This spell senses the presence of Horrors or Horror constructs. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he compares his Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any Horrors or Horror constructs within the area of effect. If successful, the magician senses the target's presence, though not its exact location or nature. The spell does not detect Horror Marks, but may pick up lingering traces of Horror corruption in a place, at the gamemaster's discretion.

SHADOW HUNTER

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: Summons a hunter spirit

This spell conjures a vaguely humanoid form—featureless, save for faintly glowing red eyes—from a nearby dark or shadowy area. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the shadow hunter's Spell Defense. If successful, a hunter is summoned, which carries out a single task before dissolving back into its formless state. Shadow hunters can track and hunt their prey unerringly if the magician possesses a personal item belonging to the target—any Tracking Test the hunter is required to make is automatically successful. Shadow hunters can be affected by all types of weapons and magic, though their high Physical Defense reflects the difficulty of harming them with mundane weaponry. Although able to slip around in the shade during the day, shadow hunters are susceptible to light. Those employing a light-based attack against a shadow hunter gain a +4 bonus to Effect or Damage Tests. A shadow hunter that is trapped in an area of sunlight without any shadows to hide in is destroyed if it cannot get to shade within a round.

Shadow Hunter

DEX: 8 **STR**: 7 **TOU**: 7
PER: 6 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 6

Initiative: 8 **Physical Defense:** 15
Actions: 2 **Spell Defense:** 8
Attack (4): 12 **Social Defense:** 12
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0
Unarmed (5): 12 **Mystic Armor:** 4

Death: 39 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: NA **Knockdown:** 7
Wound Threshold: 11 **Movement:** 6

Legend Award: Fourth Circle (1 per 2 PC)

SHADOW MELD

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell allows a character to become virtually invisible in the shadows. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for sight-based Perception Tests made to spot the target while he is in the cover of shadows or darkness. Though the target can still be seen normally in light, the presence of light does not end the spell—the target becomes near-invisible again by simply Stepping back into a shadow.

SHADOW SPELL

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 rounds
Effect: WIL+12

This potent spell reduces the effectiveness of a magician's spells by diverting most of the power back into astral space. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target magician's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician's Effect Test is subtracted from any spell Effect Tests made by the target. If the spell reduces a target's Effect Test to zero, the spell becomes a harmless shadow of itself—appearance without substance. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, the spell ends. This spell does not affect talents, creature powers, or any form of magic other than spell magic.

SHADOW TETHER

Threads: 2
Weaving: 16/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+7

This spell anchors characters to the ground by their shadows. The magician may target a number of characters equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Both targets and their shadows must be visible to him. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets' shadows are affixed to the ground, hold-

ing their owners in place. The magician's Effect Test determines the strength of the bond. Each round, a target may make a Strength Test against the Effect Test to pull free of the spell's effect. If successful, he breaks free of his shadow. Targets who are tethered by their shadows are Harried.

SHADOW'S WHISPER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/11 **Casting**: 6
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell allows the magician to hear anything spoken next to any nearby shadows. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he may make an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of a target within range. If successful, the magician hears any sound the target makes while he is within 2 yards (1 hex) of any shadow, including the target's own. The target may make a Perception Test against the Effect Test. If successful, he detects that he is being somehow observed.

SHATTER LOCK

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 6 yards (3 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8

This spell forces locks open. The magician makes a cracking sound, then gestures toward the lock and makes a Spellcasting Test against the lock's Spell Defense. Against magical locks, if successful, he makes an Effect Test against the higher of the lock's Spell Defense or Dispel Difficulty. If successful, the lock opens or the locking spell is dispelled. Against mechanical locks, the Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted 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; metal bars start at a Death Rating of 18. Once the damage to a mundane lock's Death Rating is equaled, the lock opens.

SHATTERING STONE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from center of impact
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

Earth. This spell turns an ordinary stone into an explosive missile. The magician picks up a fist-sized stone, then throws it at the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense of any character within the area of effect. If successful, the stone explodes into sharp fragments that scatter in all directions. The magician compares his Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of all characters within the area of effect. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target.

SHIELD MIST

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Air. This spell creates a shield of mist that hardens and moves to deflect blows directed against the magician. The magician moves his hands over his body while wisps of mist pour from his fingertips, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test in place of an Avoid Blow Test (p.62) against close and ranged combat Attack Tests directed at him. If the Avoid Blow Test succeeds, the mist deflects the blow and the magician suffers no harm. There is no Strain cost for this Test. The shielding effect only works against attacks that the magician can see. The magician may make a number of Effect Tests each round equal to his Spellcasting Rank. Only one Test may be made against a single attack. The magician is visible within the mist and can easily see out. The mist does not hinder his actions.

SHIELD OF WARPING

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Wood. This spell causes wooden weapons to bend and twist out of shape. The magician ties a strip of bark, grass, or other plant material to the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target is surrounded by a magical field that causes wooden or wooden-hafted weapons to bend and warp when they strike him. He makes an Effect Test against the Damage Step of any wooden weapon used to attack him. If successful, the weapon flexes wildly and the attack is deflected away from the target, missing him. On an Extraordinary Result, the weapon remains permanently warped, reducing its Damage Step by –3. If this reduces the weapon's Damage Step to zero, the weapon is ruined. Regardless of the number of attacks made against the target, the spell's warping effect can only be used once per round.

SHIELD WILLOW

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: +6 to shield's Shatter Threshold and +1 to its Physical and Mystic Armor

Wood. This spell improves the resiliency of mundane shields. The magician joins his fingers together, then touches the target shield and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the shield sprouts roots and leaves and gains the resiliency of a willow tree, adding +6 to its Shatter Threshold and +1 to its Physical and Mystic Armor for the spell's duration.

SILENCE METAL

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+7

Earth–Metal. This spell suppresses any noise made by metal weapons, armor, or other tools that a character is carrying. The magician takes a dagger or other metal object from the target, puts the item to his lips, makes a shushing noise, and hands it back. He then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target's Spell Defense or the Spell Defense of any metal items he is carrying or wearing. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty of any Perception Tests made to hear the target, based on the sounds that the metal objects he is carrying would normally make. The target can move at his full Movement Rate during the spell's duration—the noises from anything metallic he is carrying are completely suppressed regardless of whether he is walking, running, or jumping.

SILENT CONVERSE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 100 yards (50 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: Allows whispered conversation

This spell allows the magician to carry on a whispered conversation with a character within line of sight and range, regardless of intervening noise. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician and target may whisper to each other, both characters hearing each clearly. The magician may change the target who he is whispering to by making a successful Spellcasting Test against the new target's Spell Defense. The conversation can only be overheard by someone standing within 2 yards (1 hex) of either participant.

SILENT STAMPEDE

Threads: 6
Weaving: 11/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Silences sound

Illusion. This spell silences the sounds made by a group of characters or animals, including movement, talking, breathing, horse whinnying, and so on. The magician wanders around the group touching each person and animal affected by the spell, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, any sounds made by the target group are suppressed—all members of the group gain a +4 bonus to their stealth-based Action Tests. The Detection Difficulty of hearing-based Perception Tests made to detect any members of the target group is increased by +4. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets×3. The spell does not conceal the target group from sight, smell, or touch-based Perception Tests. Any Action Tests that could reveal the target group's existence are considered Sensing Tests.

SILVER SHADOW

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: WIL+3

This spell turns a character's mundane metal objects gauzy and insubstantial. The magician waves a hand in front of his face, inhaling and exhaling gently, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, all of the non-magical metal items that the target is wearing or carrying—weapons, armor, coins, and tools—turn into silvery shadowlike versions of the originals. The objects lose their intended use during the spell's duration—tools do not carve or dig or sew, weapons cannot harm an opponent, armor provides no protection, and so on. While small metal objects, like coins, and tools are automatically affected, larger metal items are only affected if the magician makes a successful Effect Test against the item's Damage Step (weapons) or Physical Armor (armor or shields). Items constructed primarily from non-metal materials are not affected.

SKY LATTICE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: 120 yards (60 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+3

Air. This spell creates a shimmering web of energy. The magician makes a series of crisscross gestures in the air, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the lattice appears within reach of the magician—it is attached to the air and needs not to touch the ground. A sky lattice is always 2 yards (1 hex) wide, but the magician may vary the length, up to the spell's range. The force of the lattice helps grip those climbing it. The magician's Effect Test is the Strength Step of the bond holding climber to lattice. The climber uses this Strength Step in place of his own for Action Tests where he could be dislodged from the lattice, such as when making Knockdown Tests. The grip secures the climber but does not hinder his movement in any way. Because of this, the climber does not need to make Climbing tests to scale the sky lattice. A sky lattice can support a maximum of 1,500 pounds of weight. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking 1 Blood Magic Damage. This damage can be healed when the spell ends.

SLEEP

Threads: 2
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Puts target to sleep

This spell causes one or more characters to fall into a deep sleep. The magician yawns widely, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets immediately fall into a magical slumber, waking only if they take any damage or the spell ends. Each round, a sleeping target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, he wakes up. The spell only affects characters or creatures that need sleep—it does not work against most undead, for example. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

SLOW

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: Halves movement; –5 penalty to Dexterity-based Tests

This spell reduces movement. The magician pantomimes casting in slow motion, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's Movement Rate is halved (round down) and he suffers a –5 penalty to his Dexterity-based Tests, including Initiative Tests.

SLOW METAL WEAPON

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+8 rounds
Effect: –3 Damage Test penalty

Earth–Metal. This spell slows a weapon with a metal edge or point, reducing its ability to inflict damage. The magician mimes a slow-moving attack, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the wielder's or his weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, the target weapon slows each time it hits an opponent, causing the wielder to suffer a –3 penalty to his Damage Tests. Nothing prevents the wielder from dropping the slowed weapon and swapping to another if he desires. Anyone picking up and using the weapon suffers the Damage Test penalty until the spell ends.

SMALL SLAYER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: Summons a poisonous creature

This spell summons a tiny poisonous creature such as a spider, snake, or scorpion to attack an opponent. The magician utters low crooning sounds and makes slow, sinuous hand movements, then makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, a venomous creature appears and sneaks up to its victim, repeatedly attacking the target until it successfully bites or stings him or the spell ends, after which it disappears. The small slayer's venom is a Damage Step 8/2D6 poison with a Spell Defense of 8, an Instant Onset Time, and a Duration of 4 rounds. The creature's attack cannot penetrate armor—if necessary, the small slayer attempts to strike unarmored areas on the target's body using the Called Shot combat option (p.222). If the creature attacks successfully, the bite or sting penetrates the target's flesh, allowing the poison to take effect.

Small Slayer

DEX: NA **STR**: NA **TOU**: NA
PER: NA **WIL**: NA **CHA**: NA

Initiative: 8
Actions: 1
Attack: 8
Damage:
Bite or Sting: 1 (poison)

Physical Defense: 8
Spell Defense: Magician
Social Defense: Magician
Physical Armor: 0
Mystic Armor: 0

Death: 10
Unconsciousness: NA
Wound Threshold: NA

Recovery Tests: NA
Knockdown: NA
Movement: 4

Legend Award: First Circle

Powers: Poison [SpellDef 8; Damage 8; see text]

SMOKE CLOUD

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+8 rounds

Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius around magician
Effect: Causes a Complete Darkness penalty

Fire. This spell creates a cloud of smoke from a torch-sized or larger source of fire that obscures vision. The magician puffs out his cheeks and exhales, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the fire belches forth a thick cloud of black smoke, quickly spreading to fill the area of effect. The magician can see and act normally in the smoke, but all others within it suffer a Complete Darkness penalty to their sight, taste, and smell-based Action Tests from their restricted vision and choking.

SNUFF

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius around center
Effect: WIL+5

Fire. This spell extinguishes a fire. The magician exhales sharply through his nose, then waves his hand over the fire and makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the fire's or it's creator's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician makes an Effect Test against the fire's Damage Step. If successful, the Damage Step is reduced by –2 per Result Level. If not completely extinguished, the fire's Damage Step increases by +1 per minute to its original intensity. Librarians of the Great Library of Throal are rumored to keep crystal spell boxes (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 133) containing the Snuff spell in numerous places throughout the library.

SOLO FLIGHT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 7/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+15 minutes
Effect: Grants flight

This spell grants the power of flight. The magician flaps his arms up and down and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he gains the ability to fly at a Movement Rate of 8.

SOOTHE THE SAVAGE BEAST

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes (see text)
Effect: Hypnotizes animal into passivity

This spell hypnotizes an animal into passivity. The magician stretches out his hands, causing softly glowing tendrils of blue light to move in an intricate pattern between them, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target animal's Spell Defense. If successful, the target becomes completely passive—it will not attack for any reason, including hunger or aggression. On an Extraordinary Result, the spell creates a weak rapport between magician and target, as the animal finds the spell's effect pleasurable. The target follows the magician around for a number of hours equal to his Spellcasting Rank, purring or making appropriately pleasurable animal sounds. If the target is attacked or affected by a disorienting spell or talent, the spell ends.

SOUL ARMOR

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+15 minutes
Effect: +5 Mystic Armor

This spell enhances a character's Mystic Armor. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a glimmering suit of blue chain mail appears, momentarily covering the target before it sinks into his body. The target adds +5 to his Mystic Armor.

SPELL CAGE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+8 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) tall by 4-yard (2-hex) thick by 4-yard (2-hex) wide cage
Effect: –5 penalty to Spellcasting Tests

This spell captures a character in a magical cage. The magician makes a descending whistling sound, followed by a "clang!" and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a cage forms around the target—if the target is bigger than the area of effect, the spell fails. Once conjured, the cage cannot be moved. The target cannot move from the cage, as it has no door. While trapped, the target suffers a –5 penalty to Spellcasting and Thread Weaving Tests, including attempts to cast spells against the cage itself.

Spell Cage

Physical Armor: 7
Mystic Armor: 10
Death: 40
Unconsciousness: NA

Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 15
Social Defense: NA
Wound Threshold: NA



SPELL SNATCHER

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/24 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round (see text)
Effect: WIL+10

This spell seizes a spell from a magician's spell matrix and places it in one of the magician's own matrices. Magicians commonly replace their Spell Snatcher spell with the snatched spell, but may replace any of the spells in their matrices. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target magician's Spell Defense. If successful, the gamemaster randomly selects one of the target's spell matrices. The magician makes an Effect Test against a Dispel Difficulty based on the Spell Circle. If successful, the spell leaves the target's matrix and appears in one of his own matrices. The snatched spell remains in the magician's spell matrix until cast or replaced, depending on the specific spell. The snatched spell can be of any Spell Circle or type. If casting the snatched spell is beyond the magician's abilities (he does not have the proper Thread Weaving talent or is not a high enough Circle), he may still cast it from the matrix as if it were a grimoire-cast spell (p.136) or by using raw magic (p.136). Either way, the snatched spell vanishes from his spell matrix as soon as it is cast. If the magician is capable of casting the snatched spell, he may use it normally, in which case the spell remains in his spell matrix until replaced by another spell or erased by a Reattuning failure. If the snatched spell is unknown to the magician, he can attempt a Read/Write Magic Test to learn the spell (see **Learning Spells**, p.130). If successful, he may add the spell to his grimoire.

SPELLSTORE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+6

This spell allows places a spell pattern within an object, allowing the spell to be cast at a later time. The object can be anything and does not require any special enchanting. The magician touches the object and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the Dispel Difficulty of the spell to be stored. If successful, the spell is placed within the object. Anyone holding the object can matrix-cast the spell using his own Spellcasting ability. If the spell requires threads, the caster must know the appropriate Thread Weaving talent. The object's wielder must be touching it to cast the spell stored within. Once the stored spell has been cast, or the Spellstore spell ends, the spell pattern vanishes from the item. The magician may extend the duration to a year and a day by taking his Wound Threshold as Blood Magic Damage (and a Blood Wound as well). During this time, the object's wielder may cast the stored spell any number of times. The magician can heal this damage and the Wound when the object is destroyed or the spell ends.

SPIRIT BOLT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+12/Mystic

This spell directs a beam of violet energy against a spirit, disrupting its pattern. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The spell does not affect Namegivers or physical Horrors or Horror constructs, such as cadaver men, but can harm astral Horrors and physically manifested spirits. The magician can use this spell against a spirit in astral space if he can see it, using the Astral Sight talent or a similar ability.

SPIRIT DART

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+2/Mystic

This spell attacks a character with a small dart shaped from astral energy. The magician pinches himself and flicks his wrist as if throwing a dart, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

SPIRIT DOUBLE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: 10
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: Creates spirit double of the magician

This spell allows the magician to summon a spirit to act as his double. The magician makes a Spellcasting (10) Test. If successful, a spirit appears and assumes a shaggy material form resembling the magician. The magician can issue verbal commands to the spirit, which it loyally obeys. The spirit can travel anywhere its form allows. Though the spirit possesses the same Attribute Values as the magician, it has a Spell Defense of 10, but knows no magical abilities.

SPIRIT GRIP

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+6/Physical

This spell draws on the malevolent energy of the spirits of the dead to harm others. The magician touches his victim and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. The spell cannot be cast on sacred ground, such as a shrine devoted to one of the Passions, or zones that have been proofed against spirits. Even a Life Circle of One (p.181) is enough to prevent this spell being cast.

SPIRIT PORTAL

Threads: 4
Weaving: 14/19 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10×Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+10 (see text)

This spell creates a doorway into astral space through which spirits may enter the physical plane or characters enter astral space. The spell must be cast within a Bone Circle (p.155) built by the magician. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he punctures a hole into astral space, continuing to widen the opening until he has created a doorway. The magician has control over who uses the Spirit Portal, but must be within sight of the portal to contest entry. To prevent a being from crossing through the portal, the magician makes an Effect Test against the being's Willpower Test. If failed, the being can pass through the portal. If successful, it is prevented from passing through. Regardless of the outcome, the magician suffers 1 Strain from the exertion.

SPIRIT SERVANT

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 days
Effect: Summons a spirit servant

This spell conjures a spirit servant to do the magician's bidding. The magician draws a circle on the ground and inscribes it with the Name he has chosen for his servant. The circle must lie undisturbed for a full night, before the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit servant appears within the circle, appearing as an ethereal humanoid of a gender and race of the magician's choosing. For the spell's duration, the servant loyally serves the magician as a porter, scullery help, or even a butler, for it is not much good at combat. The spirit servant will protect itself should it be attacked, but will never initiate combat against another being, even if commanded to do so. They have a Carrying Capacity of 60 pounds (see p.29). Usually quiet, spirit servants are quite intelligent and capable of speech. Many magicians become attached to a particular servant, summoning the same spirit time and again.

Spirit Servant

DEX: 4 **STR**: 4 **TOU**: 4
PER: 7 **WIL**: 7 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense:** 6
Actions: 1 **Spell Defense:** 9
Attack: 4 **Social Defense:** 11
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 0
Unarmed: 4 **Mystic Armor:** 3

Death: 27 **Recovery Tests:** 1
Unconsciousness: NA **Knockdown:** NA
Wound Threshold: 6 **Movement:** 6*

Legend Award: First Circle

* This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

SPIRITS OF DEATH'S SEA

Threads: 3
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: WIL+6

Fire. This spell creates a potent invigorating drink. The magician needs a cupful of an alcoholic beverage such as ale or *hurlg* (the latter being an extremely alcoholic ork beverage brewed from fermented animal fat). The magician waves his hands over the cup, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the beverage turns into a smoking, molten liquid resembling lava. The cup's entire contents must be consumed to gain any benefit from the spell. Swallowing the liquid requires the target to make a Toughness (7) Test. If failed, the target gains no benefit, but takes Step 4/D6 damage from the hot liquid scalding his insides (no armor provides protection). If successful, the target becomes energized and invigorated, much like the Air Sailors who sail Death's Sea. During the spell's duration, the target makes an Effect Test in place of Willpower Tests to resist fear-causing spells, talents, or abilities. The target also makes an Effect Test after drinking the liquid to determine the Difficulty Number for any Talent (like Battle Shout or Battle Bellow) or Interaction Tests intended to intimidate him.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: 30 rounds
Effect: Summons a spirit guide to answer a question

This spell summons an ally spirit to lead the magician on a journey to one of the netherworlds where he can find the answer to a question. The magician focuses his mind on the question he wants answered, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit appears and asks the magician to pose his question. The spirit then leads the magician into astral space, taking him to a specific netherworld where he can obtain an answer. The answer is never straightforward, but rather comes in a vision that provides hints. For example, a magician asking where to find a legendary object might relive events of the object's history (from the object's point of view) that point the way to its current location. While traveling in astral space, the spirit uses its Astral Portal power to lead the magician through any gates necessary to reach the netherworld. The magician still faces the usual challenges and dangers of traveling in astral space, however (see the ***Gamemaster's Companion***). The spirit guide is a Strength Rating 5 ally spirit.

Spirit Guide

DEX: 9 **STR**: 9 **TOU**: 9
PER: 9 **WIL**: 9 **CHA**: 9

Initiative: 10 **Physical Defense:** 12
Actions: 2 **Spell Defense:** 16
Attack (5): 14 **Social Defense:** 16
Damage: **Physical Armor:** 9
Unarmed: 9 **Mystic Armor:** 5

Death: 48 **Recovery Tests:** 4
Unconsciousness: 41 **Knockdown:** 9
Wound Threshold: 14 **Movement:** 6*

Karma Points: 10 **Karma Step:** 8

Legend Award: Fifth Circle (1 per 2 PC)

Powers: Aid Summoner (5), Astral Portal (5), Astral Sight (5): 14, Empathic Sense (5): 14, Lifesight (5): 14, Manifest (5), Spellcasting (5): 14

* This value is the spirit's flying Movement Rate

SPOTLIGHT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/20 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+8

This spell creates spotlights to illuminate characters. The magician clicks his fingers and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group in the area of

effect. If successful, a spotlight is created over each target, sitting about 2 yards (1 hex) above his head, brightly illuminating him. If a target tries to evade an attack or avoid detection, the magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Test Result. If successful, the target's attempt to evade or use stealth fails. If failed, the target avoids the spotlight's beam and the light goes out. A spotlight remains with its target until he successfully avoids it, moves out of range, or the spell ends. The magician may affect a number of target's equal to his Spellcasting Rank.

STAMPEDE

Threads: 4
Weaving: 12/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 rounds
Effect: Causes targets to become Harried

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of a stampede. The magician stamps and snorts, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group within range, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets believe a stampede is about to hit them and become Harried. Casting this spell in an area where a stampede would normally be impossible (indoors, on an airship, and so on) allows those affected to make a Disbelief Test (p.139). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

STAR SHOWER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from magician
Effect: WIL+9/Physical

This spell sprays a cloud of multicolored sparks from the magician's outstretched hand. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any characters within the area of effect. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted on each target.

STEAL STRENGTH

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/23 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell saps a character's strength, imbuing the magician with the stolen energy. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his hands glow with a faint blue aura. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test is subtracted from the target's Strength Value and added to his own. The target's Strength Value cannot be reduced below 1. Every 3 points of Strength stolen reduces the target's Strength Step by –1, to a minimum of Step 1. The magician only increases his Strength Value by the amount he is able to steal from the target—a weak target correspondingly increases the magician's Strength to a lesser degree. The magician's Strength Value may only reach twice its original Value from the Strength stolen. Instead of increasing his Strength Value, the magician my use the stolen Strength points to heal Damage Points at a 1-to-1 ratio. Stolen Strength vanishes when the spell ends, but damage healed is permanently restored. The target's Strength returns to him when the spell ends.

STENCH

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: WIL+6

Illusion. This spell creates a horrid smell, causing those subjected to it to retch and puke. The magician crushes several blossoms from a stinkweed or similarly pungent plant, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any characters in the area of effect. If successful, a hideous odor arises that renders affected targets unable to do anything except try to hang on to their last meal. The magician's Effect Test determines the stench's potency. An affected target must make a successful Willpower Test against the Effect Test to take any action, including movement. If successful, he can act normally, but is still affected by the smell while he remains within the area of effect. If failed, he can do nothing except double up and vomit and is considered Knocked Down. Willpower Tests are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

STEP THROUGH SHADOW

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/24 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: Creates astral passageway

This spell allows the magician to move from shadow to shadow through astral space. The magician, who must be standing next to a shadow—including his own—makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, the nearby shadows become temporary "gates" at the ends of a "tunnel" through the astral plane. The maximum distance that the magician can travel between shadows is 100 yards (50 hexes). He must move through astral space at his normal Movement Rate and encounters the usual astral perils when traveling. Once the magician passes through the gateway opposite to the one he entered, the spell ends. If the magician does not exit the opposite gate before the spell ends, he is trapped in astral space. Trapped magicians can leave the astral plane via other means, if available to them. The shadow-gates also allow astral entities to pass into the physical world.

STERILIZE OBJECT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+7

This spell cleanses an object of poison or disease. The magician rubs his wrists together, generating a white spark which leaps to the target object, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the disease's or poison's Spell Defense or Step Number. If successful, the object is cleansed of that disease or poison. An item with multiple diseases or poisons requires several Sterilize Object spells to be cast on it to be completely cleansed. The spell is only effective against inanimate objects. If cast on food, the food becomes sterile, losing flavor and texture, and requiring a successful Willpower (4) Test to be consumed.

STICK TOGETHER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 5/13 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+7

This spell bonds two targets tightly together. The magician mimes putting his hands together and trying to pull them apart, then points both hands (still stuck together) at the two targets and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the targets. If successful, the targets instantly bond together as soon as they touch. The magician can choose to bond two targets already in contact, such as a character and the floor, otherwise the targets must be within 2 yards (1 hex) of each other. The magician's Effect Test determines the magical bond's Strength Value and Carrying Capacity (p. 29). Each round, a target may make a Strength Test against the bond's Strength Step (derived from its Strength Value). If successful, the bond breaks and the spell ends.

STONE CAGE

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) tall by 4-yard (2-hex) thick by 4-yard (2-hex) wide cage
Effect: Traps target in a cage of stone

Earth. This spell traps a character in an earthen or stone cage. The target must be standing on earth or stone and must be smaller in size than the area of effect. The magician spreads his fingers wide, then locks them together (representing the bars closing) and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the earth or stone on which he is standing forms a cage up to area of effect in size, trapping him inside. The cage can be attacked to free the trapped target, but is resistant to attempts to destroy it—no Armor-Defeating Hits are possible against the stone cage. A character who fails his Attack Test against the cage has still struck it, but his blow has no effect. Once the spell ends, or if the cage takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, it immediately crumbles apart, freeing the target. The entrapped target may attempt to destroy the cage from within, but because he is constricted in his efforts, he is Harried.

Stone Cage

Physical Armor: 7 * **Physical Defense:** 10
Mystic Armor: Magician * **Spell Defense:** Magician
Death: 50 **Social Defense:** NA
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold:** NA

* Cannot be bypassed with an Armor-Defeating Hit

STONE RAIN

Threads: 2
Weaving: 15/22 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 12 yards (6 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+4/Physical

Earth. This spell showers fist-sized stones from the sky. The magician points at where the stones will fall and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any characters within the area of effect. If successful, affected targets are struck by falling stones. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. Each round, more stones rain down on the targets, who continue to take damage as long as they remain within the area of effect.

STOP RIGHT THERE

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/9 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Effect: WIL+3

This spell immobilizes a character. The magician holds up a hand and shouts "Stop!" as loudly as possible, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's feet freeze in place—he cannot move, but may otherwise act normally, though he is Harried. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Test Result, with a +5 bonus if he has taken any damage that round. If successful, he regains movement and the spell ends.

STORM MANACLES

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+12 rounds
Effect: WIL+5/Mystic

Air–Electric. This spell restrains a character with cloudy shackles. The magician works a drop of water into a wisp of cloud which he blows toward the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the wisp darkens and grows to form a set of manacles that shackle the target's arms or legs—while manacled, the target is Harried. If the target attempts any hostile action against the magician or his obvious allies, the manacles zap him with lightning. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

STUDY THREAD

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell allows the study of a thread woven to a pattern. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of the pattern to which the thread is tied. If successful, he may make Effect Tests in place of Astral Sensing Tests when viewing the thread.

SUFFOCATING PASTE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 9/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: WIL+3/NA

Water. This spell creates a blob of greenish-yellow paste which blinds or suffocates whoever it is thrown at. The magician sniffs loudly then spits into his hand, hurling the contents at his victim, and making a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the paste covers the part of the body which the target uses to breathe (usually the head), smothering him and causing Step 4/D6 suffocation damage each round. If the area struck by the paste also contains the target's sensory organs (usually the eyes), he is blinded as well and suffers a Partial Darkness penalty. Targets that do not require vision to "see" are still affected—the paste is thick enough to inhibit the effectiveness of their sensory organs. The paste adheres tightly and is not easily removed. The magician makes an Effect Test. If someone other than the target makes a successful Strength Test against the Effect Test, the paste is pulled off the target and the spell ends. Each round, the target may make a Strength Test against the Effect Step. If successful, he removes enough paste from his mouth to draw breath and takes no damage that round. However, the paste quickly adjusts to cover the victim's mouth again, so the respite is temporary.

SUFFOCATION

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 48 yards (24 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

Illusion. This spell suffocates characters. The magician holds his breath, then exhales and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group in the area of effect. If successful, affected targets lose their breath and start suffocating—they are Harried for all actions except Disbelief Tests and their Movement Rate is halved until they move out of range or the spell ends. Each round, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

SUMMON BONE GHOST

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 9
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 minutes
Effect: Summons a bone spirit

This spell summons the bone spirit from one of the magician's Bone Circles (p.155) within Spellcasting Rank×10 miles, allowing the spirit to exist outside the circle for a brief period. The magician makes a Spellcasting (9) Test. If successful, the bone spirit appears before him. The bone spirit cannot move more than 4 yards (2 hexes) from the magician. If it is forced to do so, the spell ends and the spirit returns to its bone circle. The bone spirit obeys any command the magician gives it—entering combat, reporting happenings within sight of its bone circle, and so on. Bone spirits do not enjoy leaving their circles, so they resist frequent summoning attempts. The Result Level increases by one level (from Average to Good, for example), for each additional attempt to summon the same bone spirit within a day. The bone spirit returns to its circle when the spell ends. If the spirit is destroyed in combat, its Bone Circle is also destroyed.

SUNLIGHT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius sphere from magician
Effect: Creates daylight

This spell creates sunlight. The magician moves his arms in a circle and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, natural sunlight emanates from him, filling the area of effect, even if cast at night or indoors. Creatures affected by sunlight are affected by this spell. The light created does not provide any protection from Horrors or any other creatures unaffected by sunlight.

SWITCH

Threads: 5
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: Switches magician's appearance with target

Illusion. This spell switches the magician's appearance with another character. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician takes on the target's appearance, and vice-versa. Action Tests made against the target or magician are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

TAILOR

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: 10×Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+4

This spell alters the style and color of a character's clothes, improving or worsening his appearance. The magician clenches his teeth as if biting a thread, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's clothes change, taking on a more fashionable and flattering cut or appearing threadbare and bedraggled, as the magician desires. When the target interacts with another, he makes an Effect Test against the other person's Social Defense. If successful, the other character's Attitude toward the target is moved one degree better or worse, as determined by the clothing look chosen by the magician.

TARGET PORTAL

Threads: 4
Weaving: 10/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 1,000 yards (see text) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+7

This spell creates a small gap in astral space, forming a pathway that allows the magician to cast spells at another as if he was much closer. The magician must be able to see the target to create a path to him. The magician makes tearing pulling motions with his hands, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a portal opens to the target—as long as he remains within range, the magician may cast any spell with a range greater than "Touch" against him through the portal. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, the portal closes and the spell ends.

TEARS OF THE SCOURGE

Threads: 2
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius sphere from center
Effect: WIL+4

This spell calls on the spirits of the legions of people killed, tortured, or emotionally destroyed by Horrors during the Scourge to make others realize how terrible it truly was. A little salt water (tears or sweat will suffice) is required to cast the spell. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among targets in the area of effect. If successful, the area fills with the screaming, wailing spirits of the dead. The magician compares his Effect Test against each target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target collapses to the ground, weeping uncontrollably—he is incapacitated and considered Knocked Down. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, he recomposes himself and breaks free of the effect. The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets. He cannot directly or indirectly harm an affected target. If he or his allies do, the magician automatically suffers the spell effect for an entire day, with no chance to resist it or break free.

Thorny Retreat

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/13 **Casting**: 6
Range: 16 yards (8 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) tall, 2-yard (1-hex) thick sections
Effect: WIL+2

Wood. This spell conjures a barrier of magical thorns. The magician pricks his hand then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he summons and places a number of wall sections equal to his Spellcasting Rank within range, each section filling the area of effect with gnarled and twisted thorns. The magician makes an Effect Test. Anyone passing through a thorn section makes a Dexterity Test against the Test Result. If successful, he passes through unscathed. If failed, the character is halted by the thorns and takes Step 4/D6 damage (Physical Armor provides protection). The thorns roll around the magician like seaweed in water and are no hindrance to him.

Thrive

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 8
Range: Touch **Duration**: 1 round
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: Accelerates plant growth

Wood. This spell accelerates plant growth. The magician sprinkles water on the ground and makes a Spellcasting (8) Test. If successful, plants in the area of effect experience the equivalent of one week's growth over the remainder of the round. After the spell ends, their growth rate returns to normal, but the plants do not revert to their normal size—the effect is permanent.

Throne of Air

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+7

Air. This spell creates a throne from air. The magician assumes a seated position and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the throne forms underneath him, appearing as a wavering, turbulent image. By concentrating, the magician can move the throne around above the ground at a maximum height of 4 yards (2 hexes) with a Movement Rate of 8. The magician may make an Effect Test in place of an Avoid Blow Test for any physical attacks directed against him while he is seated on the throne. He suffers the Strain cost for the Avoid Blow Test due to the additional concentration required to dodge the attack, as the throne provides stabilization. If the magician is unseated from the throne, intentionally or not, the spell ends.

Thunderclap

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: 2 rounds
Area of Effect: 2-yard (1-hex) radius sphere from magician
Effect: –8 penalty to Action Tests; causes deafness

Air. This spell creates a loud *clap* of thunder that stuns and deafens those hearing it. The magician claps his hands and compares his Spellcasting Test against the Spell Defense of each character, friend or foe, within the area of effect. If successful, the target suffers a –8 penalty to his Action Tests until the end of the following round and is deafened for a further Step 8/2D6 rounds, during which he suffers a –8 penalty to his hearing-based Perception Tests. Most unintelligent creatures flee in fear of the sound.



Time Flies

Threads: 4
Weaving: 10/23 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Area of Effect: 24-yard (12-hex) radius of light source
Effect: WIL+3

Illusion. This spell alters the perception of time. The magician lights a candle or torch, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test, specifying whether he is speeding up or slowing down time and to what degree (up to a factor of 10 times). If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the Spell Defense of any character within or entering the area of effect. If successful, the target's temporal perception (perception of time) alters—time seems to pass faster or slower, as determined at the time of casting, within the area of effect. For example, a target may believe that ten hours have passed

for every hour of real time, or only one hour has passed when ten hours have actually gone by. The spell only changes the target's perceptions—it has no effect on the duration of spells and talents or on Recovery Tests. If an affected target notices that time seems to be passing differently, he may make a Perception Test as a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

Tossing Earth

Threads: 3
Weaving: 11/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Area of Effect: 20-yard (10-hex) radius circle from center
Effect: WIL+1

Earth. This spell tosses those standing on an area of earth or stone wildly into the air. The magician makes loud noises as he hurls pebbles, dirt, or small stones on the ground, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, the area of effect becomes explosive when touched. The magician makes an Effect Test. Each round, anyone moving through the area of effect makes a Willpower Test against the Test Result. If successful, the character moves and acts normally. If failed, the earth or stone beneath the character explodes, throwing him Step 5/D8 yards into the air, inflicting Falling damage based on the height fallen (see the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109). The area remains volatile until the spell ends.

Translator Spirit

Threads: 4
Weaving: 11/19 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank×10 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell summons an ally spirit to act as a translator. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, a spirit is summoned which can speak any language the magician desires and translates anything he says. The spirit will defend itself if attacked, but will otherwise only serve as an interpreter. When the spirit is talking, the magician makes an Effect Test in place of a Speak Language Test to determine if its quavering voice is understood by those listening. The translator spirit is a Strength Rating 2 ally spirit.

Translator Spirit

DEX: 5 **STR**: 5 **TOU**: 5
PER: 5 **WIL**: 5 **CHA**: 5

Initiative: 6
Actions: 1
Attack (2): 7
Damage:
Unarmed: 5

Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7
Physical Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 2

Death: 32
Unconsciousness: 24
Wound Threshold: 8

Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5
Movement: 6

Karma Points: 4
Karma Step: 5

Legend Award: Second Circle

Powers: Translate (see text)

Tree Merge

Threads: 3
Weaving: 16/23 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+6 hours
Effect: Merges caster's body with a tree to hide him

Wood. This spell hides the magician by merging his body with a larger tree. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, he melds into the tree trunk and is completely hidden from physical view. To detect him in astral space, an observer must achieve a Good Result with an Astral Sensing Test against the magician's Spell Defense. The magician may communicate with the tree's spirit while merged (if one exists) as if he had successfully cast the Plant Talk spell, p.189.

Triangulate

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/10 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 500 yards **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: Determines distance to target

This spell determines the exact distance between the magician and an object or person within line of sight. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he determines the distance to the target in yards and feet.

True Blazing Fists of Rage

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+4 rounds
Effect: WIL+2/Physical

This spell looks and acts exactly like the Blazing Fists of Rage spell, p.153, but is less powerful than its illusory twin. The spell engulfs a character's hands or feet in real flames that augment the damage he inflicts with unarmed attacks. The magician touches one of the target's limbs and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's limb glows cherry-red, leaving a slowly fading after-image trailing behind. The target's body audibly "hums" with power. When he strikes an opponent with an unarmed Attack Test, brilliant red sparks fly from the area struck, accompanied by an explosive sound effect. The target's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

True Ephemeral Bolt

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/8 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+3/Physical

This spell looks and acts exactly like the Ephemeral Bolt spell, p.167, but packs less punch than its illusory twin. The magician wriggles his finger and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a glowing green bolt squirms through the air and hits the target. The magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted.

Trust

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank minutes
Effect: WIL+3

This spell inspires a character to trust the magician. The magician smiles and nods toward the target, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful,

he makes an Effect Test against the target's Social Defense. If successful, the target will not deceive or harm the magician (or others obviously Friendly to him) as long as the magician (and his colleagues) do not deceive or harm the target.

Twisted Tongues

Threads: 1
Weaving: 14/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: Jumbles targets' speech

Illusion. This spell jumbles speech. The magician mutters nonsense syllables, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among the target group, +1 for each additional target. If successful, the targets' words are rendered nonsensical. For example, someone saying "Kill them all!" might translate to "Slig covo bebop buttery!" No one understands anything said by the affected targets. Any Speak Language Tests made by affected targets are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139). The magician may affect up to Spellcasting Rank targets.

Undead Struggle

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+4/Mystic

Considered risky, this spell allows direct engagement with the undead in magical combat. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the undead target's Spell Defense. If successful, magician and target are locked in a magical force of will—neither may take any actions other than those required for Undead Struggle until one contestant is destroyed or the spell ends. Each round, the magician compares his Effect Test against the target's Willpower Test. The loser takes Damage Points equal to the difference between the Test Results. Ties are won by the magician.

Uneven Ground

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+4 rounds
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) radius circle from magician
Effect: Penalizes to enemy character actions

Earth. This spell makes the ground around the magician shake and move violently. The magician places his hands on the ground and makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among any characters in the area of effect. If successful, the ground lurches suddenly and violently, causing affected targets to become Harried and halving their Movement Rates (round down) until they move out of the area of effect or the spell ends. The magician is not affected by the shaking.

Unmask

Threads: 1
Weaving: 10/20 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 8 yards (4 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Effect: WIL+6

This spell reveals a character's true physical appearance to anyone watching. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the highest Dispel Difficulty of any power, spell, or talent concealing the target's appearance. If successful, the effects of those enchantments are suspended (not dispelled) and the target's true appearance is revealed.



Unseen Voices

Threads: 0
Weaving: NA/7 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+15 rounds
Effect: Creates unseen illusory voices

Illusion. This spell creates the illusion of hidden voices to distract a character. The magician mutters quietly to himself and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he creates a number of illusory voices equal to his Spellcasting Rank. The spell provides a nearly limitless number of different voices that can be used. A magician need only use whatever voices are required to achieve the desired result. By concentrating, the magician controls what each voice says—if he loses concentration, the voices repeat what they said in the previous round. The magician does not gain any special ability to hear what is being said by the target, but he must able to hear what the target is saying if he wants to use the voices in a real conversation.

Vertigo

Threads: 3
Weaving: 12/16 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 30 yards (15 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+7 rounds
Effect:–6 penalty to Action Tests

This spell totally disorients a character. The magician spins quickly around in circles, making himself slightly dizzy in the process, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target can no longer tell which way is up or down and becomes severely disoriented, suffering a –6 penalty to his Action Tests.

VIEWPOINT

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: 6
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes
Effect: WIL+9

This spell creates a one-way window through a wall or similar barrier no more than 2 yards (1 hex) thick. The magician makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a window up to one square yard in size is created on the wall, allowing the magician to see through it. The barrier's material is unaffected—a stone wall is still as tough as stone, a wooden fence still provides the same protection, and so on. There is a chance that someone on the other side notices the window. The magician's Effect Test determines the Detection Difficulty for attempts to spot the window.

VINES

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 20 yards (10 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Effect: WIL+4

Wood. This spells forces local flora to animate and grab a character. The magician animatedly waves his hands, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, vines or roots erupt from the undergrowth, grabbing and clutching at the target. The target is held firmly and is Harried until he escapes. If the target makes a successful Strength Test against the Effect Step, he breaks free. Alternatively, the vines can be attacked, being slashed and torn until they relax sufficiently to release their victim. If the vines take Damage Points equal to or greater than their Death Rating, the target escapes. Either way, if the target escapes, the spell ends.

Vines

Physical Armor: 0 **Physical Defense**: 9
Mystic Armor: 0 **Spell Defense**: 9
Death: Effect Test **Social Defense**: NA
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold**: NA

VISIONS OF DEATH

Threads: 1
Weaving: 9/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 40 yards (20 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: Immobilizes target with horror and fear

This spell calls upon the spirit world to present a personal horror show to a character. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target sees a detailed vision of his own death, the exact method decided by the magician. While watching the vision unfold, the target knows he is not dying, but the fear and horror has a mesmerizing effect, preventing him from moving or acting. Each round, the target may make a Willpower Test against the magician's Willpower Step. If successful, he shakes off his fear and the spell ends.

VISIT DEATH

Threads: 4
Weaving: 11/24 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 days
Effect: WIL+4

This spell inflicts a vision of death on a character. The magician touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target briefly sees himself dying a horrific and painful death in a manner of the magician's choosing, the experience leaving him disoriented and disturbed. The magician makes an Effect Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target suffers a –1 penalty per Result Level to his Action Tests. Each day, after waking from his nightly sleep, the target may make a Willpower Test against the Effect Step. If successful, his disorientation fades and the spell ends.

WAKE-UP CALL

Threads: 4
Weaving: 6/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Up to 24 hours
Effect: Sets alarm to go off at specified time

This spell sets an alarm to go off at a specified time. The magician imitates the clanging of a bell, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the magician determines when the alarm will go off and whether the alarm noise (clanging bells) is audible to the target only or everyone within earshot.

WALK THROUGH

Threads: 1
Weaving: 13/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Effect: Creates temporary pathway through an obstacle

This spell creates a temporary pathway through a wall, gate, or other obstacle no more than 2 yards (1 hex) thick. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the obstacle's Spell Defense. If successful, an opening is created, although not a very stable one—it writhes, expands, and contracts randomly. The Result Level determines how large the opening is in comparison to humans. On an Average Result, one character can wriggle through each round, requiring a successful Dexterity (7) Test to do so; a Good Result allows one character to move easily through the gap each round; an Excellent Result allows a number of characters equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank to move easily through the opening each round.

WALL OF BONES

Threads: 4
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: 7
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) high, 2-yard (1-hex) thick, 2-yard (1-hex) wide wall section
Effect: Creates a wall of bones

This spell creates a wall from the bones of those interred nearby. The magician must be standing where dead are buried, such as a cemetery or old battleground. The magician draws a line along the ground, then makes a Spellcasting (7) Test. If successful, the earth erupts along the line drawn, drawing up the bones of those buried within it to form a wall from a number of contiguous sections equal to the magician's Spellcasting Rank, each section equal to the area of effect in size. The wall can be physically or magically attacked. A character who fails an Attack Test against the wall has still struck it, but his blow has no effect—only an Extraordinary Result can defeat the bone wall's Physical or Mystic Armor. A section of wall takes damage equal to or greater than its Death Rating, the bones crumble to the ground.

Bone Wall (1 Section)

Physical Armor: 8 * **Physical Defense:** 9
Mystic Armor: 6 * **Spell Defense:** 7
Death: 40 **Social Defense:** None
Unconsciousness: NA **Wound Threshold:** NA

* Requires an Extraordinary Result to defeat

WALL OF DARKNESS

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/19 **Casting**: 6
Range: 4 yards (2 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 rounds
Area of Effect: 10-yard (5-hex) high, 2-yard (1-hex) thick, 10-yard (5-hex) wide wall
Effect: WIL+6

This spell conjures a barrier of darkness. The magician closes his eyes and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a wall of inky blackness appears, equal in size to the area of effect, that blocks sight from both sides. The wall absorbs attacks made through it, banishing the force of the attack to astral space. The magician makes an Effect Test against any Attack Test made through the wall. If successful, the attack fails. Characters on either side of the wall add +3 to their Physical Defense against attacks launched through the wall. The wall of darkness has no physical substance—anyone can Step through without being harmed.

WALL OF UNFIRE

Threads: 3
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: 6
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+3 minutes
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) high, 2-yard (1-hex) thick, 2-yard (1-hex) wide wall
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

Illusion. This spell creates a wall of illusory fire. The magician makes crackling hissing noises, like a roaring fire, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, a wall of flame equal in size to the area of effect appears within range. If a character attempts to pass through the wall, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target takes a Wound, his Knockdown Test is considered a Sensing Test (see **Illusions**, p.139).

WALL WALKER

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 rounds
Effect: WIL+5

This spell improves a character's climbing ability. The magician crouches down on all fours, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target makes an Effect Test in place of his Climbing Tests.

WATER WINGS

Threads: 1
Weaving: 7/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank hours
Effect: Waterproofs windling wings

Water. This spell waterproofs a windling's wings using a few drops of natural seed oil. The magician sprinkles the oil on the target's wings, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, the target's wings are waterproofed for the spell's duration. This protection extends only to light rain, splashes of water, or a brief dunking, such as falling into a river or washbasin. It does not provide protection if the target decides to go swimming or immerses himself in water for a period, or if he is exposed to torrential rain for longer than a few minutes. The spell only works on windlings.

WATERSPOUT

Threads: 2
Weaving: 14/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 1 mile **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+15/Physical

Water. This spell creates an enormous column of water to attack large waterborne targets, including riverboats, sailing ships, and creatures such as dragons and leviathans. The magician must be standing within ten yards of a large body of water, such as a river, lake, or sea. When attacking a riverboat or sailing ship, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the vessel's Maneuverability Rating. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. When attacking a creature or character, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. Attacking a target smaller than a rowboat requires a Good Result. If successful, the magician's Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target suffers a Wound he adds +7 to the Knockdown Difficulty.

WEAPON BACK

Threads: 2 (ritual; see text)
Weaving: 5/16 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank weeks (see text)
Area of Effect: 100 yards (50 hexes)
Effect: WIL+6

This ritual spell creates a link between a weapon and a character, allowing the weapon to find its way back should it somehow be lost. At dawn each day for a week, the magician spends half an hour inscribing a small design, using a drop of his own blood, on the weapon. He weaves the first spell thread at the end of the week. The magician then spends half an hour at dawn each day for another week, inscribing a scar of the same design on the character to be linked to the weapon. He weaves the last spell thread at the end of the second week. After all of the threads have been woven, a sympathetic link is created between the character and the weapon. The death of a character or destruction of a weapon destroys the link between them, causing both scar-design and weapon-inscription to fade away without a trace. Once the ritual is complete, the magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the higher of the target weapon's or character's Spell Defense. If successful, the designs glow brightly, then fade to their normal state. The link is now active. Anytime that the weapon is lost to the character, he may make an Effect Test against the weapon's Spell Defense. If successful, and the weapon is within the spell's area of effect, it moves to the character at a Movement Rate of 3. The character does not require line of sight to the weapon to retrieve it. Should the weapon need to make an Attribute Test—for example, to break out of a cabinet (Strength) or slide along a narrow window-sill (Dexterity)—the character makes an Effect Test in place of the Attribute Test.

WEATHER CLOAK

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/9 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank×10 minutes
Effect: WIL+3

This spell creates a cloak that provides protection against the elements. The magician holds his hands over his head, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a shimmering blue-silver cloak is woven around the target, protecting him from the elements. The target gains a +3 bonus to any Action Tests he makes to resist the effects of heat or cold caused by weather. The weather cloak also provides protection against the

effects of supernatural weather, such as the Death Rain spell, p.161. Each round, the cloak's wearer makes an Effect Test against the higher of the creator's or the weather's Spell Defense. If successful, he is unaffected by the weather that round.

Whirlwind

Threads: 2
Weaving: 12/18 **Casting**: 6; TSD (see text)
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+6 rounds
Area of Effect: 4-yard (2-hex) radius from center
Effect: WIL+9/Physical

Air. This spell creates a spinning turbulent column of air. The magician makes whirling motions with his fingers, then makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, he forms a swirling pillar of wind, 4 yards (2 hexes) high, which spins wildly around him. Each round, the magician may concentrate to direct the whirlwind against one or more characters in range. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the highest Spell Defense among all characters in the area of effect. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the magician ceases to concentrate, the wind dissipates and the spell ends.

Whisper Through the Night

Threads: 1
Weaving: 11/18 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 10 yards (5 hexes) **Duration**: Rank+1 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

This spell forces a previously-summoned ally spirit to answer questions truthfully. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the spirit's Spell Defense. If successful, he makes an Effect Test against the spirit's Willpower Step. If successful, each Result Level achieved allows him to ask one question, which the spirit must answer truthfully to the best of its ability (though it can tell half-truths). Each question takes at least one round to ask. If the spell ends before the magician asks all the questions he is allowed, he loses the opportunity to ask any remaining questions.

Winds of Deflection

Threads: 1
Weaving: 8/15 **Casting**: TSD (see text)
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+6

Air. This spell creates a wall of swirling wind strong enough to deflect physical attacks. The magician makes whooshing noises and makes a Spellcasting Test against his natural Spell Defense. If successful, a wave of roiling and surging air surrounds him. The magician makes an Effect Test against each physical Attack Test made against him during the spell's duration. If successful, the attack has no effect, otherwise, it affects the magician as normal. The swirling wind does not block attacks that cannot be resisted by Physical Armor, such as from certain spells and creature powers.

Wit Friend

Threads: 2
Weaving: 8/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+10 minutes
Effect: WIL+5

This spell summons a spirit to assist with mental activities. The magician taps the target's head and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, he summons a spirit, which glides into the target's mind. During the spell's duration, any time the target fails a mental Skill or Talent Test (except for Spellcasting or Thread Weaving Tests), the spirit allows him a second chance. The target makes an Effect Test in place of the Skill or Talent Test. If this test fails, the action fails.

Wither Away

Threads: 5
Weaving: 11/21 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank months
Effect: WIL/Mystic

This spell causes a character to slowly wither away to the point of death. The magician utters a dire prophecy about the target, then touches him and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines the number of pounds of weight the target loses each month. This continues until the spell ends or the character dies. The spell may only be dispelled or removed with talents or spells that affect curses. If the target's weight sinks below 50 percent of his racial average, he becomes weak and dizzy and is considered Harried while in this condition. If the target's weight drops below 25 percent of his racial average, he takes Effect Step damage each month, in addition to the weight loss.

Wither Limb

Threads: 3
Weaving: 8/19 **Casting**: TSD
Range: 24 yards (12 hexes) **Duration**: 1 round
Effect: WIL+8/Mystic

This feared spell atrophies legs, arms, wings, and tails. The magician points at one of the victim's limbs and whispers "wither," then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, his Effect Test determines how much damage is inflicted. If the target suffers a Wound, his limb shrivels and weakens as the muscle wastes away. The target is considered Harried in any round he uses that limb for any Action Tests. Additionally, if an arm is withered, he cannot carry an object weighing more than 2 pounds in or on that arm, including weapons or shields. If a leg or wing is withered, the appropriate Movement Rate is halved. If both legs or wings are withered, the target cannot use the appropriate form of movement, which usually means he is Knocked Down (no Knockdown Test is made), allowing only to crawl. The Wound remains with the target until the limb is restored. Only powerful healing magic, such as the Reverse Withering spell (see the ***Player's Companion***), will allow full use of the limb to be regained.

Wizard Mark

Threads: 2
Weaving: 6/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+1 hours
Effect: Places astral mark on target

This spell places a symbol or mark on the target's astral pattern. The magician makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a mark is placed on the target's astral imprint, visible to anyone using astral sight (such as the Astral Sight talent, p.61) and which can serve to brand the target for a crime or other offense. It also serves as a link between the magician and the target, acting as a weaker version of a Horror Mark. As such, it allows the magician to cast spells on the target while he is within the magician's line of sight, as if the magician was touching the subject. The mark's design is personal to the magician. Rumors suggest that a Horror may have taught Namegivers this spell, so its use is often regarded with suspicion.



WIZARD'S CLOAK

Threads: 2
Weaving: 10/17 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 minutes
Effect: WIL+8

This spell creates a magical cloak that masks the target's presence. The magician pantomimes placing a cloak over his shoulders and drawing the hood over his head, then touches the target and makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a faintly shimmering cloak of mystical energy momentarily appears, then vanishes into the target's body. The magician's Effect Test determines the target's Spell Defense against any spells or abilities intended to detect his presence or gain information about him.

WOUND MASK

Threads: 3
Weaving: 13/15 **Casting**: TSD
Range: Touch **Duration**: Rank+5 rounds
Effect: WIL+10

This spell conjures a mask that provides protection by drawing attacks made against the wearer onto itself. The magician pushes and prods the target's face, as if fitting something onto it, then makes a Spellcasting Test against the target's Spell Defense. If successful, a thin copper mask completely covers the target's face. Although there are no eye, nose, or mouth holes in the mask, the target sees, breathes, and speaks normally. The magician's Effect Test becomes the target's Physical Defense. Any physical Attack Test that fails to hit the target, hits the mask instead. The mask has a Death Rating of 25, Physical Armor 10, and can only be Armor-Defeated on an Extraordinary Result. At the end of each combat round, if the mask's Death Rating is at least 1, it fully recovers from any damage taken. If the damage taken in a single combat round equals or exceeds the mask's Death Rating, it is destroyed. The wearer is spared any damage until the next attack that hits—the destruction of the mask completely absorbs all of the damage from the blow that shatters it.

YOU GOT ME

Threads: 1
Weaving: 6/14 **Casting**: 6
Range: Self **Duration**: Rank+6 minutes
Effect: +6 bonus to Charisma-based Tests

Illusion. This spell enhances the caster's ability to pass himself off as another person. It is similar to the Best Face spell, p.152, but changes one's entire appearance. The magician makes a ripping motion, as if peeling a mask or pulling his clothes off, and makes a Spellcasting (6) Test. If successful, his appearance—including clothing, equipment, and voice—changes, as desired. The magician gains a +6 bonus to his Charisma-based Tests when trying to convince others of his false identity or attempting to persuade them to act according to that misperception. During the spell's duration, the magician may make another Spellcasting (6) Test to alter the illusion. He may even create an illusion of his regular appearance. Magicians use this spell for everything from quick changes of clothes to appearing as their worst enemy while committing crimes. If the magician is mimicking someone else, he must have previously seen that individual on a prior occasion. The illusion can change the magician's apparent size, making him as large as a troll or as small as a windling. Any Action Tests made against the magician while the spell is in effect are considered Sensing Tests (see **Illusions**, p.139).

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SUMMONING

That we exist in the corporeal does not mean that we cannot harness the incorporeal.

• Gandalar, Human Nethermancer •

Summoning is the art of attracting spirits to perform some sort of service for the summoner. Though there are talents and spells used to summon specific types of spirits, this chapter provides rules for all uses of summoning in Earthdawn.

There are several methods of summoning that adepts can use to call forth spirits. The most versatile ability allowing summoning is the **Summon** talent (p.82). It allows adepts to call spirits with a wide range of powers of the summoner's choice. Other talents and spells also summon spirits, and often much more easily than using the Summon talent, but the spirits summoned are usually very limited in power or very simple. Regardless of the method used, the actual test made to summon a spirit is called the Summoning Test.

Like the Thread Weaving talent, each Summon talent is unique and can only be used to summon spirits of a certain type. For example, Elementalists can summon only elemental spirits with this talent, while Nethermancers can summon only ally spirits.

The rules in this chapter provide an overview of summoning and banishing spirits by use of the Summon talent. Descriptions of spirits can be found in the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** (p. 210).

ON SPIRITS

Most of the information on spirits is found in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***. While they can be summoned by player characters, they still pose some mystery to an inhabitant of the world of **Earthdawn**, no matter how powerful a summoner he may be. Some general information on spirits is available to all adepts who receive summoning abilities as part of their Discipline at some point. Usually, this means the magician Disciplines and Disciplines that have access to communication with spirits.

There are several categories and types of spirits:

Tasked Spirits are simple spirits with capabilities limited to a certain task. They are usually summoned by spells such as Astral Mount or talents such as Spirit Dodge, and their summoning and other related rules are governed by the rules for the spells or Talents involved.

Elemental Spirits are the spirits of the five elements and usually summoned by Elementalists.

Ally Spirits are more mysterious than elemental spirits. Usually living in strange planes in the Netherworlds, they either originate from the Netherworlds or are spirits of deceased Namegivers. They are the domain of Nethermancers.

Invae Spirits is the Name given to a group of insect-like spirits from the Netherworlds. They are often mistaken for Horrors, as they try to break through to the physical world, but are very different in nature.

Named spirits are most often the spirits of deceased Namegivers (ally spirits), although any spirit can have a Name if given one. They follow the rules of the type of spirit they are, but require their Name to be known or one of their Pattern Items to be present during their summoning.

Aside from Tasked Spirits, spirits have a Strength Rating measuring their raw power. It is added to many of a spirit's base characteristics to determine a spirit's abilities and governs the number of powers a spirit can have. While adepts receive talents to summon and communicate with spirits, it should be understood that spirits are still very alien to player characters. They have different mindsets, agendas, and concepts of time and space, even if they were once Namegivers.

HOW SUMMONING WORKS

This section provides guidelines on how to summon spirits, including information on the forms of summoned spirits and the services they may perform, and a means of controlling spirits called the Contest of Wills.

Summoning follows a series of three Steps:

1. Make Summoning Test
2. Determine Duration
3. Determine Spirit Services

MAKE SUMMONING TEST

The summoner makes a Summoning Test using his Summon talent. The test's Difficulty Number is equal to the spirit's Spell Defense. If the summoner does not have a need for a spirit with a specific set of spirit powers, a generic spirit with the characteristics described in the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** is summoned automatically. If the spirit's Strength Rating makes it eligible for additional powers, the gamemaster decides about the additional powers assigned to a spirit. If the summoner wants a spirit to have one or more specific powers, increase the Difficulty Number of the Summoning Test by +2 for each power specified by the summoner. For example, if a Nethermancer wants to summon a Strength 4 ally spirit with two specific powers, the Difficulty Number is 13 (9 for the spirit's Spell Defense, and +2 for each of the two powers). If successful, the spirit arrives a moment later in astral space. It remains in astral space near the summoner, who may call on the spirit for services for the duration of the summoning. Nethermancers must use the Spirit Talk talent and Elementalists must use either the Elemental Tongues talent or Plant Talk spell to communicate with it.

DETERMINE DURATION

To determine how long the spirit remains, the summoner makes a Willpower Test, the result of which is the number of minutes the spirit remains in his service. Adepts that receive the Summon talent as part of their Discipline may make a Willpower-based Half-magic Test. The summoner may increase this duration by using Blood Magic. By taking Strain equal to his Wound Threshold, the summoner can



increase the duration to a number of hours equal to the Willpower or Half-Magic Test result. If the summoner physically inflicts a Blood Wound (p.123) on himself, the duration is increased to a number of days equal to the Willpower or Half-Magic Test result.

Determine Spirit Services

Once an adept has summoned a spirit, he can call on it to perform services. Spirit services may include anything from helping the summoner perform a task to enhancing the summoner's abilities. The **Spirit Powers** section in the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** lists a number of typical abilities that spirits may use when providing services.

The Result Level of the Summoning Test determines the number of services the spirit will perform for the summoner. The spirit performs one service for the summoner for each Result Level achieved with the test, starting with an Average Result. A summoned spirit will perform services only for the duration of the summoning. If the summoner does not use all the spirit's services before the summoning duration expires, those services are lost. Spirits normally perform the services demanded by their summoners with little or no resistance. Some spirits may argue or debate the merits of some services, but rarely do they outright refuse. In these cases, summoners may attempt to persuade reluctant spirits to perform services. In general, persuading a spirit to do the summoner's bidding is more difficult than defeating a spirit in a Contest of Wills, but a successful attempt at persuasion is less likely to anger the spirit in question.

Summoners may try to bargain for more services than the Result Level of their Summoning Test entitles them to. As with spirits that are reluctant to perform their services, the summoner may employ persuasion or a contest of wills. Sometimes, the nature of the task itself may persuade the spirit to render services, but the alien nature of spirits does not guarantee this. Either way, the attempt uses up time, and in most cases, the Duration of the summoning is still measured in minutes…

Persuading a Spirit

A summoner who wishes to persuade a spirit makes a Charisma Test against the spirit's Social Defense. Adepts that receive the Summon talent as part of their Discipline may make a Charisma-based Half-magic Test. If successful, the spirit grants the summoner's request.

Summoners can also use other social talents against spirits, but because these talents are intended for use against Namegivers, their effectiveness against spirits is somewhat limited. For this reason, any Talent Test for talents that are meant to work on Namegivers (or, for that matter, animals) made to Persuade a spirit require a Result Level one higher than normal against the spirit's Social Defense (usually, a Good Result).

Contest of Wills

In some instances, spirits may refuse to perform services that pose a threat to them or refuse to grant additional services to the summoner. In these cases, the summoner may impose his will on the spirit by defeating the spirit in a **Contest of Wills**. For example, a fire elemental may refuse to manifest inside a boat on a lake. A wood elemental will almost always refuse to walk into a fire. Most spirits will refuse to perform any more services than they have been summoned for.

In a Contest of Wills, both the summoner and the spirit make a Willpower Test. Adepts that receive the Summon talent as part of their Discipline may make a Willpower-based Half-magic Test. Whoever achieves the highest Test Result wins the contest. Both spirit and summoner may spend a Karma Point on this test. If the summoner prevails, the spirit must comply with his wishes. If the spirit wins, it may refuse the summoner's request. If both Test Results are the same, the summoner may choose to continue the Contest of Wills, in which case both parties make another Willpower Test, or he may concede defeat to the spirit.

Any spirit that wins a Contest of Wills may attempt to break free of the summoner's control by winning another Contest of Wills. If the spirit wins the second contest, it breaks free of the summoner. It may simply return to its astral home, or it may exact revenge on (or perhaps just cause mischief for) the summoner. The gamemaster determines the response of a freed spirit, based on the spirit's personality, the summoner's treatment of it and any past dealings it has had with the summoner.

Repeated Summonings

Normally, standard summoning methods do not allow an adept to choose the individual spirit a summoning will produce (except in the case of Named spirits). But an adept can summon a spirit he has summoned previously. Most spirits do not like being summoned, and a previous summoning by a specific summoner allows them to recognize the attempt and resist it. To repeatedly summon a spirit, the adept must make the Summoning Test against a Difficulty Number equal to the spirit's Spell Defense+1. This Difficulty Number increase is cumulative, so an adept summoning a specific spirit for a third time would make the test against the spirit's Spell Defense+2. A fourth summoning attempt would be made against the spirit's Spell Defense+3, and so on. Players and gamemasters should keep track of the number of times each character summons a specific spirit.

If the Summoning Test succeeds, the desired spirit appears. On a Good or better result, the spirit's Strength Rating does not increase. However, on an Average Result, the spirit's Strength Rating increases by 1 after it has performed all of its services. This means the spirit will be more powerful and also harder to summon in the future.

The gamemaster may decide that a certain spirit likes being summoned. If this is the case, the rules for repeated summoning do not apply.

Banishing

Elemental, ally, and Named spirits can be banished by summoners—adepts who have learned the Summon talent (p.82). To banish a spirit, the adept makes a Banishing Test using his Summon talent against a Difficulty Number equal to the spirit's Spell Defense.

If successful, the spirit is forced back to its normal astral habitat. Summoners must achieve an Excellent Result if they attempt to banish spirits of a type they cannot summon. For example, Elementalists must achieve an Excellent Result to banish ally spirits, and Nethermancers must achieve an Excellent Result to banish elemental spirits. Both must achieve an Excellent Result to banish invae (insect) spirits. Tasked Spirits require a Good Result to be banished, except by their summoner.

Note that Horrors or Horror constructs cannot be banished using this method. Failed Banishing Tests trigger the effects as described in **Dangers of Summoning**, below. In some cases, a banished spirit may take offense and come back later to retaliate against the banisher.

Dangers of Summoning

Any time an adept attempts to summon or banish a spirit, he exposes himself to the hazards of astral space. Generally, the processes used for summoning protect the adept from these hazards, but only when they work as designed. Any failed Summoning Test or banishing attempt may damage the adept… or worse.

Failed Summoning and Banishing Tests fall into two groups: normal failures and catastrophic failures. A **normal failure** occurs when an adept's Summoning or Banishing Test yields a Poor Result. A **catastrophic failure** occurs when a Summoning or Banishing Test yields a Pathetic Result.

Common effects of both types of failures are described in the following sections. However, gamemasters should feel free to create new and nasty effects based on the specific summoning failure.

Normal Failure

Normal failures cause an astral backlash that injures the adept in a way similar to effects of casting raw magic. The astral region in which the failed summoning attempt took place affects the amount of damage the adept suffers. To determine the damage caused by the backlash, refer to the Astral Backlash Table (natural Mystic Armor provides protection). The Damage Step is determined by the Strength Rating of the spirit that the character was attempting to summon.

Alternatively, the summoning attempt may produce a spirit not bound to obey the summoner. Such spirits may be of any type and usually have the same Strength Rating as the spirit the adept intended to summon, but don't perform services or obey the summoner at all—they may even attack the summoner and his companions.

Catastrophic Failure

Catastrophic failures commonly result in the adept receiving a curse. The adept automatically receives the curse (no test is needed), and the gamemaster determines the curse's effects based on the astral region and the desired Strength Rating of the spirit. Possible curse effects include increased difficulty when summoning spirits or casting spells associated with the type of spirit and increased difficulty when using a specific type of magic. (See **Curses** on p. 112 of the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** for more information.)



ASTRAL BACKLASH TABLE

Region Type	Damage Step
Safe	Strength Rating + 4
Open	Strength Rating + 8
Tainted	Strength Rating + 12
Corrupt	Strength Rating + 16

The catastrophic failure can also summon a Horror, which may launch a direct attack against the adept and his companions or use one or more of its powers, such as Horror Mark, against them. The gamemaster determines the nature and power of the Horror, based on the astral region and the Strength Rating of the spirit the adept intended to summon. For example, a failed attempt to summon a Strength 1 air spirit might summon an invae, a kreescra, or a crystal entity. On the other hand, a failed attempt to summon a Strength 7 ally spirit might arouse the attention of a Minor Horror, such as a bloatform. A failed attempt to summon a Strength 12 spirit might instead get a Named Horror interested in the summoner's activities, such as Taint or Ysrthgrathe.

Summoning Named Spirits

Summoning Named spirits follows the same sequence as summoning regular spirits, but the Summoning Test must achieve at least a Good Result, and services rendered to the summoner are one per Result Level starting with a Good Result (instead of an Average Result). To summon a Named spirit, the summoner also needs a connection to the spirit. This connection is established by knowing the spirit's Name (which might differ from what it is actually called by Namegivers, or might be an old and forgotten Name) or having possession of one of its pattern items. Because of these requirements, it is easier to summon Named ally spirits than Named elemental spirits.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

COMBAT

Soon after we re-emerged into the world, we found our lives filled with conflict. It was then we realized that the days of battle were far from over.

• Me'gana, Swordmaster of Lowilla •

In the world of **Earthdawn**, 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 chapter explains the mechanics for handling 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.

COMBAT SUMMARY

Combat is conducted in a series of turns called **combat rounds**, or simply, **rounds**. Each combat round equals roughly six seconds of game time. Roughly, because the exact length of each round is usually 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: perform simple tasks (including movement), or use one talent or skill that requires an action. The **Actions** section, p.215, describes what a character can and can't do during a combat round.

To see whether your character can actually perform his desired actions or to determine how successfully he carried them out, players usually make one or more **Action Tests**, p.14. After making an Initiative Test to determine the order in which actions are played, this typically also involves making an Attack Test which, if successful, is followed by a Damage Test. These, and the other kinds of Action Tests that players make during combat, are described in the **Actions**, p.215, and **Resolving Attacks**, p.218, sections.

The following summary outlines in order the general sequence of events that make up a typical combat round. Each element is explained more fully later on in this chapter.

1. Declare Actions
2. Determine Initiative
3. Resolve Actions
4. Begin a New Round

Most of the following rules apply equally to player and gamemaster characters. Whenever a rule applies solely to a gamemaster character or creature it is noted. References to the term *character* refer to any player or gamemaster characters or creatures participating in the combat.

DECLARE ACTIONS

All characters declare the general type of action they intend to perform this round, such as attacking, casting a spell, and so on. At this time, characters declare their use of combat options (p.221).

Combat has just been initiated in one of James' game sessions between the player characters and a group of cadaver men. The characters are about thirty yards away from the cadaver men, and James declares the undead "do not yet appear to be reacting to the characters' presence." James asks for player actions to be declared. Richard declares his ork Beastmaster will "run toward the cadaver men and attack them." Paul declares his Thief will "fly to one side then sneak round behind the cadaver men and try to backstab them." John declares his Swordmaster will "draw his broadsword, run toward the nearest cadaver man, and slay him." Andrew declares his Sky Raider will "roar loudly, then attack the meanest-looking cadaver man with his axe, using the Aggressive Attack combat option." Karl declares his Elementalist will "summon fire and cast a Flame Strike spell against the nearest undead."

DETERMINE INITIATIVE

Each round, characters make an Initiative Test to determine the order in which their declared actions are carried out. Talents, spells, armor, and shields can modify the Initiative Step, as listed with their descriptions. **A character's Initiative Step cannot be *voluntarily* reduced below Step 1.** For example, a character could not wear armor or bear shields that reduce his Initiative Step below 1 (see **Initiative Penalties**, p.254). A character whose Initiative Step is *involuntarily* reduced to zero or lower—through Wounds or magic, for example—acts last that round, with an effective Initiative Test result of 1.

Players roll their characters' Initiative; the gamemaster rolls for those characters and creatures he controls. The character with the highest Initiative Test result acts first, followed by the character with the next highest Test Result, and so on with each remaining character, continuing through a descending numerical order. All characters take their turn according to their Initiative Test result.

Initiative Tests, like other Effect Tests, are *not* subject to the **Rule of One** (p.15)—what the character rolls is his Initiative this round. If two or more characters roll the same Initiative Test result, their actions occur at the same time and are resolved in whatever order the gamemaster deems appropriate. Comparing the characters' Dexterity values to break tied Test Results is one method; comparing Initiative Steps is another. If a player character ties his Initiative Test result with a gamemaster character or creature, the player character always gets to take his actions first—**Earthdawn** is a game about heroes, after all!

Speeding Up Initiative

While players are normally responsible for just a single character, the gamemaster is often required to look after Initiative for greater numbers of gamemaster characters or creatures. To

simplify and speed up the Initiative process, it is recommended that the gamemaster make one Initiative Test for groups of similar characters under his control, rather than each individual character or monster. For example, it makes more sense for the gamemaster to roll one Initiative Test for a group of six identical ork scorchers than keep track of individual Initiative Test results for each ork. On the other hand, if the group consists of five identical ork scorchers accompanied by a captain with a different Initiative Step, the gamemaster may choose to make one Initiative Test for the five ork scorchers and a separate test for their captain.

Resolve Actions

At the start of the round, characters state what actions they hope to take and what combat options they intend to use. Now the characters declare, in descending order, from highest to lowest Initiative Test result, which talents, skills, or spells they intend to use and whether they plan to spend Karma on any actions.

> *Andrew, having declared his Sky Raider's intent to use the Aggressive Attack combat option against a cadaver man, now states that his character intends to "use Shield Charge to bash the cadaver man to the ground, then Swift Kick him while he's down."*

After declaring specific intentions, characters resolve their actions by making the appropriate Action Tests and evaluating the results. The character also determines the effect of his actions at this time, including spell Effect Tests, weapon Damage Tests, and so on. If a character wants to change his action from what he declared at the beginning of the round, he can do so now, but adds +2 to the Difficulty Number of the new action (see **Changing Actions**, p.215).

Begin a New Round

After all characters have resolved their actions, the combat round ends. If some combatants wish to continue fighting, the next combat round begins immediately.

Actions

During each combat round, a character can use several types of Actions. During his turn, he can use one Standard Action and any number of Simple Actions. He can use Sustained Actions by spending his Standard Action over the course of several of his turns. And he can use Free Actions when it is another character's turn when the ability that uses the Free Action allows it. The types of Actions are described in more detail in the **Talents** chapter, p.57.

Standard Actions

A character moving no further than his Movement Rate during a combat round can perform a single action that requires his full attention. This is a **Standard Action**, and usually requires the character to make an Action Test to determine the outcome of the task attempted. Many of the Simple and Free Actions a character takes on his turn revolve around what Standard Action he performs, and require him to use that Standard Action. The Standard Action is used every time a test with an ability is made, except where noted otherwise. **If an ability that uses a Simple or Free Action requires a test for another ability that uses a Standard Action, this Standard Action is spent on the required test!** For example, the Nethermancer's Decay and Renewal Fifth Circle ability uses a Thread Weaving (Nethermancy) Test, so using the ability requires a Standard Action, because Thread Weaving requires a Standard Action.

Battle Maps and Miniatures

While it is possible to handle combat abstractly, with the action occurring solely in everyone's imagination, the use of a hex-based battle map and miniatures helps to visualize the fight. When using a battle map, a character may move a number of hexes equal to his Movement Rate each round.

The **Earthdawn** rules assume a hex to be 2 yards wide. As a result, any distance specified in hexes can be easily multiplied by 2 to determine the distance in yards, and every distance in yards can be halved to determine the distance on the hex grid. When halving a distance, it is usually best to round up to a distance covering a full hex. For example, if an effect has a range of 1 yard, it has a range of 1 hex.

Gamemasters that want to vary the size of a hex on-the-fly are encouraged to simply leave Movement Rates, ranges, and areas of effect as they are, without re-calculating distances. In an indoor-situation where a scale of 1 yard per hex might be more comfortable due to tight spaces, simply assume the characters have to move and act more carefully, slowing them down. In an outdoor-situation with ample room, a hex can easily be 3 yards wide, characters can move and act more freely without concerns to obstacles, and thus move more quickly.

Take the Initiative

Optional Rule: In large combats, which can take a lot of real time to resolve (thus slowing game play), the gamemaster may speed up the combat round by choosing not to make Initiative Tests for gamemaster-controlled creatures or characters. In this case, he simply uses the Initiative Step as the Initiative Test result.

This rule generally works only where the creature or gamemaster character does not have a talent or ability that improves Initiative. It is strongly recommended that this optional rule only be used by the gamemaster.

Many talents and skills require characters to use their Standard Action. As noted earlier, a character can use only a single talent or skill that requires a Standard Action during a combat round. This is because the talent or skill requires a major part of the character's focus to execute. A talent, skill, or other ability with the notation "Action: Standard" in its description indicates it requires a Standard Action to be used. Talents and skills that require a Standard Action usually require an Action Test to determine their success (see **Using Talents**, p.57, and **Using Skills**, p.87). This includes most combat and Interaction talents and skills, and any use of magic, including weaving threads and casting spells.

Sustained Actions

Not all tasks can be completed in a single round. Some talents use **Sustained Actions**, identified by the "Action: Sustained" notation in talent or skill descriptions. A Sustained Action for a talent or skill usually requires several of the character's Standard Actions be spent before the Action Test is made. Often this means weeks of work to craft an item or train an animal, but sometimes it is just another round or two for additional preparation or a short speech to one's allies. Unless specified, the gamemaster should determine a reasonable length of time for the completion of such actions.

INITIATIVE-BASED MOVEMENT

Optional Rule: Characters and creatures move fairly quickly in **Earthdawn**. Gamemasters who want to add a tactical element to their games can use the following guidelines to prevent characters from moving their full Movement Rates on their Initiative. Instead, they move throughout the round.

For this option, characters keep track of their original Initiative Result (for the purpose of determining the use of abilities such as Swift Kick or Air Dance) and their Initiative Count. At the start of the round, they are identical. When it is a character's turn and he wants to move, he can move 1 hex. Then all other characters with the same Initiative Count, if any, can perform Actions (and likewise move only 1 hex). The initiative count of that character is then lowered by 1. The process is now repeated until the character stops moving. The difference between the character's Initiative Result and the Initiative Count he acted on is usually the distance he moved.

Krarg has an Initiative Result of 14 and a Movement Rate of 6. He wants to attack an Archer 5 hexes away in close combat, which requires him to move 4 hexes towards him. The gamemaster calls out Initiative values to see who goes first. When the countdown reaches 14, Krarg can take his turn, and he starts moving. He moves 1 hex, and now reduces his Initiative Count to 13. No one else acts at 14, so the gamemaster calls out 13. Again, Krarg moves 1 hex, reducing his Initiative Count to 12. No one else moves, so the gamemaster calls for 12. Again, Krarg moves 1 hex, reducing his Initiative Count to 11. However, the Archer has an Initiative Result (and as he has not yet moved, also Initiative Count) of 11. He now acts before Krarg has reached him, and uses the opportunity to loose a shot.

Some groups may be more comfortable with players calling out the different Initiative Counts while moving to create an even livelier experience of everything happening at the same time in combat. Especially when typical Initiative Results vary widely this can speed up the game. Another option is to reduce the Initiative Count by more than 1 per hex moved, this is recommended for high-Circled adept groups.

Some Sustained Actions are not covered by the rules or not listed as possibilities, because they depend too much on the situation. If a character is under pressure to complete the action quickly, the gamemaster may allow him to speed up the process by making an Action Test (often an Attribute Test) at the end of each round to determine success. This usually prevents the character from taking any other actions during a given round.

Examples of actions that require multiple rounds to complete include:

- Finding a specific object in a backpack (3–4 rounds)
- Searching an area of wall or a door (9–10 rounds)
- Removing or putting on a suit of leather armor (9–10 rounds)
- Spiking a door shut (2–3 rounds)

Kricklen wants to retrieve a healing potion from his backpack to give to a Wounded comrade. Unfortunately, his only healing potion is in his backpack, along with a considerable amount of other adventuring gear. The gamemaster judges it will take Kricklen three rounds to find the item. His comrade, however, needs it sooner. The gamemaster allows Kricklen to speed up the process by rummaging hurriedly through his backpack, and the t'skrang makes a Dexterity (6) Test each round to see if he finds the potion earlier.

SIMPLE ACTIONS

Apart from his Standard Action, a character can perform a variety of **Simple Actions** during a combat round, many of which do not require him to make an Action Test. Some talents and skills do not require a Standard Action to use; these are most often considered Simple Actions, and include talents or skills such as Anticipate Blow, Astral Sight, Battle Shout, or Second Attack. Talents or skills that can be used with a Simple Action are indicated by an "Action: Simple" notation in their description in the **Talents**, p.57, and **Skills**, p.87, chapters.

Simple Action Limitations

Technically, there is no limit to the number of Simple Actions a character can carry out during a combat round—with the exception of movement. However, the gamemaster should take into account what a character would reasonably be able to perform during a (roughly) six-second time period, balanced against the fact that **Earthdawn** is a fantasy game, subject to "reality" being stretched from time-to-time to serve the goal of telling an exciting story. By no means an exhaustive list, here are some examples of Simple Actions that could reasonably be carried out during a single combat round:

- Speak a short sentence (a dozen words or so)
- Draw or sheath a melee weapon
- Unsling a shield or take off a backpack
- Put an item into or take one out of a belt pouch
- Quickly search an area of wall or a door
- Move a distance equal to Movement Rate (can only be used once per round)

Movement

Moving a number of hexes equal to your Movement Rate is a Simple Action. If you want to move faster, you can double that rate by using the Running combat option, p.225.

Depending on the environment (and gamemaster discretion), a character's Movement Rate may be reduced. For example, characters fighting in knee-deep water may find their Movement Rate halved. See **Impaired Movement**, p.228, for more information.

FREE ACTIONS

Free Actions are usually part of other Actions a character takes, enhancing them. There are no activities that are Free Actions on their own, and as such there is no list of example Free Actions as there is for other Action types. Most Free Actions have one of two purposes: They are either enhancing the outcome of a Simple or Standard Action, such as increasing damage, or they are a reaction to another character's Action, such as dodging an Attack. As a rule of thumb, only one defensive talent or skill can be used against a single attack. For example, it isn't possible to use the Avoid Blow and Riposte talents against the same attack.

RESOLVING ACTIONS

Starting with the highest Initiative Test result, all characters attempt to perform their declared actions as designated in the Declare Actions phase of the combat round, one at a time, until all characters' actions have been resolved.

The gamemaster calls out Initiative Values, starting with the highest Initiative Test result. Each character then takes his turn performing actions. Characters often make Attack Tests when engaged in combat, but an action might also consist of casting a spell, running, or using a non-combat talent while arrows and spells fly all around. The character makes the appropriate Action Test, announcing the result after rolling the appropriate Action Dice, including any Karma or Bonus Dice rolls.

Each character's actions are fully resolved before the next character acts, unless the description for the talent or skill being used specifically states otherwise.

Reserved Actions

Instead of acting on his Initiative Test result, a character may choose to wait until later that round for a more appropriate moment to act. This is referred to as a taking a **Reserved Action**. Taking a Reserved Action allows a character to react to other characters' actions, perhaps even preventing them. If a Reserved Action has been announced, a character specifies an event to occur and has the right to act at any one point during the combat round at which that event occurs, even before the character whose turn it normally is may resolve his actions. The reserving character's Initiative Test result is automatically lowered to the Initiative value currently being resolved (it is identical to that of the character whose turn it normally is), but the character reserving his action goes first. The concentration required waiting for the right moment increases the difficulty of the action performed, however, and characters taking a Reserved Action add +2 to the Difficulty Number of all actions performed on their turn.

Taking a Reserved Action is often the only way a character can attack opponents making Charging Attacks (see p.233) or Swooping Attacks (see p.234).

Reserving an Action can be combined with Changing Actions (see below), in which case both penalties apply.

Krarg is looking out for his badly wounded companion Eladrel during a fight, having found themselves confronted by six ork scorchers. Krarg has an Initiative Test result of 16, the highest among all combatants, but announces a Reserved Action, specifying he wants to attack anyone who tries to harm Eladrel. When one of the scorchers, with an Initiative Test result of 6, takes his turn to attack Eladrel, Krarg can jump in. His own Initiative Test result is now also 6, and he may act immediately. He attacks the scorcher in close combat, but adds +2 to the Difficulty Number, the scorcher's Physical Defense. The attack knocks the scorcher down. Now it is the scorchers turn, who can either try to attack Eladrel from the ground or take any other action (which would cause him to Change Actions; see below). As Krarg's Inititative Resul is now 6, he does not benefit from his earlier, higher Initiative Test result (for example to receive an additional attack from the Air Dance Talent).

Delayed Actions

Instead of acting at his Initiative Test result, a character may choose to wait for other Actions to resolve before acting himself. This is referred to as a taking a Delayed Action. When taking a Delayed Action, a character may act at any time later in a Combat Round than his Initiative Test result, but in contrast to a Reserved Action, he cannot interrupt another's actions. Delaying an Action does not cause any penalties, but lowers the character's Initiative Test result to the value he chose to act at.

A character may also delay his action into the following Combat Round if he does not act during the current Combat Round. His Initiative for the following round is automatically 1 higher than the highest Initiative rolled for that round. He may opt to roll his Initiative normally, though.

ACTION CAP

Optional Rule: A lot can happen in six seconds. The gamemaster may, however, want to put a cap on the number of Simple Actions a character can perform each round. Before limiting Simple Actions, the gamemaster should be aware that the Disciplines in **Earthdawn** are not designed with such a limit in mind. While a low limit of 3 Simple Actions per round is often not restricting to starting characters, more advanced adepts actually require more than 3 Simple Actions to keep up with Horrors, Dragons, and entire armies they are facing. A more practical cap in advanced Circles is an Attribute Step, often Dexterity, but possibly Perception for Spellcasters. The gamemaster should not see the decision to limit Simple Actions as set in stone, but rather as a way to make the decision to use an ability or not more interesting, and as such, allow adepts with more abilities due to higher Discipline Circles a few more choices—the more experience an adventurer has, the easier small tasks are handled.

Free Actions should never be restricted.

Delaying an Action can be combined with Changing Actions (see below), both penalties apply.

Eladrel is first to act during a Combat Round. He announced to cast a Flame Weapon spell on one of his companions, but is not sure on which one, as it is not clear at the moment who will find himself on the front of close combat. So he decides to delay his action. Later that round, at an Initiative value of 9, Eladrel sees that his companion Krarg has moved in to fight off four Cadaver Men. Eladrel decides Krarg will benefit the most from the Flame Weapon spell, so after Krarg has resolved his action, Eladrel Steps in, casting the spell. For all intents and purposes, Eladrel's Initiative Test result is now also 9.

Changing Actions

A character may want to change his action, as designated in the Declare Actions phase of the combat round (see **Combat Summary**, p.214), to react more effectively to the events happening around him. This is often the case with characters with low Initiative Test results—sometimes they will find that the actions of other characters acting before them completely alter their ability to execute their original plans that round. A character is allowed to attempt a different action than declared at the beginning of the combat round, but as a consequence he adds +2 to the Difficulty Number for the new action.

It is possible that a character may, as a reaction to the fluid circumstances of combat, need to change their declared option more than once during a combat round. Each time this occurs, add +2 to the Difficulty Number for the new action.

Technically, there is no limit to the number of times a character can "change his mind" during a round; in reality, most players will quickly realize that being indecisive and trying to react to everything that is going on during the round will quickly result in very high target Difficulty Numbers.

Changing Combat Options

Characters changing their mind about using a combat option may not choose a different combat option using this rule. The character can keep his declared combat option, using it on the new action if

applicable, or decide not to use it. If the combat option has a Strain cost, the character takes Strain damage regardless of whether he follows through with the combat option or not.

At the start of a combat round, Thom Hammerblade declares that he will attack his opponent, an ork raider, and decides to exercise the Aggressive Attack combat option. Just as he is going to act, Thom notices that one of his companions is about to be attacked from behind. Thom changes his action to an attack against his companion's backstabbing opponent. He chooses to retain the Aggressive Attack combat option for his attack. When Thom attacks, he adds a bonus to his Attack Test for his combat option as normal, but the gamemaster adds +2 to the Difficulty Number—equal to his opponent's Physical Defense—because Thom changed his action.

Resolving Attacks

Because the most common action that a character will take during a combat round is to attack an opponent, the procedure used to resolve attacks is summarized below, followed by a complete explanation of each Step:

1. Make an Attack Test
2. Determine Success
3. Make a Damage Test
4. Adjust Damage for Armor
5. Check for Wounds
6. Make Knockdown Test
7. Check for Unconsciousness or Death

Make an Attack Test

Whenever a character attempts to attack a target, be it with a weapon or a spell, he makes an Action Test using the appropriate talent or skill. This type of Action Test is usually referred to as an **Attack Test**. For example, if a Swordmaster is attempting to hit a foe with his sword, he 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 attack determines the test's Difficulty Number. For physical attacks, such as those involving melee or missile weapons, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Physical Defense. For attacks made with spells, the Difficulty Number is usually the target's Spell Defense. Some talents, skills and spells use the target's Social Defense or another Difficulty Number instead. The ability description usually gives the Difficulty Number for using it.

Unless a talent or ability specifically permits otherwise (see **Simple Actions**, p.216), a character can only make one Attack Test per combat round. The character's main Attack Test always requires the character to take a Standard Action (see **Actions**, p.215).

The target Difficulty Number for an Attack Test may be modified by the distance to the opponent (for ranged combat attacks), environmental conditions (daylight, darkness, cover, and so on), and many other factors (see **Situation Modifiers**, p.226). Several combat options also modify a character's Defense Rating (see **Combat Options**, p.221).

Determine Success

The Attack Test Result is compared against the target's Defense Rating (Physical, Spell, or Social), as appropriate to the type of attack. If the test succeeds, the attack hits and the attacker makes a Damage Test (for weapons) or an Effect Test (for spells) to determine how effective the attack is. If the test fails, the attack misses and the attacker does not make a Damage Test; he completes any other actions he is allowed that round, then finishes his turn.

Armor-Defeating Hits

Some attacks are good enough to completely penetrate an opponent's armor or shield. Exceptionally well-placed attacks, lucky shots, or attacks that sufficiently focus a character's magic—these can all bypass an opponent's armor. A character making a close or ranged combat Attack Test that achieves an Excellent Result against his opponent's Physical Defense, inflicts an **Armor-Defeating Hit**. The character makes a Damage Test as normal, but applies the full unmodified result against his opponent, who loses the protection of his armor in this situation.

Farliv shoots an arrow at a swooping ice flyer, with an Attack Test Result of 15. Compared against the ice flyer's Physical Defense of 7, Farliv achieves an Excellent Result—an Armor-Defeating Hit! The ice flyer loses the protection of its thick ice-encrusted feathers against the missile. Farliv makes a Damage Test and the gamemaster adds the result to the ice flyer's Current Damage without a reduction for the creature's Physical Armor.

Combat spells intended to inflict damage on their target may also produce Armor-Defeating Hits. If a magician making a Spellcasting Test achieves an Excellent Result against his opponent's Spell Defense, he inflicts an Armor-Defeating Hit against the appropriate type of armor protection noted in the spell description, Physical or Mystic.

Broomé, a windling Elementalist, casts his Earth Darts spell at an angry cave troll. His Spellcasting Result of 23 achieves an Extraordinary Result against the cave troll's low Spell Defense of 6. The damage inflicted by the earth darts is Armor-Defeating; the cave troll does not receive any benefit from his armor. And a Damage Test result of 17 gets the troll even more upset—he suffers a Wound as well! Too bad the Elementalist is out of reach of his axe…

There is a way for characters to better defend against Armor-Defeating Hits. Some magic armors provide a bonus to the Result Level required to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit on its wearer, and shields offer a bonus to the Difficulty Number for an Armor-Defeating Hit.

Some creatures possess such effective armor that those characters attacking them require an Extraordinary Result to defeat it. Other creatures have armor that cannot be defeated at all.

Make a Damage Test

After making a successful Attack Test, the character makes a Damage Test. The Action Dice rolled for this test depend on the weapon used. Unless otherwise noted in its description, all weapons add their Damage Step to the character's Strength Step to determine the total Damage Step of the attack.

A broadsword has a Damage Step of 5, and therefore adds +5 to a character's Strength Step for inflicting damage. Thom Hammerblade has a Strength Step of 6. When he hits an opponent with his broadsword, he makes a Step 11 Damage Test (5+6=11) to determine how many Damage Points he inflicts on his opponent.

Some talents or abilities allow the character to add the result of a Karma Die to the Damage Test result. Remember that Bonus Dice also apply to all Action and Effect Tests the character makes, including Damage Tests.

When attacking an opponent with a spell, the spell will usually direct the magician to make an Effect Test to determine how many Damage Points he inflicts. The magician uses the Effect

Step given in the spell's description, which is usually based on his Willpower, not Strength, and may be modified by talents such as Willforce, p.86.

Regardless of whether the attack is made with a weapon or a spell, the Damage Test result determines the number of Damage Points inflicted on the target.

Adjust Damage for Armor

Armor is worn and shields carried to reduce the damage that the character receives. Armor and shields add a bonus to the character's Physical (and sometimes Mystic) Armor. Generally, Physical Armor protects against sources of physical damage, while Mystic Armor protects against astral or psychic damage. If there is any uncertainty, the gamemaster decides which Armor Rating is appropriate. Some types of attacks, from certain spells or creature powers, are never stopped by armor. This is noted in the description of the spell or power.

To adjust damage for armor, the character subtracts his Physical or Mystic Armor (as appropriate) from the result of the Damage Test made against him. The modified Damage Test result is the number of Damage Points added to the character's Current Damage.

Note that some Attack Tests penetrate the character's armor. An Armor-Defeating Hit does exactly that—it completely defeats the armor's protection (see **Armor-Defeating Hits**, p.218). As a result, the character does not subtract his Physical or Mystic Armor from the Damage Test result. Instead, the unmodified Damage Test result is the number of Damage Points added to his Current Damage.

Check for Wounds

If a character suffers a number of Damage Points from a single attack equal to or greater than his Wound Threshold, he also takes a Wound. Wounds reflect major trauma and inhibit the character's ability to recover from injury (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220). Wounds can also have a detrimental effect on the character's Action Tests (see **Wound Penalties**, p.221).

If the Damage Points that cause a Wound also render the character unconscious or dead, the player should still record the Wound. Some talents, spells and magic items have the ability to bring a character back from the brink of death. Any Wounds the character may be suffering from will penalize any such healing, as normal for Wounds.

Special Effects of Damage

Players measure the damage inflicted on their **Earthdawn** characters using an abstract method in which a number of points represents the damage caused by an attack. Combined with the rules for receiving and inflicting Wounds, this system is sufficient to simulate the damage characters and creatures suffer in combat situations. However, the standard rules do not account for other effects of damage such as damage to specific body parts and bleeding. The optional **Wounds That Bleed** and **Damage to a Limb** rules, p.222-223, allow players and gamemasters to add this level of detail to their games.

Make a Knockdown Test

A character can be Knocked Down if he suffers a number of Damage Points equal to or greater than his Wound Threshold in a single attack, after armor has been accounted for. The player makes a **Knockdown Test**, using his Strength Step to determine the Action Dice rolled, against a Knockdown Difficulty equal to 3 + the number of Damage Points taken in excess of his Wound Threshold. If successful, the character remains standing, otherwise he is Knocked Down.

Corvis the Thief has a Wound Threshold of 9. His opponent whacks him with a wicked sword stroke for 17 Damage Points, after accounting for his leather armor. Because the number of Damage Points inflicted at least equals his Wound Threshold, Corvis suffers a Wound and must make a successful Knockdown (11) Test—17 Damage Points minus his Wound Threshold of 9=8+3=11—to avoid being Knocked Down. Corvis doesn't have any talents like Wound Balance to help him, so he makes the Knockdown Test using his Strength Step, rolling an unfortunate 9. The next thing Corvis knows he is flat on his back and in a lot of pain.

Other causes of Knockdown, such as the Attacking to Knockdown combat option (p.222) or being dislodged from a mount (p.233), may also require a character to make a Knockdown Test. The gamemaster makes Knockdown Tests for creatures or gamemaster characters, using the Step Number shown on the creature's or character's statistics block.

Check for Unconsciousness or Death

After a character takes damage from an attack, the player checks the character's Current Damage to see if he is unconscious or dead.

Unconsciousness

A character with Current Damage at least equal to his Unconsciousness Rating, but less than his Death Rating, immediately falls to the ground unconscious. Unconscious characters may take no actions other than making Recovery Tests, and are considered both Blindsided and Knocked Down for actions taken against them. They can regain their senses by making Recovery Tests to restore sufficient Damage Points to reduce their Current Damage below their Unconsciousness Rating (see **Recovering From Damage**, p.220).

Death

A character who has taken Current Damage equal to or greater than his Death Rating immediately falls to the ground. Unless the character has a talent such as Life Check, p.74, or is quickly tended to by another character with a healing aid, such as a last chance salve, the character cannot be revived and he is dead. In **Earthdawn**, character death is usually permanent. Some methods of resurrection exist, but because they require powerful and dangerous magics, attempts are rare. Characters who wish to pursue these methods should be warned that they are *very* expensive—and the price is rarely just financial.

Using Shields

Many characters employ shields when engaged in combat, foregoing the use of both hands in order to give them additional protection. A character using a shield is restricted to using one-handed weapons only. For more information on shields, see p.254.

Armor Bonuses

Most shields add a bonus to a character's Physical or Mystic Armor when the shield is used in any form of combat. The character must be actively using the shield to gain the Armor bonus, not just carrying it on his arm or slung over his back. The character gains this bonus only for attacks made against him. A character who has been Blindsided by an attacker loses the benefit of his shield against that opponent until he is able to turn to face him. An attacker employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option (p.224) negates any bonuses that the defender receives to his Physical or Mystic Armor from using a shield.

Maximum Weapon Damage

Optional Rule: If you look closely at the damage rules, you will notice that those rules make it possible for a dagger-wielding windling with a Strength Value of 7 to kill a dragon with a single attack, given a sufficient number of Bonus Dice rolls. Technically, the open-ended dice-rolling system used in the **Earthdawn** game does allow for such a feat—this is a major feature of the game system, allowing characters to make truly heroic actions. However, the statistical odds against such an event occurring are astronomical.

Some gamemasters might consider the possibility of such an extraordinary event occurring unacceptable. Other gamemasters may believe that reasonable limits should exist to cap how much damage a character can inflict from a single attack. The Maximum Weapon Damage optional rule attempts to accommodate both styles of gamemastering, as follows:

- The single-attack damage potential of non-magical weapons is limited to inflicting a maximum number of Damage Points equal to the weapon's Damage Step×3.

For the purposes of this rule, the Damage Step of a weapon equals the character's Strength Step+the weapon's Damage Step. Bonuses applied to the Damage Test, from talents or spells, for instance, do not change this limit—it simply means the upper damage limit for that weapon will be reached more often.

The Maximum Weapon Damage rule does not affect the damage potential of threaded or other magical weapons, including spells—by definition, those weapons have very few limits. (Note that this does not include non-magical weapons improved through use of the Forge Blade or Infuse Blade talents—such weapons are not magical; the talent's magic simply enhances their natural characteristics.)

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, attacks his foe with a non-magical broadsword. Kricklen has a Strength Step of 5 and the broadsword has a Damage Step of 5, giving the t'skrang a total Damage Step of 10 for his attack. Kricklen can inflict a maximum of 30 Damage Points per attack while using his broadsword (10×3 = 30). Kevrien, a dwarf Wizard, assists Kricklen by casting the Combat Fury spell on him, adding a +4 bonus to the Swordmaster's Damage Tests. However, he is still limited to inflicting a maximum of 30 Damage Points per attack with his broadsword.

Spell Defense Bonus

Some magical shields add a bonus to the wielder's Spell Defense. As with a shield's Physical or Mystic Armor bonus, the character must be actively using the shield to gain a Spell Defense bonus, not simply carrying it around or having it slung on his back. An attacker employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option (p.224) does *not* negate the bonus that the defender receives to his Spell Defense from using the shield, although the character must retain use of the shield to keep the bonus.

Effects of Injury

All characters should expect to suffer harm at some point during their adventures. While the rules for inflicting injury and being injured appeared earlier, this section provides detailed information on how characters return to full health after taking damage.

Recovering from Damage

A character makes a Recovery Test to reduce, or "heal," any damage he has taken. The Recovery Result is typically subtracted from his Current Damage. A character who has taken no damage does not need to make a Recovery Test. The Step to make Recovery Tests is based on the Toughness Step for most characters and creatures. Each character has a limited number of Recovery Tests available to him each day, determined by his Toughness Value (p.26). Some talents and spells give the character additional Recovery Tests, which must be used within a short time (usually one day). Unused Recovery Tests cannot be saved from one day to the next.

An injured character (with 1 or more Damage Points) *must* make a Recovery Test upon waking from a full night's rest. Characters with only one Recovery Test available to them each day can recover damage only after a full night's rest. Characters with one Recovery Test available to them every two days can recover damage only after resting for two nights, making their Recovery Test on the morning of the second day. Characters with more than one Recovery Test available to them each day may spend any remaining Recovery Tests as they wish, but must meet the following conditions:

- At least one hour passes between Recovery Tests.
- The character can spend one minute without engaging in physical activity or taking damage. The Recovery Test can be made at the end of that time.

Characters must also wait at least one hour after engaging in combat before they can make a Recovery Test. This time must be spent in a state of relative rest; the character cannot undergo any strenuous physical activity during this time. Apart from certain talents, the use of healing aids, and the effects of some spells, the only exception to this rule regards unconscious characters (see **Regaining Consciousness**, below).

Regaining Consciousness

If he has a Recovery Test available to him, an unconscious character may make a Recovery Test one minute after he falls unconscious. Whether he regains consciousness or not, the character must wait another hour before he can make another Recovery Test, unless another character intervenes with a healing aid or a spell.

Reviving Unconscious Characters

If another character attempts to revive an unconscious character, he can make one of his available Recovery Tests at that time, even if one minute has not passed since he lost consciousness. As normal, if the character does not recover sufficient Damage Points to regain consciousness, he must wait another hour before he can make another Recovery Test, unless he receives intervention from a healing aid or spell.

Recovering From Poison or Disease

Recovering from the effects of poison or disease is handled differently from normal damage. See the **Adventuring** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 108, for more information on how poisons and diseases work.

WOUNDS

Characters suffer no direct ill effects from the number of Damage Points they receive. Damage only affects a character's ability to function when it results in a **Wound**. Wounds inhibit the character's ability to heal damage. When a Wounded character makes a Recovery Test, he subtracts the number of Wounds he has taken from the Recovery Result. **Regardless of modifiers, the minimum number of Damage Points that a character recovers from a Recovery Test is 1.**

Kricklen the Swordmaster has taken some heavy blows. He is currently suffering from 2 Wounds and 32 Damage Points. Kricklen makes a Recovery Test with a result of 10. Because of his 2 Wounds, the t'skrang only recovers 8 Damage Points (10 – 2=8).

Wound Penalties

While not an optional rule, Wound Penalties are best used after the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic game rules. A character takes a single Wound without suffering any immediate side-effects. When a character takes a second Wound, and again for all subsequent Wounds, the character incurs a cumulative –1 penalty to all Action and Effect Tests—with the exception of Recovery Tests (although the character still reduces his Recovery Result by the number of Wounds taken). For example, if a character has 2 Wounds, he suffers a –1 penalty; if he has 4 Wounds, he suffers a –3 penalty; and so on.

Healing Wounds

Wounds are difficult to heal. A character naturally heals one Wound per day under the following conditions:

- The character is not suffering from any damage. Even 1 point of Current Damage, including Strain damage, prevents a Wound from healing.
- The character uses a Recovery Test, after a full night's rest.

Some curses or magical effects that prevent a character from making a morning Recovery Test will keep Wounds from healing. Wounds can also be healed by some healing aids, spells, or abilities like a questor's Heal power.

COMBAT OPTIONS

The **Earthdawn** game provides characters with a number of options that allow them to exercise various combat tactics, such as fiercely attacking an opponent, or hanging back and acting more defensively. These options provide more flexibility to a character's fighting style: sometimes the character may want to simply slug it out with an opponent, but other times he may be wiser to modify his approach.

A player wanting to use a **combat option** must declare his intent to do so before he makes his Initiative Test that round (see **Declare Actions**, p.214). Unless specifically noted, a character can choose only one combat option each round. A character who is Knocked Down cannot use a combat option until he is standing (exception: see the **Jumping Up** combat option, p.224).

Many combat options have disadvantages as well as advantages. A number of options are limited to use in close or ranged combat only (see **Types of Combat**, p.228). Because they can complicate things, it is recommended that the players and gamemaster become familiar with the basic combat rules before using these different options.

The combat options Table summarizes the different combat options and their effects.



MINIMUM WEAPON DAMAGE

Optional Rule: Some players react poorly to the fact that, on occasions when they have achieved an Armor-Defeating Hit against an opponent, their Damage Test result is so low as to take away the positive effect of gaining that advantage over their foe. The Minimum Weapon Damage optional rule hopefully goes some way towards mitigating against these feelings.

- The minimum Damage Test result from a Good Result on an Attack Test is always equal to the weapon's Damage Step.

For the purposes of this rule, the Damage Step of a weapon equals the character's Strength Step+the weapon's Damage Step. Bonuses applied to the Damage Test, from talents or spells, for instance, do not increase this limit.

Note that only a Good Result is required to ensure this rule comes into effect—a character does not need to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit to benefit from the Minimum Weapon Damage rule. This is intentional, providing the character with some benefit from a better-than-average attack even if his opponent is wearing armor or bearing a shield.

At the gamemaster's discretion, he may also allow this rule for spell damage.

Aggressive Attack

When using the **Aggressive Attack** combat option, the character assaults his opponent with a ferocious flurry of blows. Aggressive Attack gives the attacker a significant advantage when fighting, improving his ability to strike his opponent and inflict damage, but also allowing him to be struck more easily in return. Each close combat Attack Test made by the character causes him 1 Strain. The character always takes at least 1 Strain, even if he doesn't make any Attack Tests during the combat round. While so inspired, the character gains a +3 bonus to his close combat Attack and Damage Tests. However, because of the frenzied nature of his attack the character is somewhat uncontrolled—he pays less attention to attacks directed against him and subtracts –3 from his Physical and Spell Defense that round.

Aiming

A character can improve his chance of hitting an opponent in ranged combat by using the **Aiming** combat option. When Aiming, the character gives up his actions for the round—he cannot move or take even Simple Actions while Aiming. In return, he gains a +2 bonus to his next ranged Attack Test. If the character continues to aim for another consecutive round, the bonus increases to +3. Each round spent Aiming causes the character 1 Strain. Regardless of how long he spends Aiming, a character can gain only a maximum +3 bonus.

A character cannot attack during the same round that he uses the Aiming combat option. The bonus is applied to his ranged Attack Test during the following round. Additionally, the character must make his Attack Test against a target visible to him during the entire time he has been Aiming in order to gain the bonus.

This combat option cannot be used with talents that provide a similar bonus, such as Mystic Aim, p.76.

Attacking to Knockdown

Instead of attacking an opponent in close combat with the intent to cause harm, a character can attempt to knock him down. This is the **Attacking to Knockdown** combat option. The character makes his close combat Attack Test as normal. If the attack hits, he makes a Damage Test, the result of which, modified for armor, becomes the Knockdown Difficulty for his opponent's Knockdown Test. If the test succeeds, he remains standing, otherwise he is immediately Knocked Down. Regardless of the outcome, the character's opponent takes no damage from an Attacking to Knockdown attempt.

In his fight with a rampaging thundra beast, Targ Boneslicer decides he wants to try to knock the beast down. Targ's attack succeeds and he rolls a Damage Test result of 18. The thundra beast has 7 points of Physical Armor. The gamemaster makes a Knockdown Test for the creature against a Difficulty Number of 11 (18 [Damage Test result] – 7 [beast's Physical Armor]=11).

Attacking to Stun

A character may choose to make a less-lethal attack against an opponent in close combat by declaring his intent to use the **Attacking to Stun** combat option. The attacker makes his close combat Attack Test as normal, but any damage inflicted to his opponent is recorded as Stun damage. Although it is added to the character's Current Damage, Stun damage cannot kill him. If the Stun damage received sends a character's Current Damage equal to or greater than his Unconsciousness or Death Rating, the character falls to the ground unconscious in a coma. The character comes out of the coma when his Current Damage falls below his Unconsciousness Rating. Creatures who have an Unconsciousness Rating of "NA" are immune to Stun damage.

Wounds That Bleed

Optional Rule: When a character or creature suffers damage, it is assumed that the target has been cut or bruised, and so is also likely to be bleeding. Even though a target may not suffer a Wound during a fight, he may bleed from other injuries. The effect of bleeding is generally ignored in the **Earthdawn** game, mainly because most characters readily tend to their injuries with bandages, Recovery Tests, healing aids, and other first aid, immediately after a fight. However, if gamemasters wish to include the possibility that bleeding can cause additional damage in their game, we offer the following guidelines.

To determine if an attack causes a bleeding Wound, compare the Damage Test result, after any reductions for armor, against the target's Wound Threshold. On an Excellent result, the target begins to suffer additional blood loss, in addition to the standard Damage Points inflicted from the attack, plus any Wounds. The damage due to bleeding causes an additional effect.

The gamemaster can resolve the effects of bleeding in one of two ways. The character may take 2 Damage Points at the end of each combat round until he either falls unconscious or dies, or he applies bandages or healing aids to his injuries, thus stemming the blood loss. Alternatively, the gamemaster may choose to have the character suffer Step 2 damage at the end of each combat round, again until he either falls unconscious or dies, or receives healing. A booster potion or a healing potion ends the additional damage from bleeding, as will some talents, such as Fireblood. Once the character has his injuries properly tended to, the effects of any bleeding damage he may be suffering from ends.

Characters may suffer bleeding damage from multiple sources as a result of this optional rule. The results are cumulative, although any healing the character carries out (or has carried out on him) will stem blood loss from all bleeding effects.

Some creatures are never subject to this rule; most undead, Horror constructs made from bone, or spirits, for example, do not possess blood and are therefore unaffected by bleeding damage.

Stun damage does not cause Wounds. If a character would normally take a Wound from the damage inflicted, he is Stunned instead. The character compares the Stun damage taken against his Wound Threshold. The Result Level determines how long he is Stunned for. On an Average Result he is Stunned for one round; on a Good Result, two rounds; on an Excellent Result, three rounds; on an Extraordinary Result he is Stunned for four rounds.

A character recovers Stun damage more easily than he does normal damage, sometimes shaking it off through sheer will. The character adds his Willpower Step as a bonus to the first Recovery Test he makes after taking Stun damage. This bonus applies only to that test and the result can *only* be used to recover Stun damage. A character may forego adding a Willpower bonus and heal both Stun and normal damage with a single Recovery Test.

Called Shot

A character can use the **Called Shot** combat option to make a precise attack against a target, attempting to strike a specific body part, hitting a weapon, striking a designated object, and so on. The player declares what object or part of his opponent his character is attempting to hit with the Called Shot. When making a Called Shot, a character suffers a –3 penalty to his Attack Test. At the gamemas-

ter's discretion, especially difficult Called Shots may incur a bigger penalty. The concentration required causes the character 1 Strain per Attack Test. If the test succeeds, the character strikes the designated object or the intended area on his opponent.

A Called Shot cannot be used to make Armor-Defeating Hits (p.218). If attempting to hit a weapon, the character's opponent must make a successful Strength Test against the Damage Step of the attack to hold on to his weapon. If an opponent is using a two-handed weapon, he gains a +3 bonus to his Strength Test. Other uses must be adjudicated by the gamemaster on a case-by-case basis (with a lesser or greater penalty, if required).

The Called Shot combat option can only be made with close or ranged combat attacks.

Defensive Stance

Sometimes it is more important that a character lives than whether he wins a fight. When he makes that decision, the character can adopt a defensive posture that reduces his chance of being hit. A character using the **Defensive Stance** combat option adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense for all attacks directed against him that round. The character only receives this bonus against attacks that he can see or sense. There is a downside to using the Defensive Stance combat option—the character suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests that round, except for Knockdown Tests. (At the gamemaster's discretion, this penalty may also be waived for defensive actions, like Avoid Blow Tests.)

The Defensive Stance option can be combined with an Attack to Stun or Attack to Knockdown during the same round.

Giving Ground

Skilled fighters willingly trade ground to gain a defensive advantage. Characters engaged in close combat can use the **Giving Ground** combat option. For every full 2 yards (1 hex) of ground yielded, the character adds +1 to his Physical Defense that round. A character may yield a number of yards equal to his Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat Rank, as appropriate. A character with no Ranks in Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat cannot use this combat option; this includes using them with the **Default Skill Use** rules, p.87. No other talents or skills provide this benefit. Because the character is focused on withdrawing rather than attacking, he suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests that round. This same degree of concentration causes the character 1 Strain.

Before he makes his Initiative Test, the character Giving Ground declares how many yards/hexes he intends to yield. The character compares his Initiative Test result to the highest Initiative among his opponents. If the test succeeds, the player chooses the location to where his character moves when he acts. If the test fails, the character's opponent decides where the yielding character moves. A character Giving Ground, moving voluntarily or not, will stop before Stepping off a cliff or into a boiling river, or running into any other hazard or obstacle. The benefit he receives from Giving Ground may be reduced by the distance he can actually move. The Giving Ground option is best used in situations where the character has an unobstructed field of movement.

If the character Giving Ground wins Initiative, he makes his Attack Tests before he moves his intended distance that round. Regardless of the combat outcome, his entire movement that round is limited to his Giving Ground distance. If the character loses Initiative, he is first moved by his opponents, after which they may choose to move into combat with the character or perform another action (see **Changing Actions**, p.216). If they choose to move into combat with the character Giving Ground, their move becomes their entire movement that round.

Damage to a Limb

Optional Rule: To determine if an attack damages a limb, compare the Damage Test result to the target's Wound Threshold. On an Excellent result, one of the target's limbs is damaged (the gamemaster chooses which limb). The target who suffers a damaged limb also takes the Damage Points inflicted by the attack, plus any Wounds. The damage to the character's limb is an additional effect. A damaged limb can be healed in the same manner as a Wound, that is, after a night's sleep, by using a healing potion, or by the questor Heal power.

The gamemaster determines how severely the limb is damaged, and the exact side effects, but we recommend that the typical effects given in the Damaged Limb Table be applied.

DAMAGED LIMB TABLE

Limb	Effect
Arm	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring use of the damaged arm. The character's Carrying Capacity is halved.
Leg	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring use of the damaged leg. The character's Movement Rate is halved.
Head	The character suffers a –1 penalty to Action Tests requiring sight. The character becomes dizzy from the blow and has trouble concentrating—any spells the character casts that require concentration automatically fail.

Kricklen is facing three unruly cave trolls. Quickly realizing his witty quips are wasted on them, he decides discretion is a better option, and uses the Giving Ground combat option to retreat away from the rocky ground he is fighting on to a more open area. He knows Melee Weapons at Rank 6, so Kricklen chooses to give up six yards of ground, potentially increasing his Physical Defense by +6. The cave trolls, feeling irritated by the t'skrang's attempts at troll humor, opt for Aggressive Attacks against the Swordmaster. All parties now make their Initiative Tests. Unfortunately, this is where things don't go so well for Kricklen, as he makes his Initiative Test with a result of all ones on the dice—fortunately, Initiative Tests are Effect Tests, and not subject to the Rule of One. However, with an Initiative Test result of 2, it looks like the trolls will get the upper hand, which they do with an Initiative Test result of 4. Because the cave trolls won Initiative, they get to choose where the Swordmaster is going to move. Their choice is simple: they move Kricklen two yards back, up against a large boulder close to the cave's entrance. This only adds +2 to the t'skrang's Physical Defense—the maximum distance he is able to move—and he still suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests. Because the trolls act before the t'skrang (who has been moved up against the rock), they have a choice as to whether they will close the distance and attack, or do something other than their declared action. However, being cave trolls their choice is simple—attack. Kricklen braces himself to take a lot of pain.

DAMAGE TO WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Optional Rule: Under the right circumstances, a character's weapons and armor can take damage in combat. Applying the effects of damage to characters' equipment adds additional complexity to the **Earthdawn** game. To damage a character's shield, weapon, or armor, the attacker must make a Called Shot (see p.404) against the item, and achieve an Excellent result on the Attack Test. Magical items are more resilient to damage than their mundane counterparts, suffering damage only from Attack Tests with an Extraordinary result.

The opponent still incurs damage as normal from the attack; the Called Shot penalty reflects the difficulty of striking the item in an effective manner. (Note this is different from the Shattering a Shield combat option; see p.406.) A character cannot declare a Called Shot against both his opponent's shield and his weapon or armor; only one or the other can be targeted by a single attack. Damage affects shields in the same way as armor; weapons receive damage in a different way.

Damaged weapons, armor, and shields can be repaired. See the **Goods and Services** chapter (p.439 and p.442) for more information on damage to items and how to fix it.

Armor and Shields

Each time armor takes damage, reduce its Physical and Mystic Armor by –1. If both Armor ratings are reduced to zero, the armor becomes useless. For example, padded cloth armor (Phys 2; Myst 0) can only sustain damage from two Called Shots with an Excellent result before it is ruined.

Severely damaged armor and shields can hinder the wearer's performance. A large dent in a breastplate changes the way it fits; a damaged elbow joint reduces the wearer's mobility. To reflect this, the gamemaster may choose to apply any of the following penalties to characters wearing damaged armor, or may create his own. Characters wearing damaged armor may:

- Suffer a –1 penalty to Initiative Tests.
- Suffer a –1 penalty to all Action Tests involving use of the armor or shield.
- Subtract –1 from their Movement Rate.
- Temporarily lose one of the item's thread Rank abilities (usually the highest Ranked).

The gamemaster has the final say as to when and how damage to his armor or shield affects a character's skills, talents, and abilities.

Weapons

Each time a weapon takes damage, reduce its Damage Step by –1. When a weapon's Damage Step is reduced to zero, it is ruined. Some weapons, such as knives, blow-guns, and so on, can be destroyed in a single blow this way. If the gamemaster wishes, weapons may also suffer damage if the character fails his Attack Test because of the Rule of One (p.18), the weapon's Damage Step is reduced by –1, as described above.

Severely damaged weapons may not perform as well as they used to, and can affect the wielder's performance. A large notch taken out of a broadsword blade may unbalance the weapon; a dulled edge may mean the difference between victory and defeat. To reflect this, the gamemaster may choose to apply any of the following penalties to characters wielding damaged weapons, or may create his own. Characters using damaged weapons may:

- Suffer a –1 penalty to Initiative Tests.
- Suffer a –1 penalty to all Action Tests involving use of the weapon.
- Temporarily lose one of the weapon's Thread Rank abilities (usually the highest-Ranked).

The gamemaster has the final say as to when and how damage to his weapon affects a character's skills, talents, and abilities.

GOING INSIDE A SHIELD

Shields typically provide additional protection to a character, increasing the bearer's Physical and Mystic Armor. A shield cannot protect everywhere at once, however. A character may declare that he is maneuvering to strike at a point where his opponent cannot defend with his shield. This is the **Going Inside a Shield** combat option. The character declares his intent to bypass his opponent's shield during the Declare Actions phase (p.214) of the combat round, subtracting the shield's Physical or Mystic Armor, as appropriate, from his Initiative Test result. If the character retains a higher Initiative Test result than his opponent, he has successfully maneuvered to a position where he has gotten inside the target's shield, and his opponent loses the protective benefit of the shield. If the character's modified Initiative Test result is equal to or lower than his opponent, the defender managed to bring the shield into position to block the attack before the character could complete his action. The character may still attack his opponent normally this round, but suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Test for failing to get past the shield. The loss of shield bonus is only against the character Going Inside a Shield, and only during the round in which the combat option is used.

Barak the Warrior faces an opponent with a body shield. Barak declares his intent to bypass the shield by using the Going Inside a Shield combat option. He rolls 14 for his Initiative Test, which is reduced by the body shield's Physical Armor of 5 to a result of 9. Barak's opponent rolls an Initiative Test result of 7. Barak feints left then, as his opponent brings his shield to face, Steps to the right and attacks. His opponent loses the benefit of his shield against Barak's sword blow and for any other attacks the troll carries out against him that round.

JUMPING UP

This combat option may only be used by characters who are Knocked Down. Instead of requiring the character's Standard action to stand up, the gamemaster may allow the character to get back on his feet as a Simple Action.

Using the Jumping Up combat option causes the character 2 Strain and requires him to make a successful Dexterity (6) Test. The character suffers an Initiative Penalty to his Dexterity Step for any armor he is wearing. However, he does not suffer the –3 penalty for being Knocked Down when making the test—this has already been accounted for in the Difficulty Number. All other penalties for being Knocked Down (lower Defense Rating, and so on) remain until he is standing. If the test fails, the character may still use his Standard Action to stand up.

A character cannot perform any other movement in the round he jumps to his feet, but can carry out other actions, including attacking nearby opponents.

Sant'Zabur, a t'skrang Warrior, was Knocked Down by a dwarf soldier during the previous combat round. He does not intend to flee—crawling away is too ignominious for a t'skrang!—and also does not intend to get taken out this easily. On his Initiative, the t'skrang takes 2 Strain for using the Jumping Up combat option. He is wearing hardened leather armor so must make a successful Dexterity (6) Test with a –1 penalty (for the armor's Initiative Penalty). Rolling a 7 on his Dexterity Test, Sant'Zabur nimbly leaps to his feet and attacks the astonished soldier.

RUNNING

A character may opt to move faster than his Movement Rate by **Running**. If this combat option is chosen, the character may double his normal Movement Rate, but uses his Standard Action for the combat round to do so, therefore he cannot use any talents, skills, or abilities that require a Standard Action. As he does not move with regard to conditions and dangers of the battlefield or other surroundings, he is considered Harried (p.227) from the moment he starts running until the end of the round and takes 1 Strain per round running.

If Running is combined with the Sprint talent or skill, only the character's normal Movement Rate is doubled, not the Sprint bonus. Running can be combined with the Splitting Movement combat option, p.226.

SETTING AGAINST A CHARGE

Characters fighting mounted opponents are at a disadvantage because they often cannot attack a mounted fighter in close combat on their Initiative due to the mount's high Movement Rate or the rider using the Splitting Movement combat option to get away before a counter attack. So when defending against a mounted opponent the defender often has to use Delayed or Reserved Actions (see p.216) to be able to attack at all. In the case of a Charging Attack (see p.233), however, the defender on foot can employ the **Setting Against a Charge** combat option in close combat to turn the high momentum the rider's attack would profit from to his advantage.

To Set Against a Charge, the defender has to use a melee weapon of sufficient length to reach his attacker beyond the mount's fore section. Usually, this means a spear of at least 5 feet in length. The defender also has to take a Reserved Action, and take his turn the moment the attacker rides into range. The defender makes his close combat Attack Test as normal, but on a successful hit replaces his Strength Step with that of the mount to determine the Damage Step. On a Good Result on the Attack Test, the defender additionally has a chance to knock the rider off the mount: the rider makes a Knockdown Test with the Damage Test Result as the Difficulty Number. If this test fails, the rider is knocked off his mount. Note that this Knockdown Test is made in addition to any the rider makes because of suffering Wounds.

The Setting Against a Charge combat option can be used in combination with the Defensive Stance and Attack to Knockdown combat options.

SHATTERING A SHIELD

A character facing a shielded opponent may attempt to soften up his defenses by smashing his shield. This is the **Shattering a Shield** combat option. Only weapons of Size 3 or greater can shatter a shield. The character declares his intent to shatter his opponent's shield during the Declare Actions phase (p.214) of the combat round and takes 1 Strain. He makes a close combat Attack Test against his opponent, as normal. If the test succeeds, the attack hits the shield. If the character achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit with his Attack Test, he adds his weapon Size as a bonus to his Damage Test (see **Armor-Defeating Hits**, p.218; also refer to **Shields and Armor-Defeating Hits**, p.219). The character makes a Damage Test against the shield's Shatter Threshold (see **Shields**, p.254). If the test succeeds, the shield shivers and breaks—it is now useless to the bearer, and confers no further protective benefits. All of the attack's energy is directed into shattering the shield. Regardless of the Attack Test result, the bearer takes no damage from the attack.

Magical shields are considerably harder to destroy than their mundane counterparts. The character must achieve an Excellent result on his Damage Test against its Shatter Threshold to smash a magical shield. The Aggressive Attack combat option can be used with the Shattering a Shield option, increasing the chance of smashing the target shield.

COMBAT OPTIONS TABLE

Combat Option*	Effect/Modifier
Aggressive Attack (1 per attack)	+3 bonus to Attack and Damage Tests; –3 penalty to Physical and Spell Defense
Aiming (1 per round)	+2 (1 round) or +3 (2 rounds) bonus to next ranged Attack Test (see text)
Attacking to Knockdown	Possibly knocks opponent down; inflicts no real damage to opponent
Attacking to Stun	Damage Test inflicts Stun damage; Wounded opponent is also Stunned
Called Shot (1)	–3 penalty to Attack Test; if successful, attack hits designated area
Defensive Stance	+3 to Physical and Spell Defense; –3 penalty to all Action Tests (except Knockdown Tests)
Giving Ground (1)	+1 to Physical Defense per yard given (up to maximum of Melee Weapons or Unarmed Combat Rank); –2 penalty to Attack Tests
Going Inside a Shield	Negates opponent's shield bonuses; –2 penalty to Attack Test
Jumping Up (2)	Allows the character to stand up and perform a Standard action; no other movement allowed
Running (1)	Character doubles his Movement Rate, but is Harried
Setting Against a Charge	Allows the character to unhorse a charging opponent
Shattering a Shield (1)	Breaks opponent's shield
Splitting Movement (1)	Allows a move/action/move combination; character is Harried
Tail Attack [t'skrang only]	Allows an additional Unarmed Combat attack (–2 to all Action Tests)
Tail Parry [t'skrang only]	+1 to Physical Defense per –1 to all Action Tests (max. +3 bonus)

* The number shown in parentheses after the combat option is the Strain cost for using that option.

Barak, a troll Warrior, continues to face off against an opponent bearing a body shield. Even after a successful attempt to bypass his opponent's shield, the protection it confers is proving to be a deciding factor in this fight. Barak decides to remove the obstacle and declares his intent to shatter his opponent's shield. He makes a successful Attack Test against his opponent, with an Average result. Now Barak makes a Damage Test against the shield's Shatter Threshold of 21, rolling a 24 for his Damage Test result—a success! Barak's sword comes down hard on his opponent's body shield, ripping through the metal rim, and splitting the shield in two. Casting the fragments aside, Barak's opponent takes a firm grip on his broadsword and prepares for a much harder contest.

Splitting Movement

This combat option allows characters to split their movement during a combat round. A character could use part of his Movement Rate to approach a target, make an attack, then use the rest of his Movement Rate to move away. Use of the **Splitting Movement** combat option must be declared at the beginning of the combat round and causes the character 1 Strain Point of damage. A character who uses this option is also Harried (see p.227) that round.

Tail Attack

This combat option is only available to t'skrang. A character may make an additional attack in close combat by using the **Tail Attack** combat option. Tail Attack allows the character to make an additional Unarmed Combat Test, even if he has already used his Standard Action for other attacks, but the character suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests that round, including the Tail Attack Test. Attached Weapons (see p.248) increase the Damage of Tail Attacks as per standard rules.

Tail Attack can be combined with other combat options that utilize close combat, except Giving Ground and Tail Parry.

Tail Parry

This combat option is only available to t'skrang. When equipped with a tail weapon or piece or armor fitted to the tail, a character can use the **Tail Parry** combat option to better defend himself in combat by deflecting incoming blows. Tail Parry adds +1, +2, or +3 to the character's Physical Defense, at the character's choice, but the character suffers an equal penalty to all his Action Tests that Combat Round.

Tail Parry can be combined with other combat options that utilize close combat, except Aggressive Attack and Tail Attack.

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 situations can occur during combat and affect a character's performance. Referred to as **Situation modifiers**, these conditions directly affect combatants' Action Tests and Defense Ratings. The effects of each type of situation are described below, with specific modifiers summarized in the Situation Modifiers Table.

Blindsided

When a character cannot see his attacker in order to react effectively to an attack, he is considered **Blindsided**. The character subtracts –2 from his Physical and Spell Defense against that attack. In certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense. Some examples of Blindsided attacks include attacks from the rear, attacks made against a blinded character, or attacks made from an ambush (although a character who is completely Surprised suffers that penalty instead; see **Surprised**, p.228). The attacker must be able to see his target in order to take advantage of the character's Blindsided modifier.

Cover

Characters can increase the Difficulty Number of attacks made against them by taking advantage of nearby objects, such as trees or boulders, or even items of furniture, as protection. There are too many items that could be used as cover to be mentioned here, but generally **Cover modifiers** are applied against attacks made against the character for three degrees of protection, as follows:

Partial: Partial Cover obscures approximately 30–50 percent of a character's body, leaving an attacker able to see most of the character. A character behind Partial Cover adds +2 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Full: Full Cover obscures 50–90 percent of a character's body. An attacker can still see enough of the character to make an Attack Test. A character behind Full Cover adds +4 to his Physical and Spell Defense.

Complete: Complete Cover is what it implies—obscuring more than 90 percent of a character's body. An attacker cannot see enough of the character to make an effective Attack Test, unless he is using a talent such as Bank Shot or True Shot to bypass the cover. A character behind Complete Cover cannot be attacked. However, unless he moves to reveal more of his body, he cannot make any attacks either.

Cover modifiers are applicable against any attacks made against the protected character. Note that there are occasions where cover works to the mutual benefit of both attacker and defender.

Kricklen is being shot at by a bow-armed Theran soldier. Unable to close the distance and engage his foe with his trusty broadsword, the wily t'skrang decides to move to within striking distance next round, using the cover of a large tree to protect him. Accounting for the fact that he moved this round to get to cover, the gamemaster determines that the Swordmaster has Partial Cover, and adds +2 to his Physical Defense. The Theran takes a shot, but misses, his arrow sinking into the bark near the t'skrang's face. Grinning, Kricklen prepares to engage the soldier.

Darkness

Characters sometimes find themselves fighting in the dark without a source of light. If a character does not possess Heat Sight (p.20) or Low-Light Vision (p.20), or another form of night vision or similar sense, then his actions will be impaired. **Darkness modifiers** are different, based on the amount of ambient light present, as follows:

Partial: Partial Darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room on a cloudy day. There is some ambient light, but without a light source the environment is quite dark, with a lot of shadow. A character in Partial Darkness suffers a –1 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Full: Full Darkness is equivalent to a character being in a shuttered room at night, allowing some moonlight to filter in through the cracks. A kaer or cave with some form of luminescence would provide a similar environment; there is almost no ambient light, and there are a lot of deep shadows. A character in Full Darkness suffers a –3 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Complete: Complete Darkness is exactly that—the complete absence of any light; an underground kaer or a cave system with no

COVER DENSITY

Optional Rule: The standard rules for Cover modifiers take into account the amount of cover, but not how dense or hard it is. The optional Cover Density rule adds modifiers for the general hardness or density of the cover, as follows:

Soft: Soft Cover, while able to obscure the character, provides less physical protection. This type of cover includes light brush, thin trees, thick curtains, and the like. A character behind Soft Cover subtracts –1 from his Cover modifier.

Medium: Medium Cover provides the character with a reasonable level of physical protection. This type of cover includes thick brush or hedge, normal-sized trees, over-turned tables, wooden fences, and the like. A character behind Medium Cover make no changes to his Cover modifier.

Hard: Hard Cover provides the highest level of physical protection. This type of cover includes extremely dense brush, large tree trunks, brick or stone fences, and the like. A character behind Hard Cover adds +1 to his Cover modifier.

SITUATION MODIFIERS TABLE

Situation	Action Test Modifier	Defense Modifier*
Blindsided	–	–2
Cover	–	Partial: +2 Full: +4 Complete: NA
Darkness (Blindness; Dazzled)	Partial: –1 Full: –3 Complete: –5	–
Distance	Short: NA Long: –2	–
Harried	–2	–2
Overwhelmed	–3	–3
Impaired Movement	Light: –2 Medium: –3 Hard: –4	–
Knocked Down	–3	–3
Stunned	Simple actions only; Harried (–2)	–2
Surprised	No Action Tests allowed	–3

* Also applies to Social Defense, at the gamemaster's discretion.

luminescence would meet this level of darkness. The entire environment is one big shadow. A character in Complete Darkness suffers a –5 penalty to his sight-based Action Tests.

Characters with Low-Light Vision are not affected by Partial or Full Darkness modifiers; characters with Heat Sight are not affected by Partial, Full, or Complete Darkness modifiers. At the gamemaster's discretion, Darkness modifiers are ignored for Knockdown Tests if the character is in a reasonably open area with good footing.

Darkness modifiers are usually applied as the result of being in a naturally dark environment. The magical darkness created by some spells or creature powers may apply similar or greater Darkness modifiers. Likewise, magical darkness can affect characters with Low-Light Vision or Heat Sight differently from natural darkness. The spell or creature power description normally includes information relating to the application of any Darkness modifiers for that effect. At the gamemaster's discretion, darkness may also affect a character's Movement Rate (see **Impaired Movement**, p.228).

Blindness

A character who is blinded, whether from natural or magical causes, will suffer a Darkness penalty for the duration of the blindness. Blindness penalties tend to be equivalent to Full Darkness if the character still possesses some ability to see, albeit in a very hazy and indistinct manner, otherwise, Complete Darkness.

Dazzled

The opposite of darkness, intense light will sometimes dazzle a character. Some spells or creature powers deliver this effect. The effect of strong light does not tend to have as major an effect as darkness on the character. Dazzled penalties tend to be equivalent to Partial or Full Darkness; only rarely will a light blind a character to the level of Complete Darkness.

DISTANCE

When making a ranged combat attack, the character may incur a penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests due to the distances involved (see **Ranged Combat**, p.230). The Situation modifiers for each of the different range bands are as follows:

Short: There are no Situation modifiers at **Short Range**; the character makes his Attack and Damage Tests as normal.

Long Range: When attacking a target at **Long Range**, the character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack and Damage Tests.

Farliv, an elven Archer, is doing his part for his companions' defense by firing his elven warbow at a band of ork scorchers emerging from the nearby forest. The gamemaster tells Farliv's player that the orks are currently about 96 yards away—Long Range for a warbow. Farliv has a Missile Weapons Step of 12. When firing at the orks at this distance, he subtracts –2 from his Attack and Damage Steps for being at Long Range. This means he makes a Missile Weapons Test at Step 10, due to the –2 penalty. Skillfully firing an arrow at a particularly ugly ork, Farliv easily hits his target. His warbow normally inflicts Step 11 damage. However, at Long Range, he suffers a –2 penalty to the Damage Step and rolls Step 9.

HARRIED

A character who is engaged in close combat by four or more opponents is considered **Harried**. Conditions other than combat, such as the effects of some talents or spells, may also cause the character to become Harried.

A Harried character suffers a –2 penalty to his Action Tests. Additionally, the character subtracts –2 from his Physical and Spell Defense (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). This reflects the "distracted" state of the Harried character and his inability to properly defend himself.

Kricklen is being attacked by five ork scorchers. Because of the number of opponents he is facing, The Swordmaster is Harried—at least until he dispatches a couple of them. While a nuisance, it doesn't prevent Kricklen from quickly removing one of the orks from the fight. Unfortunately, the remaining four orks are still enough to continue causing the t'skrang to incur a Harried penalty. One of the orks has an ability that he

brings to the fight—he knows Battle Shout, which he directs against the Swordmaster. The gamemaster decides Kricklen is sufficiently distracted to subtract –2 from his Social Defense, as well as his other Defense Ratings.

Overwhelmed

Multiple sources of distraction stack to further disorient an already Harried character. A Harried character suffers a further –1 penalty to his Action Tests and subtracts an additional –1 from his Physical and Spell Defense (and possibly Social Defense) for each additional Harried effect he incurs after the first.

Impaired Movement

At the gamemaster's discretion, terrain and obstacles can affect a character's movement. Normal movement in the **Earthdawn** game assumes the character is relatively unimpeded—if this isn't the case, the character's ability to move may be compromised, depending on the environment:

Light: Light brush, narrow alleyways, cramped rooms, Partial Darkness, and similar environments reduce a character's Movement Rate by –2.

Medium: Thick brush or hedges, wooded areas, knee-deep water, overturned tables, crowded streets, Full Darkness, and the like reduce a character's Movement Rate by –3. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters crossing obstacles require a successful Dexterity (5) Test to avoid tripping or having their movement halted.

Hard: Extremely dense underbrush, a packed marketplace, Complete Darkness, waist-deep water, and similar environments reduce a character's Movement rates by Movement Rate by –4. At the gamemaster's discretion, characters crossing obstacles require a successful Dexterity (7) Test to avoid tripping or having their movement halted.

None of these modifiers reduce a character's Movement Rate below 1.

Knocked Down

A character who is **Knocked Down** can still act but his activity is severely impaired while he is prone. While he remains Knocked Down, the character suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests, and subtracts –3 from his Physical and Spell Defense (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). These penalties remain in effect until the character stands up again. A character who is Knocked Down is also effectively Harried, but only the greater Knocked Down penalty is applied; if additional Harried modifiers are caused by other sources, add penalties from being Overwhelmed (p.227) to the Knocked Down penalty.

Standing is a simple matter, but uses the character's Standard Action during the round in which he gets back on his feet (see **Standard Actions**, p.215). A character cannot move in the round that he stands up from being Knocked Down. If he chooses to remain on the ground, a character may crawl at a Movement Rate of 1.

For a moment, things were looking up for Kricklen. He managed to dispatch another ork scorcher, and therefore lost his Harried penalty. Unfortunately, one of the orks gets in a solid blow against him, inflicting a Wound and forcing a Knockdown Test—a test that Kricklen subsequently fails. The Swordmaster is Knocked Down. Now he not only suffers a –3 penalty to his Action Tests—including his next Initiative Test—until he stands up, but his Physical and Spell Defense are also markedly reduced. Still, it could be worse. At least there are no other Swordmasters around to view his plight! Kricklen's player is certain that, if they were, the gamemaster would also apply a penalty to the t'skrang's Social Defense for the embarrassment.

As most require freedom of movement, a character who is Knocked Down is unable to use any combat options until he is standing (see **Combat Options**, p.221), with the exception of the **Jumping Up** combat option, p.224.

Stunned

Some talents and spells can cause a character to become **Stunned**, as can a successful attack with the Attacking to Stun combat option (p.222). During the first round of being Stunned, the character is dazed and temporarily disoriented by the blow. He can only take defensive actions. Additionally, his Movement Rate is reduced to 1. During the entire duration of being Stunned the character is also Harried, treating the effect as one source of distraction for this penalty.

Kricklen gets to his feet, just in time to get struck by a new opponent—an ork Sky Raider, who uses the Attacking to Stun combat option against the t'skrang. Striking the Swordmaster, the ork inflicts more damage than Kricklen's Wound Threshold, leaving him Stunned. Kricklen is temporarily disoriented, and can only take defensive actions. Even worse, he incurs a Harried penalty for the duration of the Stunned effect. Head throbbing, the Swordmaster hopes his comrades will come to his aid… and soon!

Surprised

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, those caught off guard by such a situation are **Surprised**.

Surprised characters cannot take any Actions, not even Free Actions, during the combat round in which they are Surprised. They also subtract –3 from their Physical and Spell Defense during the same round (in certain situations the gamemaster may also apply this penalty to the character's Social Defense). A character who is Surprised is also effectively Blindsided, but only the greater Surprised penalty is applied; don't use both penalties. The effect of surprise ends as soon as the combat round ends.

To determine whether a character is Surprised, he makes a Perception Test against a Difficulty Number based on the situation. This is usually equal to the lowest Dexterity Step among the characters or creatures encountered, but is otherwise determined by the gamemaster. If the test succeeds, the character can act or react as normal. If the test fails, the character is Surprised.

Kricklen is in serious trouble. He is facing three ork scorchers, one of whom has proved to be a Sky Raider, and has Stunned the Swordmaster. However, unknown to the orks, Kricklen's comrades have returned, sneaking up to within striking distance of the orks. The gamemaster makes a Perception Test for the orks to see if they notice the t'skrang's comrades approaching—none of them do. The orks are Surprised as the Swordmaster's fellow adventurers leap out from the nearby undergrowth. The surprise is total—even Kricklen, in his dazed and injured state, is Surprised.

Types of Combat

Though most types of combat use the same basic Attack and Damage Test procedure, some alter that by taking into account the situation, the environment, the type of weapon, the distance between opponents, and so on. There are three primary types of combat: close, ranged, and spell combat. Within each combat type there may be one or more types of attack.

Most forms of combat fall into one of the following categories:

Close combat: Melee and unarmed attacks.
Ranged combat: Missile and thrown attacks.
Spell combat: Spell and magical power attacks.

The following sections describe each type of combat in more detail, including mounted, aerial, and creature combat.

CLOSE COMBAT

Close combat is any type of physical combat that occurs within reach of the combatants. This is usually a 2 yard distance between opponents, but some longer weapons allow for an even greater reach. The Melee Weapons and Unarmed Combat skills and talents are those most commonly used in close combat.

The two types of close combat are:

Melee attacks: Made by hitting an opponent with a hand-held melee weapon, such as a broadsword or a battle-axe (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.248). Melee attacks are most commonly made using the Melee Weapons skill or talent.

Unarmed attacks: Made by an attacker punching, biting, kicking or generally employing his limbs in an injurious fashion against his opponent. Unarmed attacks are most commonly made using the Unarmed Combat skill or talent.

Target Cover

Opponents who are protected or concealed by some form of cover, such as dense brush, a low wall, a large rock, or a tree, gain a Cover modifier, and are generally harder to hit in close combat. See **Cover**, p.226, for more information.

Maximum Number of Attackers

A maximum of six human-sized opponents can attack a character in close combat. Any time four or more attackers set upon a character at the same time, he is considered Harried. The character remains Harried until fewer than four attackers surround him. Note that some small creatures or pack animals can swarm an opponent, allowing more attacks against their opponent than normal (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 147). Regardless of the number of combatants, the relative positions of the attackers appears on the Melee Combat Positions diagram, below.

MELEE ATTACKS

Combatants attacking each other with swords, daggers, staves, clubs, or other melee weapons, while in close proximity to each other are said to be in **melee combat**. When making **melee attacks**, characters most commonly use their Melee Weapons skill or talent, although other skills and talents can be used in melee combat—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing a melee attack.

Most characters are only allowed a single melee attack each round, as a Standard Action. However, some skills and talents, like Second Attack or Second Weapon, allow the character one or more additional melee attacks as a Simple Action. Generally, a character must be within 2 yards of his opponent to make a melee attack. At the gamemaster's discretion, some longer weapons may allow the attacker a longer reach.

Melee Weapons

Statistics for many different melee weapons can be found in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.248. This includes the weapon's Damage Step, weight, cost and general Availability. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon; some of these rules supplement or supersede those described in this chapter. Some melee weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements suffers a penalty to attack tests with that weapon (see **Weapons**, p.248) Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength Step to the melee weapon's Damage Step to determine the Damage Step used for Damage Tests.

Entangling Weapons

Some weapons, such as whips, not only cause damage to those struck, but also wrap around the victim, preventing him from acting. These weapons are noted in their description as **entangling weapons** (see the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.248), along with their Entangling Difficulty. If the attacker achieves a Good or better result on his Attack Test with an entangling weapon, he entangles his opponent. The entangled character is considered Harried for any actions other than attempts to break free of the entangling weapon. To free himself, the target must make a successful Strength or Dexterity Test against the weapon's Entangling Difficulty. If he was holding a one-handed bladed weapon when struck, he may add the weapon's Damage Step as a bonus to this test (this will help to cut him free, ruining the entangling weapon in the process).

FLEEING FROM COMBAT

Optional Rule: Characters engaged in close combat need to be faster than their enemies to break away from the fight unscathed. The optional Fleeing From Combat rule reflects the difficulty of doing this in the middle of battle. A character who wants to move to get away from a close combat fight he is involved in can only do so if his Initiative Test result is higher than that of his opponents.

Note that this rule does not prevent the character's opponents from following him, it simply makes it harder for him to get out of the fight in the first place.

Serafino, a human Swordmaster, is fighting two ork scorchers. The orks have managed to wound him with their battle-axes, so Serafino decides it is best to get away from them for the moment. Sadly, Serafino's Initiative Test result is only a 4, while the ork scorchers have Initiative Test results of 7 and 9—the Swordmaster won't be able to use his Combat Move this round. In the next round, Serafino rolls a 14 on his Initiative Test while the orks get a 5 and a 2. Since his Initiative Test result is higher, Serafino can flee from this fight, which he does, taking the opportunity to hide behind his friend Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior. Spitting curses at the departing Swordmaster, the ork scorchers decide to pursue him, but quickly change their minds when they realize they are going to have to deal with the obsidiman Warrior first!



Improvised Melee Weapons

Sometimes a character will want to hit another character with an object not normally intended as a melee weapon, such as a chair, a tankard, a rock, or something else again. The gamemaster determines the statistics for this improvised weapon, including any Strength Minimum and the item's Damage Step. Because of the unbalanced nature of the weapon, the character suffers a –2 penalty to his Attack Tests when wielding the item. If the improvised weapon is ablaze (such as a lit torch, for example), a Pathetic Attack Test Result extinguishes it.

UNARMED ATTACKS

Some characters disdain the use of weapons when fighting their battles, preferring instead to use their bare hands or feet (or tails, in the case of t'skrang). Fighting this way is called **unarmed combat**. When making **unarmed attacks**, characters most commonly use their Unarmed Combat skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used in unarmed combat—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing an unarmed attack. Most characters are only allowed a single unarmed attack each round, as a Standard Action. Some skills or talents, like Frenzy, may allow the character one or more additional unarmed attacks as a Simple Action.

Most unarmed attacks are considered to be punches or kicks, using the character's unmodified Strength Step as the Damage Step for a successful Attack Test. Some characters possess racial advantages, like the t'skrang Tail Combat ability (p.24), or have the ability to use talents to improve the damage they inflict, such as the Claw Shape talent. In order to make an unarmed attack, a character must be within 2 yards of his opponent. Characters battling opponents in unarmed combat may forego their Standard Action attack that round to use a special option: Grappling.

Grappling

A character can attempt to wrestle with an opponent in place of making his Standard Action unarmed Attack Test (or Tests) that round. Unless the character possesses an ability that specifically allows the use of this option, when attempting a **Grappling attack** the character makes an Unarmed Combat Test against the target's Physical Defense. On a Good Result, the character successfully grapples his opponent; both characters fall prone in the same hex and are Knocked Down for any actions other than unarmed attacks against each other or attempts to break free. On an Excellent Result, the character initiating the attack may remain standing and is only considered Harried instead of Knocked Down. The result of the character's Unarmed Combat Test becomes the Grappling Difficulty of that attack. Grappling attacks inflict no direct damage to the target, therefore the attacker does not make a Damage Test.

The target of a successful Grappling attack can try to break free of the attacker's hold. While Knocked Down, those involved in the Grappling attack incur no penalties to any Action Tests they make to maintain or break free of a hold with their grappled opponent. The grappled target may make an Unarmed Combat or Strength Test against the Grappling Difficulty of the attack. If the test succeeds, the target breaks free of the grappling character's hold. At the gamemaster's discretion, any other action performed by the grappled target must beat the Grappling Difficulty to be successful. For example, a grappled t'skrang may attempt a tail attack, but must beat the Grappling Difficulty to hit. A grappled magician may try to cast a spell that requires neither threads nor gestures, but must use the Grappling Difficulty for his Spellcasting Test.

Maintaining a Grapple Hold

Once a character makes a successful Grappling attack against an opponent, he can maintain the hold by declaring that he is doing so as his Standard Action during consecutive rounds. The character may choose to let go of his grappled opponent at any time. While grappling his opponent, the only other option the character may make is to establish a better hold on his opponent. The character may choose to make another Unarmed Combat Test against his opponent in order to establish a better hold; this is resolved as normal, however, if the character fails the new Grappling attack his hold has been broken and his opponent is free to act as normal. Both parties remain Knocked Down until they stand up, however.

WEAPON REACH

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters and players may desire a little more "realism" for their **Earthdawn** combats by taking into account the relative reach of weapons in combat. The optional Weapon Reach rule provides a method of handling this.

A character engaged in close combat against an opponent wielding a weapon with a larger Size is generally at a disadvantage against that opponent. Even if his Initiative Test result is higher than his opponent's, he will still be hampered by his opponent maneuvering to keep him at weapon's length.

The character with the smaller-Size weapon suffers a –1 Reach penalty to close combat Attack Tests made against an opponent with a larger-Size weapon. Unarmed attacks (limbs, tails) are considered to be Size 1 weapons. The character with the larger-Size weapon gains no benefit—his opponent is no harder to hit, nor is his own ability to attack impaired.

In order to "seize" the advantage over a character with a larger-Size weapon, a character must get inside his reach. This is similar to the Going Inside a Shield combat option (see **combat options**, above), but is directed against the character's weapon, rather than his shield.

The character with the Reach penalty declares he is Going Inside a Weapon (Shield). All of the rules for employing the Going Inside a Shield combat option apply, except the character subtracts his opponent's weapon Size from his Initiative Test result to determine the outcome. If he fails to win Initiative, the –2 penalty for attempting the Going Inside a Shield combat option is added to his –1 Reach penalty, for a total –3 penalty to his Attack Tests against his opponent that round.

If the character is successful with his attempt to "seize" the advantage, the roles are reversed, and his opponent now incurs the –1 Reach penalty until he, in turn, can "regain" the advantage. This differs from the Going Inside a Shield option, which is only effective for one round, by lasting until advantage is won back or the fight is over. Such jockeying for advantage may occur several times during a fight.

Characters fighting with equal-Size weapons gain no advantage over each other. A character fighting with two weapons determines his initial advantage based on the highest Size among the weapons he is wielding.

RANGED COMBAT

Ranged combat is best described as being any type of physical combat that occurs beyond the reach of the combatants. Normally, this is reserved for weapons that project a missile, or are thrown, toward a target more than 2 yards (1 hex) away.

The two types of ranged combat are:

Missile attacks: Made by firing a missile weapon, such as a bow or a sling (see **Missile Weapon Descriptions**, p.253). Missile attacks are most commonly made using the Missile Weapons skill or talent.

GRAPPLING OUT-SIZED OPPONENTS

Optional Rule: Sometimes Grappling attacks will occur between obviously out-sized opponents, for example, a troll attempting to grapple a windling. Because the physical size differences are considerable, the gamemaster may decide to compensate for the relative size of the combatants by employing the **Grappling Out-sized Opponents** optional rule.

There are many ways of managing this in the context of the game: comparing the relative sizes or Toughness values of the combatants, applying penalties based on Strength differences, and so on. The Grappling Out-sized Opponents rule tries to keep things simple, as follows:

- Once a successful Grappling attack has been made against an opponent, the smaller of the two combatants is considered Harried (see **Situation Modifiers**, p.408).

The gamemaster may also consider using the Overwhelmed rule, p.227, giving very small combatants an additional penalty to compensate for extreme size difference.

Targ Boneslicer, a troll Sky Raider, has made a successful Grappling attack against Poorht, a windling Thief. Because of the relative difference in their sizes, the gamemaster decides to use the Grappling Out-sized Opponents optional rule and tells Poorht's player that the windling is now Harried, meaning he suffers a –2 penalty to his Unarmed Combat or Strength Test to break free of the troll's hold. Targ's player points out to the gamemaster that Targ is an 8 foot tall troll, considerably larger than the somewhat miniscule (by comparison) windling. Taking this into account, the gamemaster decides to invoke the Overwhelmed rule and gives Poorht an additional Harried penalty for the extremes in stature. This means that Poorht now needs to make an Unarmed Combat or Strength Test with a –3 penalty in order to break free of the troll's grip. Just as well this is a friendly contest!

Thrown attacks: Made by hurling a throwing weapon, such as a flight dagger or a throwing axe (see **Throwing Weapon Descriptions**, p.254). Thrown attacks are most commonly made using the Throwing Weapons skill or talent.

Weapon Range

All ranged combat attacks are effective only up to a certain distance. The two range categories are: **Short** and **Long**. Missile and thrown weapons cannot be used to attack a target beyond Long Range. A character making a ranged combat attack will often incur a Distance penalty, based on whether his target is at Short or Long Range (see **Distance**, p.227). The range statistics for missile and throwing weapons appear in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.254. The minimum range for most missile or throwing weapons is 2 yards (1 hex). If an attacker is within 2 yards of his opponent, he cannot attack him with a ranged combat attack.

Firing Into a Melee

Characters will sometimes want to make a ranged combat attack against an opponent engaged in close combat. This hazardous practice is known as **Firing Into a Melee**, and can result in the attacker inadvertently hitting an ally or a companion instead of the desired target. To resolve a missile attack fired into a melee, use the following procedure.

The number of characters or creatures standing between the attacker and his designated target is added to the target's Physical Defense. The attacker then makes his Missile or Throwing Weapons Test against this modified Physical Defense. If the test succeeds, the missile or thrown weapon hits the target, inflicting damage as normal. If the test fails, the attacker compares the Attack Test Result to the Physical Defense of each character or creature standing between himself and the original target, starting with the closest character. If the test succeeds, that character is struck instead of the target. If the test fails, the attacker continues on to the next target in order, and so on until he strikes a character, or all possible intervening targets have been tested for a hit.

The number of intervening characters or creatures is not determined simply by drawing a straight line between the attacker and his target. Because of the fluid nature of combat, those characters freely able to move within 2 yards of the path between attacker and opponent are considered eligible targets to be struck. This accounts for intervening characters unexpectedly Stepping into the line of fire during the time the attacker prepares and looses a missile or hurls his thrown weapon. The gamemaster determines how many characters or creatures are standing between the attacker and his target, taking the fluid nature of combat into account.

Farliv, an elven 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 there are five other characters shifting back and forth in the way, increasing the Difficulty Number of the Attack Test by +5 to 13. Farliv makes a Missile Weapons Test, with a result of 9; he misses his target. The gamemaster compares the Attack Test Result against the Physical Defense of each of the five intervening characters, starting with the one closest to Farliv. The closest character is an enemy gamemaster character 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 8. Farliv's arrow strikes Jerreck, and now the Archer suddenly wishes he had the silver tongue of a Troubadour to explain the mistake to his friend.

Target Cover

Targets who are concealed or protected by some form of cover, such as dense brush, a low wall, a large rock, or a tree, gain a Cover modifier and are harder to hit (see **Cover**, p.226).

MISSILE ATTACKS

A combatant attacking a target character from a distance with a bow, crossbow, sling, or other missile weapon is said to be in **missile combat**. When making **missile attacks**, characters most commonly use their Missile Weapons skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used—this is normally noted in the ability description as allowing a missile attack.

Most characters are only allowed a single missile attack each round, as a Standard Action. However, some skills and talents, like Secon Shot, allow the character one or more additional missile attacks as a Simple Action. As noted under **Weapon Range**, above, to make a missile attack, a character must be no closer than than 2 yards (1 hex) from his opponent. Also, the distance to the target may modify the character's Attack and Damage Tests (see **Distance**, p.227).

Missile Weapons

Statistics for different missile weapons can be found in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.253. This includes the weapon's Damage Step, range categories, weight, cost and general Availabil-

ity. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon. Some missile weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements suffers a penalty to attack tests with that weapon (see **Weapons**, p.248). Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength Step to the missile weapon's Damage Step to determine the Damage Step used for Damage Tests.

Thrown Attacks

A combatant hurling a weapon, such as a dagger, a throwing axe, or a spear, at a target character from a distance is said to be in **thrown combat**. When making **thrown attacks**, characters most commonly use their Throwing Weapons skill or talent, although some other skills and talents can be used—this is normally noted in the ability's description as allowing a thrown attack. Most characters are only allowed a single thrown attack each round, as a Standard Action. However, some talents, like Second Shot, allow the character to make additional thrown attacks. As noted under **Weapon Range**, to make a thrown attack, a character must be no closer than 2 yards away from his opponent. The distance to the target may modify the character's Attack and Damage Tests (see **Distance**, p.227).

Throwing Weapons

Statistics for different throwing weapons can be found in the **Goods and Services** chapter, p.254. This includes the weapon's Damage Step, range categories, weight, cost and general Availability. Any special rules relating to use of the weapon are detailed in the description for that weapon; some of these rules supplement or supersede those described in this chapter. Some throwing weapons require the character to have a minimum Strength or Dexterity value in order to wield them effectively. A character who does not meet either of these requirements is considered Harried until he drops or stops using the weapon, or improves his Attribute value (see **Improving Attribute Values**, p.237). Unless otherwise noted in the weapon description, characters add their Strength Step to the throwing weapon's Damage Step to determine the Damage Step used for Damage Tests (see p.399).

Entangling Weapons

Some thrown weapons, like bolas and nets are entangling weapons. See **Melee Weapons**, p.248, for details on Entangling attacks and how they work.

Throwing Objects

As in life, characters will sometimes want to hurl objects that are not designed to be thrown, such as rocks, flasks of oil, or even furniture, at an opponent. The gamemaster must determine the Damage Step and Range of objects not shown on the Throwing Weapons Table. The character makes a Throwing Weapons Test with a –2 penalty, due to the unbalanced nature of the object being thrown. If a character is throwing the object at another character, he makes the Throwing Weapons Test against the target's Physical Defense Rating. If throwing an object at a specific target area, the character makes a Throwing Weapons (7) Test. If the test succeeds, the character hits the target and makes a Damage Test, as normal. If the object misses the target, it (or its component parts) may scatter.

Determining Scatter

If a character throws an object at a target and misses, the gamemaster rolls a D6 (no Bonus Die) and consults the Scatter Diagram to determine the direction in which the object actually travels. To determine exactly how far away from the target the object lands, the gamemaster subtracts the Throwing Weapons Test Result from the Difficulty Number; the net difference



becomes the Scatter Step. The gamemaster makes a Scatter Test, the result of which is the distance in feet that the object scattered from the target.

Targ Boneslicer, a troll Sky Raider, heaves a large boulder at an enemy troll. Targ rolls a 6 on his Throwing Weapons Test against his opponent's Physical Defense of 10—he fails to hit his target. The gamemaster rolls a D6 to see in which direction the boulder went and gets a scatter direction of six. He then makes a Step 4/D6 Scatter Test (10–6=4) to determine the distance in which the boulder scatters from the target, with a result of 5. The boulder lands harmlessly some five feet beyond the target. Fragments of rock fly loose, but nothing that causes harm. Targ is really upset, however.

Spell Combat

Spell combat involves those spell attacks made against an opponent using spell magic, or a similar magical power, and usually requiring the magician to make a Spellcasting Test against his opponent's Spell Defense. Spells targeted against an opponent's Spell Defense also allow the possibility of achieving an Armor-Defeating Hit with the magician's Attack Test (his Spellcasting Test). Most combat spells are easily differentiated by the fact that they often involve making an Effect Test as a Damage Test, as noted in the spell description. This is not always the case, but is a good rule-of-thumb for the gamemaster to apply when determining what constitutes a combat spell.

See the **Spells** chapter, p.140, for more information about casting spells and descriptions of the many different spells available to magicians in the **Earthdawn** game.

Casting Into a Melee

Characters will sometimes want to make a spell combat attack against an opponent engaged in close combat, who becomes more difficult to hit. The number of characters or creatures standing between the attacker and his designated target is added to the target's Spell Defense. The attacker makes his Spellcasting Test against the target's modified Spell Defense. If the test succeeds, the spell hits the target and takes effect. Otherwise, it fails.

Broomé, the windling Elementalist, casts his Earth Darts spell at an opponent engaged in melee combat with his companions. The target he chooses has a Spell Defense of 9, but there are four other characters between Broomé and his target, increasing the Difficulty Number of the Attack Test by +4 to 13.

MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted Combat is common in the world of **Earthdawn**. Large tribes of nomads and ork scorchers roam the plains of Barsaive, and magic has forged a whole Discipline dedicated to fighting while mounted, the Cavalryman. Mounted Combat shares most rules with regular combat, but this section explains special rules that apply to Mounted Combat. Note that there are abilities that tie into the rules for Mounted Combat to alleviate its disadvantages or improve its advantages, most of them found in the Cavalryman Discipline.

A mounted character is referred to as a **rider**, an animal that has a rider as a **mount**.

MOUNT TRAINING

The amount of training a mount has determines how easy or difficult it is for the rider to handle it, during combat or daily travels. There are three states of training a mount can have. **Untrained** mounts are not used to carrying Name-givers on their backs, and are often as wild as found in nature. They can hardly be ridden and spook away from combat, but some abilities such as Dominate Beast or Tame Mount allow a rider to control them quickly. **Trained** mounts are the state mounts are usually sold in and allow riders. While combat will not spook them, their main purpose is for travel. **Combat-trained** mounts are accustomed to the sound of the battlefield and trained to ride into or straight at other creatures on the rider's command, or even attack them. They are usually more expensive than trained mounts.

GETTING AND STAYING MOUNTED

Mounting an animal is a Standard Action and requires the animal to be a trained mount. An untrained mount requires the character to first make a Trick Riding (mount's Social Defense) Test.

Getting off of a mount is a Simple Action.

A rider may jump off his mount to attack in close combat; or he may throw himself off his mount to grapple (see p.230) a target. If attempting to grapple a target this way, the rider suffers Step 5/D8 damage from the impact of the fall. If the grappling attempt is successful, the target also suffers Step 5/d8 damage.

Mounted Knockdown Tests

If the mount fails a Knockdown Test, the rider is also automatically Knocked Down as he falls off his mount. This fall and any other event that knocks a rider off a mount cause the rider Step 5/D8 falling damage (an exception applies when using flying mounts, see **Aerial Combat**, p.234). If the rider alone fails a Knockdown Test, he falls off his mount, but the mount is unaffected.

The gamemaster may disallow a rider the use of some magical abilities that allow for enhanced Knockdown Tests. Most of these are based on spells that bind the character to solid earth or another object. Other abilities like the Sure Mount talent provide enhanced Knockdown Tests specifically for the purpose of staying mounted.

MOUNTED COMBAT SEQUENCE

The combat sequence for mounted characters is the same as the normal combat sequence (see p.214), but some special rules apply.

Both mount and rider handle their Actions independently, they both have a Standard Action, but the mount acts on the rider's Initiative if trained. Untrained mounts act independently from their rider, which makes combat difficult at best, impossible at worst, as the mount moves and acts independently from the rider.

A mount that did not have a rider at the beginning of the round, when actions were announced, changes its Initiative to that of the rider once mounted, but cannot take Actions it has already used up (in most cases, Standard Actions and Movement).



MOUNTED MOVEMENT

For the purpose of Movement only, a rider and his mount are treated as one character as long as the rider controls the mount (see **Mounted Combat Sequence** above). While mounted, a mount's Movement Rate is used instead of the rider's Movement Rate. A character cannot use his own Movement Rate in a round in which he has used the Movement Rate of a mount, even if he dismounts; it is simply assumed he has already moved—he has invested the effort normally put into his own Movement into directing the mount.

Additionally, characters not familiar with their mounts have to succeed at a Trick Riding (mount's Social Defense) Test to take their mounts into (but not away from) combat; Cavalrymen and Beastmasters are assumed to be familiar with their mounts at all times.

Running and Splitting Movement

A rider can instruct his mount to use the Running combat option (see p.225). Doing this uses up the mount's Standard Action, not the character's. Note that using the Running combat option causes the mount 1 Strain and to receive the Harried modifier (see p.227); the rider is unaffected by these. When using the Splitting Movement combat option (see p.226), only the rider is affected by the Harried modifier and takes the Strain, not the mount, as the mount does not put any effort into coordinating its Movement.

Note that in many instances of Mounted Combat (see **Charging Attacks** below), both of these combat options will be used, so both mount and rider each take 1 Strain and are Harried. Some abilities of the Cavalryman Discipline (see p.45) serve to alleviate these conditions.

CHARGING ATTACKS

Charging Attacks are attacks made in close combat that have a mounted character use the momentum of the mount's movement to deliver devastating attacks. A Charging Attack requires a combat-trained mount or a successful Trick Riding (mount's Social Defense) Test.



Krarg rides a mount with Movement Rate 8. He surveys the battlefield for opponents he can target with a Charging Attack. His opponents are at distances of 5, 10, and 11 hexes from him. To make a Charging Attack, he has to make his mount use the Running combat option to move at least 9 hexes (more than its normal movement Rate of 8), so he can attack two opponents, the ones 10 and 11 hexes away, with a Charging Attack. He chooses to attack the closer opponent, moves 9 hexes to be adjacent to him, and his attack is successful. After the attack, he is directly adjacent to that opponent. He could have used the Splitting Movement combat option to move another 7 hexes away from that opponent, which might have been a good idea to set up for the next Charging Attack.

To make a Charging Attack, the rider has to make his mount use the Running combat option (see p.225) and move towards the target in a relatively straight line at a rate **higher than the mount's Movement Rate**. If the rider plans to move after the attack, by using the Splitting Movement combat option, it also has to be in a relatively straight line.

A successful attack during a Charging Attack has the mount's Strength Step added to the Damage Step due to the high momentum of the impact.

At the same time, the high momentum can cause the rider to be thrown off his mount or lose his weapon. After a successful Charging Attack, a rider makes a Strength Test against the target's Toughness Step to determine any ill effects. If the test fails, a rider using a spear or lance-type weapon is thrown off his mount, suffering Step 5/D8 of falling damage and becoming Knocked Down. A rider using a shorter melee weapon like a sword or mace loses his weapon. Unarmed riders suffer no ill effects. Some weapons are not suited for Charging Attacks and may shatter on impact (refer to the weapons' descriptions, p.248). If a weapon shatters, the rider is not knocked off his mount and does not lose the weapon – he retains only a fractured piece of it anyway.

Charging Attacks do not allow typical forms of additional attacks, such as the Second Attack, Second Weapon, or Momentum Attack talent or skills, to be used against a target, as rider and mount move past it too fast and put all their effort into the Charging Attack. Only when ending their movement next to a target can these abilities be used. Several specialized talents allow for additional attacks during Charging Attacks, however.

Clashing Charges

If two riders both make Charging Attacks against each other, they add the Strength Steps of both their mounts to the Damage Step, not just the Strength Step of their own mount.

Mounted Weapon Use

Mounted characters can use long weaponry like lances or spears differently from other characters due to their special posture and the ability to hook them to their armor, saddle, or stick them under their arms. They may use weapons up to their two-handed Size limit with one hand. This situation is only beneficial when there is enough room to maneuver or while charging. If the mount would not be able to move at least 1 hex (regardless of if it actually does), the rider receives the difference between the weapon's Size and his one-handed Size Limit as a penalty to all Attack and Damage Tests with the weapon, as it has now become unwieldy in the close-quarter fight.

Mount Attacks

Combat-trained mounts may be directed by their rider to use their Standard Action to make attacks of their own, employing the Steps and abilities found in the creature's description. Mounts not trained for combat may also make attacks, but these are not controlled by the rider, and the mount usually only attacks if threatened, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Aerial Combat

Some creatures and characters, including windlings, are capable of flight. The rules governing combat between characters and flying creatures requires additional explanation, as flight introduces some additional considerations into the **Earthdawn** game.

Flying Movement

The Flying Movement rate of creatures appears with their statistics in the **Creatures** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 145. Flying creatures are not limited in their ability to move. They can freely move vertically or horizontally as part of their normal movement. Flying creatures or characters can use combat options as normal. Unless stated otherwise, flying creatures do not need to use their Movement Rate to stay airborne and can hover in place.

Swooping Attacks

Some flying creatures and characters prefer to make close combat Swooping attacks against their opponents. To make a **Swooping Attack**, a creature or character must split his movement by using the Splitting Movement combat option (see p.226). The swooping attacker flies into close combat using a portion of his Movement Rate, makes his attacks, and flies off using the remainder of his

HANDLING MOUNTED COMBAT

Mounted Combat can seem difficult to handle during the game due to the requirements to make a Charging Attack and the many combat options involved. This guide presents the typical procedures for different types of mounted attacks and suggests some terms for identifying them during a game in which Mounted Combat frequently occurs.

Stationary attacks do not involve movement. The rider simply attacks from his mount's back, and the mount can also make attacks. Some talents, such as Down Strike or Wheeling Defense, enhance stationary Mounted Combat. There are no extra combat options or modifiers to consider.

Mobile attacks are those where the mount moves before or after the attack. They share a lot of traits with stationary attacks, but some talents like Wheeling Defense cannot be used to full effect. There are no modifiers for the attacker, but the defender may have to delay or reserve his action to attack in close combat in return (if his Initiative is higher and he cannot move far enough on his turn to reach the mount, which often has a higher Movement Rate). If his Initiative is lower than the attacker's and the attacker moves away after attacking, the defender often cannot attack in close combat due to not being able to follow.

Charging Attacks require the mount to use the Running combat option, using up its Standard Action. It cannot Attack and has to move more than its Movement Rate towards the target. The rider's Damage is enhanced by the mount's Strength Step and possibly the Charge talent. The mount's Movement ends next to the target. The mount is Harried and takes 1 Strain, unless Cavalryman abilities circumvent this. A defender can Set Against a Charge to strike the attacker before being hit and may profit from the momentum if successful.

Ride-by attacks use the Splitting Movement combat option, the mount moves before and after the attack so the mount's Movement does not end next to the target. The mount may attack. Splitting Movement causes the adept to be Harried and take 1 Strain, although Cavalryman abilities can circumvent this. Damage is not increased as with a Charging Attack. The defender can delay or reserve actions as with a mobile attack (see above).

All-out Charging Attacks use both Splitting Movement and Running to allow for a Charging Attack that does not end next to the target. The mount moves more than its Movement Rate towards the target, and up to what remains of its doubled Movement Rate away; it cannot attack. Damage is enhanced as per Charging Attacks, and both mount and rider take 1 Strain and are Harried, except where abilities often found with the Cavalryman circumvent this. The defender may Set Against a Charge. The Wheeling Attack talent allows a character to circumvent the requirement to move before the attack, but the mount has to move the full distance during the round, usually after the attack.

Movement Rate. Characters who wish to attack swooping creatures or characters in close combat must have a higher Initiative Result than their opponent that round and use a Reserved Action (see p.216) to intercept the attacker.

MOUNTED AERIAL COMBAT

Mounted Combat involving flying mounts is handled the same as mounted combat using non-flying mounts. The rider may make Swooping Attacks just as any other flying creature or character, and may make flying Charging Attacks per the same rules. Note that the mechanisms for handling attack and defense are the same for Mounted Combat involving split movement and Swooping Attacks. The only difference is Knockdown Tests failed by characters riding flying creatures, see below.

KNOCKDOWN

Flying creatures and characters can be knocked out of the sky. A flying character or creature who fails a Knockdown Test is Knocked Down to the ground and may take Falling damage from the height fallen (see **Falling Damage** in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109). Once the character or creature stands back up it can again take to the air.

If a character riding a flying mount fails a Knockdown Test and would be knocked off his mount, he receives Falling Damage as described above instead of the normal Step 5/D8 Falling Damage for riding a land-based mount.

Long Falls

The gamemaster may decide that a creature or character flying at a considerable height or with special physical properties or features does not hit the ground after failing a Knockdown Test. Instead, they plummet towards the ground over several rounds, losing an appropriate level of height in the process. There are no simple rules to determine how fast a creature falls each round; variables include body weight, wind, wings that help slow the descent, and so on. Flying creatures and characters that have been Knocked Down, but haven't yet hit the ground, can spend their Standard Action to make a Dexterity (6) Test to "stand up". If the test succeeds, the creature or character stops falling.

A creature or character that is unconscious and falling makes a Recovery Test after one round of uncontrolled descent, as if he were being roused by another character (see **Effects of Injury**, p.220). If the creature or character manages to regain consciousness, he can attempt to make a Dexterity (6) Test to "stand up" as noted earlier, otherwise he continues to fall until he hits the ground or is somehow rescued.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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 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, and expand on, his reputation. 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 chapter describes how to build your character's legend in **Earthdawn**.

Earning Legend Points

As a character survives encounters and accomplishes group or individual adventure goals, he gains in experience. As in real life, this experience generally makes him smarter and more capable, and eventually allows him to learn new abilities, all of which allow him to survive more dangerous encounters. Character experience in **Earthdawn** is measured using Legend Points. The gamemaster awards Legend Points based on a character's accomplishments and other factors during an adventure (see the **Gamemastering** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 82). Accumulated Legend Points allow characters to improve their talents, skills, Attributes, and so on.

Characters earn Legend Points for performing specific types of actions, including:

Achieving Adventure Goals: For example, if the adventuring group's goal is to uncover treachery against the Throalic throne, characters in the group earn Legend Points as they expose the traitors to loyal authorities. A 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.

Conflicts: In **Earthdawn**, the characters face dangerous situations on a regular basis, facing deadly opponents and creatures. Defeating these earns the characters Legend Points. However, defeating an opponent does not necessarily mean killing him. If an adventuring group removes an opponent as an obstacle to the adventure goal without resorting to violence, characters in the group should earn the same Legend Points as if they had defeated their 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 a character takes or suggests an action on which the success of the adventure clearly turned, the character may receive Legend Points for that individual deed.

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 a player's roleplaying makes it more difficult for the gamemaster to run the game, his character may not receive Legend Points for roleplaying.

Player Versus Character Experience

Players should not confuse "character experience" with "player experience." Player experience is not measured in game terms; it simply refers to what a player learns about the game by playing it.

For example, a player may learn how his character should behave in Throal to avoid getting into trouble, or may develop more effective combat tactics against specific monsters. However, his character may not be privy to this information, and during the game the player should avoid having his character take actions based on information the character would not actually know.

Lessons such as these may benefit a character by allowing him to survive longer or accomplish more, but this playing experience does not directly affect the Attributes, talents, skills, or characteristics the character uses in the **Earthdawn** game.

Tallying Legend Points

Each time the gamemaster awards a character Legend Points (see **Earning Legend Points**, above) they are added to the character's Current and Total Legend Points tallies. Each time a character spends Legend Points, they are deducted from his Current Legend Points tally.

Current Legend Points

As a character earns Legend Points, a running total is kept of how many points he has available to him to use for improvements. This total is the character's **Current Legend Points**. Conversely, each time a character spends Legend Points, his Current Legend Points are updated by subtracting the points spent from the total.

The updated total after each change in the character's Legend Point tally is recorded on his Character Record Sheet.

Total Legend Points

In addition to keeping a running Current Legend Points total, which rises and falls as the character earns and spends Legend Points, a player should also keep a grand total of all the Legend Points his character has ever earned.

Each time a character earns (but not spends) Legend Points he adds to this cumulative total. This is the character's **Total Legend Points**, and is recorded separately on his Character Record Sheet. The character never reduces his Total Legend Points; they are mainly used to determine his Legendary Status—how notable his legend is as it develops, and how it affects others as a result (see **Legendary Status**, p.244).

Thom Hammerblade has returned home from his most recent adventure. He earned 1,200 Legend Points for this venture into the unknown. Before he embarked on his journey, Thom had a running total of 300 Current Legend Points and 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 spends 500 Legend Points to increase one of his Talent Ranks, his Current Legend Points would be reduced to 1,000, but his Total Legend Points would remain unaltered at 3,200.

SPENDING LEGEND POINTS

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute Values, Talent and Skill Ranks, to refresh their Karma Points, to weave threads to magical items, and to improve other abilities, as explained below.

IMPROVING ATTRIBUTE VALUES

Characters may spend Legend Points to improve their Attribute Values. The Legend Point cost for improving an Attribute Value increases for each additional point that the Attribute is increased. For example, improving a character's Strength Value by +1 costs 800 Legend Points; improving it again by another point (+2 total) costs 1,300 Legend Points; and so on. Consult the Attribute Increase Table to determine the Legend Point cost of improving an Attribute.

While improving Attribute Values may seem an expensive proposition, they are definitely worth considering. Improving an Attribute Value potentially increases the Attribute Step and also improves those characteristics, including talents and skills, associated with that Attribute. For example, increasing a character's Strength value by +1 increases the character's Carrying Capacity and may increase the character's Strength Step, increasing the effectiveness of the character's Strength-based talents and skills.

While similar to improving Talent or Skill Ranks, the following considerations and conditions must be taken into account:

- No Attribute Value may be increased by more than +3.
- Only one Attribute can be improved at a time.
- The character must complete a number of days of training equal to his current Attribute Step, during which time he must be rested and in good health (not suffering from any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds).

Kricklen wants to increase his Dexterity Value. His current Dexterity Step is 7, so he embarks on seven days of intensive training.

- Attribute training costs money. Each week of training costs a character an average fee equal to his current Attribute Step×10 silver pieces. At the gamemaster's discretion, this fee may double or triple if the character wants private tuition.

Kricklen's training will cost him 70 silver pieces per day, based on his current Dexterity Step of 7. For seven weeks of training, this totals 490 silver pieces. Kricklen knows it's worth the money, so pays willingly.

- The character must have sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the cost of the Attribute Value increase (see the Attribute Increase Table).

Kricklen has completed his training. This is the second time he has improved his Dexterity Value (a total of +2), so it will cost him 1,300 Legend Points. He alters his Current Legend Points total and adds +1 to his Dexterity Value. This also increases his Dexterity Step to 8, so he modifies his ability Step Numbers as well.

- The character must exercise the Attribute for a number of weeks equal to his current (new) Attribute Step before he can improve another Attribute. This exercise time is otherwise not exclusive—the character may adventure, raise Talent Ranks, train for a new Circle, or perform other tasks.

Having improved his Dexterity, Kricklen now wants to improve his Strength. However, before he can do this he must first exercise his Dexterity for eight weeks (his new Dexterity Step).

To avoid any confusion that might arise from changing an Attribute Value, the character's original Attribute Value should be noted on his Character Record Sheet, with the improved Attribute Value recorded nearby (for example, in brackets beside the original value).

IMPROVING TALENT RANKS

Characters spend Legend Points to add Ranks to existing talents or learn new talents (by purchasing Rank 1 in a talent). Because Talent Ranks commonly add to an Attribute Step to determine the Step Number used for making a Talent Test, a higher Rank translates into a higher level of ability with that talent. See **Using Talents**, p.57, for more information on talents and how they work.

A character's Talent Rank can be increased by meeting all of the following conditions:

- The character is rested and in good health (not suffering any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds).
- The character can meditate uninterrupted for eight hours. This time is needed for the character to remember his earlier Discipline training, imagining how improving his Talent Rank would alter those lessons and exercises. Through meditation, he magically extends his initial training to incorporate new experiences and consolidate and grow that knowledge and ability within himself. The character can only meditate on one talent at a time.
- The character must not have increased the talent already that day. A talent can only be increased by one Rank per day. As he also requires sufficient rest, an adept can only increase up to two different talents by one Rank each per day under normal circumstances (up to two consecutive eight-hour meditation sessions, followed by eight hours of sleep).
- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new Talent Rank.

The Talent Rank Cost Table shows the Legend Point cost to increase a character's Talent Ranks in his first Discipline (see **Learning New Disciplines**, p.241, for information on Legend Point costs for characters with multiple Disciplines). The character pays the Legend Point

cost for each Rank increase, in consecutive order. For example, a character who intends increasing a talent from Rank 2 to Rank 4 must first pay the Legend Point cost for Rank 3.

To find the Legend Point cost of increasing a talent to the next Rank, consult your character's Discipline description to determine at which Circle it was learned (at which Circle it is available if a Discipline Talent, or at what Circle it was chosen as a Talent Option). Then find the column on the Talent Rank Cost Table that includes the Circle of the talent for your Discipline. In the Talent Rank column, find the new 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 intersect is the Legend Point cost for that Talent Rank.

ATTRIBUTE INCREASE TABLE

Attribute Increase	Legend Point Cost
+1	800
+2	1,300
+3	2,100

Delthrien, an elven Archer, wants to improve her Avoid Blow talent from Rank 3 to Rank 4. Because she chose Avoid Blow as a Talent Option right at First Circle, Delthrien's player reads down the Circle 1–4 column until she gets to the Rank 4 row. The Legend Point cost listed for a Circle 1–4 talent at Rank 4 is 500. Delthrien meditates for 8 hours and spends 500 Legend Points to gain the new Talent Rank. She subtracts the Legend Points from her Current Legend Point total, and changes the Rank of her Avoid Blow talent from 3 to 4.

Caelarion, an elven Nethermancer, decides to improve his Summon talent from Rank 5 to Rank 6. Summon is a Fifth Circle talent for Nethermancers, and cross-referencing the new Rank of 6 with the Circle 5–8 column shows that it costs 2,100 Legend Points to improve the talent to Rank 6. Caelarion's player notices that the Nethermancer has only 2,060 Current Legend Points, not quite enough to improve his Talent Rank from 5 to 6. Caelarion must earn a few more Legend Points before he can afford to improve his Summon talent.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, wants to improve his Melee Weapons talent from Rank 7 to Rank 8. His player checks the Talent Rank Cost Table and calculates this will cost Kricklen 3,400 Legend Points. However, after his last fight, Kricklen took more than a little damage, including several Wounds. While he has sufficient Current Legend Points to cover the cost of improving the talent, he will not be able to meditate effectively until all of the Damage Points—and the Wounds—have been healed.

Maximum Talent Rank

Rank 15 is the highest Rank that adepts can learn talents to. Some magical treasures, spells, or rituals can increase this above Rank 15. Regardless of whether an increase is temporary or permanent, the character improves his Talent Rank as if any Rank bonuses are not in effect.

Improving Skill Ranks

Characters can spend Legend Points to add Ranks to existing skills, or to learn new skills (by purchasing Rank 1 in a new skill). Though similar to gaining Talent Ranks, improving Skill Ranks differs in the following ways:

- No character can improve a Skill Rank beyond Rank 10.
- Improving a Skill Rank requires the character to complete a number of weeks of training equal to the new Rank, during which time he must be rested and in good health (not suffering any Current Damage or Wounds, except Blood Magic Damage or Blood Wounds). For example, improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4 requires four weeks of training.
- The character has sufficient Current Legend Points to pay the full cost of the new Skill Rank (see the Skill Training Table).
- Skill training costs money. An average week of training costs a character a fee equal to the new Rank×10 silver pieces. At the gamemaster's discretion, this fee may double or triple if a character wants private instruction.
- Skills require the character to practice that skill at the current Rank for a period of time before the character is eligible to train for a new Rank in that skill. A character must practice the skill for a varying number of weeks, determined by the current Skill Rank. This practice time is not exclusive—the character may adventure, raise Talent Ranks, train for a new Circle, or perform other tasks. For example, before improving a skill from Rank 3 to Rank 4, the character must first have practised that skill for at least five weeks.

Circle-Based Attribute Improvement

Optional Rule: Instead of improving Attribute Ratings through training and spending Legend Points at any point during the game, gamemasters may wish to employ a method requiring less bookkeeping or limiting the attribute increases to Circle Advancement, as previous editions of Earthdawn did. There are two options for Circle-based Attribute improvement:

Free Increases allow a character to increase one of his Attributes by 1 each time he reaches a new Circle in his first Discipline, without any cost in Legend Points.

Paid Increases were the standard rule in previous editions of **Earthdawn**. With this rule, a character may spend Legend Points to increase one of his Attributes by 1 once per Circle. Opportunities to increase an Attribute cannot be "saved up" from one Circle to the next.

With either of these options, no Attribute may be increased by more than +3.

Learning New Spells

If the gamemaster is using the optional **Spell Legend Point Cost** rule (p.133), magicians may spend Legend Points to learn spells from other magicians. The Legend Points are spent by the character after making a successful Spell Learning Test.

See **Learning Spells**, p.130, for more information about how magicians learn new spells.

Purchasing Karma Points

All adept characters can use Karma, the raw magical energy that runs through the world of **Earthdawn** (see **Karma**, p.29). Characters use Karma Points to improve the probability of success for their actions. Once used, a character must replenish these lost points. This is done through use of the Karma Ritual talent (see p.74), which allows the character to purchase Karma Points by spending Legend Points.

Once per day, a character can purchase additional Karma Points, to a maximum equal to his Karma Ritual Rank, by performing a Karma ritual appropriate to his Discipline. As the character per-

TALENT RANK COST TABLE

Talent Rank	Initiate/ Novice Circle 1–4	Journeyman Circle 5–8	Warden Circle 9–12	Master 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

SKILL TRAINING TABLE

Skill Rank	Weeks of Training	Weeks of Practice	Legend Point Cost
1	1	2	200
2	2	3	300
3	3	5	500
4	4	8	800
5	5	13	1,300
6	6	21	2,100
7	7	34	3,400
8	8	55	5,500
9	9	89	8,900
10	10	–	14,400

forms the half-hour-long ritual, he pays 10 Legend Points for each Karma Point he wants to purchase. Once he completes the ritual, the new Karma Points are added to the Current Karma total on his Character Record Sheet.

Poorht, a windling Thief, knows the Karma Ritual talent at Rank 3. When he begins his daily Karma ritual, he can choose to spend some of his Current Legend Points to gain up to 3 Karma Points, each costing the windling 10 Legend Points—a total of 30 Legend Points for 3 Karma Points. After Poorht completes his half-hour-long Karma ritual, he spends the required Legend Points and adds +3 Karma Points to his Current Karma Points total.

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 Point cost, into weaving these threads can then attach them to the True Patterns of people, places, or items.

For an in-depth explanation of how to use Legend Points to weave magical threads, see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.112.

ADVANCING DISCIPLINE CIRCLES

There is only one way for a character to advance to the next higher Circle in a Discipline: he must reach a minimum level of achievement in his current ability with that Discipline, then seek out a tutor to teach him the next Circle's abilities.

Characters who improve a number of talents to a sufficiently high Rank are eligible to advance to the next Circle of their Discipline. Such advancement allows characters to learn and improve new talents.

Onnaro, an obsidiman Wizard, reaches Second Circle. He can still spend Legend Points to increase his First Circle talents, but can now spend Legend Points to learn and improve his new Second Circle talents: Read/Write Language or one of his Novice Talent Options.

Beginning at Second Circle, many Disciplines also improve one or more of the character's characteristics.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster, advances to the Eighth Circle of his Discipline. As soon as he completes his training, the Swordmaster adds +1 to his Social Defense.

CONDITIONS FOR CIRCLE ADVANCEMENT

To be eligible to advance to the next Circle of a Discipline, the character must first fulfill two conditions:

- The character must have learned his Discipline Talents at a minimum Rank.
- The character must train with a higher-Circle member of his Discipline.

MINIMUM TALENT REQUIREMENTS

To begin training for a new Circle, an adept must have made sufficient progress with his current abilities, by having increased all of his Discipline Talents to a Rank equal to the Circle he wants to attain. For example, to train for Fifth Circle, an adept must know all of his First, Second, Third, and Fourth Circle Discipline Talents (eight in total) at a minimum of Rank 5. Talent Options are not used to determine Minimum Rank Requirements and play no role in Circle advancement.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

In addition to meeting the minimum Talent Rank requirements for eligibility to advance to a new Circle, a character must also seek and complete training.

Once the character meets the minimum Talent Rank requirements, he may choose to pay a tutor to teach him the abilities of the next Circle in his chosen Discipline. To advance to the next Circle, a character must train under the guidance of a higher-Circle member of the same Discipline.

Kricklen, a t'skrang Swordmaster trying to attain Fourth Circle, must train with a Fourth or higher Circle Swordmaster.

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 training benefits and must start all over again, incurring additional time and cost as a consequence. The average cost shown in the Circle Training Cost Table offers players a guideline for determining likely Circle advancement training costs.

While many instructors are willing to negotiate their fees, others may charge double or triple the fee for private tuition. For example,

ALIGNING TALENTS AND SKILLS

Optional Rule: It is possible that some characters will learn the same ability as a skill and as a talent, as such knowing the same ability twice. Talents are powered by magic, but skills are not—seen from a game mechanics perspective, there is sometimes little to differentiate the two. For example, all Namegivers learn the Read/Write Language skill. Since all magicians learn the Read/Write Language talent, magician characters will have the same ability as a skill *and* a talent.

Gamemasters and players who think this is a waste of Legend Points can use this optional rule. Whenever a character first gains a Rank in a talent which is already listed as a skill on his Character Record Sheet, he can choose to "align" the new talent and incorporate the learned skill knowledge by paying the normal Legend Point cost for learning the talent at Rank 1. In return, he gains a talent Rank which reflects the knowledge of the skill based on the Equivalent Skill Rank Table. The skill is then erased from the Character Record Sheet.

Serafino, a human Swordmaster, knows the Throwing Weapons skill at Rank 4. Upon advancing to the Third Circle of his Discipline, he pays 100 Legend Points to gain the Throwing Weapons talent and chooses to align it with his existing skill knowledge. Referencing the Equivalent Skill Rank Table, he gains the Throwing Weapons talent at Rank 5 in return for giving up the equivalent skill.

Caedrus, an obsidiman Warrior, knows the Second Weapon skill at Rank 5. Upon reaching Ninth Circle, he learns pays 300 Legend Points to learn the Second Weapon talent at Rank 1. Choosing to align the new talent with his current experience, the obsidiman instead gains the Second Weapon talent at Rank 3 and Caedrus' player erases the skill from his Character Record Sheet.

EQUIVALENT SKILL RANK TABLE

	—New Talent Rank—			
Skill Rank	**Circle 1–4**	**Circle 5–8**	**Circle 9–12**	**Circle 13–15**
1	2	1	1	1
2	3	2	1	1
3	4	3	1	1
4	5	4	2	1
5	6	5	3	2
6	7	6	4	3
7	8	7	5	4
8	9	8	6	5
9	10	9	7	6
10	11	10	8	7

USING ALL TALENTS TO ADVANCE

Optional Rule: With this optional rule, instead of being required to know all his Discipline Talents at a rank equal to the next Circle, a character requires a certain number of talents available to his Discipline, either Discipline Talents or Talent Options, at minimum talent ranks, as shown on the Optional Advancement Table.

To reach his New Circle, a character is required to know a Minimum Number of Talents at a Minimum Talent Rank, and one of those talents must be from his current Circle (the Single Talent from Circle #).

The player of Serafino the Swordmaster checks what the requirements for his character to advance to Third Circle are. He looks at the table, and determines that his Swordmaster must know 6 talents at a rank of 3, and that one of those 6 talents must be one of the two talents he learned at Second Circle. He looks at his character sheet, and sees that while he has raised all of his First Circle Discipline Talents and the Wound Balance Talent Option he chose at First Circle to a rank of 3, both his Second Circle Discipline Talent and his Second Circle Talent Option of Durability are only at rank 2. He needs to raise his rank in either Heartening Laugh or Durability to 3 to be eligible to advance to Third Circle.

When using this optional rule, the recommended Legend Awards on the Legend Award Table (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 98) are too high to produce a stable Circle advancement from Circle 11 on. Only award half of what is recommended in Circles 11 and 12, and only award a third of what is recommended in Circles 13 through 15.

OPTIONAL ADVANCEMENT TABLE

New Circle	**Minimum # of Talents**	**Minimum Talent 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	11	11
13	16	12	12
14	17	12	13
15	18	13	14

a character who performs a substantial favor for an instructor might have his fee reduced by 25 percent; conversely, an instructor who dislikes the trainee might raise his fee by 25 percent.

Reaching the Next Circle

Once a character meets the Talent 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 the Discipline Talent and one of the Talent Options available at the new Circle.

The character learns his new Discipline Talent from his tutor, but may learn a talent from his Talent Options at a later point from any adept who knows the desired talent (if the adept's tutor does not know the talent himself). Learning a Talent Option at a later point this way requires the same time and effort as learning a talent via Versatility (p.85).

On the Character Record Sheet, the player notes any improvements to his character's characteristics granted or Discipline Abilities learned at the new Circle.

CIRCLE TRAINING COST TABLE

Instructor Circle	Average Cost (silver pieces)
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

Learning New Disciplines

Characters can learn additional Disciplines above their first. This is referred to as "multi-Disciplining." Keep in mind, however, that becoming an adept in the world of **Earthdawn** is not easy or automatic. A character who decides to learn an additional Discipline must attempt to master the new training methods, which are often based on distinctly different philosophies, in addition to retaining those of his other Disciplines. As a character advances through the Circles of each of his Disciplines, however, his confidence grows and he gains insight as a result. The stronger a character's grasp of all of the Disciplines he knows, the easier it becomes to learn a new one. At the same time, advancing in a Discipline requires a character to more closely adhere to its philosophies and traditions, which makes it harder to adopt the new style of thinking a new Discipline requires. This creates an interesting paradox—as a character advances, it becomes easier and more difficult to learn an additional Discipline.

To learn a new Discipline, a character must study that Discipline's First Circle Discipline Talents with the assistance of another character of that same Discipline. The character's tutelage in the new Discipline can only be imparted to him from a Fifth or higher Circle adept of his desired Discipline. Regardless of his prowess in any other Disciplines he may know, the character is being "inducted" as an Initiate into the new Discipline.

Finding a master willing to perform an initiation into the new Discipline is the first Step, and can present some difficulties. Many masters are reluctant to initiate characters who are already adepts of another Discipline because such students tend to be more independent, self-assured, and harder to teach than green recruits. Also, masters are particularly reluctant to initiate characters who practice Disciplines they consider unsympathetic or opposed to their own. They may refuse to teach applicants they do not like, or may require them to embark on a risky venture to prove their worthiness. Individual masters will also have their own preferences and prejudices when it comes to other Disciplines.

The entire process of learning a new Discipline is at the discretion of the gamemaster. If the gamemaster does not want to allow a character to learn a particular combination of different Disciplines, he can make it very tough for a character to find a teacher.

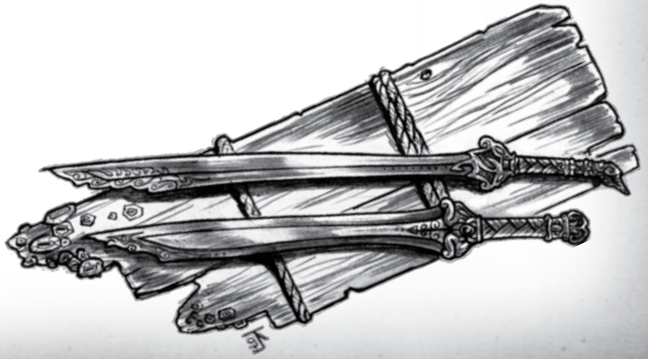
If player characters want to initiate one another into their various Disciplines, the gamemaster can impose other kinds of limits. A character who embarks on training in a new Discipline must devote considerable time to the effort. Gamemasters can make it difficult for experienced characters, who have already accumulated obligations and enemies, to find the time to train. As a gamemaster character cannot initiate others until they themselves have reached Fifth Circle in a Discipline, all player characters capable of initiating others will most likely have burdens of this kind.

Another hurdle adepts may face when trying to learn a new Discipline is the fee charged by the master. The standard fee is 100 silver pieces for each Circle the student already knows (cumulative for those who already know more than one Discipline), charged for each talent the adept needs to learn. Some masters may charge more or less, based on their relationship with the student. Many masters will also ask for favors, deeds, or even blood oaths in addition to coin. Learning a second Discipline should not be a matter of simply coming up with the money; the gamemaster is encouraged to role-play the negotiation, and use favors and service to the master as adventure hooks.

A character learning a new Discipline must learn all of the First Circle Discipline Talents for that Discipline that he does not know yet at Rank 1 (this usually means he does not need to learn the Karma ritual talent, as all Disciplines learn it at First Circle). The character must have sufficient Current Legend Points available to him to learn all of these new talents simultaneously. The Talent Option for First Circle can be learned at a later time, as per the rules presented under **Reaching the Next Circle**, p.241, but for all Talent Option slots of the new Discipline, the character must choose from the Talent Options of the new Discipline, he cannot choose from the Talent Options of his old Discipline. Talents selected as Talent Options for the new Discipline are also increased at the Legend Point cost for talents of his new Discipline (see below), even if they are available as Talent Options to both Disciplines. The Legend Point cost is determined by which Talent Option slot the character wants to fill, not which Discipline it is available from.

The Legend Point cost of purchasing a Rank 1 talent in a new Discipline is determined by the number of Disciplines that the character is already a member of. The character uses the lowest Circle among all of his Disciplines to find the Legend Point cost for a Rank 1 talent on the New Discipline Talent Cost Table.

For each new Discipline Talent that he wishes to learn, the character must study with the tutor for 40 hours during the course of a 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 his new Discipline for at least 80 hours a month, the training automatically fails and the character must start over.



Kricklen, a Second Circle t'skrang Swordmaster wants to learn to become an Archer. Kricklen already knows one of the Archer Discipline's First Circle talents: Karma Ritual. Kricklen needs to learn the four remaining First Circle Archer talents. First, he must find a Fifth or higher Circle Archer willing to train him, then he must spend 40 hours in training for each additional talent to be learned (a total of 160 hours of training). Because the Swordmaster must also study for a minimum of 80 hours per month, Kricklen will complete this training within a period of two months—a task that will likely take him away from his adventuring colleagues during this time. The New Discipline Talent Legend Point Table shows that Kricklen must spend 800 Legend Points per talent to learn this second Discipline—his lowest (actually, his only) Discipline Circle is 2, and he is now learning his second Discipline. After spending 3,200 Legend Points to learn the four new talents at Rank 1, and paying 800 silver pieces to his master (200 silver per talent he needs to learn), the t'skrang is now a First Circle Archer as well as a Second Circle Swordmaster! He has yet to choose and learn a Talent Option from his new Archer Discipline, though.

Later in his adventuring career, Kricklen, now a Sixth Circle Swordmaster and Fourth Circle Archer, wants to expand his options by learning a third Discipline, and chooses to become an Illusionist. Again, after first finding a Fifth or higher Circle Illusionist willing to train him, Kricklen learns the five First Circle talents he does not already know: Illusionism (Thread Weaving), Speak Language, Read/Write Magic, Spellcasting, and Spell Matrix. He already knows the Karma Ritual talent, so does not need to relearn it. Five weeks and 5,000 silver pieces of training later (at 40 hours for each talent learned), Kricklen spends 2,500 Legend Points (500 Legend Points per talent, based on his lowest Discipline Circle and the fact that this is his third Discipline) to learn the five new talents at Rank 1. Kricklen joins the Illusionist Discipline as a First Circle magician.

ADVANCING IN A NEW DISCIPLINE

The talents from the character's first Discipline are improved normally (see **Improving Talent Ranks**, p.237). The Legend Point cost for new talents from additional Disciplines is determined by the number of Disciplines that the character knows. The Equivalent Talent Circle Table shows the equivalent Circle range used to determine the Legend Point cost of talents from each of the character's additional Disciplines:

Kricklen, a Sixth Circle t'skrang Swordmaster, has also learned the Archer Discipline to the Fourth Circle, and most recently has taken on knowledge of the Illusionist Discipline at First Circle. When advancing talents from his first Swordmaster Discipline, Kricklen spends Legend Points as normal. Circle 1–4 talents from his second Archer Discipline are bought as if they were Circle 5–8 talents, with a corresponding shift for higher Circle talents again. When improving the new First Circle talents that he has gained from his third Illusionist Discipline, Kricklen pays Legend Points for those talents as if they were Circle 9–12 talents. Once he becomes a Fifth Circle Illusionist, all of the talents for that Discipline from that Circle onward are bought as if they were Circle 13–15 talents.

Discipline Talents the character can learn from multiple Disciplines are learned at the lowest Legend Point cost, provided the character qualifies to learn them under that Discipline by being of high enough Circle. They count as Discipline Talents for all of a character's Disciplines and can be used to advance in circle for all

EQUIVALENT TALENT CIRCLE TABLE

Equivalent Circle Range	—Discipline Circle Range— Second Discipline	Third Discipline	Fourth+ Disciplines
1–4	–	–	–
5–8	1–4	–	–
9–12	5–8	1–4	–
13–15	9–15	5–15	1–15

NEW DISCIPLINE TALENT COST TABLE

Lowest Circle Attained	—Rank 1 Talent Legend Point Cost— Second Discipline	Third Discipline	Fourth+ Disciplines
1	1,300	2,100	3,400
2	800	1,300	2,100
3	500	800	1,300
4	300	500	800
5+	200	300	500

of his Disciplines Talents specific to each Discipline, such as the Thread Weaving talent, count as different talents for this purpose, and have to be learned separately.

Talent Options that are available to several of a character's Disciplines are handled separately. If a character has already learned a Talent Option for a Discipline, he uses the Legend Point cost appropriate for this Discipline to raise the talent, and it occupies a Talent Option slot of that Discipline, even if it was available for a lower Talent option slot for a new Discipline.

Talent Options that turn out to be Discipline Talents for an additional Discipline become Discipline Talents for that new Discipline as soon as the character qualifies to learn them for that Discipline. They use the Legend Point cost for that new Discipline from then on, but until then, are still treated as Talent options for the old Discipline. Once they become a Discipline Talent, they free up the Talent Option slot, and the character may learn a new Talent Option.

Kricklen has learned the Karma Ritual talent from his first Discipline: Swordmaster. Even though the Archer Discipline also teaches this talent at First Circle, the t'skrang uses the Legend Point cost for his Swordmaster Discipline—the Discipline with the lower talent cost—as the Legend Point cost for improving this talent. While Kricklen knows Thread Weaving from his Swordmaster Discipline, as well as from his Archer and Illusionist Disciplines, these are three different talents, and the Legend Point cost for each is determined by the order in which the t'skrang learned his Disciplines, as given in the Equivalent Talent Circle Table. If Kricklen had learned the Anticipate Blow Talent Option for his Swordmaster Discipline at Second Circle, he would have had to transform it into a Discipline Talent for his Archer Discipline once he reached Third Circle. He would have treated it as an Archer talent from that point on, and could have chosen a new Talent Option for his Swordmaster Discipline. He still would have treated it as a Swordmaster Talent Option while being a First and Second Circle Archer, though, and could not have made it an Archer talent before becoming a Third Circle Archer.

DURABILITY

A character learning new Disciplines only benefits from the Durability talent of his first Discipline. He cannot chose Durability as a Talent Option from other Disciplines. For example, a Wizard who

later becomes a Sky Raider can only increase his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings using his Wizard-based Durability talent, and cannot learn Durability from the Sky Raider Talent Options – he can still learn another talent as a Talent Option, of course. (However, see the optional **Realigning Durability** rule, below)

Characteristics Bonuses

If a character gains the same characteristics bonus (see p.41) from more than one Discipline, the character gains only the more advantageous of the bonuses, not both. If two bonuses are identical, he only receives one of them. For example, an Archer of Eleventh Circle has received a total of three +1 bonuses to his Physical Defense (+1 each at Second, Eighth, and Tenth Circle). If that character also is an Eleventh Circle Swordmaster, he does not receive the +1 bonus to his Physical Defense from becoming an Eleventh Circle Swordmaster, as his +3 bonus from the Archer Discipline is more advantageous. The reverse is true for Social Defense, the character gains the higher bonus from his Swordmaster Discipline, but not the lower from his Archer Discipline. When that Character advances to Thirteenth Circle in the Archer and Swordmaster Disciplines, both Disciplines convey a +1 bonus to Spell Defense. The adept only receives one of those bonuses.



Realigning Durability

Optional Rule: Some players and gamemasters don't like the limitations of using only the Durability talent from the character's first Discipline. This optional rule allows the character to shift the focus of his Durability talent to other new Disciplines. Characters may "realign" their Durability talent with that for a new Discipline that the character has learned. The character must be at least Second Circle in the new Discipline, and therefore eligible to learn that Discipline's Durability talent. In order to gain the benefits of the new Discipline's Durability, the character must chose it as a Talent Option for the new Discipline and immediately improve his Durability talent by 1 Rank at the Legend Point cost for the new Discipline (not the original Discipline). The Durability talent is now aligned towards the new Discipline, uses a Talent Option slot of that Discipline, and frees up the Talent Option slot it occupied for the old Discipline (the character may learn another talent from the Talent Options available to that slot from his old Discipline as per the standard rules).

From this point on, the character increases Ranks in Durability as for other talents of the new Discipline, and increases his Death/Unconsous Ratings as for that Discipline's Durability.

However, any bonuses to the character's Death or Unconsciousness Rating from earlier Durability Ranks are kept at their previous levels. This may require some additional bookkeeping to keep track of, but avoids the potential for unbalancing the game through use of this rule.

Caelarion, an elven Fourth Circle Nethermancer and First Circle Elementalist, has just learned a third Discipline, Warrior, and has advanced it to Second Circle. He knows the Durability talent from his Nethermancer Discipline at Rank 6—adding +24/+18 points to his Death/Unconsciousness Ratings, respectively. At this point, Caelarion decides that, given his newfound interest in getting into close combat, he requires more of an ability to take damage. Checking with his gamemaster, he is told that he is allowed to use the Realigning Durability optional rule. He decides to align his Durability to the Warrior Discipline in order to take advantage of the better bonuses. Caelarion needs to learn the Warrior's Durability as a Talent Option and increase his Durability talent from Rank 6 to Rank 7 to achieve this realignment, using the Legend Point costs for improving a Circle 1–4 talent from a third Discipline. Checking the appropriate tables, his player sees that this will cost Caelarion 5,500 Current Legend Points, a price he can afford. After spending the Legend Points his Durability is now at Rank 7 which, taking into account the split, is noted down on his Character Record Sheet as being "Durability: 7 (Nethermancer 6, Warrior 1)". Caelarion adds the +9/+7 point bonus to his Death/Unconsciousness Ratings for his new Warrior Durability Rank, giving him a total of +33/+25 to his Death and Unconsciousness Ratings. He now also has the opportunity to learn a new Talent Option from his Nethermancer Discipline, replacing the option slot that was formerly occupied by the Nethermancer Durability.

Once the character's Durability talent has been aligned to a new Discipline it can never be aligned back to the original Discipline. It can, however, be aligned to new Disciplines that the character may learn. In effect, once the Durability talent has been passed on to another Discipline it cannot be returned.

Now that Caelarion has aligned his Durability to his Warrior Discipline, any further improvements in that talent are made as a Warrior. Legend Point costs for these improvements are made at the same level as other Circle 1–4 talents for his third Discipline. He can never realign his Durability with his Nethermancer Discipline, although he could do so with his Elementalist Discipline. Given the lower bonuses involved, this is not a likely prospect, however.

KARMA

Characters who follow multiple Disciplines may spend only one Karma Point on Attribute-only Tests, even if all of their Disciplines allow it. For example, both Swordmasters and Archers may spend a Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests when they reach Fourth Circle. A Fourth Circle Archer who is also a Fourth Circle Swordmaster can still spend only one Karma Point on Dexterity-only Tests. Characters with Discipline talents from multiple Disciplines they know are also subject to this rule. Unless the talent description specifically says otherwise, they may only spend one Karma Point on a Talent Test, regardless of the number of Disciplines for which the talent is a Discipline Talent.

Similar as for Characteristic bonuses (see above), a character only ever gains the +1 Karma Step bonus from reaching Thirteenth Circle in a Discipline once, and may only spend 1 Karma Point on Recovery tests from his Ninth Circle Karma bonus.

HUMAN VERSATILITY

The human Versatility racial ability allows human adepts to learn talents from outside their Disciplines, but it does not make it easier for human characters to learn additional Disciplines. When a human character learns a new Discipline for which he already knows one or more talents through use of his Versatility, he must relearn those talents and purchase Rank 1 in each—he is considered to not know these talents for the purpose of learning a new Discipline. The Legend Point cost is determined as normal, based on his current Disciplines.

Over time, the character will repurchase all Talent Ranks up to the current Rank that he has acquired through Versatility. Once he has done so, he may learn an additional talent via Versatility; effectively that Versatility "slot" is freed up for re-use. Until that point, the character essentially knows the same talent at two different Ranks, and players should differentiate between these on their Character Record Sheet. A character who knows the same talent at two different Ranks may use either the Versatility or the Discipline talent.

LEGENDARY STATUS

Each adventure contributes a small part to a character's overall legend—as tales of his exploits spread across the land and Troubadours sing songs of his adventures. A character's Legendary Status is represented by two factors: **Renown** is a measure of how hard or easy it is to recognize a character by Name; **Reputation** reflects the general nature of a character's legend—for good or for bad. A character's Legendary Status is the same as his highest Discipline Status Level, as shown on the Legendary Status Table.



RENOWN

Use the Renown Rating as base Difficulty Number for Knowledge Skill tests (such as Legends and Heroes or other appropriate fields, for example). On an Average Result, the character making the test recognizes the name and some general information about the adept in question. A Good Result means he knows details on the adept's exploits. Higher results can provide intricate or even obscure information of the adept's legend (see **Using Knowledge Skills** on p.89).

REPUTATION

A character's Reputation is a bonus an adept can use in Interaction Tests where the adepts reputation is a factor. Apply the appropriate bonus given on the Legendary Status Table when making Interaction Tests of this kind. Be aware that another character disguising and acting like the adept in question may be able to gain the same bonus at the gamemaster's discretion!

Bad Reputation

A character's legend may not always be as heroic as these rules suggest, many adepts have a skeleton in a closet or a dark spot in their history. On certain occasions, this might backfire and put the character into trouble. For example, a known scoundrel is less likely to receive an advance on any payment, because people won't really trust him. In those cases, the gamemaster may reduce the Reputation bonus accordingly or even turn it into a penalty if appropriate.

THE PRICE OF FAME

Although a high Legendary Status affords a character both minor and major benefits, it 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 them, no matter what the cost. Most villages and small towns will ask recognized adepts for help in time of trouble. Communities of this size may even seek them out to solve their problems. Though adepts often do act heroic (as most of them 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 a certain level of recognition.

ADVENTURING GROUPS

The world of **Earthdawn** encourages groups of player characters to work together to solve problems. The player characters in your gaming group may come together through an outside force at first, formed into a group and forced to work together for a specific purpose. Once that purpose is accomplished, they may decide to continue to travel together for other reasons. At this point, the characters have become an adventuring group.

Traveling with an adventuring group offers many advantages over solo exploring. The most obvious is survival. By working together, the characters will have a better chance of living longer, healthier lives. Forming adventuring groups also gives the characters access to a powerful and unique magic; by forming and Naming an adventuring group, the characters in the group can use thread magic to improve their abilities, become more powerful, and take on more dangerous challenges (see the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.120, for more information on Naming adventuring groups).

As adventuring groups travel the land, tales of their exploits precede and follow them, told both by the members of the group and by those who see and hear of the group's deeds. As the characters seek out new adventures, stories of the group spread through-

out the land, and given time, the members of the group will take their place among the legends of **Earthdawn**. But the legends of adventuring groups do not simply filter into the people's collective unconscious. The characters in the group must build their legend by seeking adventure and keeping a record of their travels, battles, victories, defeats, discoveries, and so on.

The people look to heroes for inspiration, protection, and, most importantly, for the hope that their world shall endure. Fortunately for those characters who seek to become heroes of the people, **Earthdawn** offers adventure opportunities galore. From battling the remaining Horrors left on this world, to fighting against the Theran Empire, to exploring the land; countless adventures await those courageous enough to face danger in search of glory.

Characters can add to the legends created by their adventures by keeping a journal of their group's exploits. This journal is called a **Group Adventuring Log**.

Group Adventuring Logs

Group adventuring logs serve several purposes. A journal provides a record of the history of the group, both personnel and events. It also records any discoveries made by the group, and as such can serve as a source of stories and legends. An adventure log might provide a rudimentary sketch of an unmapped region, confirm or disprove popularly held beliefs about a people or place, or record the fate of a missing person.

While this type of information may be invaluable to interested parties, adventuring logs serve an even more important function for the ordinary citizen. The stories in an adventuring group's journal are tales of heroism and tragedy, the types of stories that people need to hear. By sharing their adventures with other people, adventuring groups bring hope to a re-emerging world and so are hailed as heroes. Aside from these loftier reasons to record their tales of heroism, an adventuring log can also make the characters money and earn them Legend Points.

The Great Library of Throal

The Great Library of Throal is tasked with recording the history of Barsaive, including the tales of its heroes. One of the most efficient ways it does this is by collecting the stories of adventuring groups. Once a year, the Kingdom of Throal invites all adventuring groups to bring their journals to the Library and share their stories with Throalic historians. The Kingdom of Throal pays well for these stories, because adventurers' tales contain the history and describe the present of Barsaive. How much a group receives for the stories in their log depends on the Legendary Status of the adventuring group. Fledgling adventurers earn a modest sum, while great heroes of legend can earn a king's ransom.

The Players' Role

Though the adventuring log is something the characters create, the players must actually write it. Two considerations should encourage players to physically record their adventures. First, if the players don't keep a written journal of their groups' adventures, their characters cannot earn any money from the Library of Throal and will not earn the available Legend Points. Even if the characters state at the end of every session, "We're keeping a journal," if the players themselves don't write it out, it doesn't count. If you want to garner the rewards, you've got to earn it.

The second consideration helps both the players and the gamemaster. Because the adventuring log provides a record of all the group's adventures, the players will not have to ask the gamemaster to repeat the events of a specific encounter, adventure, or campaign. The journal also gives the gamemaster a quick reference guide to events in the game, and what information the

Initiation Tests

Optional Rule: To see if the character has successfully learned to think like a true practitioner of the new Discipline, the gamemaster may require a Perception-based Initiation Test at the end of the training period. The Difficulty Number for this test is equal to the highest Circle among the character's current Disciplines, multiplied by the number of Disciplines the character already knows. This level of difficulty reflects the fact that as a character becomes more settled into a particular way of thinking, he finds it that much harder to adopt a new one.

Kricklen, a Sixth Circle t'skrang Swordmaster and Fourth Circle Archer, is now learning to become an Illusionist. Because he already knows two Disciplines, the Difficulty Number for his Illusionist Initiation Test is 12 (6×2 = 12).

Some Disciplines—particularly the magician Disciplines—expect the character to possess high Perception Values. The gamemaster may choose to have the character make the Initiation Test using any Attribute listed as important for the new Discipline (see the **Disciplines** chapter, p.63). The Initiation Test is made before the character spends any Legend Points. If the test is a failure, the training time and any fees paid are wasted, and the teacher may or may not be willing to give the character a second chance, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Multiple-Discpline Karma Rituals

Optional Rule: A character acquiring an additional Discipline must purchase all the First Circle talents that differ from his current Discipline, but need not relearn talents for the new Discipline that he already knows. In theory, this rule applies to the Karma Ritual talent. In fact, however, Karma rituals for each Discipline are quite different, as they serve to focus the magic of a particular Discipline.

Because the use of Karma for Discipline talents is based on that Discipline's worldview, under this optional rule characters should not be able to use Karma gained from one Discipline's Karma ritual with talents of another Discipline. To reflect these limits, gamemasters may choose to require characters to purchase the Karma Ritual talent for each new Discipline the characters acquire. The cost for Rank 1 in the new Karma Ritual talent is determined as normal.

A character who follows more than one Discipline must perform Karma rituals for each of his Disciplines separately. Ideally, the player should keep separate Karma Point totals for each Discipline, but the gamemaster may allow a character to maintain a single Karma Point total to avoid extraneous bookkeeping.

characters would or would not possess. Finally, the adventure log makes it easier for players to roleplay their characters more consistently and generally makes the game run more smoothly.

The players can record their adventures any way they choose. The players may decide to purchase a blank or lined journal, use a three-ring binder and notepaper, or even create a computer database.

Players should take turns recording the group's adventures so that no one gets the job every session. The type of information that should be included in the journal are: the names of the members of the group, the name of the group, a sketch of the group's symbol, and an outline of the events of an adventure. The players can decide how much detail to include in their account. The bottom of the log provides a space to record pertinent game information, including the Legend Point Awards for each player.

Log Payment

Whenever an adventuring group shares its log with the Great Library of Throal, the group's Average Legend Point Total is determined by adding together the individual characters' Total Legend Points and dividing it by the number of characters in the group. Each time your adventuring group shares its journal with the Great Library of Throal, it earns 10 percent of the difference to its previous Average Legend Point Total in silver pieces. For example, if a group last submitted its journal when it had an Average Legend Point Total of 10,000, and now submits it with an Average Legend Point Total of 30,000, the difference is 20,000, and the group would earn 2,000 silver pieces for presenting their journal to the Great Library.

Log Legend Points

Adventuring groups who share tales of their exploits with the historians and scholars of Throal also earn a Legend Point bonus. Each time a group shares its adventure log with the Great Library of Throal, each member of the group earns a number of Legend Points equal to half of the amount of silver pieces received for the log. In the previous example, each character in the group would receive 1,000 Legend Points.

Add these points to the characters' Current and Total Legend Points. These bonus Legend Points can be used to increase abilities, purchase Karma Points, and so on.

Group Legendary Status

Much like individual characters, adventuring groups can earn Legendary Status. The Group Legendary Status is the same as the Discipline Status Level achieved by the majority of the members of the group.

Legendary groups receive the same benefits as legendary characters, but also suffer the same drawbacks from being famous.

LEGENDARY STATUS TABLE

Status Level	Renown	Reputation	Notes and Benefits
Initiate	21	NA	The general population remains oblivious to the character's daring exploits, his exploits are known only to his a few people other than his master, family, and friends.
Novice	15	+1	Though many merchants and businessmen know of the character, the populace at large has not yet heard his Name.
Journeyman	11	+2	Quite a few Troubadours tell tales of these characters' exploits, there's a good chance he is recognized in Barsaive's larger towns and cities. Characters can use this to their advantage, as they often receive reduced prices on goods and services just for asking, and may be able to request important favors more easily than lesser characters.
Warden	9	+3	Nearly everyone has at least heard the name of the character, as his legend is told throughout the province. Many Warden characters maintain castles or strongholds in or near their favorite cities. The rulers of kingdoms often court these characters in the hope of convincing them to perform dangerous tasks for them. 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.
Master	7	+5	The character is a living legend. Virtually everyone knows of him and his deeds, and more people claim to have known, seen or adventured with these characters than is possible by any race's standards. Examples 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).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

GOODS AND SERVICES

Of course I can help you, sir. Step right up and take a look at my wonderful wares.

• Garrn Devia, Merchant of Bartertown •

As a character survives and prospers from adventuring, he will likely need better equipment. In addition to gear such as weapons, armor, and clothing, characters will need to obtain food, lodging, and transport during their travels. This chapter provides descriptions of a range of commonly available goods and services, their prices, any restrictions on their use, and directions for purchasing them.

ITEM CHARACTERISTICS

Each and every item in Earthdawn is handcrafted and unique. Availability, Weight, Size, and Cost vary greatly from item to item and from region to region. Bartering and haggling is the norm in Barsaive, as is the customization of every item available. The following rules cater for this variation and offer gamemasters and players an easy way to deal with this topic and haggle over the price.

AVAILABILITY

An item's **Availability Rating** determines how hard the item is to find. The different Availability Ratings for goods and services are the following:

Everyday goods can be found virtually everywhere in Barsaive—just head to the nearest village to find them! They are what even simple farmers in Barsaive's hinterlands use to do their fieldwork every day, enjoy in their pastime, or consume to live on a day-to-day basis.

Average-rated goods are still readily available, but might only be found in town markets on a regular basis. They are not bought by everyone on a daily basis, but it usually is not hard to find them if you need them, although purchase in rural areas might have to be planned ahead.

Unusual items are often found only in the markets of Barsaive's larger towns and cities or specialist craftsmen's workshops. Regular folks do not need them, or buy them once in a lifetime. Some common magic items fall into this category.

Rare items are harder to find, even in the Grand Bazaar of Throal. Consumers are usually rich or in need of very special items – and adventurers are often in need of very special items. Many common magic items fall into this category.

Very Rare goods often require research to find a willing supplier. They are either very exotic and from far away lands or have powerful magic abilities.

An item's Availability Rating is shown along its other characteristics in the tables found throughout this chapter. Availability Ratings usually assume a typical representative of a fairly standardized merchandise, bought in Barsaive: An item that is not limited to a certain home region and does not have any special physical properties. Under certain circumstances or for specific items, the Availability Rating may be adjusted for better or worse. For example, the Theran Uyglar is a Rare food, but when in the Theran-occupied city of Vivane it might be of Average Availability. And while a broadsword is of Average Availability, one explicitly of t'skrang design is Rare in the city of Jerris, and one bearing Jerrisian ornamentation is Rare in the t'skrang villages along the Serpent River.

COST

An item's **Cost** is usually expressed in silver pieces – the most common form of currency in the Province of Barsaive, see **Currency**, p.249. Some very cheap items have their Cost listed in copper pieces ("cp"). The Cost listed with each item is what a nondescript, standard item of its type costs in a place appropriate to its Availability Rating. The gamemaster should adjust the price if a character wants to buy an item in a place it is normally not readily available in. For example, a pole-axe is an Unusual weapon with a Cost of 150 silver pieces, and is available at this price in most larger cities. If a character wanted to buy it in a village and the gamemaster decided it was indeed available there, because the headman had a single such weapon to defend against dangerous beasts, the Cost could increase to double or even triple the 150 silver pieces, because the headman could not re-acquire such a weapon easily.

Cost and Availability usually go hand-in-hand: Everyday items are cheap, Rare items are extremely expensive.

Races and Cost

Some races modify the Cost of an item due to their unique physique. Usually, this means that such an item needs to be specially fitted for that race, except where made in an area where that race is predominant, or if commissioned ahead of time to a craftsman familiar with that race's needs.

- Trolls and Obsidimen require more material to cover their bodies in armor, multiply the Cost by 1.25. If no armor in their measurements is available and a human-sized suit has to be modified on short notice, multiply the Cost by 1.5 instead.
- Windlings require less material to cover their bodies in clothing or armor, multiply the Cost by 0.75. If a human-sized suit has to be modified on short notice, multiply by 1.25 instead. Windlings also sometimes want weapons normally intended for larger races balanced for their special needs. This does not impact a weapon's other Characteristics, it simply makes it more comfortable to use and "looks right" on a windling. Multiply the Cost by 1.25. However, for magic items, most of the item's cost is often a result of the enchantment. Do not modify the cost of a magic item made for windlings. If you can clearly distinguish the material cost from the enchanting cost, modify only the material cost. Windlings usually pay half for a meal in an inn.
- T'skrang pay a fitting fee when buying armor or clothing to accommodate for their tail, multiply the Cost by 1.1. If the armor or clothing covers the tail instead of just providing a hole for it, multiply by 1.25 instead.

Size

Item **Size** is a characteristic commonly only found in weaponry. The inhabitants of Barsaive are of different races, their physical make-ups allowing them to wield weapons of different dimensions. For example, windlings require smaller weaponry, while trolls and obsidiman can use larger weapons. The **Weapon Size Restriction** Table lists the weapon-wielding capabilities of each race. The first column gives the maximum Size weapon that members of a particular race can wield with one hand; the second gives the maximum Size of a weapon they can wield with two hands.

WEAPON SIZE RESTRICTION TABLE

Race	One-Handed Size Range	Two-Handed Size Range
Dwarf	1–3	4–5*
Elf	1–3	4–6
Human	1–3	4–6
Obsidiman	2–4	5–7
Ork	1–3	4–6
Troll	2–4	5–7
T'skrang	1–3**	4–6
Windling	1	2

* Dwarfs may only use up to Size 4 missile weapons as their short stature makes firing larger weapons awkward.

** T'skrang tail weapons have a Size Range of 1–2.

Size is also often used as a factor in using magical and non-magical abilities on weapons. For example, the Forge Weapon talent determines how much a weapon can be enhanced based on its Size.

Weight

The Weight of items found in the tables within this chapter and elsewhere throughout **Earthdawn** products is expressed in pounds, if not denominated otherwise. Some items are measured in ounces ("oz."), some are so light their Weight is negligible ("Neg."). Weights given are for typical items of their type, which usually assumes they are made for a human-sized Namegiver. Some items are expressly made for or by other races and are larger or smaller, and therefore more or less heavy.

Races and Weight

Item entries assuming a human physique sometimes need to be modified to generate the appropriate item for trolls, windlings, obsidiman, and sometimes t'skrang. While these races can use many items assuming a human physique, they require more raw material be used for items such as clothing or armor. And if made by a member of that race for that race, the item would be more appropriately sized. For example, a troll can sit on a bench made by a human craftsman, but if a troll craftsman would make it to use in his home, the bench would simply be bigger. Some items, such as troll swords or windling bows – items that carry a race's name – already are suited for that race and need not be modified. Items for trolls are usually also suitable to be used by obsidiman.

- Trolls and Obsidimen multiply the Weight for other items by 1.25, or 1.5 if the item is intended to support the race's full weight.
- Windlings multiply the Weight for other items by 0.2.
- T'skrang multiply the Weight of items that take their tail into account, such as clothing or armor, by 1.1 (this change is optional for the character – he does not have to cover his tail.)

Though people still barter in some remote areas of the province, the vast majority of Barsaivians use the hexagonal coins of Throal or (less commonly) the round coins of Thera 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 Moneychangers' Guild complains bitterly that the equal value of the two currencies deprives them of a fair profit, they 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. For example, if a character exchanges 1,000 old Landisian silver pieces, he will receive 750 Throalic silver pieces in exchange. The rate applied to Theran coin often nets less, usually about 60 percent of their original value. Legends of cursed coins and false gold and silver make most merchants cautious about taking coins not minted by Thera or Throal.

Weapons

There are a wide variety of different weapons available, grouped into three general categories—melee, missile, and throwing—corresponding to the different talent and skill categories needed to properly wield them.

Strength Minimum

Most weapons require a Minimum Strength Value to wield them without penalty in combat. Characters who do not meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but are penalized for doing so. A character who does not meet the Minimum Strength Value requirement for using a weapon receives a –1 penalty to all Attack Tests with that weapon for every point of Strength he lacks to wield the weapon.

A broadsword has a Strength Minimum of 12 to wield. The Wizard Lanthras, with a Strength Value of 10, picks up a broadsword and tries to use it in combat. Because he lacks 2 points of Strength to wield the broadsword, he makes all Attack Tests with it at a –2 penalty.

Dexterity Minimum

Some weapons have a minimum Dexterity value—this is noted on the appropriate Weapons Table. As for a weapon's Strength Minimum, above, characters who don't meet this requirement can still use the weapon, but are penalized for doing so. A character who does not meet the minimum Dexterity value requirement for using a weapon receives a –1 penalty to all Attack Tests with that weapon for every point of Dexterity he lacks.

Attached Weapons

Unless otherwise noted, weapons attached to a character's body in one way or the other - be it a gauntlet worn, a boot with a nasty spike, or the weapons t'skrang often attach to their tails—are used in unarmed combat. They are still considered weapons and can be targeted as such by Spells, abilities, or Talents and Skills such as Disarm or Riposte, but use Unarmed Combat or a Talent or Skill substituting for Unarmed Combat for Attack Tests.

Melee Weapon Descriptions

Battle Axe: The traditional weapon of dwarf armies, the battle axe has a two- to four-foot-long haft with a single bell-shaped blade.

Broadsword: A broadsword has a blade approximately three feet long. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

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.

Dagger: A dagger is a small, sharp-bladed weapon with a maximum length of twelve inches. A dagger with a blade longer than this is considered to be a sword.

Dwarf Sword: A dwarf sword has a curved, single-edged blade about two feet long that is wider than the blade of a typical short sword. Dwarf merchants prefer this weapon above most others, weaker Namegivers find it uncomfortable to swing.

ENCUMBRANCE

Especially in the first flush of adventuring, a character may be tempted to carry excess equipment and more treasure than he can hold. As noted in the **Creating Characters** chapter, your character's Carrying Capacity determines how much weight your character can carry without overburdening himself, but what happens when your character wants (or needs) to move more weight?

Lifting, Pushing, and Dragging

A character can lift as much a twice his Carrying Capacity from the ground and over his head without making a Test. However, his Movement Rate is reduced to 1 while he does so. Dragging or pushing heavy items along the ground without a test is also possible, and a character can move as much as five times his Carrying Capacity this way at a Movement Rate of 2. Of course, these numbers are guidelines and the gamemaster may modify them according to the current situation and conditions.

Feats of Strength

A character can lift or drag even more by succeeding at a Strength Test against a Difficulty Number determined as follows: use the Characteristics Table to find the lowest Strength Value that allows a weight the character is attempting to move, and determine the difference to his own Strength Value. For lifting, add +6 to get the Difficulty Number; for dragging, add +2. The attempt causes 1 Strain per round. If successful, the character can move the weight.

Krarg has a Strength of 14, so his Carrying Capacity is 125 pounds. He can lift up to 250 pounds without making a Test. He now wants to lift a weight of 500 pounds, his unconscious troll buddy Na'atok, who is too heavy for this. Krarg would need a Strength of 20 to lift that much. He subtracts his Strength of 14 from 20, the result is 6. Krarg has to succeed at a Strength (12) Test to lift Na'atok. If he just wanted to drag him, the Difficulty Number would be 8 (6+2).

CURRENCY

CURRENCY DENOMINATIONS

Throal and Thera both use an easy-to-follow decimal currency system, with each consecutive denomination worth ten times that of the previous denomination. Thus, ten copper pieces equal one silver piece, ten silver pieces equal one gold piece, and so on.

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 one-third of an ounce each (48 coins to the pound). 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, most goods and services are priced in silver 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-quarter of an ounce (64 coins to the pound).

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 Kearos Navarim, Elder of Thera, and one of the founders of the Theran Empire. Throalic gold pieces show the Merchant King Braza overlooking the Throal Mountains. Each gold piece weighs one-fifth of an ounce (80 coins to the pound).

GEMS

In some cities in Barsaive, including 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. Gems can be virtually any size, quality and value, the latter generally expressed in silver (or sometimes gold) pieces. The most common gem values are denominations of 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 silver pieces, though some people use gems of lesser or even greater value.

Characters can usually exchange gemstones at 75 percent of their value, but may get a slightly higher rate—approximately 80 percent—for gems of exceptional quality. This exchange rate allows the buyer to make a profit when reselling the gems.



ELEMENTAL COINS

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 usually reserved for special occasions such as finalizing long-term trade agreements, swearing blood oaths, and sealing peace treaties. 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. All elemental coins weigh one tenth of an ounce (160 coins to the pound).

Air pieces resemble finely crafted crystal and each contains a portion of elemental 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. **Earth pieces** consist of soil mixed with clods of elemental earth. These plain brown pieces gleam under bright light. **Fire pieces** resemble disks of slowly swirling flame, an effect of the elemental 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. The plain, round **water piece** contains elemental water. Throalic water pieces contain freshwater, and Theran water pieces contain saltwater.

Orichalcum pieces comprise all 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 the factual basis of these stories.



Flail: A flail consists of a wooden, leather-covered handle, two to four 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.

Hand Axe: Small and easy to use, this basic chopping instrument consists of a one to two-foot-long handle with a single, flat, square- or bell-shaped blade at one end.

Knife: A knife is a small, sharp-bladed cutting tool with a blade of up to six inches in length.

Lance: A specialized spear designed for fighting on horseback, the lance consists of an eight- to twelve-foot-long wooden shaft, fitted with a metal or hardwood handle. A brace at the end of the handle attaches the lance to the user's armor or saddle. If the character is mounted, he effectively wields the lance as if it were a Size 3 weapon (see **Mounted Weapon Use**, p.234), usually freeing up one hand to carry a shield for protection. A lance can be used on foot, but due to the nature of its design and the length of the weapon, it uses the properties of the long-spear then.

Long Spear: A five to eight-foot-long spear, the long spear is wielded with two hands. Like other spears, long-spears are treated as Size 3 weapons while mounted (see **Mounted Weapon Use**, p.234). If a Damage Test for a Charging Attack results in a roll of 30 or higher, the weapon shatters.

Mace: A mace is a club reinforced with a shaped-metal head.

Pole Arm: This catch-all term applies to any weapon with a haft more than four feet long. Theran slave traders use a simple, deadly five-foot-long pole arm with a sharp metal tip on the end. Guards at the Elven Court wield longer pole arms tipped with various blades, hooks and points. All types of pole arms do the same amount of damage, and require two hands to wield. The price for pole arms varies according to the blade configuration—the more elaborate the blade, the greater the cost. Pole arms can be used in the same fashion as long spears during Charging Attacks if the blade is formed appropriately, and shatter on a Damage Test result of 25.

Pole Axe: The pole axe is one of the deadliest weapons available. The haft, usually at least six feet long, holds a large single or double bell-shaped or rectangular blade. This huge, heavy weapon requires two hands to use. Pole axes cannot be used to deliver Charging Attacks with the same efficiency lances do, they are always used two-handed.

Quarterstaff: Any weapon shaped like a pole and made from hardened wood qualifies as a quarterstaff. Anywhere from three to six feet long, most quarterstaffs are usually plainly finished. However, characters with an appropriate Artisan skill sometimes decorate them with elaborate carvings and even gems and precious metals. A quarterstaff makes an excellent defensive weapon—the

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Cost	Weight	Availability
Battle-Axe	7	13	5	35	6	Average
Broadsword	5	12	3	25	4	Average
Club	3	7	2	2	3	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	8 cp	1	Average
Dwarf Sword	4	12	2	6	2	Average
Flail	5	10**	3	35	5	Average
Hand-Axe	4	8	2	15	3	Average
Knife	1	3	1	3 cp	10 oz.	Everyday
Lance	6	14	6	150	10	Unusual
Long-Spear	5	13	5	15	7	Average
Mace	4	13	3	20	5	Average
Pole Arm	7	14	5	100–175	8–10	Average
Pole-Axe	8	16	6	150	10	Unusual
Quarterstaff	4	6**	5	5	4	Average
Raid Spear	7	16	7	10	12	Unusual
Sap	1	3**	1	3	2	Average
Short Sword	4	8	2	16	3	Average
Scythan Axe	5	12	3	20	4	Unusual
Spear	4	9	3	9	3	Average
Spiked Mace	6	13	4	40	7	Average
Trispear	5	11	4	25	4	Average
Troll Battle-Axe	8	17	6	45	8	Unusual
Troll Sword	6	13	4	50	6	Average
Two-Handed Sword	8	15	6	125	7	Unusual
Warhammer	7	15	5	95	8	Unusual
Whip	3*	7**	3	10	2	Average
Windling Pole Arm	4	7	2	55	2	Unusual
Windling Spear	2	4	1	25	8 oz.	Unusual
Windling Sword	3	6	1	45	1	Unusual

* May be used to entangle an opponent up to 3 yards away.
** A minimum Dexterity value of 7 is required to use a flail, quarterstaff, sap or whip.

wielder adds +1 to his Physical Defense when using the Defensive Stance (p.223) or Giving Ground (p.223) combat options.

Raid Spear: A crude but extremely long stone-tipped spear used by the crystal raiders: long enough to cross the gaps between ships before boarding, enabling them to push back defenders from the rails.

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. A sap is designed to help a character knock out his opponent. If the character using the sap is employing the Attacking to Stun combat option (see p.222), he gains a +1 bonus to his Damage Test. If the character makes a successful Called Shot (p.222) with a sap while Attacking to Stun (p.222), striking his opponent on an exposed area, such as the back of the neck or the temple, he gains a +2 bonus to his Damage Test.

Short Sword: A short sword is a bladed weapon, two to three feet in length. Usually wielded one-handed, some short swords feature hilts designed to allow windlings to wield them with two hands. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Scythan Axe: In contrast to Throalic dwarfs, who grew fond of swords a long time ago, many dwarfs outside of Throal preserved the Scythan axe called the *mareka*. The *mareka* is a one-handed weapon featuring a single axe-head. On the side opposite to the blade, the weapon is either flat or has a small spike or hook. The *mareka* shows the true pragmatism of the dwarfs of ancient Scytha, as the flat side can be used as a hammer, or the hook for climbing (the latter providing a +1 bonus to any Climbing Test where the hook or spike proves useable). The weapon is also referred to as "knee-crusher," as it saw frequent use in the early wars that the Scythan dwarfs fought against larger foes such as trolls and ogres. The ancient dwarf blessing "May a shield be above your head, and may you strike straight" is more literal than it might first appear when it is applied to the *mareka*.

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, the spear may also serve as a short three- to five-foot-long pole arm in melee combat. Sometimes referred to as a short-spear, spears are often used in conjunction with a shield. Spears are often used during Charging Attacks where a lance is not available, but like long-spears shatter on a Damage Test Result of 30 or more.

Spiked Mace: The spiked mace is a large club, like a mace, but with a spiked metal head.

Trispear: This specialized weapon evolved from a pole arm. Trispears range from four to six feet long, the longer version used almost exclusively by t'skrang fishermen. Unlike a conventional pole arm, the trispear 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 other pole arms, the trispear normally requires two hands to wield.

Troll Battle-Axe: A troll-sized version of the typical battle-axe, the best examples of these weapons are found with the highland troll clans.

Troll Sword: Created specifically for trolls, the troll sword has a blade more than four feet

MISSILE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Short Range in yards (hexes)	Long Range in yards (hexes)	Cost	Weight	Availability
Blowgun	1	3	1	2–8 (1–4)	9–16 (5–8)	2	10 oz.	Unusual
Box of 10 Needles	–	–	–	–	–	1	8 oz.	Unusual
Elven Warbow	5	12*	5	2–48 (1–24)	49–96 (25–48)	200	4	Rare
20 Warbow Arrows	–	–	–	–	–	25	4	Rare
Light Crossbow	4	9	3	2–32 (1–16)	33–64 (17–32)	50	5	Average
15 Light Bolts	–	–	–	–	–	15	3	Average
Longbow	4	11*	5	2–40 (1–20)	41–80 (21–40)	60	4	Average
20 Longbow Arrows	–	–	–	–	–	10	3	Average
Medium Crossbow	5	12	4	2–40 (1–20)	41–80 (21–40)	100	7	Unusual
15 Medium Bolts	–	–	–	–	–	20	4	Unusual
Quiver	–	–	–	–	–	2	2	Average
Shortbow	3	8	3	2–30 (1–15)	31–60 (16–30)	15	3	Average
20 Shortbow Arrows	–	–	–	–	–	5	2	Average
Sling	2	5	2	2–20 (1–10)	21–40 (11–20)	3	1	Average
Troll Sling	4	10	4	2–30 (1–15)	31–60 (16–30)	15	4	Average
Windling Bow	3	5	2	2–24 (1–12)	25–48 (13–24)	25	14 oz.	Average
20 Windling Bow Arrows	–	–	–	–	–	5	8 oz.	Average

* A minimum Dexterity value of 15 is required to use an elven warbow. A minimum Dexterity value of 13 is required to use a longbow.

THROWING WEAPONS TABLE

Weapon	Damage Step	STR Min.	Size	Short Range in yards (hexes)	Long Range in yards (hexes)	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bola	3	6*	2	2–12 (1–6)	13–24 (7–12)	10	2	Average
Dagger	2	4	1	2–10 (1–5)	11–20 (6–10)	8 cp	1	Average
Dart	1	4	1	2–18 (1–9)	19–36 (10–18)	3 cp	8 oz.	Average
Flight Dagger	2	4	1	2–20 (1–10)	21–40 (11–20)	25	12 oz.	Unusual
Hawk Hatchet	4	8	3	2–24 (1–12)	25–48 (13–24)	75	2	Unusual
Knife	1	3	1	2–8 (1–4)	9–16 (5–8)	3 cp	10 oz.	Everyday
Net	–	4–8*	3-6	2–6 (1–3)	7–12 (4–6)	15	5	Average
Spear	4	9	3	2–10 (1–5)	11–20 (6–10)	9	3	Average
Throwing Axe	3	7	3	2–12 (1–6)	13–24 (7–12)	25	2	Average
Throwing Dagger	2	4	1	2–16 (1–8)	17–32 (9–16)	2	12 oz.	Average
Windling Net	–	3*	2	2–6 (1–3)	7–12 (4–6)	15	12 oz.	Average
Windling Spear	2	4	1	2–8 (1–4)	9–16 (5–8)	25	8 oz.	Unusual

* A minimum Dexterity value of 9 is required to use a bola or net.



long and is balanced for one-handed use by those with exceptional strength. Obsidimen occasionally carry troll swords, and other races sometimes adapt the hilt design to make the sword a two-handed weapon. The blade can be curved or straight, with single or double edges.

Two-handed Sword: The largest bladed weapon available, a two-handed sword is just over four feet long and balanced specifically for two-handed use. The double-edged blade can be curved, but is most often straight.

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.

Whip: *This is an entangling weapon.* 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. Whips allow a wielder to entangle an opponent within 3 yards, as well as damaging him. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 9 (see **Entangling Weapons**, p.229).

Windling Pole Arm: This spear used by windlings is unusually long in comparison to a winding's height to allow a flying windling to attack targets far below his feet or reach vulnerable areas of larger Namegivers when on foot. This weapon works as a lance for mounted windlings, they can use it one-handed (see **Mounted Weapon Use**, p.234).

Windling Spear: Usually used as a thrown weapon, the windling spear can be used in melee combat.

Windling Sword: This sword made specifically for use by windlings resembles a dagger, but has a much smaller grip. Namegivers larger than windlings cannot properly wield it and receive a –3 penalty to attack rolls made with it.

Missile Weapon Descriptions

Blowgun: A blowgun is a one- to three-foot-long hollow tube of wood or metal used to fire two-inch-long 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.

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 two to four feet long, fletched with feathers, and thicker and heavier than conventional longbow arrows.

Light Crossbow: 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 twelve inches 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 six to eight inches in length and have feather fletching.

Longbow: A variation of the shortbow, the longbow ranges from four to eight feet long. Longbow arrows are similar to shortbow arrows, but are two to four feet long.

Medium Crossbow: The medium crossbow is a larger version of the light crossbow, with a two-foot-long shaft and twelve-inch-long bolts.

Quiver: A typical quiver holds 40 arrows or 30 bolts. Most quivers are hard leather cylinders or rectangles strapped over the bowman's back like a backpack. Individuals from the taller Namegiver races often prefer to hook their quivers to their belts. Some quivers come equipped with a cover to discourage others from stealing arrows.

Shortbow: The term shortbow applies to all bows less than four 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. Shortbow arrows are two feet long, made of wood and fletched with feathers. Both stone and metal arrowheads are used, but the finest shots almost exclusively use metal-tipped arrows.

Sling: This 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. Rocks are most commonly used as ammunition, though a sling can throw any small object. Some merchants sell metal balls to use with a sling, but most customers simply find them a waste of good silver.

Troll Sling: The troll sling is a large sling attached to the end of a staff. Trolls and obsidimen can use a troll sling one-handed; all other races must use it with two hands.

Windling Bow: This specialized bow was created especially for windlings, who lack the stature to use standard bows. A windling bow is eighteen inches long and fires nine- to twelve-inch-long arrows.

Throwing Weapon Descriptions

Bola: *This is an entangling weapon.* 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 one to three 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 a target; after inflicting damage to the target, the bola may also entangle it. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 9 (see **Entangling Weapons**, p.229).

Dagger: Technically a melee weapon, a dagger can also function as a throwing weapon.

Dart: Darts are any small, balanced throwing weapons less than six 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.

Flight Dagger: 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.

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.

Knife: A knife can also be used as a throwing weapon.

Net: *This is an entangling weapon.* 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 up to ten human-sized Namegivers. A standard net can capture creatures larger than a windling in size. The weapon's Entangling Difficulty is 12 (see **Entangling Weapons**, p.229).

Spear: Often used as a throwing weapon, most spears are three to five feet long and tipped with a stone or metal head. A spear can be thrown with one hand.

Throwing Axe: A throwing axe is the same size as a hand-axe, but is specifically designed for throwing. It has either a single or double blade, which is usually smaller than the blade of a hand-axe.

Throwing Dagger: The throwing dagger is a flatter, thinner version of a conventional dagger, specially balanced for throwing.

Windling Net: Like a normal net, but designed to capture creatures windling-size and smaller.

Windling Spear: The windling spear is a windling-sized version of its larger counterpart. This 2 foot long spear is balanced to enable a windling to throw it even while flying. Windling spears are usually tipped with metal, because stone spearheads often throw off the delicate balance of these weapons.

Repairing Damaged Weapons

Damaged weapons can be repaired. Repairs require one day for each Damage Step lost by the weapon. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new weapon of the same type per Step repaired (see **Services**, p.269). Repairs can be performed by anyone using the Craft Weapon skill (p.95) or by a Weaponsmith. A ruined item cannot be repaired.

Damaged Thread Weapons

Magical weapons reduced below Damage Step 1 cannot be repaired. As long as the weapon's Damage Step is 1 or more, it does not need to be repaired; in effect, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked, possibly altering its True Pattern, the magic of the item restores its Damage Step at the rate of +1 per week, until it reaches its original value.

ARMOR & SHIELDS

Characters use armor and shields to protect themselves from injury while engaged in combat.

Living Armor

Obsidimen only wear "living" armor—bark, fernweave, blood pebbles, crystal, and similar armors. This is noted in the armor's description (see **Armor Descriptions**, below). Some shields are also described as being living armor. The restriction for obsidimen wearing only living armor does not apply to shields. This notation is included to differentiate these shields from normal shields for the purpose of creating them (see **Living Armor** in the **Enchanting** chapter of the ***Player's Companion***).

Initiative Penalties

Some armor and shields are particularly encumbering and reduce the wearer's Initiative. The item's Initiative Penalty is subtracted from the wearer's base Initiative Step. Initiative penalties are cumulative. A character wearing armor and using a shield incurs a penalty to his Initiative Tests equal to the combined Initiative Penalty for his armor and shield.

A character cannot wear a set of armor or carry a shield if doing so would reduce his base Initiative Step below 1.

Caelarion wears crystal ringlet armor and carries a footman's shield; the armor has an Initiative Penalty of 2 and the buckler an Initiative Penalty of 1. Adding these together, Caelarion suffers a –3 penalty to his Initiative Tests while employing this armor combination.

Initiative penalties for armor and shields are listed in the Armor and Shield Tables, below.

Deflection Bonus

Shields and helmets offer additional protection of weak areas. Shields are used to deflect incoming blows or force the attacker to strike around them, thereby reducing the accuracy of the attack, even if it hits. Shields have a Deflection Bonus characteristic, noted under "Deflection Bonus" for every shield in the Shield Table below, expressed as two positive modifiers. When using a shield, a character adds the modifier on the left of the slash to the Difficulty Number to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit against his Physical Defense, and the modifier on the right to the Difficulty Number to achieve an Armor-Defeating Hit against his Spell Defense. An opponent can deny the character the Deflection Bonus by using the Going Inside a Shield combat option (p.224), by Shattering the Shield (p.225), or by Surprising or Blindsiding him. Note that the Parry talent (p.76) and skill make further use of the Deflection Bonus (the bonus used by talents, skills, and other abilities depends on the Defense Rating being targeted).

Helmets

All armors listed below come with helmets. Helmets are made of the same material as the armor if possible, or of a similarly protective material if not possible (some living armors do not allow helmets to be formed or to be implanted in the head). The character is free to wear the helmet or not. While he wears the helmet, he gains a +2 Deflection Bonus to the Difficulty Number to score an Armor-Defeating Hit against him, just as for shields, as he has covered a vulnerable area. However, he also receives a –1 penalty to Perception Tests, except for visual perception in his direct field of vision. In contrast to the Deflection Bonus from a shield, the Deflection Bonus from a helmet cannot usually be denied. The Deflection bonus applies only to an Armor Rating the armor has, a helmet for a suit that does not have a Mystic Armor Rating does not offer a Deflection Bonus to attacks against the wearer's Spell Defense. The gamemaster may apply the –1 penalty to other tests where the helmet might be in the way, such as tests where the adept's face must be seen for an ability to work.

Krarg has a Physical Defense of 18. This means normally, an attacker achieves an Armor-Defeating Hit against him on an Attack Test with a result of at least 31. However, once Krarg equips his shield (Deflection Bonus +3) and puts on his helmet (Deflection Bonus +2), an attacker can only Armor-Defeat Krarg when scoring at least 36 on an Attack Test. He is still hit on a Test Result of 18 as normal, though. As he wears crystal ringlet and has a crystal raider shield, the Deflection Bonuses also apply when his Spell Defense is targeted. If he only had a normal footman's shield, he would only profit from his helmet's Deflection Bonus.

ENDURING ARMOR BY STRENGTH

Optional Rule: Some gamemasters may want to simulate how strong characters are more capable at wearing heavy armor than weaker characters. The gamemaster may use a character's Strength Value to determine the extent to which a strong character can ignore Initiative Penalties. Compare the character's Strength to the Mystic Armor column of the Characteristics Table (p.27), the Rating a character would normally get as his natural Mystic Armor is the number by which the character's combined Initiative Penalty is alleviated (but it cannot result in a bonus).

Krarg is wearing crystal ringlet armor and carrying a raider's shield. Combined, his Initiative Penalty is 4, causing him a –4 penalty to Initiative Tests. Krarg has a Strength Value of 19, this alleviates 3 of his Initiative Penalty of 4, he makes Initiative Tests at a –1 penalty only. If he increased his Strength by 1 to a Value of 20, he would not suffer any Initiative Penalty from his armor/shield combination. If he were to reach a Strength of 23, he could alleviate a higher Initiative Penalty, but would not receive any benefit from being able to do so if he were to use the same armor and shield.

Using this optional rule can have different effects on the game, depending on what races the characters have chosen. Obsidimen and trolls have very high Strength Values, and increasing it at character creation comes cheaper, allowing these races to alleviate more Initiative penalties. Windlings, on the other hand, can hardly ever reach a Strength Value that allows them to alleviate any penalties at all. The gamemaster is encouraged to vary the effects of Strength on Initiative Penalties if a broad mix of races is participating in the campaign. He can multiplythe Strength Value of trolls and obsidiman by 0.8 before comparing it to the table (the multiplier is related to the weight multiplier for troll and obsidiman-sized items) and multiply a winding's Strength by 1.5 before comparing it to the table.

Armor Descriptions

Bark: *This is living armor.* Bark armor was originally created by the Namdroth (a secretive society of orks), and is woven from the bark of the *hursthen* tree, a short, stubby tree with shaggy, easily-stripped bark. Only recently has its use been recognized. Like fernweave, the armor is living, and provides its Mystic Armor bonus only when watered once every three days. However, bark armor loses moisture more easily than fernweave and once completely dried out it cannot be revived.



Blood Pebbles: *This is living armor.* Blood pebbles are a form of living elemental armor. Hundreds of small elemental stones are embedded in the character's skin, drawing power from the magic in his blood. The character wearing this type of armor takes 4 Blood Magic Damage that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Implanting or removing blood pebbles requires one day of work by a trained Weaponsmith.

Chain Mail: Made from interlocking metal rings, chain mail is flexible but slow to bend, which impedes the character's movement. Chain mail protects the character's entire body, except the legs below the knees.

Crystal Plate: *This is living 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 at a cost of 2,400 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, causing an annoying noise while moving.

Crystal Ringlet: *Living armor.* Made from carved, interlocking rings of living crystal, this armor protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the armor is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 100 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the armor loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Espagra-Scale Cloak: Espagra-scale cloaks, fashionable among dwarfs, are made from the hide of the espagra—a brightly-colored, scaled, flying reptile—and provide similar protection to leather armor. Espagra-scale cloaks are perfectly suited to those social occasions when an individual desires some physical protection, yet does not wish to look awkward by wearing a suit of full armor. The cloak is fastened around the neck and does not include a hood which could be used as a helmet. When worn over other armor the Physical and Mystic Armor bonuses stack, but the wearer incurs an additional –1 Initiative Penalty.

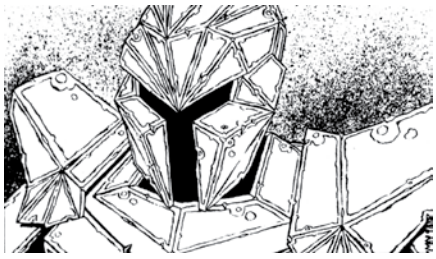


Fernweave: *Living armor.* Woven from deep-forest vines and herbs, fernweave is living armor that must be watered once every three days. If the armor is not watered, the magical properties of the herbs disappear, along with the Mystic Armor bonus this armor provides. Dormant fernweave armor will revive if watered, even after a considerable lapse of time (centuries in some cases). Watering fernweave consumes one day's water ration.

Hardened Leather: Hardened leather armor has been boiled to be made harder than normal leather. This armor protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Hide: This armor is commonly made by sewing tanned animal hides to a normal suit of leather armor. Hide armor retains the shape of the animal the hide came from, including its paws and head, the latter which is often worn as a helmet. The paws cannot be used as weapons. Animal hides commonly used to make hide armor include: bear, jaguar, lion, and gorilla skins.

Leather: 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 character's entire body except for the forearms, and legs below the knee.



Living Crystal: *Living armor.* Living crystal armor is made up of small columns of crystal that are embedded inside the character's body. The magic in the character's blood causes the crystals to grow until the armor covers the character's skin. Implanting the crystal inflicts 5 Blood Magic Damage to the character, that cannot be healed while the armor is worn. Because the crystal is alive, the character 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 character'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 3 days of work by a trained Weaponsmith.

Living Hair Barding: *Living armor.* This type of armor is normally used by mounts, but occasionally worn by Namegivers. Made of thundra hair woven together with small bits of True Earth to create an armored material similar to rhinoceros horn, it is woven into the mount's own hair by a trained Cavalryman or Beastmaster. For each of the next four days, it inflicts 1 Blood Magic Damage per day (4 Blood Magic Damage in total), until it takes full root in the animal's or Namegiver's bloodstream. It provides no protection until completely embedded. Living hair does not cover the wearer's head, feet or hands. Removing living hair barding takes four days, after which time the character can heal the Blood Magic Damage.



Obsidiman Skin: This armor is made from the skin of a slain obsidiman. The negative reaction it elicits in most Namegivers usually outweighs its protective value. Obsidimen will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dwarfs and trolls consider the wearing of obsidiman skin armor an ugly and distasteful practice, and react to the character with loathing; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by two degrees.

Padded Cloth: Padded cloth armor comprises two layers of quilted raw cotton. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Padded Leather: Padded leather armor combines padded cloth with a covering of leather armor. It protects the character's entire body except for the forearms and legs below the knee.

Plate Mail: Plate mail is composed of fitted and jointed pieces of steel plate, with chain mail to protect vulnerable gaps. Though the armor moves smoothly for such a massive and ungainly-looking construct, the heaviness of the plate metal makes quick reaction almost impossible. Plate mail protects the character's entire body.

Ring Mail: Ring mail is leather armor reinforced with metal rings to deflect blows. It protects the character's entire body except for the legs below the knee.

ARMOR TABLE

Armor	Physical Armor	Mystic Armor	Initiative Penalty	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bark	3	3	2	14	100	20	Unusual
Blood Pebble	5	3	1	20	300	NA	Rare
Chain Mail	7	0	3	–	180	40	Average
Crystal Plate	7	7	5	22	12,000	90	Rare
Crystal Ringlet	4	4	2	16	500	45	Rare
Espagra-Scale Cloak	3	1	0/1*	–	200	10	Rare
Fernweave	2	3	0	13	125	15	Unusual
Hardened Leather	5	0	1	–	40	20	Average
Hide Armor	5	1	1	–	50	25	Average
Leather	3	0	0	–	10	15	Average
Living Crystal	6	3	2	22	1,100	NA	Rare
Living Hair Barding	4	4	1	16 E	350	NA	Rare
Obsidiman Skin	3	1	0	–	100	20	Rare
Padded Cloth	2	0	0	–	2	5	Average
Padded Leather	4	0	0	–	20	20	Average
Plate Mail	9	0	4	–	3,000	60	Unusual
Ring Mail	6	0	2	–	110	30	Average
Wyvern-Skin	8	1	3	17 W	2,000	50	Rare

EDN: The armor's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the ***Player's Companion***). If the item requires True elements to be woven into it separately, the type of element is noted in superscript (A = True air; E = True earth; F = True fire; W = True water; Wd = True wood). See **Weaving True Elements Into Patterns** in the **Enchanting** chapter of the ***Player's Companion***).
* The second Initiative Penalty is used when the cloak is worn over other types of armor (see text).

Wyvern-Skin: Made from the hide of a wyvern, this armor retains most of the creature's natural resiliency and is fortified with True Water to preserve that resiliency. This armor covers the torso, arms, and legs. Wyverns will attack anyone wearing this armor on sight. Dragons consider the wearing of wyvern-skin armor distasteful and will react accordingly; worsen the Attitude toward the character (and his obvious companions) for Interaction Tests by one degree. True Water is a key ingredient when enchanting this type of armor, to ensure its flexibility.

Shield Descriptions

Bark: *Living armor.* As with bark armor, bark shields were originally created by the Namdroth, woven from *hursthen* tree bark. Like fernweave, the armor is living, and provides its Mystic Armor bonus only when watered once every three days. However, bark loses moisture more easily than fernweave and once dried out it cannot be revived.

Body: A wooden frame completely sheathed with metal, these tall shields protect the character from the neck to the shins.

Buckler: This small shield straps to the character's forearm. The character may fire a bow while wearing a buckler, but cannot use a melee or throwing weapon with the shielded hand.

Crystal Buckler: *Living armor.* A crystal buckler is a small shield made from living crystal usually strapped to the character's forearm. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield. Crystal bucklers are usually wielded by crystal raiders, although this type of shield is found in all parts of Barsaive. The crystal buckler is the shield of choice for those crystal raiders that prefer greater mobility over protection.

Crystal Raider: *Living armor.* A crystal raider shield is made from living crystal embedded in a wood or metal frame. The enchantments that sustain the crystal must be renewed annually at a cost of 30 silver pieces. Without the enchantment, the shield loses its Mystic Armor bonus and the living crystal becomes dormant. Renewing the enchantment automatically revives the living crystal, even on a centuries-old shield.

Ferndask: *Living armor.* A ferndask is a buckler made from vines and herbs, similar to fernweave armor. The ferndask is living and must be watered once every three days or its magical properties will disappear along with the shield's Mystic Armor 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 correspondingly heavier than a conventional buckler. Because of the shield's size, a bow can be employed while using a ferndask in the same way as a buckler.

Footman's: A footman's shield is made of wood and rimmed and reinforced with metal. Properly used, a footman's shield protects most of the character's upper body and can also be used to block some low blows.

Rider's: A rider's shield resembles a footman's shield, but is specifically designed to protect a mounted rider. Cavalrymen almost exclusively use this kind of shield. Although it protects the rider, it does not protect his mount.

Repairing Damaged Armor

Damaged armor and shields can be repaired. Repairs require one day for each point of Armor Rating lost by the armor or shield. Repair costs are approximately 10 percent of the price for a new item of the same type for each point repaired (see **Services**, p.269). Repairs can be performed by anyone using the Craft Armor skill (p.94) or by a Weaponsmith. A ruined item cannot be repaired.

Damaged Thread Armor

Magical armor and shields with both Physical and Mystic Armor Ratings reduced below 1 cannot be repaired. As long as one of the item's Physical or Mystic Armor Ratings is 1 or more, it does not need to be repaired; in effect, the item repairs itself. Though the physical form of the item may be dented or marked, possibly altering its True Pattern, the magic of the item restores its Physical and Mystic Armor at the rate of +1 per week, until they reach their original values.

MAGICAL EQUIPMENT

Many magical items are available for purchase and use by adventurers, from blood charms to healing aids.

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. Characters must attach blood charms directly to their skin; the charm breaks through the skin to reach the blood it needs to activate.

Blood charm magic builds slowly. **A character must wear a charm for at least one day before he can use it.**

Charms that may be recharged after use require the character to first heal the Blood Magic Damage taken when implanting the charm. Then the character takes Blood Magic Damage again to recharge the charm. Because the blood charm is already attuned to the character, he does not need to wait another one day before again using it.

Blood Charm Descriptions

Absorb Blow: Absorb blow charms are usually made from quartz, veined red from the character's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage. When activated, it absorbs the first 12 Damage Points inflicted on the character. Armor-Defeating Hits are resolved normally, bypassing the charm's magical benefits. A character cannot use the charm if he is Surprised or Blindsided. After absorbing 12 Damage Points, the charm is destroyed, leaving only a cracked, blackened piece of stone.

Astral-Sensitive Eye: Astral-sensitive eyes are magically treated lumps of amber, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 Permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the permanent damage can never be healed. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see into astral space as if he possessed the Astral Sight talent, p.61. The character gains a +1 bonus to his Astral Sensing Test, using his Perception Step. If the character knows the Astral Sight talent, he gains a +1 bonus to his Astral Sight Test. Each time the charm is used to make an Astral Sensing Test, the character takes 1 Strain.

Blood Karma: Blood karma charms are crafted from intricately woven gold, silver and copper wire, set with small diamonds. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 Blood Magic Damage. When activated, it allows the character to spend multiple Karma Points on a single Talent Test. The character suffers 1 Strain for each Karma Point he spends. Karma is spent on the Talent Test one point at a time, until the test is successful, the character runs out of Karma Points, or he decides to stop. After use, the charm is destroyed, leaving the character with a tarnished filigree of twisted wire embedded with cracked dusty black diamonds.

Blood Knuckles: Blood knuckles are small stones of jade, agate or lapis lazuli set into the character's knuckles in a manner similar to that for blood pebble armor. Veins of the character's blood appear in the stones, darkening them. For 1 Strain, the character may use his blood knuckles to add a +2 bonus to an unarmed Damage Test. Warriors have been known to place blood knuckles in the joints of their feet, knees, or tails (in the case of t'skrang), to take advantage of their favored attack methods. Implanting blood knuckles causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage. The process of implanting or removing blood knuckles requires a trained Weaponsmith and takes four hours to complete.

Blood Matrix: A blood matrix acts as a spell-specific spell matrix. When preparing a blood matrix, a magician makes an Alchemy Test to alter the item's pattern so that it holds some of the essential pieces of a specific spell pattern. This change enables the magician to store the pattern of the spell in the item, in much the same way as storing a spell in a standard spell matrix. Creating a blood matrix requires a successful Alchemy Test against the Reattuning Difficulty of the spell being attuned to the blood matrix. To create Enhanced or Armored blood matrices, the magician must achieve an Excellent or Extraordinary Result (Enhanced or Armored, respectively) on a second Alchemy Test against the stored spell's Reattuning Difficulty. Nethermancers can create blood matrices using half-magic. The blood matrix acts as a normal spell matrix of the equivalent type (Armored, Enhanced, or Spell; there are no Shared Matrix versions of this charm), except it can contain only the spell pattern it was specifically created to store. Attaching a blood matrix charm causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage. For 2 Strain, the character may cast the spell attuned to the blood matrix. Casting the spell requires the character to make Thread Weaving Tests for the type of magic involved to weave any remaining spell threads, then make a Spellcasting Test as normal. If the character does not possess the appropriate talents to cast the spell, the charm cannot be used. Using an Enhanced blood matrix charm causes the wearer 3 Strain; using an Armored blood matrix charm causes the wearer 4 Strain.

Blood Weapon: *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning.* A blood weapon replaces part of the character's anatomy with a living crystal item that enhances his unarmed damage capability. The item usually mimics the natural weapons of animals or creatures: razor-sharp teeth, claws attached to a hand or foot, a stinger (embedded in a t'skrang's tail, for instance), or sharpened horns implanted in the character's skull. All of these different blood weapons have the same effect. Installing or removing the blood weapon requires a trained Weaponsmith and takes eight hours to complete, during which time the character takes 3 Blood Magic Damage. For 1 Strain, the blood weapon grants the character a +4 bonus to an unarmed Damage Test.

Bone Charm: Many ork tribes make magical charms from the bones of dead enemies

SHIELDS TABLE

Shield	Physical Armor	Mystic Armor	Initiative Penalty	Deflection Bonus	Shatter Threshold	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Bark	2	1	1	+2/+1	14	11	15	5	Unusual
Body	5	0	2	+4/+0	21	–	50	15	Unusual
Buckler	1	0	0	+1/+0	17	–	5	3	Average
Crystal Buckler	1	1	0	+1/+1	17	10	50	5	Rare
Crystal Raider	3	3	2	+3/+3	18	14	150	15	Rare
Ferndask	1	2	1	+1/+2	16	11	22	5	Unusual
Footman's	3	0	1	+2/+0	19	–	15	10	Average
Rider's	3	0	1	+2/+0	19	–	20	8	Average

EDN: The shield's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter of the ***Player's Companion***)

BLOOD CHARM DEPATTERNING

Optional Rule: "Depatterning" is the bland euphemism coined by magicians to describe what happens when excessive stress placed on a Namegiver's True pattern causes that pattern to collapse in on itself. Depatterning is always fatal, often spectacularly so. The most common cause of depatterning is from the use of blood charms. When a character uses a blood charm, he adds to his Depatterning Rating. The Depatterning Rating is a measure of how much stress the use of blood magic has caused to the character's True pattern. Each blood magic charm has its own Depatterning Rating, the amount by which the character's rating increases if he uses the item.

While the act of implanting a blood charm causes no harm (other than any Blood Magic Damage costs associated with it), the first time a character uses a blood charm with a Depatterning Rating, he gains that rating. For every subsequent use of a blood charm, even those charms with a Depatterning Rating of 0, the gamemaster makes a Depatterning Test for the character, using the character's Willpower Step against a Difficulty Number equal to the character's current Depatterning Rating. If the test fails, the character's True pattern begins to weaken, and the character's Depatterning Rating is increased by +1. If at any time the Depatterning Rating exceeds the character's Willpower value, the next time that character uses a blood charm and fails the Depatterning Test his True pattern dissolves and he dies spontaneously and horribly. The test is only made on activation of the charm. For example, if the charm has a Strain cost per round, the gamemaster makes a Depatterning Test only when the charm is activated, not each round.

The gamemaster may choose the manner of death from the following list or create another unique form of demise, depending on what seems most entertaining at the time:

- 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 shards.
- The character melts like wax in a flame.
- The character putrefies on the spot.

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 Result against the affected character's Spell Defense with an appropriate talent or spell, such as Astral Sight.

If the depatterning is detected before the affected character next uses one of his blood charms, he can restore his True pattern by removing all blood charms and not employing any form of blood magic, except the Strain caused by talent or other ability use, for a year and a day. After this time, the character's True pattern is restored. He can thereafter use blood charms if he so chooses, and begins the hazardous cycle all over again.

Characters suffering from weakened patterns are especially susceptible to spells and talents that target the character's True pattern. Using a spell or talent against a character with a weakened True pattern adds the character's current Depatterning Rating to the Spellcasting or Talent Test result.

Stress Depatterning

If a character has a blood charm noted in the description as being *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning* implanted in his body, and suffers an injury to the specific part of his anatomy to which the blood charm is attached (as the result of a Called Shot, for instance), the character makes an immediate Depatterning Test. On a Pathetic Result, the character dies instantly and horribly in a manner determined by the gamemaster. Magicians call this unfortunate phenomenon "Stress Depatterning." They don't readily admit that it can happen, simply because it depresses sales of blood charms.

who fought with valor, hoping to take the dead opponent's strength and courage for themselves. They are available in two versions:

Common bone charms are left unshaped as small chunks of knuckle-sized bone set into the wearer's skin with a metal pin. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 Blood Magic Damage and grants a +1 bonus to his Recovery Tests.

Shaped bone charms are worn only by tribal chieftains or magicians and are carved into shapes meaningful to the wearer, often crude or intricate representations of one of the Passions. These may be up to four inches long, are attached along the character's forearm, and are otherwise identical to absorb blow charms.

Crystal Arm: *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning.* A crystal arm is made of living crystal and implanted in the character's chest, or between his shoulder blades. Installation or removal of the arm requires a trained Weaponsmith, takes eight hours, and causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Once implanted, the arm can be used to pick up and move things as normal. For 1 Strain, the character may use the crystal arm to make an unarmed combat Attack Test in addition to his other actions, but suffers a –2 penalty to all Action Tests that round, including the bonus Attack Test. A character may instead choose to only make an unarmed combat attack that round, thus avoiding the penalty. Alternatively, if the character knows the Second Attack or Swift Kick talent or skill, his crystal arm may be used to perform them without penalty. Damage dealt by the arm is based on the character's Willpower Step, rather than his Strength Step. Having an extra arm can be quite inconvenient; accommodating it requires a whole new wardrobe, custom-made torso armor and adjusting to new sleep positions. However, a character who has lost a real arm and replaces it with a crystal arm does not suffer the inconveniences of an unnaturally placed appendage. He may use it as he would a normal limb, however, he loses the ability to make a bonus unarmed attack.

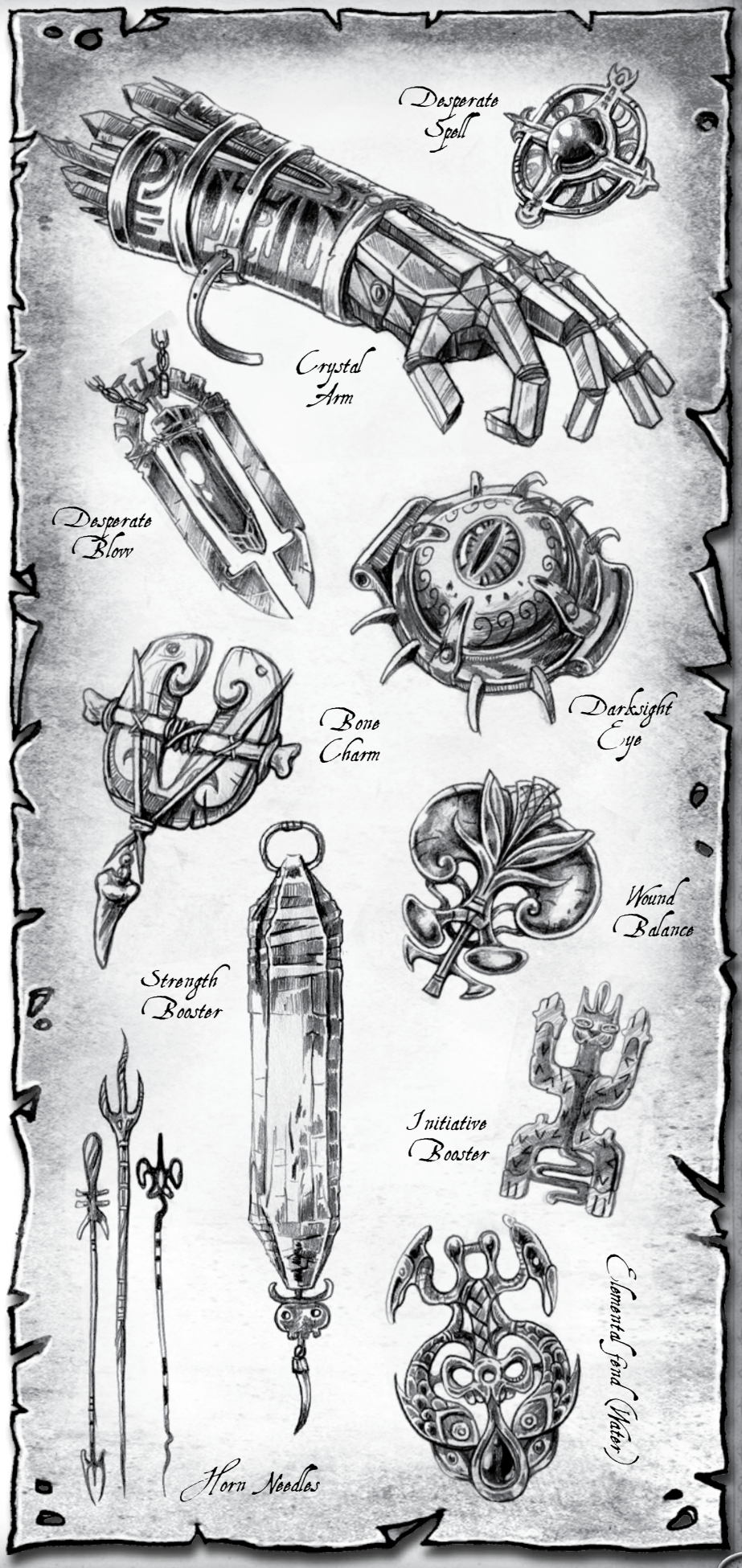
Darksight Eye: A darksight eye is a magically treated piece of living crystal, hollowed out and filled with nourishing fluid and a gel worm, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the character's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, this process causes the character 2 Permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the Permanent damage can never be healed. Though the character's normal vision through the gem is slightly cloudy, the eye allows him to see in the dark as if he possessed Low Light Vision, p.20. A character who already has this ability gains no benefit from wearing a darksight eye.

Death Cheat: Usually made of turquoise or tourmaline, this charm bears a characteristic red spot drawn from the wearer's blood. Implanting a death cheat charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Upon the character's death, the death cheat charm allows the character to make a Recovery Test with a +6 bonus. Should the character have no Recovery Tests available, it grants a bonus Step 6/D10 Recovery Test. If the result is enough to bring the character's Current Damage total below his Death Rating then he lives, otherwise he remains dead. Once the charm has been used, it becomes inert, appearing as a translucent stone drained of most of its color. Though the charm has no intrinsic value thereafter, nobles or would-be heroes often offer up to 100 silver pieces for a used death cheat charm, openly wearing them as an unearned badge of honor.

Desperate Blow: Charm makers usually fashion desperate blow charms from steel and quartz. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic damage. The character's blood infuses the quartz with red, and one drop of blood is perpetually suspended from the steel. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to an Attack or Damage Test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the Blood Magic Damage caused by using the charm.

Desperate Spell: Implanting a desperate spell charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Made of silver and a small pearl, the character's blood leaves brilliant red speckles on the pearl. When activated, a desperate blow charm grants a +6 bonus to a Spellcasting or spell Effect Test, chosen by the character. The charm may be recharged after use, which first requires the character to heal the Blood Magic Damage caused by the charm.

Disturbing Appearance: *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning.* Disturbing appearance charms cover a wide range of cosmetic alterations, all of them alarming. Examples include: skin made of glass, compound or serpentine eyes, scaled hide, gems in place of fingernails, hair made of wire or silk, bright-colored teeth or radically altered musculature. A character might also become disturbingly beautiful, with unnaturally fine and symmetrical features. The charm itself is innocuous—a small piece of black crystal, no bigger than a copper piece, embedded anywhere on the character's body. Implanting the charm causes the character 1 Blood Magic Damage. For 1 Strain, the disturbing appearance charm grants the wearer a +2 bonus to Interaction Tests where the alteration caused by the charm may prove beneficial. (Sometimes it's an advantage to be intimidating, awe-inspiring or unnervingly beautiful.) The bonus might also apply when attempting to seduce particularly perverse individuals.



BLOOD CHARM TABLE

Charm	DR	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Absorb Blow	0	11	100	1	Unusual
Astral-Sensitive Eye	0	13	325	1	Unusual
Blood Karma	0	16	2,000	1	Rare
Blood Knuckles	1	11	180	1	Rare
Blood Matrix:					
Normal	1	Spec.	1,500	1	Unusual
Enhanced	1	Spec.	2,500	1	Rare
Armored	1	Spec.	3,500	1	Very Rare
Blood Weapon	1	20	500	3	Rare
Bone Charm:					
Common	0	12	175	1	Rare
Shaped	0	11	175	1	Rare
Crystal Arm	2	18	1,700	10	Very Rare
Darksight Eye	0	11	200	1	Unusual
Death Cheat	0	17	450	1	Unusual
Desperate Blow	1	14	275	1	Unusual
Desperate Spell	1	14	300	1	Unusual
Disturbing Appearance	3	20	1,000	1	Rare
Elemental Fend:					
Air	0	17	250	1	Unusual
Earth	0	17	200	1	Unusual
Fire	0	17	350	1	Unusual
Water	0	17	300	1	Unusual
Wood	0	17	400	1	Rare
Garlen Stone	NA	15	250	1	Rare
Horn Needle	1	14	450	1	Rare
Horror Fend	0	17	500	1	Unusual
Initiative Booster	1	21	600	1	Rare
Karma	2	16	1,000	1	Rare
Karma Absorber	3	20	500	Neg.	Very Rare
Poison Sac	2	18	1,000	1	Very Rare
Spore Glands	2	19	300	Neg.	Very Rare
Strength Booster	1	13	300	1	Rare
Targeting Eye	0	13	450	1	Unusual
Wings of Fire	2	18	1,000	3	Very Rare
Wound Balance	1	14	200	1	Unusual

DR: The value added to the character's Depatterning Rating (see **Blood Charm Depatterning**, p.258).
EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter in the ***Player's Companion***)
Neg.: Negligible weight for encumbrance purposes. At the gamemaster's discretion, approximately 10 such items weigh 1 pound.
Spec.: Special rules apply to the creation or purchase of these blood charms. See the charm's description for details.

Elemental Fend: Elemental fend charms are infused with True Wood, fire, water, air or earth, protecting the character against the powers of spirits of the same element. An elemental fend charm is made by soaking a small piece of orichalcum in a special alchemical solution. After one week, the orichalcum is removed and a kernel of one of the five True Elements is woven into it; at this point, the charm takes on the appearance of the True Element in question. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. For 1 Strain per round, the character adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense. When the character stops using it, the charm falls from his body, destroyed. The charm may be reattached, but requires the character to heal the damage the charm caused before recharging.

Garlen Stone: Garlen stones are small pebbles covered in golden caterpillar-like hairs. When swallowed, the hairs lengthen into spines and the stone attaches itself to the character's stomach or intestinal wall. Swallowing a Garlen stone causes the character 4 Permanent damage. Once ingested, a stone cannot be removed without killing its owner. For this reason, the Permanent damage caused by swallowing the Garlen stone can never be healed. For 2 Strain, the character may use one of his available Recovery Tests to heal a Wound instead of healing Damage Points. The Garlen stone cannot be used again until the character has healed all Wounds and Damage Points he has taken, and never twice within the same day. Garlen stones can only be created by questors of Garlen using the Alchemy skill (p.91). Implanting or using a Garlen stone never causes the character to increase his Depatterning Rating or make a Depatterning Test.

Horn Needle: These charms are small pieces of ivory or other animal horn painstakingly carved into thin needles. When implanted under the user's skin, the needle darkens from yellowish-gray to red with black streaks, and remains visible through the skin. This causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. The charm increases the wearer's resistance to poisons and diseases. For 2 Strain, the character gains a +3 bonus to Toughness-based Tests or adds +3 to his Spell Defense when resisting the effects of poison or disease.

Horror Fend: Charm makers construct Horror fend charms from gold and silver designed around a piece of True Earth. Two drops of the wearer's blood travel along the gold, soak into the earth, emerge in the silver, then soak into the earth to start the pattern again. Implanting the charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. Horror fend charms offer protection against the Horrors or their constructs. For 1 Strain per round, the character adds +3 to his Physical and Spell Defense against Horrors and Horror constructs. When the character stops using it, the charm falls inert from his body. The charm may be reattached, but requires the character to heal the damage caused by the charm before recharging.

Initiative Booster: Made from ruby-colored crystal, Initiative booster charms turn as dark as obsidian when they absorb the wearer's blood. Implanting the charm causes the character 4 Blood Magic Damage. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Initiative Tests; for each point of Strain the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to his Initiative Test. The character must declare he is using the charm, and how much Strain he is taking, before he makes his Initiative Test.

Karma: Karma charms enable adepts to use Karma Points on non-Discipline talents. Each Karma charm is made for a specific talent, such as Melee Weapons, and can only be made for talents that are Discipline talents for at least one Discipline, and whose use requires an Action Test. Implanting a Karma charm causes the character 3 Blood Magic Damage. For 2 Strain, plus the Strain cost of the talent, the character may spend a Karma Point on the talent. The charm does not actually make the talent a Discipline talent; if the talent requires Karma the adept must still spend the requisite Karma Point (see the **Talents** chapter, p.57).

Karma Absorber: *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning.* To gain a Karma absorber, the character undergoes ritual scarification, which causes him 3 Permanent damage. Over a period of two months, the raised welts grow into a ring of tumor-like flesh around the crown of the skull. (In trolls, this soft flesh covers the hard cartilage of the horns.) The tissue acts as a lightning rod for Karma. Each time the character successfully strikes an opponent with a melee or missile weapon, an unarmed combat blow or a damage-causing spell, the character may take 2 Strain to gain one of his opponent's Karma Points (his opponent reduces his Karma Points total accordingly). This blood charm is only effective against opponents who have Karma. The Karma absorber is sensitive to the touch. If it is hit by an opponent making a Called Shot (p.222), the character suffers an Armor-Defeating Hit and a minimum of 1 Wound. Such an attack also destroys the Karma absorber; it bursts, spurting bloody pus over the character. An opponent can only be affected by one use of this charm each round.

Poison Sac: Poison sacs are attached to blood weapons, so a character must already possess a blood weapon to have a poison sac installed. The installation causes the character 1 Blood Magic Damage. A character with multiple blood weapons must specify to which one the poison sac is attached. No test is required for the character to affect a target with the poison—if the blood weapon causes a Wound then the victim is poisoned. The poison has a Spell Defense and Damage Step equal to the character's Toughness Step. Armor does not protect against this damage. A victim of a poison sac is immune to further hits from poison-sac-equipped weapons until he stops taking damage from the current one.

Spore Gland: A spore gland charm is a fungal parasite implanted in the glands around the character's throat. The implantation procedure causes the character 2 Permanent damage, which can never be healed. Thereafter, whenever damage taken knocks the character unconscious, the gland opens up and sprays a cloud of corrosive spores. The cloud inflicts Step 4 damage to the unconscious character, and inflicts Toughness Step damage to all other living targets within a 10-yard radius. No armor protects against this damage, although characters who have imbibed an anti-sporific potion are unaffected by the spores. Each character within range of the spores makes a Toughness Test against the unconscious character's Willpower Step. Success indicates the character suffers only half damage from the spores. The character's permanently swollen glands are visible only on close inspection, and the character smells slightly musty on humid days.

Strength Booster: Strength boosters are most often made of clear crystal that turns deep red when activated by the wearer's blood. These charms grant their wearer a bonus to Strength Tests; for every 2 Strain the character takes, he gains a +1 bonus to Strength-only Tests. A strength booster charm cannot be used to augment Damage Tests in combat. Attaching a strength booster charm causes the character 2 Blood Magic Damage.

Targeting Eye: A targeting eye is a magically treated piece of quartz, hollowed out and filled with a gel worm and nourishing fluid, then attached to an eye patch. When first worn, the worm burrows into the wearer's eye, destroying it. Though the fluid in the gem makes it relatively painless, the process causes the character 2 Permanent damage. Once implanted, the charm can never be removed—the Permanent damage can never be healed. The character sees through the quartz normally, though his vision through that eye is a little cloudy. For 1 Strain, the character gains a +2 bonus to his ranged combat Attack Test.

Wings of Fire: *Susceptible to Stress Depatterning.* The wings of fire charm consists of several magically treated fire opals embedded into the character's back in a crisscross fashion. The implantation process inflicts 3 Blood Magic Damage. After a month-long healing period, the character can use the charm to fly for short periods. The character can remain airborne for up to Toughness Step rounds. Each round spent flying causes 1 Strain. The character's flying speed is determined as if he were a flying windling. When the charm is activated, jets of flame shoot out from the opals in the character's back. These magical flames are not hot, and cannot be used to damage opponents or to start fires. Windlings who have lost their wings sometimes resort to using this dangerous blood magic.

Wound Balance: Wound Balance charms are made of amber-colored crystal and turn a deep orange when activated by the wearer's blood. Embedding the charm causes 3 Blood Magic Damage. For 1 Strain, the wearer gains a +3 bonus to a Knockdown Test.

COMMON MAGIC ITEMS

Common magic items are those that do not require a woven thread to use. Many of these items have been created with one of the five True Elements woven into their structure, which is what gives them their varied magical properties. These properties can usually be activated or deactivated by a command word or gesture, though some are designed to react to other stimuli.

Common Magic Item Descriptions

Air Elevator: The type of air elevator most commonly found in Barsaive is a primitive version of those at the Theran fortress of Sky Point. Common air elevators are platforms, usually wooden, into which kernels of True Air are woven. The True Air allows the platform to rise and fall at the command of a person standing on the platform. Air elevators rise and descend at a rate of approximately 1 yard per round. They can be pushed from side to side, but remain steady against winds and such. Small air elevators are most often used to carry heavy items or provide access to high library shelves, such as those in the Great Library of Throal. They are also a means of reaching the upper floors of multi-story buildings that lack ladders or stairs. Larger air elevators are used to load cargo and materials on to floating airships. The cost shown is for a 3-yard by 3-yard by 1-yard elevator. Larger elevators will cost at least two to three times the listed price, at the gamemaster's discretion.

Bedroll of Comfort: Bedrolls of comfort are magically enchanted to change temperature as needed to keep their users comfortable. The bedrolls are made of *glinsthin* and *frasth* fibers—*glinsthin* grows on the highest and coldest mountain peaks, while *frasth* grows by the shores of Death's Sea. This combination of cold and warm





plant fibers, plus a tiny infusion of True Air, enables the bedroll to magically adjust to the user's body temperature and keep him comfortable.

Boots, Dry: Dry boots are leather boots able to repel water to keep the wearer's feet dry. Kernels of True Water are woven into the boots, essentially sealing the boots against outside moisture. This ability is constantly working, but has an unfortunate side-effect. Because of its nature, the True Water will keep moisture inside the boots as effectively as keeping it from entering. However, this also means that the boots will take a very long time to dry out should water or liquid get inside them.

Boots, Huntsman's: Huntsman's boots are an improved version of the dry boots. These leather boots are designed for the huntsman who spends extended periods of time in the forest. Woven with kernels of True Air and True Water, these boots keep the wearer's feet both warm and dry, and add a spring to his stride that makes a long day of hunting less tiring. A character wearing a pair of huntsman's boots can walk an additional five miles each day.

Chair of Comfort: Chairs of comfort may be crafted in any shape or style, but these wooden chairs always possess the grace and beauty characteristic of elven craft. The True Wood used in their construction gives them exceptional strength and a springy quality that makes them as comfortable as cloth cushions. Additionally, these chairs mold themselves to the shape of the person sitting in them—which enables even blood elves to sit comfortably. Very few chairs of comfort are crafted on a large enough scale to accommodate trolls or obsidiman (increase the cost and weight by +50 percent each, and worsen Availability by one level).

Cleaning Broom: Kernels of True Wood and True Earth are woven together in these magical whisk brooms, which capture all loose dust and dirt with which they come in contact. A simple command word allows the user to dump all the dust that the broom picks up, so that the broom can be used over and over again.

Cloak, Dwarf Winternight: 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 add +2 to the character's Physical and Mystic Armor against cold damage from spells, ice weapons, or other cold sources.

Cloak, Everclean: Everclean cloaks repel dirt and stains to stay clean for extended periods. The kernels of True Water and True Air woven into the cloak repels dirt and oils that might cause stains. Eventually, after many months of use, these cloaks become stained and must be cleaned like other clothes. As

with warm cloaks, all kinds of garments are made in the manner of everclean cloaks.

Cloak, Oak-Leaf: Oak-leaf cloaks are woven of leaves harvested from the blood oak trees common to the Blood Wood. The cloaks provide a measure of protection from cold and rain, but more importantly, they provide camouflage for those who need to move about wooded areas unobserved. In wooded settings, the cloak aids the wearer by blending in with the surroundings. The wearer gains a +2 bonus to any Action Tests related to avoiding being seen. Within the Blood Wood, this is increased to a +3 bonus, and should the wearer be hiding in or next to a blood oak tree, it is increased again to +5. For three months of the year, the leaves of the cloak turn crimson red, just as the leaves of the blood oak tree do. During this time, the cloak is only effective when the wearer is hiding among the branches of a blood oak tree; it is effectively useless for hiding in other surroundings during this season.

Cloak, Warm: A warm cloak is a woolen cloak that keeps its wearer warm when temperatures outdoors drop below a certain point. The magic of these cloaks comes from the kernels of True Air and True Fire woven into them. The True Air reacts to changes in temperature, and the True Fire serves to warm the wearer. Though many types of garments are made in this fashion, the warm cloak is the most common.

Cloaksense Brooch: A cloaksense brooch infuses any cloak it is fastened to with magic. The brooch uses the character's Perception Step as a magical probe. When the character is in immediate danger of a surprise attack, he makes a Perception Test against the lowest Spell Defense among the attacking group. If the test succeeds, the cloaksense brooch warns the character of the attacker's presence, foiling Surprise or Blindside attacks. Cloaksense only works against ambushes within 10 yards of the character, and each attempt to use the brooch causes the wearer 1 Strain. In a situation where use of a cloaksense brooch might come in handy for the character, the gamemaster should ask the player if he wants to use it or not, at which point the character makes his choice (and takes the Strain).

Divining Rod: Some adventurers use magical divining rods to locate water sources. These items resemble forked branches and are enchanted with True Water. A character with a magical divining rod gains a +3 bonus to Wilderness Survival Tests to locate water.

Elfweave Robe: These beautiful garments display a fine, delicate craftsmanship that human and dwarf weavers envy, but cannot yet copy. Elves most commonly wear elfweave robes, though some humans also wear them. Though the elves disclaim the rumors attributing magical properties to the robes, courtiers have long noted that the robes never quite sit right on an ork or dwarf.

Firefly Chalk: Firefly chalk is made by enchanting a special type of soft clay, then forming the clay into sticks about four inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter. The sticks remain the dull color of the original clay but produce a dimly glowing script that may be read under all lighting conditions. If more than five words are written with the chalk, the glow provides enough light to qualify as low-light conditions. Most people use the chalk to leave messages in naturally dark places, such as kaers or mines, though Troubadours and Illusionists sometimes paint their faces and bodies with it prior to night-time performances. Firefly chalk washes off most surfaces if rubbed or doused with water.

Fire Starter: A fire starter is a short wand that will produce a small flame at one end. This flame can be used to start larger fires. Fire starters have a kernel of True Fire woven into them. The flame is activated by a spoken command word.

Floating Chair: True Air is woven into the cushions and fabric of sedan chairs to create floating chairs. These chairs hover about one yard off the ground and can be pushed around slowly. They turn and move at a comfortable pace and do not drift once they come to rest. Most floating chairs can only support human-sized or smaller occupants: dwarfs, elves, humans, orks, windlings and t'skrang. Chairs large enough to support trolls and obsidimen are available in some markets.

Hambrell's Contract: Hambrell's contracts are magical parchments used for contracts between two parties. The contracts were originally created by Wizards in the employ of House Hambrell, a renowned merchant house of Kratas. The secret of creating the parchments was lost during the Scourge, along with the last members of House Hambrell. Most magical scholars believe that the contracts make use of trapped ally spirits. No one knows how many Hambrell's contracts were originally made, or how many survived the Scourge, but several dozen at least have been reported to exist in Barsaive and the Theran Empire. A Hambrell's contract is a single page the size of a large book, though it can be smaller. The parties involved in the contract write the terms of their agreement on the magic parchment. The entire contract must fit on one side (the Hambrells apparently felt that short, to-the-point agreements worked better for all concerned). Once the agreement is written and all parties sign the contract, the contract creates duplicates of itself, one for each contributing party. Until the signed contract is fulfilled by all the involved parties meeting their obligations, the parchment cannot be used again. Upon fulfillment of the contract, the writing fades and the duplicates disappear. The Hambrell's contract may then be used for another agreement. All parties must enter into the agreement willingly and understand all of its terms. Any agreement acceptable to all parties is valid, even if one of the parties gets nothing from it. If any party breaks a term of the contract, all copies of it start to show signs of wear and age. If a serious violation occurs, the edges of the parchment start to appear burnt and cracked. These changes alert all parties that the contract has been breached. Additionally, any character who has broken a contract written on one of these parchments may not enter into a different Hambrell's contract until he has fulfilled the terms he agreed to in the first contract. If he tries to enter into another one, his name fades from the parchment almost immediately after he signs it, and no duplicate contracts appear. This alerts the other parties present that the character has broken a previous Hambrell's contract and has not made amends. Destroying a Hambrell's contract also destroys any duplicates of it. If a copy is destroyed, the copyholder may reform it by returning to the holder of the original contract and re-signing it.

Heat Stone: Heat stones contain nuggets of True Earth and True Fire that make the stone glow deep red and become as hot as a burning coal. The True Earth and True Fire are slowly consumed over a period of about a year, depending on the quality of the stone's enchantment. Heat stones are generally kept in metal or ceramic containers. The steady heat they give off makes them ideal as bed-warmers, room heaters and for starting fires.

Hot Pot: A hot pot is a ceramic cooking pot that has been woven with kernels of True Fire. The True Fire heats the ceramic, allowing the user to cook food in the pot without actually using fire. A spoken command word can heat up the pot, but the temperature cannot be regulated. The hot pot simply heats to a given temperature, and no higher.

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 (large quartzes) during the Scourge, and these gems can still be found in use in most towns and cities. Most light quartzes can be dimmed and turned on or off on command. To provide sustenance for the living crystal, the light quartz is enchanted. The enchantments must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces. Without the enchantment the crystal loses its ability to glow and the living crystal becomes dormant.

Light Quartz Weapon: Though rarely found in Barsaive, weapons with small light quartz crystals embedded in their hilts permit their wielders to use the weapons as light sources. Such weapons are favored by adventurers who explore underground

COMMON MAGIC ITEMS TABLE

Item	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Air Elevator	12 [A]	3,000	NA	Rare
Bedroll of Comfort	11 [A]	340	2	Rare
Boots:				
Dry	12 [A]	250	2	Rare
Huntsman's*	11 [AW]	700	2	Rare
Chair of Comfort*:				
Standard-sized	13	600	6	Rare
Troll/Obsidiman-sized	14	900	9	Rare
Cleaning Broom	11 [AWd]	25	2	Rare
Cloak:				
Dwarf Winternight	12 [F]	275	2	Unusual
Everclean	11 [AW]	275	1	Rare
Oak-Leaf*	12	800	1	Rare
Warm	11 [AF]	300	2	Rare
Cloaksense Brooch	13	350	2	Unusual
Divining Rod	12	75	1	Rare
Elfweave Robe	13	80	2	Unusual
Fire Starter	12 [F]	100	2	Rare
Firefly Chalk (per stick)	12	12	Neg.	Unusual
Floating Chair:				
Standard-sized	12 [A]	250	NA	Rare
Troll/Obsidiman-sized	13 [A]	600	NA	Rare
Hambrell's Contract	NA	700	Neg.	Very Rare
Heat Stone	11 [EF]	100	3	Rare
Hot Pot	12 [F]	100	8	Rare
Light Quartz:				
Small	13	75	2	Unusual
Medium	14	125	6	Unusual
Large	15	200	20	Rare
Light Quartz Weapon	13	100	1	Rare
Message Stone	10 [AE]	300	2	Unusual
Message Stone (Warded)	20 [AE]	600	2	Rare
One-Size (fits all) Hat	13	35	1	Unusual
Orichalcum Container	10	5,000	1	Rare
Pot of Grumbah:				
Small (1 foot diameter)	12 [A]	75	2	Rare
Large (1 yard diameter)	13 [A]	200	5	Rare
Pure Water Pot	16	150	2	Rare
Quiet-Fingers Gloves	13	140	1	Unusual
Quiet Pouch	13	65	2	Rare
Season Lamp	11 [AF]	350	NA	Rare
Talisman:				
First Circle	16	150	2	Rare
Second Circle	18	300	2	Rare
Third Circle	19	450	2	Rare
Fourth Circle	21	600	2	Rare
Fifth Circle	22	750	2	Rare
Traveler's Mug	12 [W]	350	1	Rare
Upandal's Blessings	11 [EWd]	275	3	Rare
Volus Brooch	11	500	2	Rare
Wind Instrument	12 [A]	250	2+	Rare

* Halve the cost and better the Availability by one level if the item is purchased from blood elves.
EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the ***Player's Companion***). If the item requires True elements to be woven into it separately, the type of element is noted in superscript (A = True air; E = True earth; F = True fire; W = True water; Wd = True wood). See Weaving True Elements Into Patterns in the Enchanting chapter of the Player's Companion).

regions, especially kaers. The light quartzes used are smaller than standard light quartzes and roughly half as effective. Also, light quartz crystals can be installed in a weapon's hilt only when a weapon is being made. The cost of the weapon is additional to the cost of the quartz. Like small light quartzes, the enchantment must be renewed each year at a cost of 10 silver pieces.

Message Stone: Message stones are living crystals woven with True Earth and True Air that enable them to capture sounds within their crystalline structure. A spoken command is used to release the message. Government couriers and wealthy merchants often use these stones to deliver important messages in the sender's own voice. More expensive message stones have wards cast on them to safeguard their messages against tampering.

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.

Orichalcum Container: A small container sufficient to hold up to twenty kernels of a True Element. These containers usually are fashioned in the form of small boxes with hinged lids and engraved with protective runes and symbols.

Pot of Grumbah: Pots of *grumbah* are heavy-lidded pots made of black iron and the hides of ice flyers, with kernels of True Air woven into them. They are most often used to carry food, and occasionally used to transport the remains of creatures. The pots are airtight once sealed and keep their contents cold, tripling the amount of time the contents remain fresh before decaying. The pots come in a variety of sizes ranging from one foot to one yard in diameter and weigh anywhere from two to five pounds.

Pure Water Pot: For the most part, water from running brooks, streams, or rivers is clean enough for drinking, though characters may wish to purify it just to be safe. Some adventurers carry magically enchanted pure water pots that cast the Purify Water spell, p.190, with a Spellcasting and Effect Step of 8/2D6 on any liquid placed in them.

Quiet-Fingers Gloves: These gloves muffle the sound of the character's hands bouncing or bumping against someone else's property. If another person tries to detect the character wearing these gloves while he is attempting to pick a lock or a pocket, add +1 to the Difficulty Number for the required Perception Test. Quiet-fingers gloves only work when the character is actively using his hands.

Quiet Pouch: Minor silencing illusions, such as those used in quiet-fingers gloves, are woven into the fabric of these pouches and prevent noise from emerging. Wealthy travelers often use quiet pouches to keep thieves and beggars from hearing the jingling of coins as they walk.

Season Lamp: These elaborate hanging lamps are made from brass or iron woven with True Air and fire. The two elements alternately warm or cool the room where the lamp hangs, keeping it at a constant temperature regardless of the weather outside. Season lamps are most commonly used in the homes of the well-to-do to create a comfortable environment.

Talisman: Talismans are single-use spell matrix objects (see **Using Spell Matrix Objects** in the **Spell Magic** chapter, p.134). Every talisman is rated by the maximum spell Circle it can hold. For example, a First Circle Talisman can store First Circle spells, while a Fifth Circle Talisman can store spells of any Circle up to Fifth Circle. Talismans can store only those spells that the magician can cast normally, and are limited to spells requiring no threads to cast. To store a spell pattern in a talisman, the magician must make a successful Thread Weaving Test against the Reattuning Difficulty of the spell to be stored. This process takes a number of hours equal to the spell Circle. A magician can maintain a maximum number of talismans equal to his Thread Weaving Rank; this includes talismans he has attuned for others. If the magician wishes to attune

another talisman above this limit, he must first expend a currently attuned one. To use a talisman, the magician must touch or hold it. For 2 Strain, the magician can cast the spell the talisman contains as if it were held in a spell matrix. Once used, the talisman must be reattuned using the magician's Thread Weaving talent, as normal.

Traveler's Mug: Traveler's mugs are large steel mugs decorated with symbols of healing and endurance executed in precious metals. These pint mugs are enchanted with orichalcum and True Water and fill up once per day with cool fresh water upon a spoken command.

Upandal's Blessings: These wooden-handled tools, which combine a file with a chisel and hand drill, have won much praise from artisans and enchanters. The central shafts of each tool are made of rune-encrusted metals woven with generous amounts of True Earth and True Wood. The tools enable an artist to correct mistakes when crafting items from any substance, so long as he does so within five minutes of making the error. The tools are especially useful to artists working with precious metals or similar substances, as they can correct errors without whittling their carvings down to a smaller size. Often used by craftsmen to decorate shields and weapons, Upandal's blessings were also used to etch runes into kaer doors during the Scourge. Should the user of these tools fail a Craftsman or Artisan Test he may immediately erase his mistake and make a second test. Using Upandal's blessings when crafting magical items requires a Craftsman or Artisan Test against the item's Spell Defense. On a Pathetic Result, any errors made while crafting the item cannot be corrected.

Volus Brooch: These small brooches are made from the preserved magic-sensing organ of a volus (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 206), encased in a living-crystal casing lined with orichalcum. The brooch offers the wearer a limited version of the volus' magic-sensing ability. When the wearer is within 1 mile of a source of magic, the gamemaster makes a Step 8 Spellcasting Test against a Difficulty Number based on the type of magic being used, as shown in the Volus Brooch Use Table. If the test succeeds, the crystal casing glows dimly; as the wearer nears the source of the magic, the glow brightens. Adepts rarely use volus brooches, as their own magic often interferes with the brooch's abilities and advertises their magical powers to others.

VOLUS BROOCH TABLE

Magic Type	Difficulty Number
Raw Magic	4
Creature Magic	9
Adept Magic	11
Magical Items	12
Matrix-cast Spells	14

Wind Instrument: Wind instruments, such as flutes or trumpets, often have True Air woven into them to give the instrument a clearer, purer sound that carries much better than usual. The True Air also allows the musician to play the instrument with less effort and for longer periods of time than he could play a non-magical instrument. The musician gains a +1 bonus to his Emotion Song Tests, if he possesses the talent or skill, and to any other Action Tests made to determine how well he plays the instrument.

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. The bulk of the weight of a Healing Aid is usually its packaging, typically a clay or ceramic vial. The weight of the potion inside does not have any effect on how well it works or how much is needed: A character always requires a full dose; windlings do not need to drink less of a potion because they are smaller, trolls do not require several doses because they are larger. Unless noted in the description, healing aids that grant a Recovery Test bonus do so using the rules for recovering from damage described in **Effects of Injury**, p.220. Using a Healing Aid is a Standard Action for most items, and exceptions are noted with the item.

Healing Aid Descriptions

Anti-Sporific: The alchemists who install spore glands (see **Blood Charms**, p.257) also sell potions that protect others from the effect of the spores. Each dose works for four hours, during which time the character is immune to the effect of spore gland spores. Characters with spore glands implants often give these potions to companions they are traveling with. The anti-sporific, while especially efficacious against spore gland spores, is also effective against other types of spores. The character gains a +5 bonus to any Tests made to resist the effects of spore-based attacks for 8 hours after ingesting the potion.

Booster Potion: A booster potion improves the effectiveness of the character's healing processes, granting a +8 bonus to the next Recovery Test the character makes within 24 hours.

Cleanse Poison Potion: This potion gives a character an additional chance to rid himself of the effects of a poison. He repeats the original Resistance Test made against the poison and if successful, the poison no longer causes any additional harm and all effects caused by being poisoned end. Effects caused by the poison wreaking havoc on the character's system, such as damage, are recovered from as normal.

Confidence Booster: A confidence booster potion produces a mild, invigorating intoxication that grants a +3 bonus to any Tests the character makes to resist the effects of intimidation or fear. Each dose lasts for two hours. After the potion wears off, the character feels extremely lethargic, he is considered Harried for ten minutes.

Cure Disease Potion: A cure disease potion boosts the character's immune system, granting a +5 bonus to any Tests made to resist the effects of a disease he has caught for24 hours.

Disease Remedy: This potion allows the imbiber to shake off illness. The character repeats the Test made to resist becoming ill in the first place. If successful, he is no longer afflicted, and any effects caused by having the disease end. Effects caused by the course of the disease, such as damage, have to be recovered from normally.

Halt Illness Potion: This potion halts diseases and illnesses. Once ingested, it stops all of a disease's effects for 8 hours, but effects caused before the potion was taken remain in effect. The illness runs its normal course once the potion's effects end.

Healing Potion: A healing potion automatically heals one Wound and grants a +8 bonus to the character's next Recovery Test within 24 hours. If the character has no Recovery Tests left when ingesting the potion, he may chose to make an immediate Recovery Tests with a Step of 8/2D6.

Kelia's Antidote: Kelia's antidote neutralizes the effects of poison. The character does not suffer any new ill effects from being poisoned, but effects caused before the antidote was taken remain in effect. If poisoned after taking the potion, the character makes tests to resist the poison as normal, but the poison does not cause any ill effect before the antidote's effects end.

Kelix's Poultice: Kelix's poultice grants a +5 bonus to any Tests the character makes to resist the effects of a poison afflicting him for 24 hours. The poultice must be applied to the injury where the poison entered the character's system. If no injury exists or if it cannot be identified, an injury must be caused. This reduces the poultice's effectiveness to a +3 bonus. Applying the poultice is a Sustained Action, time required depends on if an injury has to be caused or where it is located.

Last Chance Salve: A last chance salve can be applied to a character who has been dead for a number of hours no greater than the higher of his Toughness or Willpower Steps. After it is smeared over the character's body, a process usually taking 5 minutes, the clear salve glows a gentle blue as it works its magic, a process that takes ten minutes. The character may take all of his remaining Recovery Tests. If he has no Recovery Tests available, the last chance salve grants him a bonus Recovery Test. If the character's Current Damage total is brought below his Death Rating, then he returns to life, otherwise he remains dead. Multiple last chance salves may be applied

to a character, but only one salve will be effective during any one hour period.

Resist Disease Potion: A resist disease potion grants a +3 bonus to Test the character makes to avoid becoming diseased or ill. The potion's effects last for 8 hours. The potion does not help once the character has been caught a disease.

Resist Poison Potion: This potion strengthens the character's ability to resist being poisoned. He receives a +5 bonus to all tests made to avoid becoming poisoned for 4 hours. The potion does not help the character once a poison affects him.

Salve of Closure: A salve of closure automatically heals any Wound to which it is applied. Activating the salve costs the character one of his Recovery Tests. If he has no Recovery Tests available, then the salve has no effect.

HEALING AID TABLE

Item	EDN	Cost	Weight	Availability
Anti-Sporific	13	250	1	Rare
Booster Potion	11	50	2	Unusual
Cleanse Poison Potion	12	150	1	Rare
Confidence Booster	13	150	2	Rare
Cure Disease Potion	13	500	2	Rare
Disease Remedy	10	100	1	Rare
Halt Illness Potion	11	100	1	Unusual
Healing Potion	13	300	2	Rare
Kelia's Antidote	13	125	2	Rare
Kelix's Poultice	11	50	1	Unusual
Last Chance Salve	13	600	1	Very Rare
Resist Disease Potion	13	75	2	Unusual
Resist Poison Potion	12	125	1	Unusual
Salve of Closure	9	200	1	Rare

EDN: The item's Enchanting Difficulty Number (see the **Enchanting** chapter in the ***Player's Companion***).

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT

Adventuring equipment includes items such as backpacks, bedrolls, tents, rope, and other equipment commonly used by characters during their adventures. Much of the equipment listed is basic gear that requires no explanation. Items with specific game functions are described following the relevant sections.

Equipment Descriptions

Adventuring Kit: The adventuring equipment package deal includes basic equipment most adventurers can reasonably expect to need and use, and offers players a simple method of buying adventuring equipment for their characters. All characters begin game play with an adventurer's kit (see **Equip Your Character**, p.31).

Alchemist's Kit: A portable alchemy lab used by traveling alchemists and fitting into a case the size of a backpack. It contains the absolute minimum of equipment required to perform alchemical tasks. A character using an alchemist's kit suffers a –3 penalty to his Alchemy Tests (p.91).

Alchemist's Shop: A complete alchemy lab containing glassware, mortars, jars, elemental burners, crucibles and the like, for use with the Alchemy skill, p.91. An alchemist's shop is not portable because of all of the bulky and delicate apparatus involved.

Artisan Tools: The tools required for the characters to perform his Artisan skill. These are adequate to carry out typical work related to the character's Artisan skill—for more intricate tasks, the character will usually require a more complete set of tools, at a cost of five or more times that given in the Adventuring Equipment Table. The cost of these tools does not include any materials that may be required. All characters begin game play with tools appropriate to their Artisan skill (see **Equip Your Character**, p.31).

Backpack: Usually made from leather or burlap, a standard backpack can hold approximately 50 pounds of goods.

Bedroll: Bedding and a blanket slim enough to be rolled up and tied for carrying. Adventurers use them to sleep in an impromptu fashion on the road. Each bedroll accommodates one person.

Belt Pouch: A small leather or cloth bag either tied to or threaded through one's belt, the belt pouch typically holds approximately 5 pounds of goods.

Blanket: A thicker, wool blanket. Standard gear for travel in cold, mountainous terrain.

Candle: A wax cylinder with a wick in its center and a clay or metal plate to hold the melting wax. The standard light source for home use, a candle illuminates a 3-yard radius. A favorite of troubadours and magicians when writing late at night.

Chain: A 3-yard length of chain that can be used for binding and capturing as well as climbing. Obsidimen and trolls require the heavy version to assist them when climbing. If used to bind someone, light chain can be broken with a successful Strength (10) Test; heavy chain with a successful Strength (13) Test.

Climbing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for climbing.

Craftsman Tools: Different craftsman tools are necessary to use the Craftsman skill, p.94.

Disguise Kit: A metal box filled with makeup, hair dye, cheap accessories, and clothing outfits useful for creating disguises. Essential for using the Disguise skill, p.96.

Fishing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for using the Fishing skill, p. 97.

Flint and Steel: A piece of flint and steel that, when struck forcefully together, creates sparks for starting fires. Used to light tinder to create campfires and to ignite torches.

Grappling Hook: A hook with an eye for attachment to a length of chain or rope. The grappling hook is used to secure a rope or chain for climbing. Grappling hooks can be thrown by making a Throwing Weapons Test against a Difficulty Number determined by the gamemaster (usually 7). The character must use the Called Shot combat option to hit the intended location.

Healing Kit: A healing kit comes in a small shoulder bag and contains bandages, salves, and herbal potions that can speed recovery from injury. A character treated for at least ten minutes with a healing kit gains a +1 bonus to his next Recovery Test. Each healing kit contains enough supplies for three applications. A three-application refill can be purchased separately but requires the basic components of a healing kit to be useful.

Iron Pot: An iron pot is common in households throughout Barsaive as the standard form of cooking-ware, but is sometimes used by adventurers to prepare meals on the road. Adventurers who hunt commonly carry this item to create stews from smaller game.

Lantern: Lanterns are used for light by the ordinary inhabitants of cities and towns as well as by adventurers. A hooded lantern illuminates a 10-yard-radius area. A bull's-eye lantern focuses the light into a 2-yard-wide beam that extends to 20 yards. Most lanterns burn oil, but some use light quartz to provide illumination equivalent to a hooded lantern.

Map and Scroll Case: A capped vellum tube used for storing rolled pieces of paper or parchment. When capped, the case is water resistant, but not necessarily watertight.

Musical Instrument: Musical instruments for use with the Entertainer skill, p.96.

Navigation Charts: A map and scroll case with a basic chart of the stars. Required to use the Navigation skill, p.99.

Oil Flask: Used as fuel, each flask holds enough oil to fuel a lantern for eight hours.
Paper/Parchment: A prepared piece of cloth or vellum suitable for writing on.

Physician's Kit: A metal box filled with tools for diagnosing illness, as well as unguents, salves, and specialized components to treat more serious injuries. A basic physician's kit can be used three times before its consumable supplies are exhausted. A three-application refill can be purchased, but requires the tools from the basic kit to be useful. A physician's kit is required to use the Physician skill, p.99. Many physicians

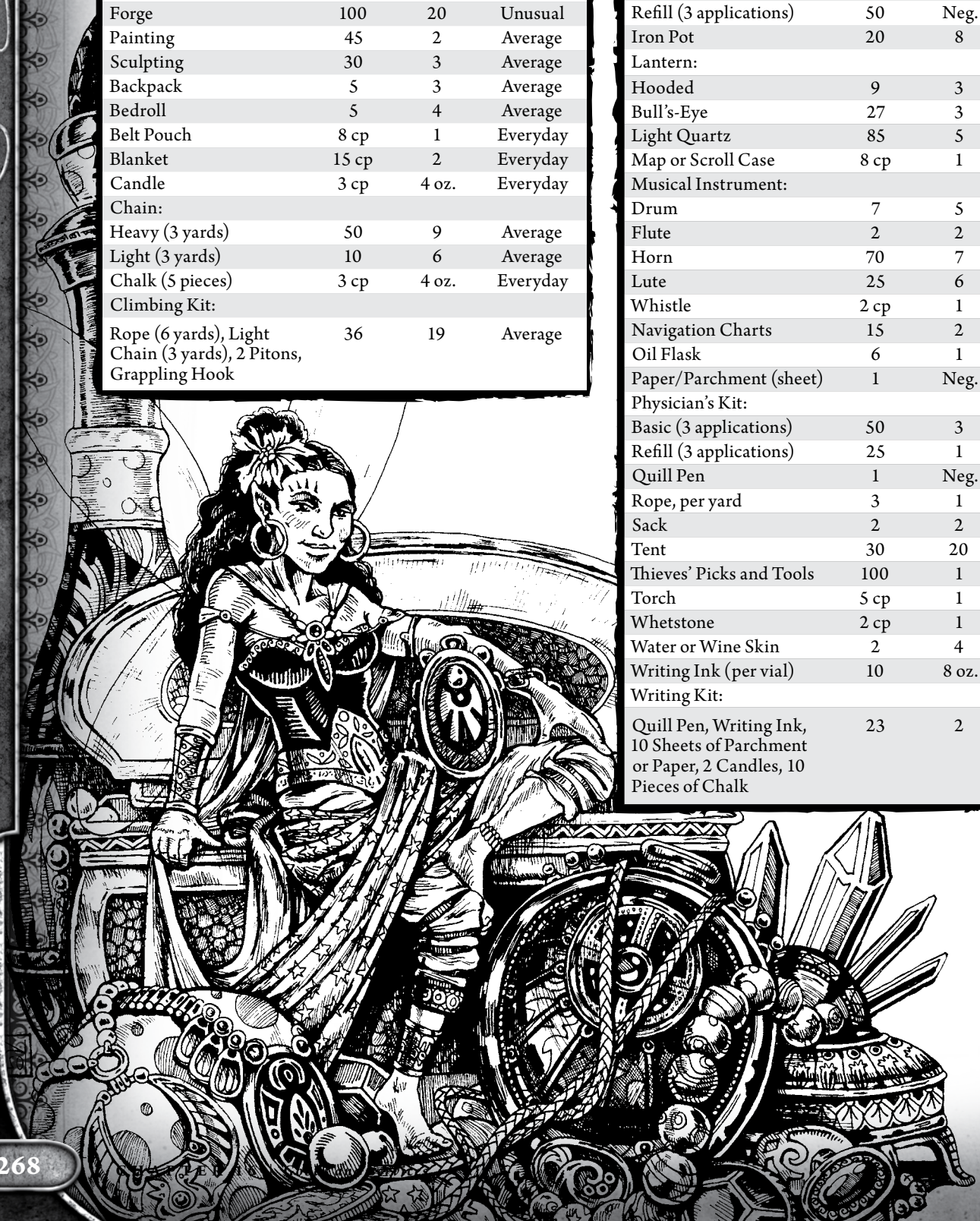


ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Adventurer's Kit:			
Backpack, bedroll, flint and steel, torch, waterskin, large sack	15	14	Average
As above, plus a tent	40	34	Average
Alchemist's Kit	500	15	Unusual
Alchemist's Shop	2,000	NA	Unusual
Artisan Tools:			
Carving	15	3	Average
Embroidery/Sewing	25	1	Average
Forge	100	20	Unusual
Painting	45	2	Average
Sculpting	30	3	Average
Backpack	5	3	Average
Bedroll	5	4	Average
Belt Pouch	8 cp	1	Everyday
Blanket	15 cp	2	Everyday
Candle	3 cp	4 oz.	Everyday
Chain:			
Heavy (3 yards)	50	9	Average
Light (3 yards)	10	6	Average
Chalk (5 pieces)	3 cp	4 oz.	Everyday
Climbing Kit:			
Rope (6 yards), Light Chain (3 yards), 2 Pitons, Grappling Hook	36	19	Average

ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Craftsman Tools	25	5	Average
Disguise Kit	50	6	Average
Fishing Kit:			
10 Fish Hooks, Fishing Net, Fishing Rod, Bait Jar	20	14	Average
Fishing Net (9 sq. yards)	15	10	Average
Flint and Steel	1	8 oz.	Everyday
Grappling Hook	10	5	Average
Healing Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	75	5	Unusual
Refill (3 applications)	50	Neg.	Unusual
Iron Pot	20	8	Average
Lantern:			
Hooded	9	3	Average
Bull's-Eye	27	3	Average
Light Quartz	85	5	Unusual
Map or Scroll Case	8 cp	1	Average
Musical Instrument:			
Drum	7	5	Average
Flute	2	2	Average
Horn	70	7	Average
Lute	25	6	Unusual
Whistle	2 cp	1	Everyday
Navigation Charts	15	2	Average
Oil Flask	6	1	Everyday
Paper/Parchment (sheet)	1	Neg.	Unusual
Physician's Kit:			
Basic (3 applications)	50	3	Average
Refill (3 applications)	25	1	Average
Quill Pen	1	Neg.	Average
Rope, per yard	3	1	Average
Sack	2	2	Everyday
Tent	30	20	Average
Thieves' Picks and Tools	100	1	Unusual
Torch	5 cp	1	Everyday
Whetstone	2 cp	1	Everyday
Water or Wine Skin	2	4	Everyday
Writing Ink (per vial)	10	8 oz.	Unusual
Writing Kit:			
Quill Pen, Writing Ink, 10 Sheets of Parchment or Paper, 2 Candles, 10 Pieces of Chalk	23	2	Unusual



also carry around a healer's kit for use with less serious ailments.

Quill Pen: A feather with a specially shaped tip. When dipped in a vial of ink, it draws the liquid in, and leaves a trail when drawn across a piece of paper or parchment. A common tool for Troubadours and magicians.

Rope: Rope of various lengths, usually made of hemp, and useful for binding and capturing, as well as climbing. If used to bind someone, the rope can be broken with a successful Strength (8) Test.

Sack: Made of burlap or heavy cloth, a sack holds approximately 30 pounds of goods.

Tent: A simple tarpaulin shelter large enough to accommodate two human-sized characters.

Thieves' Picks and Tools: A set of these specialist tools is required for a character to make use of the Lock Picking skill, p.98.

Torch: A wooden rod with its tip wrapped with an oil soaked rag. It can be lit by the spark from a flint and steel and typically burns for around an hour. The standard light source for adventurers, a torch illuminates a 10 yard radius. Unlit, it acts as a club in melee combat, but is treated as an improvised weapon when used this way (see **Improvised Melee Weapons**, p.229). A lit torch may also set flammable targets such as dry straw or cloth alight (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 109).

Water or Wine Skin: A leather pouch with a constricted bottleneck useful for holding liquids. A typical waterskin holds enough water for one day. The weight shown on the Adventuring Equipment Table is for a full skin.

Whetstone: A tool for sharpening and maintaining weapons.

Writing Ink: Black ink for writing. Each vial contains enough ink to write eight to ten pages of information. Dyed inks of other colors are harder to find—increase the Availability Rating by one level—and cost two or more times the price of black ink.

Writing Kit: Comes with all the tools necessary for writing.

SERVICES

ACCOMMODATION AND PROVENDER

Nearly all towns and cities in Barsaive offer food and lodgings of varying quality. The most typical types of lodging are described below.

Accommodation Descriptions

Flophouses: Flophouses are the most inexpensive lodging available. 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.

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 (15) Test. A successful Dispel Magic (12) Test also defeats these locks.

Luxury Inns: Luxury inns exist only in larger towns and cities. The staff at these establishments pay particular attention to details and try to fulfill any reasonable customer requests. 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 in-room safes and safety deposit boxes.

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.

Provender Descriptions

Drinks: Ale and wine are the most common drinks available, 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.

Dwarf Mine Rations: Dwarf mine rations consist of nuts and vegetables grown exclusively underground. Hearty and lightweight, dwarf mine rations have the consistency of gravel, unfortunately, and some claim they have a taste to match. Those who eat only dwarf mine rations for an entire day add a +1 bonus to 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, with a Difficulty Number based on their race: obsidimen and dwarfs must make a successful Willpower (2) Test; humans, trolls, and orks a Willpower (3) Test; elves, t'skrang, and windlings must make a successful Willpower (4) Test.

Food: Daily food and lodging is available at the numerous inns and taverns of Barsaive's cities, towns, and villages. The costs listed are fairly standard from city to city. All of the meals described below are full meals capable of sustaining a character for a full day.

Average Meal: The average meal includes fatty meat, bread, cheese, seasonal fruit, 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.

Simple Meal: A simple meal consists of cheese, bread, and seasonal fruit. This type of meal emphasizes quantity over quality.

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.

Trail Rations: Most adventurers and travelers use rations, generally dried food prepared to last long periods of time without spoiling. Trail rations consist of dried fruit, dried meat, and nuts.

TRADE SERVICES

For a price, characters can contract the services of messengers, sages, scribes, weaponsmiths, armorers and others.

Service Descriptions

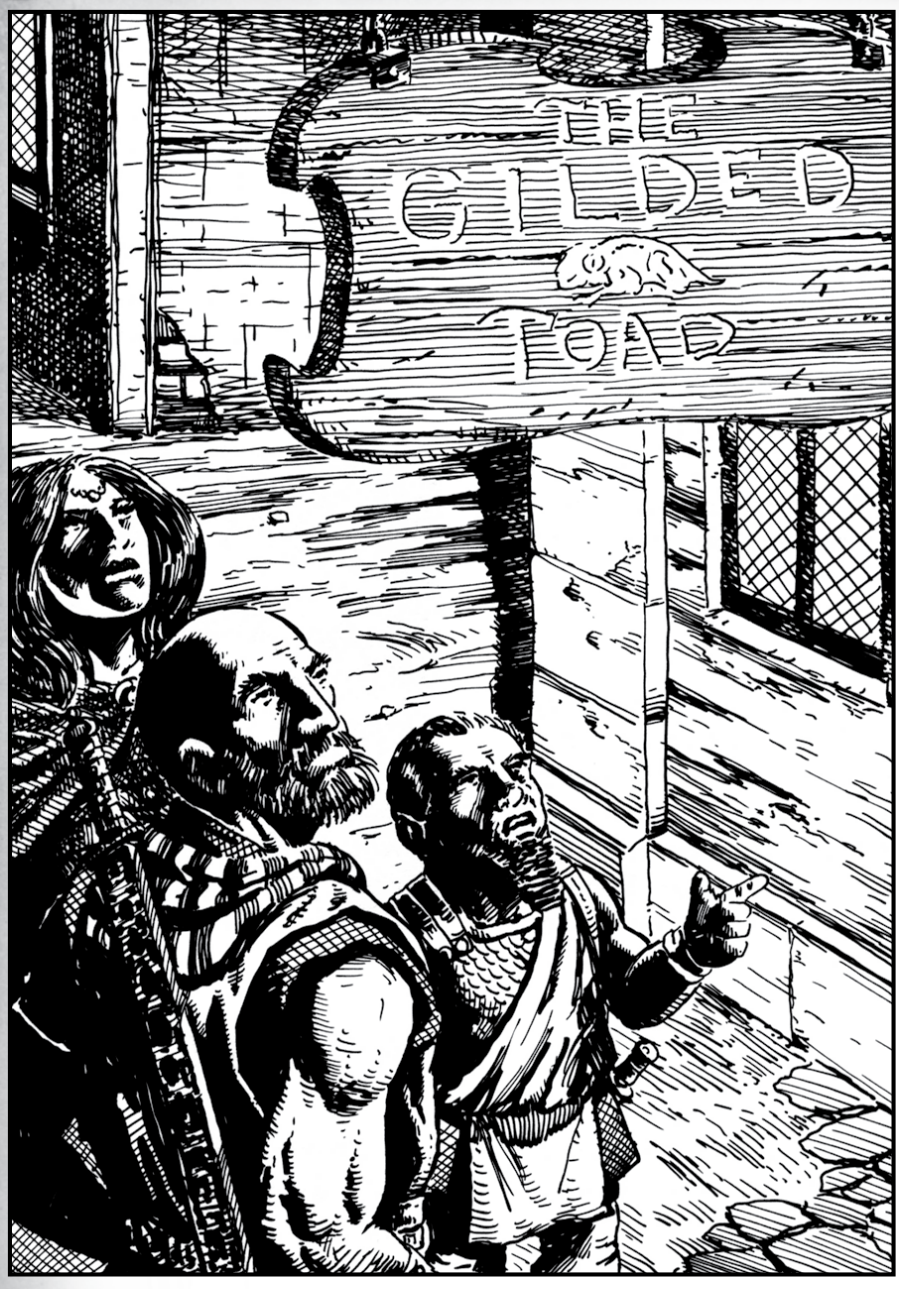
Armorer: Armorers forge new and repair armor and shields. Most also sell armor. Armorers will also decorate armor, for instance, etching a group symbol on a breastplate or shield.

Farrier: Farriers are paid to look after animals, providing services such as horse shoeing and basic veterinary care.

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 defined area, though some will carry messages to other cities or regions. Windlings and obsidimen specialize in providing messenger services, though individuals of any race can be messengers. Many city residents use windlings to ensure quick delivery. However, obsidimen, though slower, have a greater 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 epic of heroic adventure.

Weaponsmiths: Weaponsmiths forge and repair all types of weapons, from swords and staffs to maces. They can also add decorative markings to weapons.

Transport

There are many modes of transport which can be secured. Characters can arrange for passage aboard a t'skrang riverboat, or in a caravan traveling between cities, or even book passage on an airship (though this is often difficult to arrange and costs a great deal). Though not commonly available, vehicles are sold in larger towns and cities.

The costs shown do not include the price of any animals required to draw the vehicle.

Transport Descriptions

Canoes: Canoes are small boats capable of carrying only one or two human-sized passengers safely. Propelled by oar, most canoes are three to five yards long by one yard wide at the center. The ends of the canoe taper to a width of three to four inches. These craft are most often used for travel along the running streams and rivers near large hills and mountain ranges.

Carts: Carts are wheeled vehicles used by merchants to transport goods. Large carts usually measure one to two yards long by one yard wide. Pack mules usually pull carts, but some merchants also use horses for the task. Smaller carts can be pushed by hand.

Rowboats: Rowboats are propelled by oars fixed onto side brackets. Usually three to four yards long by one to two yards wide, these boats can safely carry up to four human-sized passengers. At least one passenger must work the oars. These craft are often used as fishing boats on calmer streams and rivers.

Wagons: Wagons are capable of carrying two to five human-sized passengers. Usually a team of horses pulls a wagon, but mule teams are used with some smaller and slower wagons.

Mounts

Animals are used in many regions. When they aren't used for labor, they are often used for food or entertainment. Game statistics can be found in the **Creatures** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide*** (p. 145).

For long journeys, characters may prefer riding, because mounts can carry them faster and farther in a single day than their own two feet. Not every mount can carry a character of any Namegiver race; some races are either too large or too small for certain types of mounts. Humans, elves and orks can ride nearly any type of mount except for the tiny kue and zoaks, which are used primarily by windlings. T'skrang can also ride just about any mount, though most prefer not to do so. Dwarfs can ride ponies, huttawas, troajin and pack mules, but their legs are too short to reach the stirrups on most horses. Trolls are too big and heavy for riding horses and smaller mounts, but war horses are strong enough to carry them. More often, trolls ride sturdy granlains or (on occasion) thundra beasts. Only thundra beasts and elephants are strong enough to carry obsidimen. In many adventuring groups, obsidiman members don't ride mounts at all—instead, they ride in wagons or carts pulled by a pair of pack mules or large draft horses. Griffins are the most exotic mounts used in Barsaive, and only high-Circle Cavalrymen or Beastmasters have the necessary skills to ride them.

Mounts purchased at character creation, a Cavalryman's starting mount, and any mounts bought from a typical dealer, come trained for riding and will generally not get spooked in combat, although temperament may vary among individuals. Untrained mounts may be purchased for 75 percent of the standard list price. Except where already noted, combat-trained mounts cost ten times the prices shown, sometimes more. Training can be accomplished with the Animal Bond, p.60, and Animal Training, p.61, skills (both also available to some Disciplines as talents).

Tack and Harness

To properly ride a mount, a character needs utensils such as stirrups, saddle, blankets, bridles, and the like. Not having these items may cause penalties to any tests made riding or a Harried modifier, at the gamemaster's discretion. The typical price of a full set of equipment is one third the price of the (not combat-trained) mount, to a maximum of

PROVENDER TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Drinks:			
Ale:			
Average	5 cp	NA	Everyday
Dwarf Stout	2	NA	Average
Good	1	NA	Average
Wine:			
Average (per bottle)	5 cp	1	Average
Average (per glass)	1 cp	NA	Average
Fine (per bottle)	5	1	Unusual
Fine (per glass)	1	NA	Unusual
Food:			
Average Meal	1	NA	Average
Good Meal	3	NA	Average
Simple Meal	3 cp	NA	Everyday
Sumptuous Feast	50	NA	Unusual
Theran Uyglar	25	NA	Rare
Rations:			
Dwarf Mine (1 week)	25	6	Unusual
Trail (1 week)	10	8	Average

ACCOMMODATION TABLE

Accommodation (per night)	Cost	Availability
Flophouse (no bed)	1 cp	Everyday
Cheap Inn:		
Public Room, one large bed	5 cp	Everyday
Private Room, one bed	1	Average
Guild Inn:		
Room, with bed and bath	8	Average
Room, with security lock	12	Unusual
Luxury Inn:		
Room, with bed and bath	25	Average
Room, with magical amenities	40	Unusual
Room, plus private valet	55 + tips	Rare
Merchant Inn:		
Private Room, one bed	3	Average
Private Room, with bath	5	Unusual

TRANSPORT TABLE

Transportation	Cost	Availability
Boat:		
Canoe	20	Average
Rowboat	50	Average
Carriage *or* Coach	150	Unusual
Cart:		
Large	40	Average
Small (hand)	15	Average
Transport (per person/mount*):		
Airship	20-30**	Rare
Caravan	3-5**	Average
Ferry	1-2**	Average
Riverboat	5-6**	Unusual
Wagon:		
Large	50	Average
Small	30	Average

* Large mounts (thundra beasts, elephants, dyres, etc.) count as two mounts for transportation purposes.
** Per day of travel.

TRADE SERVICES TABLE

Service	Cost	Availability
Armorer:		
Basic Decoration	35	Average
Ornate Decoration	140	Unusual
Farrier	5	Average
Library Access:		
Major City	25	Average
Throal	20	Average
Messenger:		
City to City	30-75	Unusual
Local	5	Average
Sage	15-100	Unusual
Scribe	50-75	Average
Weaponsmith:		
Basic Decoration	45	Average
Ornate Decoration	180	Unusual

150 silver pieces. For example, an untrained war horse normally costs 150 silver pieces, so its saddle and other equipment cost 50 silver pieces. An elephant costs 3,000 silver pieces, but as the maximum price for the equipment (in this case, a howdah) is 150 silver pieces, a character does not have to pay 1,000 silver pieces (one third of 3,000) to equip his elephant. Availability for tack and harness is the same as for the mount.

Care and Feeding

A rider must ensure that his mount gets adequate rest, warmth and food if he wants the mount to perform well. Ideally, a mount should be rubbed down after a long day's ride or a long gallop, given a clean stable to sleep in every night, and fed and watered each day. Make sure that characters spend the time and money needed to care for their mounts. If they don't, their mounts become irritable and sluggish, slow down the pace of travel and force the characters to stop frequently.

Most mounts are herbivores—they eat mostly grass and hay, occasionally supplemented by high-energy grains such as oats. A few mounts, such as troajins and griffins, are carnivores. Meat usually costs more than grain, so feeding a carnivorous mount costs more than feeding a horse or a mule. Characters can allow carnivorous mounts to hunt, but a mount cannot hunt while being ridden—and most riders are understandably reluctant to let their valued mounts wander into the wilderness in search of prey.

Riders usually allow their mounts to graze whenever they stop to rest, and they frequently carry an additional supply of feed to supplement the mount's diet. Carnivorous mounts can consume preserved meat, but they prefer it fresh. When hunting or using survival skills to provide food for a band of adventurers, player characters should treat a carnivorous mount as another member of their party. For example, troajin generally eat as much meat per day as a Namegiver, while griffins require at least three times that amount.

MOUNTS TABLE

Mount	Feed Cost	Stable Cost	Carrying Capacity	Speed	Weight	Lifespan	Cost	Availability
Dyre	5	2	2,740	8	2 tons	25	4,500!	Rare
Elephant	30	NA	1,760	8	3.5 tons	70	3,000	Very Rare
Goat, riding	1 cp	NA	250	8	150	15	10	Average
Granlain	1	3 cp	1,020	8	1.5 tons	20	115	Rare
Griffin	10	5	360**	9/9*	600	45	7,500!	Very Rare
Horse:								
Draft	5 cp	3 cp	520	8	1,800	30	150	Average
Pony	5 cp	3 cp	250	8	700	25	110	Average
Riding	5 cp	3 cp	360	10	1,000	25	125	Average
War	5 cp	3 cp	740	8	1,800	25	1,500!	Unusual
Huttawa	8 cp	3 cp	520	8	600	15	95	Unusual
Kue	2 cp	1 cp	100	8	25	10	100	Unusual
Mule, pack	2 cp	2 cp	360	8	900	20	100	Average
Stajian	3	1	1,020	11	1 ton	25	3,500!	Rare
Thundra Beast	5	2	1,360	8	2.5 tons	45	4,000!	Rare
Troajin	2	3 cp	250	8	400	20	100	Unusual
Zoak	1 cp	NA	80**	2/9*	25	15	115	Rare

* The second value is the creature's flying Movement Rate.

! These mounts are combat trained. The price reflects the training these mounts have received to allow them to act in combat situations. At the gamemaster's discretion, other mounts may also be purchased as combat-ready—multiply the Cost by ×10 or more to reflect this.

** These creatures are used to carrying burdens while flying. When in flight, their Carrying Capacity remains the same as on land.

Carrying Capacity: The animal's unencumbered (by rider, barding, or equipment) Carrying Capacity, in pounds. This takes into account additional legs (and support).

Lifespan: The animal's normal life span, in years.

Healing Mounts

Mounts injured in combat can be healed by some of the methods used on Namegivers. However, most booster and healing potions are designed only for Namegivers and may not be effective on some mounts, depending on their physiology. Additionally, mounts may refuse to ingest potions and herbs. Characters can mix potions and herbal remedies with a mount's feed, but this reduces the effectiveness of such medicines by half. For example, a booster potion mixed with feed works at half its normal efficacy, granting only a +4 bonus to the mount's Recovery Test.

The most effective means of healing certain mounts are the Blood Share and Heal Animal Servant talents, which allow a mount to recover damage quickly. However, keep in mind that a character can only use these talents to heal his own mount or animal servants.

If a mount goes lame, its rider has a serious problem on his hands. A mount that suffers more than 3 Wounds in combat or is hit by a combat spell, such as Bone Shatter (p.155), may suffer a crippling injury to one of its limbs or wings. If the optional **Damage to Limb** rule, p.223, is used, a mount may also suffer a broken limb in the normal course of combat.

A lame mount cannot walk or fly until it heals, and even then it will never again be able to move at more than half its former rate. For this reason, most riders simply put down lame mounts rather than spend the effort needed to heal them. Cavalrymen whose mounts go lame often perform the Rite of the Hero for their suffering mounts rather than condemn them to life as a cripple.

Mount Descriptions

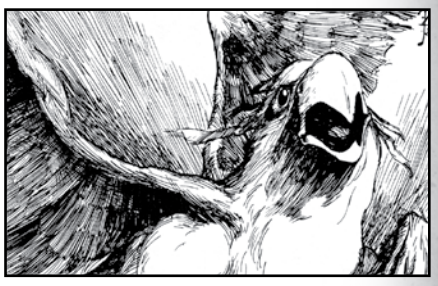
Dyre: Ork cavalrymen prize the dyre as a mount because of its huge size, quick brain, and irritable temper. Most ork cavalries have at least one or two in their Ranks, if not several. Standing twelve feet tall at the shoulder, the dyre is covered in long, matted brown fur. Its back rises sharply in the middle as if humped, and it resembles a cross between a bear and bull. Like a bear, the dyre has squat, stubby legs and a short tail. Its head looks like a bull's, only wider, with sharply curving horns. The beast has hardly any neck, holding its head so low to the ground that only its back shows over the top of the high plains grass.

Elephant: In some regions elephants are used to haul heavy carts and wagons overland along the trade routes that link the coastal cities.

Goat, Riding: Windlings who cannot afford a more specialized creature often ride goats because they're easy to train, can carry a proportionally huge amount of weight, and eat nearly anything.

Granlain: Granlain 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. Granlain are stubborn animals, and trolls are often the only Namegivers strong enough to deal with these massive, willful beasts. Granlain are not common. Wild granlain live only in the plains and foothills near mountainous regions.

Griffin: These strange, four-legged creatures combine a lion's body with the head, legs, and wings of a large eagle. Like an eagle, 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 paws. Typically, griffins stand 4 feet tall at the shoulder, and are five to six feet long with an average wingspan of seven to nine 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. Humanoids of average human size and smaller, except for windlings, can 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. Though difficult to train once broken-in, tame griffins make excellent and loyal steeds.


Kue
Dyre
Zoak
Troajin
Granlain
Huttawa
Stajian

Horse, Draft: Draft horses are used as pack animals and to pull carts and wagons. They are generally stronger than riding horses, but are also slower.

Horse, Pony: A smaller breed of horse used mainly by dwarfs for transportation and war. Many ork, elf, and human children train their horse riding skills on ponies as they grow up.

Horse, Riding: The most common type of horses used, riding horses make strong mounts, but cannot wear barding or armor.

Horse, War: 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 are often used by armies and cavalry units, particularly ork scorcher tribes.

Huttawa: The 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. Standing four feet tall at the shoulder and six feet long, huttawa are a favored mount for dwarf cavalrymen, and often help pull caravan wagons belonging to dwarf trading companies. Though not overly bright, huttawa are easy to train.

Kue: The kue resembles a cross between a lizard and a cat, with a reptilian body and feline mannerisms and facial features. Like cats, kue 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, three to four feet long, and have horns on their heads and tails. Kues are native to jungles and forests, and make ideal mounts for the windling Cavalrymen and Warriors who protect their communities and villages. Kues are generally sold only in larger cities and those towns located near jungles.

Mule, Pack: Pack mules pull carts and wagons. Slow but strong, these animals can travel through terrain that horses and other larger pack animals cannot.



Stajian: Stajian are large, bison-like animals often used as mounts by ork cavalry. They stand six feet tall at the shoulder and are less massive than a thundra beast, but faster and stronger than a horse. Their broad hooves make them good navigators in both swamp and mountains.

Thundra Beast: 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 seven feet tall at the shoulder, are ten to twelve feet long, and weigh about five thousand pounds. Each thundra beast has a large horn in the center of its forehead, which it uses to attack opponents. Ork scorcher groups frequently ride thundra beasts.

Troajin: Troajin are tiger-like animals native to jungle and mountain country. The average troajin stands approximately four feet tall at the shoulder and is eight feet long—a combination of a five foot body and a three foot tail. Wild troajin are fiercely territorial and defend themselves with sharp claws and teeth. Troajin often become animal companions for Beastmasters.

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. The creature's feathered legs each end in four eagle-like talons. Zoaks measure roughly four feet from beak to tail-tip. The zoak's neck is long and flexible, similar in appearance to that of the crakbill, but with vertebrae instead of pure muscle. These jungle and forest animals are favored by windling Cavalrymen, and also often serve as companions for Beastmasters. Because they are difficult to train, zoaks are rarely offered for sale. Merchants in cities are known to trade and sell zoaks.

THREAD ITEMS

Thread items are objects whose magical properties remain dormant until a character attaches a magical thread to the item's True Pattern. Once a character has done so, the thread activates the item's magical power. To weave a thread to a thread item, a character must have knowledge of the Thread Weaving talent, p.83.

Thread items convey more powerful abilities than the common magic items presented earlier in this chapter, but are not as powerful as General Treasure or even Legendary Treasure, even if both of the latter also use threads to power them. Like General and Legendary Treasure, all thread items have a Name, a True Pattern, and Pattern Knowledges. However, Thread items usually only have one single Key Knowledge, The item's Name.

Also in contrast to magical treasures, many thread items can be purchased. Expensive, difficult to create, and hard to find, these items are normally only available in Barsaive's larger cities. Though thread items are not as rare as magical treasures, they are still not commonly available. Most thread items have a Very Rare Availability. The Availability and sale value of thread items is always at the gamemaster's discretion.

The process of using Thread Weaving to power magical items is explained in the **Thread Magic** chapter, p.133, and the **Magical Treasures** chapter of the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 130.

LEARNING KEY KNOWLEDGES

A character can learn the Name of a thread item upon purchase, often from the merchant selling the item or the craftsman who created it. Even for a thread item whose Name constitutes its entire Key Knowledge, learning the item's Name in this manner does not allow the character to understand its True Pattern. To fully understand an item's Pattern Knowledge, a character must make a successful Item History Test against the item's Spell Defense, or must have someone make the test on his behalf. As with magical treasures, understanding a thread item's Pattern Knowledge allows a character to effectively weave a magical thread to the item and so activate its power.

THREAD ITEM CHARACTERISTICS

Thread Items have several characteristics that determine how easy it is for a character to use them and that describe the item's powers. These are further explained in the chapters mentioned above, but are repeated here for convenience, and to outline how these characteristics usually behave for threaded items available on the market, as opposed to General or Legendary Treasure:

Maximum Threads gives the number of Threads that can be woven to the item. In most cases, two threads can be woven to an item, which means two characters can share an item. Unless otherwise noted, only the character wearing or wielding the item profits from its power, and only to the extent he has woven threads to the item.

Spell Defense serves the same purposes as for characters, creatures, or other objects. It also correlates to an item's power: the higher the Spell Defense, the more powerful the item. Most items found in this chapter only have a Spell Defense of 10–14.

THREAD ITEM PRICES

While the Cost of Thread Items is at the gamemaster's discretion, the Enchantment Cost Table offers some suggestions for entry-level prices for the different types of items. Note these prices are for the enchantment of the item alone—the item's regular price still has to be added, although in many instances this is only necessary if it is significant.

ENCHANTMENT COST TABLE

Template	Cost	Availability
Melee Weapon:		
One-Handed	4,000	Rare
Two-Handed	6,000	Very Rare
Ranged Weapon:		
One-Handed	5,000	Very Rare
Two-Handed	4,000	Rare
Heavy Armor	7,500	Very Rare
Light Armor	5,500	Rare
Defensive Item	3,500	Rare
Mastery Item	3,000	Rare
Consumables Item	5,000	Very Rare
Special Effect Item	5,000	Very Rare

Legend Point Cost determines how costly it is for characters to weave threads to the item's individual Ranks. These correlate to the Cost for raising talent Ranks. For example, if an item lists "Journeyman" as its Legend Point Cost, the first Thread Rank costs as many Legend Points to weave to as learning Rank 1 for a talent of Fifth Circle, the second Thread Rank costs as many Legend Points as raising that talent to Rank 2, and so on. Most items in this chapter use the Legend Point Cost of "Novice," however.

A **Key Knowledge** is required at certain Thread Ranks to weave a thread to that Rank. Most items in this chapter only have a Key Knowledge at Thread Rank One (see **Learning Key Knowledges** above).

The **Effect** is an instruction that describes how the item's power translates into bonuses, Steps, and special abilities: what the character gets for all his troubles. Thread Items have an Effect at every Thread Rank, it is available when the thread to that Rank is woven.

In addition to these characteristics, an item contains a description of its physical properties. This description may include special decorations often found on the item—sometimes these represent Steps necessary to enchant the item—but more elaborate descriptions are usually reserved for more powerful, unique items such as Treasure.

Thread Item Templates

Because there are countless mundane items that can be turned into Thread Items to enhance their powers, especially in the fields of weaponry, armor, and shields, the following section lists templates that can be applied to certain ranges of items. In place of the item's usual description, these templates include hints and additional rules information on how to apply the template to an item, what items are appropriate, and what the item's general purpose is. The template's "Effect" line sometimes constitutes a direct instruction to you on how to phrase the Effect line of the item you are developing.

Only one template can be applied to an item.Further down, a number of example items have been developed for you to see a few templates in action as well as for you to use as-is in your game.

Heavy Armor

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 13
Legend Point Cost: Novice

This template is typically applied to a shield or suit of armor with a high Initiative penalty. The base Armor Rating of the item is often high enough so further increases are relatively small, and reducing the high Initiative penalties takes priority for most characters. Characters that do not care about high Initiative Penalties on heavy armor usually apply the Light Armor Template to heavy armor instead.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Armor Ratings become the same as if Forge Armor was used to full extent. This usually means increasing them by half, rounding up (a Rating of 0 remains at 0).

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Reduce the item's Initiative Penalty by 1.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add +1 to the wearer's Physical Defense or add +1 to one of the Armor Ratings.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Reduce the item's Initiative Penalty by 1.

Light Armor

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 12
Legend Point Cost: Novice

This template is usually found on armors or shields that do not have an Initiative Penalty. It conveys more armor bonuses than the Heavy Armor template, but armors it is used on usually start out lower. This template can also be applied to items that typically are not armor, but are worn like armor, most commonly clothing.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Armor Ratings become the same as if Forge Armor was used to full extent. This usually means increasing them by half. A Rating of 0 remains at 0, except if both ratings are at 0. In this case, add +1 to one of the Armor Ratings.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Add +1 to one of the Armor Ratings.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add +1 to one of the Armor Ratings.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Add +1 to one of the Armor Ratings.

Melee Weapon

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 11
Legend Point Cost: Novice

The melee weapon template is usually applied to weapons found on the Melee Weapons Table, as it offers no bonuses beyond a higher Damage Step. It can be applied to other weapons such as missile of thrown weapons, but these more often use the Ranged Weapon template found below, as they benefit from Range increases. Note that the first Thread Rank offers the most benefit in this template, but the same effects could be achieved without resorting to a thread weapon. However, the benefit does not fade as with the Forge Weapon talent, at the cost of "using up" a Rank of the Thread Weaving talent for weaving a permanent thread.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Damage Step of the item becomes the same as if Forge Weapon was used to maximum effect. Usually, this means adding the Size of the base weapon to it.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Add +1 to the item's Damage Step.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add +1 to the item's Damage Step.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Add +1 to the item's Damage Step (at this point, it is a Step that equals the mundane weapon's Damage Step + weapon's Size + 3).

Ranged Weapon

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 11
Legend Point Cost: Novice

This template is usually applied to weapons from the Missile Weapons Table or Thrown Weapons Table. Note that this does not necessarily prevent the item from granting a Damage bonus in melee combat: if the template is applied to a dagger, that is both a ranged and melee weapon, the higher Damage Step is used in both types of combat.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Damage Step of the item becomes the same as if Forge Weapon was used to maximum effect. Usually, this means adding the Size of the base weapon to it.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Increase the Ranges by one quarter of the base weapon's Ranges (rounded up).

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add +1 to the item's Damage Step.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Increase the Ranges by one quarter of the base weapon's Ranges (rounded up, 150% the base weapon's Ranges overall).

Consumables Item

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 14
Legend Point Cost: Novice

Items of this type offer a special bonus a number of times per day. They can be based on magic items such as potions of blood charms, but can also provide simple consumables such as water or food.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.

Effect: The item produces the effect once per day. If the effect normally has a Step Number or bonus, halve it (round up).

Thread Rank Two

Effect: The Step Number or bonus is now the full bonus for the item. If it does not have any, assign a +2 bonus to an appropriate test type or characteristic (for example, an item providing nourishment might grant a bonus to the consumer's Recovery Tests).

Thread Rank Three

Effect: The Step Number or bonus is increased by one quarter (round up). If it does not have any, raise the previously assigned bonus to +3.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: The item provides the effect twice per day.

Mastery Item

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 14
Legend Point Cost: Novice

This template is used to enhance items into giving bonuses to certain tasks. Before creating the item, a task, trade, or profession is determined, such as thievery, exploration, climbing, or combat. Then, an appropriate item is chosen, one that takes part in the task. Thievery items might be dark cloaks, combat items may be gauntlets, and so on. Note that while bonuses to Talent Ranks are limited with this template (the maximum Rank bonus is +2, twice), the bonuses to test types are not, as they do not convey Ranks. Example test types include Initiative Tests, close combat Damage Tests, ranged combat Damage Tests, close combat Attack Tests, ranged combat Attack Tests, Climbing Tests (as opposed to gaining Climbing Ranks), Charisma-only Tests (or any other Attribute), and so on. Note that contrary to Rank bonuses, test type bonuses improve Skill Tests. A bonus to Haggle Tests adds to the result of both Haggle Talent or Haggle Skill Tests, but a Haggle Rank bonus adds only to the Haggle Talent Test by increasing its Rank and thereby Step. No Mastery Item can convey a skill Rank bonus.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.

Effect: Add a +1 Rank bonus to a Talent relevant to the profession or task; or add a +1 bonus to a type of test relevant to the task.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Add a +1 Rank bonus to a Talent relevant to the profession or task, but not the same as the Talent enhanced in Thread Rank One; or add a +1 bonus to a type of test relevant to the task, again different from that at Thread Rank One.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add a +1 Rank bonus to a Talent relevant to the profession or task, but not the same as in Thread Rank Two (this can mean increasing the Rank bonus to the Thread Rank One Talent to +2, though); or add a +1 bonus to a type of test relevant to the task with the same restriction.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Add a +1 Rank bonus to a Talent relevant to the profession or task (this can mean increasing any of the previous Rank bonuses to +2); or add a +1 bonus to a type of test relevant to the task, again limited to +2 total to any single task.

Special Effect Item

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 14
Legend Point Cost: Novice

This most versatile and difficult to apply template takes an item that already has some sort of effect, most often a magical effect, and further improves it. Sometimes it creates a magical effect that can also be achieved with strong elemental enchantments, such as an item generating heat or cold. Often, an item's weight or size are modified. This template cannot be applied to items or for effects another template could cover, for example, it cannot increase a weapon's Damage Step or a wearer's Defenses.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.

Effect: The characteristic to be affected increases to 125% or decreases to 75%.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: The characteristic to be affected increases to 150% or decreases to 50%.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: The characteristic to be affected increases to 175% or decreases to 25%.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: The characteristic to be affected increases to 200% or decreases to 10%.

Defensive Item

Maximum Threads: 2 **Spell Defense**: 13
Legend Point Cost: Novice

Defensive items convey bonuses to a character's Physical, Social, or Spell Defense. The type of item chosen should be connected to the Defense Rating chosen, for example bracers for Physical Defense (although applying it to a shield is just as fine), or jewelry for Social Defense or Spell Defense. Helmets are often all-purpose items for this template.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.

Effect: Add +1 to a Defense Rating.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: Add +1 to a Defense Rating.

Thread Rank Three

Effect: Add a +1 Rank bonus to the Avoid Blow Talent if Physical Defense was chosen at Thread Rank One, to the Steel Thought Talent if Spell Defense was chosen at Thread Rank One, or to the Resist Taunt Talent if Social Defense was chosen at Thread Rank One.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: Add +1 to a Defense Rating.

Example Thread Items

Below, find a number of example Thread Items developed using the Item Templates above. These example items have an additional "Template" characteristic detailing what type of template was used to create them. The Template characteristic does not have any game effects and is not normally part of Thread Items, but feel free to note it down with your own creations to keep track of the template you used.

Thread Short Sword

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 11
Template: Melee Weapon

This short sword has been enchanted to cause greater harm, hopefully for greater good. It is more carefully adorned than typical weapons of its type, but otherwise uses the same weapon characteristics as any other short sword.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 6.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 7.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 8.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 9.

Thread Crystal Ringlet

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 12
Template: Light Armor

This ringlet armor from crystal still feels comfortably enough to wear without too much restriction, but its rings shine ever so more brilliantly.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Physical and Mystic Armor Ratings are now 6.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The Mystic Armor Rating is now 7.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The Physical Armor Rating is now 7.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The Mystic Armor Rating is now 8.

Thread Crossbow (medium)

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 11
Template: Ranged Weapon

This medium crossbow's shaft is beautifully decorated, likely a t'skrang piece crafted by an artist normally working on riverboats, as the ornamentation depicts waves. It otherwise behaves like a normal medium crossbow.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 9.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: Increase the Ranges to Short: 2-50 yards (1-25 hexes), Long: 51-100 yards (26-50 hexes)

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 10.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: Increase the Ranges to Short: 2-60 yards (1-30 hexes), Long: 61-120 yards (31-60 hexes)

Thread Warhammer

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 11
Template: Melee Weapon

This warhammer looks like it reduces whatever it hits to crumbs—even week-old dwarf bread. Its head is not made from the same plain metal as others either, it is darker. Still, there is a distinct dark sparkle to it. It otherwise uses the same weapon characteristics as any other warhammer.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 12.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 13.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 14.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The weapon is now Damage Step 15.

Thread Plate

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 13
Template: Heavy Armor

A shining new suit of plate and maille, this armor obviously hails from the forges of Throal. Threaded armor is difficult to produce, the heavier the more difficult, and the Weaponsmith has proudly left his mark in a more visible place than usual.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The Physical Armor Rating is now 14.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The Initiative Penalty is now –3.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The Mystic Armor Rating is now 1.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The Initiative Penalty is now –2.

War Gauntlets

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 14
Template: Mastery Item

Gauntlets like these have been used to enhance a fighter's capabilities in any situation on the battlefield for centuries, but with the end of the Orichalcum Wars and the awkwardness to wear gauntlets in daily life, only dedicated warriors use them nowadays.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The wearer gains a +1 bonus to close combat Damage Tests.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The wearer gains a +1 bonus to close combat Attack Tests.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The wearer gains a +2 bonus to close combat Damage Tests.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The wearer gains a +2 bonus to close combat Attack Tests.

Protective Amulet

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 13
Template: Defensive Item

This amulet featuring a ruby gleans, almost blending the eye of anyone who stares too intensely at its wearer. The ruby is set in gold, and the amulet is held on a gold chain.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The wearer adds +1 to his Spell Defense.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The wearer adds +1 to his Social Defense.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The wearer adds +1 Rank to his Steel Thought Talent.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The wearer adds +2 to his Spell Defense.

Buoyant Bag

Maximum Threads: 2
Spell Defense: 14
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Template: Special Effect Item

This rather large leather bag can hold most of the equipment an adventurer needs—or a small fortune worth of loot he finds. Its surface is embroidered with motifs of air and clouds.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The bag and its contents weigh only 75% of what they should normally weigh.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The bag and its contents weigh only 50% of what they should normally weigh.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The bag and its contents weigh only 25% of what they should normally weigh.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The bag and its contents weigh only 10% of what they should normally weigh.

Spellmaster's Wand

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 14
Template: Mastery Item

A short length of finely carved wood bristling with magical energy at a magician's touch, this wand is used to accentuate gestures made when casting spells and weaving threads.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The wielder adds a +1 Rank bonus to his Spellcasting Talent.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The wielder adds a +1 Rank bonus to his Thread Weaving Talent.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The wielder adds a +1 bonus to spell Effect Tests.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The wielder adds a +2 Rank bonus to his Spellcasting Talent.

Healing Vial

Maximum Threads: 2
Legend Point Cost: Novice
Spell Defense: 14
Template: Consumables Item

This is the sort of vial typically used to store a healing potion. It has since been enchanted, the vial now much more powerful than the potion, having absorbed the potions' magical essence.

Thread Rank One
Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the item's Name.
Effect: The vial produces a healing potion once per day, but its bonus to Recovery Tests is only +4, or a Step 4 Recovery Test on its own. It cannot heal Wounds. The potion cannot be saved for later use, it must be consumed immediately.

Thread Rank Two
Effect: The healing potion produced by the vial now works like a regular healing potion: it grants a +8 Step bonus to a Recovery Test or Step 8 Recovery Test on its own, and can heal a Wound.

Thread Rank Three
Effect: The bonus to Recovery Tests is now +10, or a Step 10 Recovery Test on its own.

Thread Rank Four
Effect: The vial can now produce an additional healing potion per day.

Spell Matrix Objects

Before the Scourge, magicians did not have as frequent use for spell matrices as they have nowadays, as casting spells via Raw Magic was relatively safe without the corruption brought by the Horrors. For spells they used regularly or that were more harmful when cast raw, they used Spell Matrix Objects, items that work nearly identical to today's Spell Matrix Talent. Indeed, the Spell Matrix talent was developed by applying Spell Matrix Object Theory to talents. Spell Matrix Objects can take almost any physical form; staffs are practical and popular choices with magicians, and their tradition of artistic robe embroidery stems from Spell Matrix Robes.

The rules and characteristics for Spell Matrix Objects deviate from the other items presented in this chapter in certain places.



Spell Matrix Object

Maximum Threads: 1

Spell Defense (by Matrix Type *): Sp 12; En 15; Ar 19; Sh 24

Legend Point Cost (by Matrix Type*): Sp Initiate; En Novice; Ar Warden; Sh Master

* Sp = Spell; En = Enhanced; Ar = Armored; Sh = Shared Matrix

A Spell Matrix Object's properties vary with the type of Matrix Talent the object emulates. There are Spell Matrix, Enhanced Matrix, Armored Matrix, and Shared Matrix variants. Aside from the following limitations and exceptions, a Spell Matrix Object works like a Matrix Talent of its type, with the Thread Rank filling the function of the Talent Rank.

A Matrix Object must be worn or held close to the user to work, for re-attuning it, for casting spells from it, and for weaving threads to spells stored in it. If another adept manages to dislodge the old owner's thread by weaving a thread of his own, the Matrix is wiped clean.

Any one object can only be one Spell Matrix Object, it cannot hold two matrices.

Thread Rank One

Key Knowledge: The owner must learn the object's Name.

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is 1.

Thread Rank Two

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 2.

Thread Rank Three

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn the Name of the object's creator.

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 3.

Thread Rank Four

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 4.

Thread Rank Five

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn what materials were used to create the object.

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 5.

Thread Rank Six

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 6.

Thread Rank Seven

Key Knowledge: The wielder must learn where the materials used to create the object came from.

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 7.

Thread Rank Eight

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 8.

Thread Rank Nine

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 9.

Thread Rank Ten

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 10.

Thread Rank Eleven

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 11.

Thread Rank Twelve

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 12.

Thread Rank Thirteen

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 13.

Thread Rank Fourteen

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 14.

Thread Rank Fifteen

Effect: The highest-Circle spell the object can hold is now 15.

CLOTHING

Each Namegiver race wears its own style of clothing, and individual clothing choices can vary greatly. The Clothing Table lists the most common types of clothing available in Barsaive, including package deals for entire outfits.

CLOTHING TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Belt	5 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Boots:			
Soft	1	1	Everyday
Riding	4	2	Average
Mountain	8	2	Average
Breeches:			
Peasant's	4 cp	1	Everyday
Merchant's	1	1	Average
Guild Member's	7	1	Unusual
Brooch:			
Plain Brass	2	1	Everyday
Ornamental	12	1	Average
Silver	15	1	Average
Gold	120	2	Average
Cloak:			
Wool	5	1	Average
Satin- or Silk-lined	14	1	Average
Traveler's	8	1	Average
Fur-trimmed	50	1	Average
Theran	380	2	Unusual
Dress:			
Plain	2	1	Everyday
Patterned	7	1	Average
Embroidered	22	2	Average
Satin	100	2	Unusual
Ballroom Gown	250	4	Unusual
Theran	560	6	Unusual
Gloves	2	Neg.	Average
Hat:			
Felt	4 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Woolen	12 cp	Neg.	Average
Fine Quality	9	Neg.	Average
Courtier Quality	18	1	Unusual
Hooded Mask	3	Neg.	Average
Hosiery:			
Plain	5 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Silk	20	Neg.	Average
Jacket:			
Wool	12	1	Average
Silk	90	1	Average
Courtier's	170	2	Unusual

CLOTHING TABLE

Item	Cost	Weight	Availability
Peasant's Garb:			
Shirt, belt, sandals and breeches	12 cp	1	Everyday
With robe or dress instead of breeches	3	1	Everyday
Pin or Clasp	1	Neg.	Average
Robe:			
Linen	15 cp	1	Average
Embroidered	15	1	Average
Sandals	2 cp	Neg.	Everyday
Shirt:			
Plain	2 cp	1	Everyday
Patterned	1	1	Average
Silk	45	1	Average
Shoes:			
Merchant's	2	1	Average
Courtier's	40	1	Unusual
Scabbard (blade)	5	1	Average
Scarf	5	Neg.	Average
Toga	6 cp	1	Average
Traveler's Garb:			
Soft boots, belt, shirt, breeches and cloak	8	3	Average
With robe *or* dress instead of breeches	9	3	Average
Tunic	4 cp	1	Everyday
Wealthy Traveler's Garb:			
Riding boots, belt, shoes, three patterned shirts and guild breeches or patterned dress, fine hat, satin-lined cloak and an ornamental brooch	40	5	Unusual
With embroidered robe instead of breeches	50	5	Unusual

Neg.: Negligible weight for encumbrance purposes. At the gamemaster's discretion, approximately 10 such items weigh 1 pound.
Weight: The clothing weights listed here are used for encumbrance purposes and do not reflect the true weight of the item. If the gamemaster wants to better reflect the encumbrance of clothing that is carried (not worn), double the weights shown.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BARSAIVE PROVINCE

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, 1509 TH, compiled by the Great Library of Throal from 1415–1509 TH.

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 Blood Wood, from the Aras Sea to the Wastes. Countless legends speak of Barsaive, yet much of our province and the changes it underwent during the Scourge remain 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, or 25 days on horseback. Traveling from Barsaive's eastern edge to its western boundary would take him 60 days on foot, or 38 days 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 Elven 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 to the South. A blighted area known as the Wastes marks Barsaive's western border. It includes the Poison Forest, a once-lush woodland blasted and corrupted by Horrors during the Scourge. The Aras Sea bounds Barsaive to the East, a saltwater ocean that connects Barsaive to other lands beyond the Kingdom of Throal and the Theran Empire.

The Scourge wrought terrible changes in the land of Barsaive, leeching forests and farmland of life and destroying cities, towns, and villages. Though most of Barsaive has recovered from the Scourge, with many forests re-grown and much of the land fertile again, 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.

THE LAND

The landscape of Barsaive contains forests and jungles, plains, and hilly and mountainous regions. The plains and the hills and mountains each cover roughly a quarter of Barsaive, and jungles and forests cover the remaining half. 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 the unwary.

CLIMATE

The Scourge caused Barsaive's temperatures and rainfall to shift drastically and frequently, leaving the landscape devoid of living vegetation, in addition to the destruction brought to it by the more beast-like Horrors. 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, while many claim the heat from Death's Sea is carried into the land by altered wind patterns. 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 Namegiver races are scattered across Barsaive, with some members of each race gathered in enclaves and others living in areas of mixed racial populations. The province's larger cities, in particular, have attracted Namegivers from all over Barsaive over the last century, making most of them places where all races mix. The table below lists the approximate distribution of the races throughout Barsaive, based on estimates garnered through years of traveling. As yet, no complete census of Barsaive exists–the fact that previously undiscovered kaers are opened every couple of months would make a census short-lived anyway.

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 one third of Barsaive's population. On the slopes of the Throal Mountains, outside the gates of Throal, the hardened garahamite dwarfs farm and mine the mountains in the Throalites' ancient ways, and to the north and east of the mountains nomadic tribes eke out a living hunting

game. Tales contend that some of these primitive peoples worship mad Passions and Horrors, but they often spring from storytellers who cater to those that would not leave the comforts of Throal's underground cities even if the King offered another free claim to land.

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 one sixth 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.

BARSAIVE RACIAL COMPOSITION TABLE

Race	Population
Dwarf	32%
Elf	10%
Human	16%
Obsidiman	1%
Ork	19%
T'skrang	8%
Troll	13%
Windling	1%

Of the people living in the lowlands, about a quarter live in the cities of Haven, Kratas, Iopos, Jerris, Urupa, and Travar. Outside the cities, the great lowland jungles and plains of Barsaive contain only one fourth of the province's population. Ork scorchers, nomadic riders who travel the land on massive beasts, roam across the plains in primitive hunting bands and in organized, mercenary ork cavalries who sell their talents and strength to the highest bidder.

Although the Scourge ended nearly one hundred years ago and people may now freely travel the land, most prefer to gather in large population centers. As a result, the population distribution of Barsaive remains fairly static.

Travel and Trade

Though many self-sufficient villages remain scattered throughout Barsaive's remote regions, trade has once again begun to generate wealth in most of the province. While the largest amount of trade is done using airships and the t'skrang riverboats, there is still need for overland trade routes and caravans, and many a courageous merchant travels the land with a lone wagon or two, providing the farmers in the hinterlands with the amenities of life not found in a small community, taking what the wilderness has to offer back into the cities.

Old Theran Road

A long, fortified road from pre-Scourge times runs all the way from Parlainth to the newfound city of Urupa. The white stones of this road reflect the moonlight during the night, glowing in a milky white. Trade has sprung up again, mostly between the settlements close to the road. Caravans from many merchants are a frequent sight, along with messengers and other travelers. The road remains, however, a feature of Barsaive's east, and is unlikely to ever again see as much travel as it did when Parlainth was the shining beauty of Barsaive's cities.

The Pilgrimage Route

Although not exactly a trade route, the pilgrimage is sacred for the t'skrang of Barsaive. The Pilgrimage Route stretches from Ayodhya near lake Ban to the Cliff City of House Syrtis and resembles a small footpath running close along the shores of the Serpent River, passing some of the most revered t'skrang sacred sites. The Pilgrimage Route ends at the Pinnacle Gate of the Cliff City, where the pilgrims who have completed the fifteen-day journey receive a personal audience with the *Shivalahala* Syrtis, also known as the Prophetess. She is the leader of House Syrtis and a revered figure by every race in Barsaive for her incredible insight into the future. The pilgrim is allowed to ask one question, which the *shivalahala* will answer if she can divine a true reply.

After the Scourge, the dwarfs of Throal developed a caravan route that runs parallel to the southern part of the Pilgrimage Route–although out of respect for the sanctity of the path never crossing it – and from there on along the Coil River to Throal. The discovery of a passage through the Adipae Rapids has made the Coil River the prime trade route between Throal and Lake Ban, however, and mostly poor merchants and travelers on foot use the road today.

Due to the landing of the Theran behemoth *Triumph* on the Liferock, Ayodhya is currently not accessible to travelers, meaning pilgrims have to start their pilgrimage in an untraditional way.

Trade Routes

Other trade routes have sprung up in the past decades, connecting the great cities with trading ports along the Serpent River. King Varulus III saw the wisdom of providing them with distance markers—small milestones that help people navigate and guide them to his kingdom. The trade routes are usually not fortified or guarded, which makes travel along them slow and dangerous.

The most frequented and important routes run from Throal to Jerris, passing the dangerous areas around Lake Vors and Kratas, the city of thieves; and from the southern Serpent River in Barsaive's southern heartland to the Theran foothold of Sky Point and Vivane on Barsaive's southwestern border, circumventing the troll raiders of the Twilight Peaks and the Liaj jungle. The mainstay of Barsaive's bulk trade remains limited to ships, either airships or riverboats, and so a number of shorter routes connect the rivers with nearby towns. None of these routes is of any importance beyond the town it serves, though.

Plains

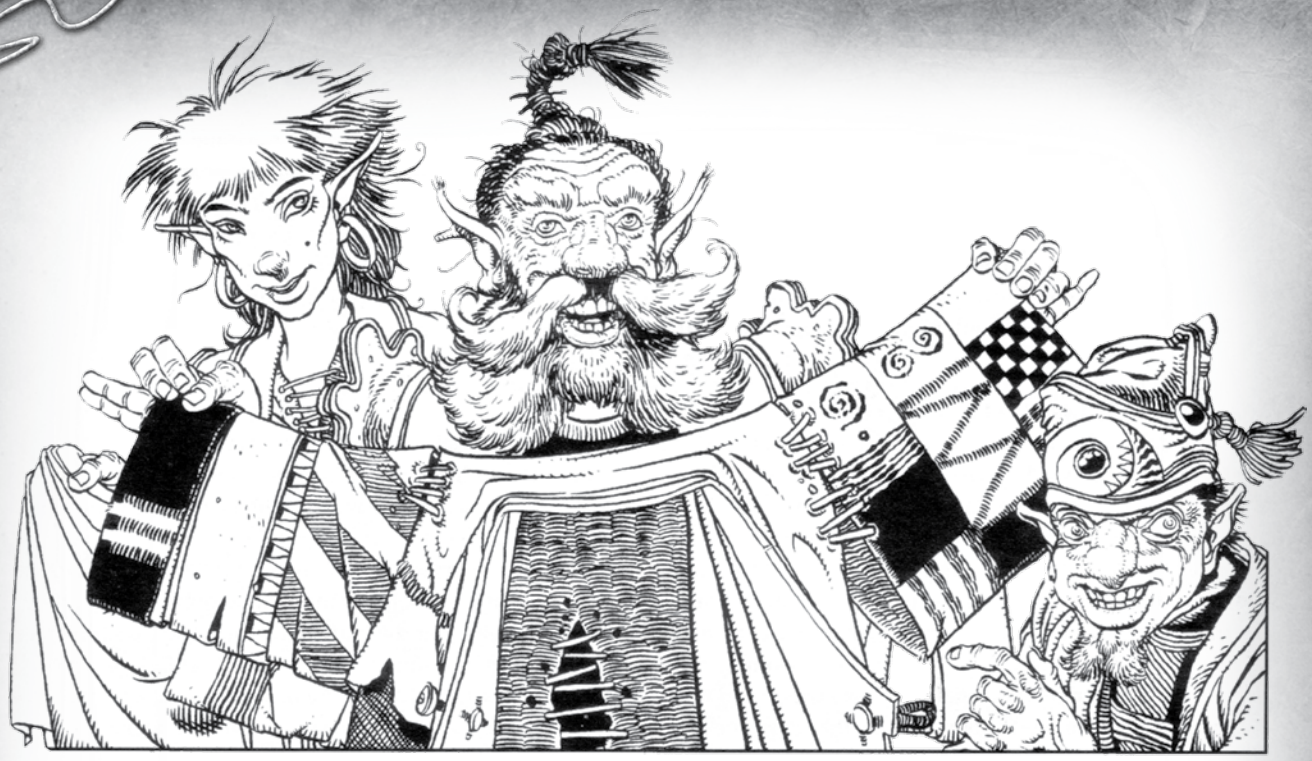
The plains of Barsaive stretch between the mountain ranges and jungles that cover most of the province. Low brush and small hills dot this vast expanse of land. Cities and towns have sprung up on the plains since the Scourge, and the countryside between the cities and mountains contains countless peoples, villages, and citadels.

Still, despite the many brave groups of settlers that have re-settled many of the plains boasting Barsaive's most fertile farmland after the Theran War, much land is still free for the taking, but few are interested in the light of the new threat the Therans pose with their fortress of *Triumph* that threatens to cut off much of Barsaive's south from Throal, and grants the Therans access to much of the area to its north. With many of the small kaers pre-Scourge farmers built now lost and so many others turning to the large cities for better protection directly after the Scourge, Barsaive's plains are nowhere near as populated as in the past, leaving much of the land empty.

While settlements on the plains are prone to raids by ork scorcher tribes, troll crystal raiders, and various other bandits, other areas have turned into true places of peril, proving dangerous to travelers. The most notable of these regions are the Badlands and the Wastes.

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 alive.



The Wastes

Along Barsaive's western border lie the Wastes, an area inhabited by little more than monsters, Horrors, and 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 would also seem to explain the reason for the numerous bands of adventurers who enter the Wastes in search of ancient treasures and magical artifacts, despite the fact that few groups ever return.

Low clouds of gray dust and ash continually swirl over the Wastes, carried westward by the wind to extend over the Poison Forest and the city of Jerris.

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

Between the Kingdom of Throal and Parlainth lie the most treacherous mountains of Barsaive, known for their steep cliffs, deep valleys, and plunging gullies. The terrain is unstable and prone to rockslides and earthquakes. Rumors tell of all kinds of creatures and Horrors—even savage tribes of Namegivers—hiding here, preying on travelers and surviving among the barren rocks.

Delaris Mountains

The beautiful Delaris Mountains lie in the western part of Barsaive and are rumored to shelter the ancient monastery of Elianar Messias (***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 6). Breathtaking in their beauty, the Delaris Mountains possess the eerie quality of dampening sound, a seemingly peaceful stillness that can prove a hazard to travelers. Two major trollmoots call these mountains home: the Rockhorns to the East and the Skyseekers to the West. While not as dangerous as the crystal raiders of the Twilight Peaks, these moots still conduct raids south, north, and west of the mountains; and defend their homes with the unequalled advantage of being accustomed to the sound-dampening effect, much like the many predators of the area that catch their fair share of would-be explorers every year.

Dragon Mountains

The Dragon Mountains rise in the southeastern corner of Barsaive, between the Aras and Death's Seas. They received their Name because the great dragon, Mountainshadow, calls them home, lairing in the tallest peak of this mountain range. There are rumors of a Namegiver community that survived the Scourge by taking refuge in Mountainshadow's lair, living under his wing to this day.

Scol Mountains

The high and forbidding peaks of the Scol Mountains to the North of Barsaive are hazardous to travelers. Only the lowlands seem to boast life, but remain harsh and bleak. The greatest danger, however, is not the extraordinarily rough and barren terrain—it is the presence of the brutal and unforgiving Firescale trollmoot, known for killing strangers on sight.

Troll folklore and legends tell that the trolls from these mountains once built and ruled the fallen Kingdom of Ustrect. The current situation, however, suggests that the tribes of the Scol Mountains now intend to remain apart from Barsaivian society. Allied to the Denairastas of the city of Iopos, their control of the skies of Barsaive's northwest remains unchallenged, threatening airship forays into the area north of the Wastes and beyond Iopos.

Scytha Mountains

The land between the Kingdom of Throal and the Blood Wood is occupied by the Scytha Mountains. A long time ago, the dwarfs of Barsaive built their first kingdom in these mountains, predating the founding of Throal by many years. The Kingdom of Scytha, already in a weakened position because of long-lasting feuds with its neighbors, was forced to swear allegiance to the Theran Empire during the

Orichalcum Wars and suffered heavily under the empire's oppression. Creatures now thought to be the first of the Horrors began to infest the caverns and passageways of Scytha long before the Scourge proper, forcing the dwarfs to abandon their home. Scytha was the first major loss to the Horrors, and the mountains have remained inhabited by them and their undead minions ever since. Scytha boasts some of the most tainted areas of Barsaive, having been under the Horrors' influence longer than other places of the province.

The Scytha Mountains are the domain of the great dragon, Vasdenjas, who has been known to give audiences on Mount Wyrmspire.

Thunder Mountains

Just north of the Dragon Mountains, the Thunder Mountains meet the eastern edge of the Badlands. No widely accepted explanation exists for the booming rumbles and thunderous sounds that roll through the valleys and peaks during certain months of the year, but their presence gives birth to all kinds of legends and rumors. Some people say that they stem from a giant creature trapped underneath—most likely a great dragon or even the Horror, Verjigorm, also known as the Hunter of Great Dragons. Others say it's Death himself, calling out to remind the world of his imprisonment beneath Death's Sea.

Throal Mountains

Home of the most influential kingdom of the province, the Throal Mountains rise impossibly high into the sky. The dwarf kingdom is buried deep beneath the untamed surface and the cold, blue-tinted soil. Traveling the mountains is dangerous due to the extremely low temperatures and myriad cobblestones covering the ground. Beyond a few mountain settlements and several tribes of savage ogres that were pushed into the higher regions by dwarfs re-settling the mountains, the great dragon, Icewing, lairs on top of Mount Vapor, high above the clouds. Icewing is one of the few great dragons known to give audiences.

Twilight Peaks

The stunning Twilight Peaks in southwestern Barsaive were named for the unique view these mountains pose during the twilight hours. Rich deposits of crystal reflect the glow of the Death's Sea, creating a warm aura around the mountains that can be seen for miles. The crystal growing here is not only the largest source of living crystal in Barsaive, it is also vastly superior to that found in other mountain ranges. Unsurprisingly, the Twilight Peaks are home to Barsaive's crystal raider trollmoots, who use the living crystal to forge armor, shields and weapons when they don't embark on raids in the lowlands or prey on other airships that come too close to their domain.

The major trollmoots are the Stoneclaws and the Swiftwinds to the East, the Bloodlores and Blackfangs to the West, and the Ironmongers and Thundersky trollmoots in the central peaks. The crystal raiders are known to battle among themselves, as ancient feuds exist between the tribes.

Tylon Mountains

Twelve improbably tall spires reach to the skies from the twelve peaks of the Tylon Mountains in central Barsaive. These spires rival the mighty Throal Mountains in height, piercing the clouds beyond the sight of travelers standing at their foot. Some slopes and glens of the Tylon Mountains are barren, while others are covered with thick forests and brush.

According to ork folklore, the spires are the twelve Passions themselves, frozen in time as they reached out into the universe to stop the Horrors from ravaging the world.

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 as to how it occurs.

Today, Barsaive's jungles and forests contain a diverse range of trees. The tallest reach a height of 100 yards, rarely growing close enough together for their crowns to touch. Other trees stand 30 to 60 yards 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 20 to 30 yards 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 15 yards from the ground, range from thin stands to impenetrable thickets.

In areas with sparser growth a person can spot someone up to 50 yards away; in other locales, the foliage grows thickly enough to render an object invisible only a yard or two away from the 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 other similarly ruined cities and towns.

Blood Wood

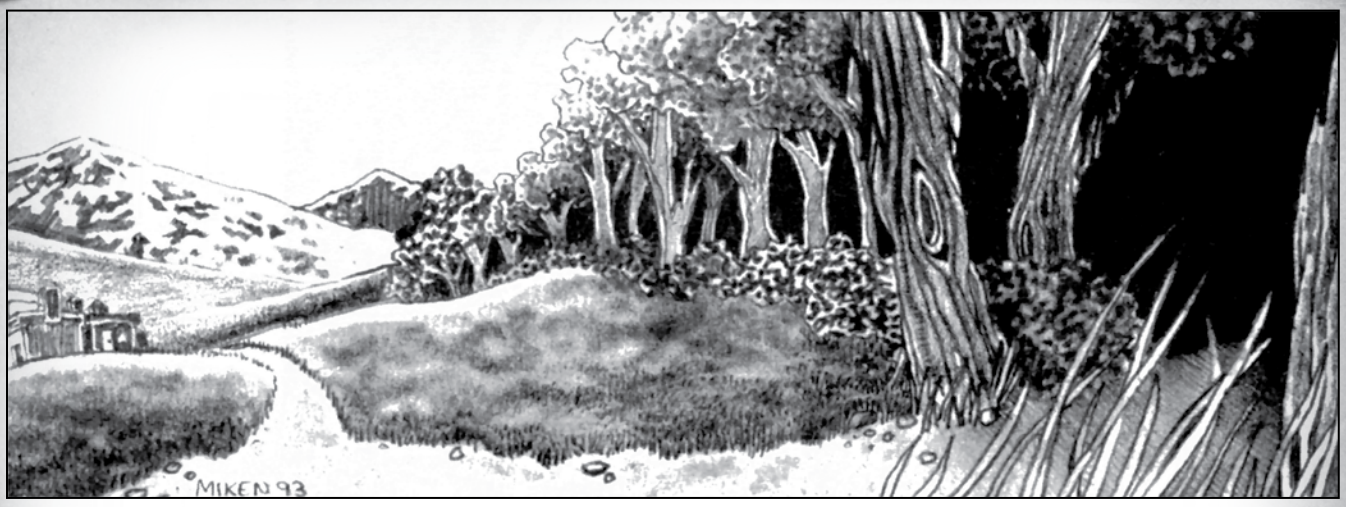
Once known as Wyrm Wood before the Scourge, Barsaive's most prominent forest stretches along six hundred miles, nearly the entire width of the province's northern border. At first glance, Blood Wood is a place of fantastic beauty, with thick red and green undergrowth and towering trees that only allow narrow shafts of sunlight to pierce the forest gloom. However, the use of blood magic has twisted the growth of Blood Wood, creating a terrible mockery of the grace and beauty for which Wyrm Wood had been known before the Scourge. The Blood Wood holds the dubious honor of being the only place in Barsaive corrupted by its inhabitants, rather than by the Horrors.

Those who journey to the Blood Wood face dangers and difficulties unlike those anywhere else in Barsaive. Because of the self-isolation Queen Alachia has imposed over Blood Wood, very few uninvited travelers pass beyond the outermost fringes and live to tell the tale. Deadly defenses—both natural and elf-made—ensure that no one enters Blood Wood undetected by the Blood Warders and Wardens serving as border guards.

Wyrm Wood was once renowned the world over as the center of elven culture and tradition, but the Ritual of Thorns and the transformation it wrought on the Blood Wood has reduced the influence of the Elven Court and Queen Alachia to the Wood's confines.

Glenwood Deep

About two hundred miles west of Lake Vors, the Serpent River curves south around the wooded hills of Glenwood Deep. More than thirty windling clans make their homes in the trees of the Deep, forming the largest concentration of windlings in Barsaive. Fierce inter-clan rivalries occasionally erupt into open warfare, but like most windling endeavors, these disputes are quickly resolved and then forgotten.



The windlings of the Deep are known for their wanderlust and their extensive travels allow them to spread their open and intense dislike of the House Ishkarat t'skrang, who control the stretch of river circumventing the Deep, throughout Barsaive.

Liaj Jungle

The Liaj Jungle lies in the vast basin between the Delaris and Tylon Mountains. Far from any major waterways and trade routes, this vast green land is rarely traveled. The Liaj has grown considerably since the Scourge, and the jungle teems with life. Strange beasts roam the jungle floor, including giant spiders whose silk fetches a high price from merchants across Barsaive.

But all the creatures that roam the jungle are no match for the most fearsome inhabitant of the Liaj: the great dragon, Usun, who brooks no trespassers into his domain. Despite the dragon's presence, several tribes and villages are scattered on the outskirts of the jungle, and the mysterious Tamers, who live without clothing, weapons, or tools of any kind, inhabit the deeper reaches of the Liaj.

Poison Forest

Stretching from the northern foothills of the Delaris Mountains, the Poison Forest forms a barrier between Barsaive and the Wastes beyond. Once lush and green, the Poison Forest is a casualty of the Scourge—a terrible reminder of the harm done to our land by the Horrors. The Poison Forest is not dead, however, but eternally caught in the process of dying.

The entire wood reeks of decay, with the wind sometimes carrying the stench all the way to Jerris. The trees are twisted and blackened, their leaves brown and brittle. Grasses, vines, and other plants look like dead things left to wither in the pitiless sun. The few animals that live in this blighted place are also caught in a perpetual state of decay, with their flesh rotting off their bones.

The Poison Forest is eerily silent—no bird calls, no animals cry. Only the sound of the wind blowing in from the Wastes disturbs the haunting quiet. This wind also brings with it dark clouds that drop fine dust and ash, coating everything in black soot as if a fire had just swept through the Forest.

Servos Jungle

The Servos Jungle in the heart of Barsaive is very isolated and remains largely unexplored despite its central location, hampering caravans on their way to the South of the province. While veined with waterways large and small, its interior contains only a few swamplands.

Everything in the jungle grows to immense size; vines as thick as a troll's arm, shrubs the size of small trees and blossoms the size of stewpot-lids barely scratch the surface of the jungle's marvels. There is virtually no undergrowth in the deeper parts of the jungle—the thick canopy is almost impenetrable to rainfall and sunlight.

The Servos is the home of the Cathan tribes: tough, olive-skinned humans of small and slender build who survived the Scourge without Theran aid, and savage t'skrang dwelling near the many waterways that flow south to join the Serpent River.

The 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, many of which are provided by t'skrang ferrymen wherever a t'skrang settlement is found. The Serpent River's banks contain the most fertile soil in Barsaive, and many villages and towns dot the long, wide river valley. Countless tributaries, such as the Alidar, Byrose, and Caucavic Rivers, feed the Serpent along its course, forming a network of waterways that travelers and traders have used for thousands of years.

The Serpent River is dominated by the reptilian t'skrang, whose communities—personified by the *aropagoi*, the t'skrangs' great trading houses—dictate the conditions traders and travelers on the Serpent River must face.

The return of the Therans has hampered some of the trade along the river, as their allies of the K'tenshin *aropagoi* have taken the opportunity to cut off the South Reach of the Serpent in violation of contracts signed after the Theran War, staking claim to a monopoly on all trade with the South, due to the high tolls they now charge.

Coil River

The Coil River is one of most prosperous stretches of the entire Serpent River system. From its source in the Throal Mountains to the Aras Sea, the Coil runs as swiftly and strongly as the Serpent and is home to more people than the rest of Barsaive's mightiest waterway. North of the intimidating Adipae Rapids lies the town of Darranis, which has become a vital link between Throal and the Serpent River system since the end of the Theran War. Only riverboats with express permission by King Neden of Throal have the rights to traverse the underground rivers to reach the dwarf kingdom to the North; most other trade runs through Darranis and continues to Throal's mighty gates by caravan on the dwarf caravan road, while some continues on to Ardanyan to be shipped to Throal from there.

The southern part of the Coil River, which runs from Lake Ban to the Aras Sea is also known as the Silverspring, partly because of the high volume of lucrative trade with the seaport city Urupa. The southern part of the river also passes the so-called Swinging City of Axalalail, built entirely on platforms suspended in a grove of massive trees growing close to the river. The town's t'skrang residents, who built Axalalail with the aid of a windling clan, use rope swings to move from platform to platform.

Mothingale River

The River Mothingale has connected the elven civilization with the Serpent River since the dawn of Namegiver history. In ancient times, elven trading ships plied the Mothingale and Serpent Rivers and even ventured out into the Aras Sea. Today, only ruins speak of the shipyards and settlements that were destroyed when Queen Alachia ordered the destruction of the elven fleet as part of Blood Wood's isolation.

The confluence of Mothingdale and Serpent River also marks the location of the fortress at Eidolon (see below).

Servos River

Those who wish to travel into the heart of the Servos Jungle must embark north on the Servos River. The Servos is nearly as wide as the Serpent, but its banks are firm and steep. The banks of the Servos and its tributaries are dotted with the villages of primitive t'skrang and human tribes of Cathan heritage. Originally, these tribes also inhabited the lower courses of the Servos and Galanga Rivers, but they abandoned these settlements as Theran and K'tenshin slavers slowly advanced up these rivers. With the Therans' return, the slaving raids began anew, although the jungle-dwellers are more apt at evading them today.

Tylon River

Running swiftly from the Tylon Mountains, the Tylon River is the largest tributary in the Serpent River's south reach. The upper reach of the Tylon, which stretches from the river's source to the four-hundred-foot falls at Daiche Canyon, flows through densely forested hillsides and verdant valleys that are considered some of the most beautiful wilderness in Barsaive. The Tylon's lower reach meanders through the rugged plains where the Dinganni nomads wander. At the southern end of Daiche Canyon, the city of Kratas has built the colony called Daiche, which like its patron city has become a locus of trade – much of it in stolen goods – and controversy.

River Settlements

Countless towns and villages dot the shores of the Serpent and Coil Rivers, trading with the t'skrang and other Namegivers. The following settlements are the most influential ones; their Names are known in every port along the Serpent.

Denlikiyan

Denlikiyan is the wealthiest of all of the river villages, as it boasts the finest shipyards of the Serpent River. The village's engineers are responsible for the innovations of the renowned *shimoram* riverboat design, and Denlikiyan is one of a handful of yards able to build a fire engine—and therefore, a complete riverboat—from scratch. Rumor has it that after nearly a century of shipbuilding, Denlikiyan now sits on top of one of the largest stashes of gold coins in all of Barsaive. Denlikiyan lies close to the settlements of the Vorst, a community of humans who suffered badly during the Scourge.

Eidolon

At the confluence of the Mothingale and Serpent Rivers lies Kaer Eidolon, a site of great historical and strategic importance in northern Barsaive. Eidolon is a fortress manned by elven and t'skrang soldiers of House Syrtis who fight hard to keep the oppressive t'skrang House Ishkarat in check. Although the elves stationed at Eidolon are usually not from Blood Wood, they still operate under the command of Queen Alachia. This situation has led to an active black market trade between Blood Wood and the t'skrang of House Syrtis.

Lalai Gorge

A few miles south of the confluence of the Caucavic and Serpent Rivers, the Throal Mountains collide with the Caucavic Mountains to form the Lalai Gorge, one of Barsaive's unique natural wonders. The Cliff City of House Syrtis is built into the southern wall of the gorge, which rises nearly 1,000 yards on each side of the river. The Cliff City was built before the Scourge and served as a citadel for the largest of the t'skrang *aropagoi*.

Tansiarda

Just south of the confluence of the Onman and Serpent Rivers lies the town of Tansiarda, home to a consortium of dwarf engineers and magicians embarked on one of the most ambitious endeavors in Barsaive's history—to bridge the Serpent River. The dwarf engineers are following a plan developed before the Scourge, which if successful would provide an overland connection to the old Theran road which runs along the other side of the river. Needless to say, because of the possible threat to their business interests, tensions between the dwarfs and the riverfaring t'skrang frequently run high.

Ardanyan

On the trading route between Tansiarda and the Kingdom of Throal, the trading town of Ardanyan flourishes from the traffic. Founded by a group of wealthy merchants, the town boasts above-average defenses and provides travelers with a safe haven from the ork scorchers threatening the area.

Trosk

The small town of Trosk is the last major settlement on the shores of the Serpent River before it merges into the Mist Swamps. Built on the ruins of a pre-Scourge port city, Trosk is called home by many questors of Jaspree and their servants, who occasionally trade with the Scavians and the t'skrang. The Troskians believe that they have a sacred duty to stop the growth of the Badlands, regularly making forays into the Horror-infested region. So far, no one can tell if their efforts have met with success.

Servalen

Located on the shore of Lake Pyros, Servalen is a bustling, brawling community. As a village that outgrew itself, criminals always held the upper hand in Servalen. Before the Therans returned to Barsaive, many of the inhabitants of Servalen were transients: ork scorchers and riverboat crews on liberty, mercenaries waiting to be hired, and explorers staging expeditions into the nearby Mist Swamps. The t'skrang of House K'tenshin and the Therans took control shortly after the landing of *Triumph*, and turned Servalen into a slave market and transfer point to Vivane and Sky Point.

The Serpent Lakes

At three points along its length, the frantic rush of the Serpent River slows and winds into the calm and clear Serpent Lakes. Each lake hosts settlements of many sizes, both along the shores and underwater.

Lake Ban

As the largest freshwater lake in Barsaive, Lake Ban is home to the Floating City of the t'skrang House V'strimon. The city is built entirely on platforms made of woven reeds growing upward from the lake bottom. Lake Ban's location—midway between Throal and Urupa, at the junction of the Coil and Serpent Rivers—has made it a major economic and cultural crossroad. The Floating City, along with the bustling towns and villages along the lake's shores, makes Lake Ban the undisputed heart of the Coil River Valley, as well as one of Barsaive's most civilized regions.

The landing of the Theran fortress of *Triumph* at Ayodhya (see the **How It Came To Pass** chapter in the ***Gamemaster's Guide***, p. 15) has had a strong impact on the region, as the V'strimon have marshaled their warships to protect their city from attacks by the Therans and their allies, House K'tenshin. The K'tenshin seized control of the Serpent River between Lake Pyros and Lake Ban during the Theran's arrival, which in turn led to open hostilities between the two houses.

Lake Pyros

West of Ayodhya and *Triumph*, the Serpent River enters a densely forested region that gradually gives way to impenetrable jungle. The Serpent River empties into the smallest of the Serpent Lakes: Lake Pyros, whose name stems from the precious, thick layer of phosphorescent algae that covers the bottom of the lake. The land around the eastern shores of Lake Pyros contains some of the most fertile soil of the province.

Several waves of settlers have erected quickly growing boomtowns along the shores, which attract deserters and exiles of all kinds, despite frequent raids by the t'skrang pirates of mysterious House Henghyoke. Tensions between the various immigrant and native groups have risen high from time to time, but House K'tenshin has recently managed to seize control of the unruly towns, turning Lake Pyros into a staging area for Theran slaving raids into the Servos Jungle.

Lake Vors

More than a thousand feet deep, the cold waters of Lake Vors foster some unusual species of fish and freshwater mollusks. The north bank of the lake consists of high bluffs rising up to 100 yards above the water's edge. Ruled by the oppressive t'skrang House Ishkarat, the Lake boasts two major settlements: the recently constructed town of Axalekso, on top of the northern bluffs, and the Fortress Isle of Maratha, jutting out of the water like a rough-hewn pillar in the western parts of the lake.

Long considered a minor power by the Elven Court of Blood Wood and the former King of Throal, House Ishkarat is allied with the Denairastas Clan of Iopos.

The Mist Swamps

As the Serpent River approaches Death's Sea, it divides into countless streams, creating a huge marsh. The mighty waters of the Serpent River are completely evaporated by the lava's heat, and carried inland to hang over the swamps as the thick mists for which they are Named or condense there as they cool. The knee-deep water maintains a scalding hot (and at times, boiling) temperature, and thick steam rises up from the area. Though the Mist Swamps are not as instantly deadly as Death's Sea, they still pose considerable danger to unwary travelers. The thick moisture of the air combined with the high temperature leeches energy from foolhardy adventurers not properly equipped for the journey. In addition, the mists are so thick that one can barely see more than a few yards ahead.



Rumors and vague hints on ancient maps suggest that a city Named Yrns Morgath once stood on the site covered by the Mist Swamps—a city that predates all other known Barsaivian cities. While there are records of some ruins and ancient structures that have been discovered by people surviving expeditions into the

Mist Swamps, most scholars believe that no one has found the city because it serves as the lair of Aban, the great dragon, who claims the Mist Swamps as her own territory. Other people believe that the "lost city" has no more substance than the Castle of Assassins—another piece of common folklore rumored to lie hidden in the mists, and the source of tales told to scare children.

Scavia

Not much is left of the mighty city of Scavia that once arose between the Mist Swamps and the Scarlet Sea. Built on the ruins of an even older civilization, the Scavian kingdom fell during the Scourge due to a serious flaw in the construction of their kaer. Although descendants of the Scavian kingdom survived the Scourge, their numbers are dwindling. Mostly human, these families sail the lower part of the Serpent River on their barge-towns—floating villages that serve as home for the Scavians.

For a long time, the Scavians felt the t'skrang with whom they share the river were a threat to their own existence, and fought many battles against them. Recently, they have joined forces with the emerging t'skrang House T'kambras, fighting against the Theran-allied House K'tenshin. In return for their protection, the Scavians frequently provide House T'kambras with elemental fire and ancient engineering secrets. The most popular port for making such exchanges is the trading town of Farram, where the Iontos River enters the Serpent.

Seas and Oceans

Although it may seem odd to refer to seas and oceans when only one of them actually holds water, Barsaive has three main seas that affect trade and influence the province's weather.

Aras Sea

Marking the eastern border of Barsaive, the Aras Sea is a large saltwater ocean that reaches to unexplored lands. The Aras Sea is home to abundant wildlife, including magical creatures and a few water-dwelling Horrors. Violent storms occasionally spring up without warning and eventually travel to shore, causing great damage. Rumors exist that the storms are magical in nature.

The Coil River meets the Aras Sea in the Coil Delta, where Urupa—the only city on Barsaive's shoreline—is located. Urupa boasts a fortress-like embassy belonging to the people from across the Aras Sea, who frequent Urupa for trade. Only a handful of the wealthier citizens of Urupa have ever been invited inside this building.

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 himself resides in the sea, where the Passions imprisoned him 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, the ocean of fire will become water, and Death will be free to roam the land.

Scarlet Sea

The Scarlet Sea, linked to the Death's Sea by the Pryon Strait (also known as Dead Man's Gullet), is the home of exiles, outcasts and other pirates. Using stolen airships, these brigands raid mining ships and merchant vessels hoping to avoid the crystal raider's drakkars by traveling over the Scarlet Sea.

The sight of the *Firespawn*—a ravaged Theran vedette—sends shivers down the spine of every airship captain. The pirates hole up in caves and lava vents along the shores, often aided by outcast trolls who help to repair the pirate airships in exchange for needed supplies. They are not connected to the trollmoots of the Twilight Peaks, and have exchanged bloody blows with crystal raiders on several occasions.

Major Powers

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, which is 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 in their first attempt to take over since the Scourge ended, the Therans insist that Barsaive still belongs to their empire. Throal provides Barsaive's strongest counterweight to renewed domination by the hated Therans—a façade which now seems brittle after the Battle of Prajjor's Field.

Though the individual practices of governments in Barsaive's cities, towns and villages may vary, many 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 and language 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. Few Barsaivian municipalities, mostly those located near Theran lands in the southwest, continue to use Theran currency.

The Kingdom of Throal

The dwarf kingdom of Throal lies in the massive Throal Mountains, Barsaive's largest mountain range. The kingdom consists of two main parts. The Halls of Throal were built centuries ago and sheltered the kingdom during the Scourge. Since the Scourge, the kingdom has constructed the Inner Cities of Bethabal, Oshane, Tirtaga, Wishon, and Yistane. The cities of Hustane and Valvria have only recently been opened to settlement, and plans for two more cities, Raithabal and Thurdane, are in the works. The Inner Cities usually become the homes of newcomers to the dwarf kingdom who are hoping to make a better life for themselves, and are located so deep inside the mountain that travel from the gates of Throal often requires an overnight stay in the Halls of Throal. While predominantly inhabited by dwarfs before the Scourge, the influx of newcomers has reduced the dwarfs' share of the total population to under 50%.

Nearly a third of Barsaive's population has accepted the dwarf kingdom's invitation to live in Throal, with about 30,000 Namegivers living in the Halls, and another 25,000 living in each of the Inner Cities (although the newest cities are more sparsely populated at present). Besides the legendary Grand Bazaar located right behind the Gates of Throal, all of the nine Halls of Throal and the Inner Cities boast large bazaars, as well as some of the finest inns and taverns in Barsaive. While appointed magistrates oversee the Halls, nobles that have sworn fealty to King Neden rule the Inner Cities.

Part of the Throalic Court are a number of representatives from the ancient Noble Houses, many of which trace their existence to the time when the dwarfs still dwelled on the mountains instead of under them. While the Noble Houses have no firm say in Throalic

politics, they control most of the trade in and outside of the kingdom, thus holding a lion's share of the economic and social power.

Though most Barsaivians remain strongly allied to Throal, as they did during the Theran War, some have become suspicious of Throal's current politics. Since the assassination of his father, King Neden is close to fighting a war on two fronts. The question of Throal's role in the future of Barsaive is slowly dividing the old guard and the reformists in the kingdom, and some fear it will lead Throalic society into a civil war.

Mountain Settlements

The sovereignty of Throal extends beyond the underground kaer and the Inner Cities. King Neden also rules over roughly twenty thousand people living in small settlements scattered throughout the Throal Mountains, the *garahamites*, who took King Vaulus III's offer of free land after the Scourge. Most of these communities are mining towns financed by Throal's noble houses.

The Major Cities

The great cities of Barsaive are home to many thousands of Namegivers. While almost all of them have developed customs and laws that closely resemble the *Council Compact* of Throal, each city is still culturally unique, and each remains politically independent of the Kingdom of Throal. With the notable exception of Parlainth, the following cites have populations in the tens of thousands.

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 goods or services in Bartertown, if they look long and haggle hard enough.

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 executing dissidents. The Denairastas subject outsiders to the same drastic measures as city residents; 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. With the recent assassination of King Varulus III, it appears they have put their plans into motion.

Jerris

The wealthy trading city of Jerris lies on Barsaive's western edge, between the Liaj Jungle and the Poison Forest. A perpetual cloud of gray-black ash and dust hangs over Jerris, blown in from the Wastes that lie west of Barsaive. Rumors claim this pollution has cursed the city. A fiercely competitive group of trading houses act as the de facto rulers of Jerris. Only issues vital to the city's livelihood motivate these traders to suspend their otherwise continuous infighting and treachery.

Jerris boasts the finest airship yards in all of Barsaive and is the only city able to build the mighty air galleons. The Jerrisians' access to such fine shipwrights has made the city the home of Barsaive's most powerful shipping agents, claiming the same station that the *aropagoi* have on the Serpent and Coil Rivers.

Kratas

Located almost exactly in the geographical center of Barsaive at the edge of the Tylon Mountains, Kratas is commonly 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 crossroad 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.

Kratas had been a Theran city before the Scourge, but its citadel did not survive the Horror's assault. While still maintaining a large population, only roughly a third of what Kratas held before the Scourge lives here today. The city itself is in disrepair, boasting many empty but damaged buildings, with debris from the protective dome still littering the streets and roofs.

Travar

Among 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 southern 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. Those patrons whose champions win the Founding become magistrates.

Parlainth and Haven

The ancient ruins of Parlainth, the Theran Empire's provincial capital before the Scourge, lie in 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 is often called "the Forgotten City", a reference to the many splendors lost to time and the Scourge. The Forgotten City has become an attraction 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 southwestern corner of Parlainth. Ostensibly 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.

Urupa

Situated on the shores of the Aras Sea, Urupa was founded after the Scourge by the residents of seven small kaers, like so many believing that safety lay in numbers. The city lies at the base of a high, sheer cliff on a peninsula in the Coil Delta. The 500-yard-high cliff discourages attacks on the city from above, and a well-fortified port helps defend against attacks from the sea. Urupa has considerable military resources, including troll drakkars and a large militia, commanded by a Leadership Council made up of the councilors of Urupa's different districts.

The city has grown rich as a trading hub between the t'skrang of House V'strimon and the enigmatic people from across the Aras Sea, and remains Barsaive's only major port city.

Cara Fahd

The ork nation of Cara Fahd lies in southwest Barsaive, between the Delaris Mountains, the Twilight Peaks, and Theran-occupied Vivane. The territory claimed by Cara Fahd hosts a variety of ter-

rain, from inhospitable and unforgiving jungle to open plains. On the southeastern slopes of the Delaris Mountains sits Claw Ridge, the capital of Cara Fahd. Dominated by the granite fortress of Wurchaz, the city is still being constructed; only a quarter of its residents live in finished buildings, the rest living in tents or makeshift shacks. Many settlers in the area have begun farming the soil-rich flood plains of the Delaris River.

Cara Fahd is unique in that it not only is an ancient kingdom founded anew and populated by orks from all over Barsaive, it is also the only kingdom–as opposed to a city–that formed after the Scourge that caused so many other kingdoms to fall. While a young nation, Cara Fahd has become a home to many ork scorcher tribes and mercenary cavalries, and has considerable military might.

The T'skrang Aropagoi

Six great trading houses dominate trade on the Serpent River. With the exception of House Henghyoke, each *aropagoi* controls a section of the river system. Until recently, riverboats from all houses traveled the entire length of the river, until the Therans' backing and the might of their fortress of *Triumph* allowed House K'tenshin to claim all of the South reach for itself, breaking the Free Trade *Compact* agreed upon after the Theran War. Although not all villages and settlements along the Serpent River are affiliated with the *aropagoi*, all of them operate under their system of trade—written down in the Free Trade Compact–and most are at least affiliated with the *aropagoi* dominant in their region of the river.

House Ishkarat dominates the North reach of the Serpent River, and is based on the Fortress Isle of Maratha. Its thirst for conquest has left it with few allies—the Denairastas clan of Iopos being the most prominent.

House Syrtis is based in the Cliff City of Lalai Gorge, and has allied with the elves of Blood Wood to keep the expansion of House Ishkarat in check.

House V'strimon controls the Coil River and is based on the Floating City of Lake Ban. House V'strimon is closely allied with Throal, the city state of Urupa, and House Syrtis. Recent events have led to open hostilities with House K'tenshin.

Due to the arrival of the Theran behemoth, the southern reach of the Serpent River is controlled almost exclusively by **House K'tenshin**, which has allied with the Therans and seized control of the river from the Mist Swamps to Lake Ban.

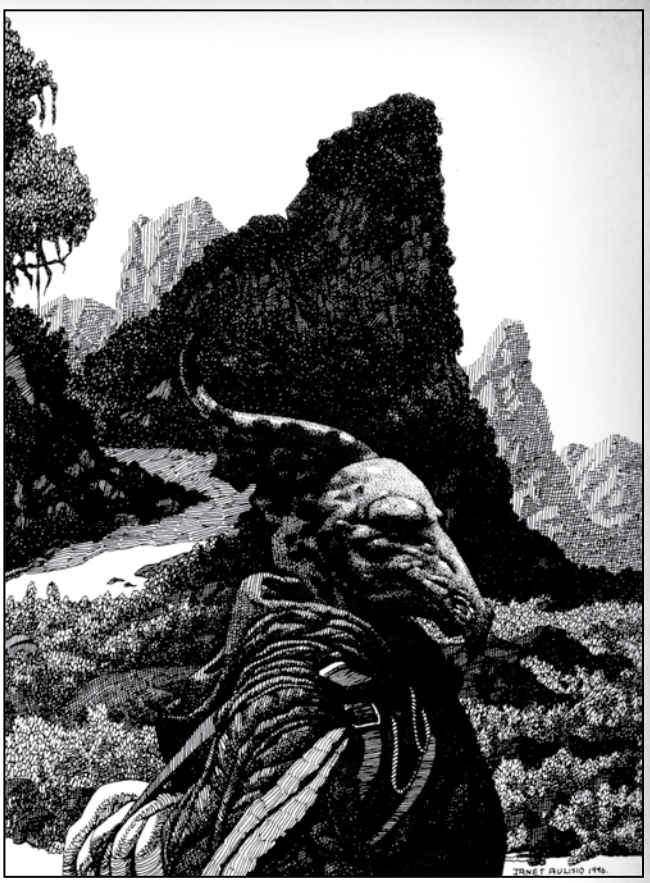
The recently revived **House T'kambras** vies with House K'tenshin for control of the Tylon River. Its influence is strongest in the northern reaches of the Tylon, but its central settlement remains unknown.

The mysterious **House Henghyoke** is a pirate confederation whose riverboats raid the entire length of the Serpent River. Eerily silent, its warriors never cry out, even when injured in battle, and have never broken under interrogation. The location of its base remains unknown, and it has no known allies.

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 Elven 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 in order 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 mutilation they inflicted to their bodies in order to survive the Scourge. The inhabitants of the Blood Wood remain



capable of intricate magic; the Elven Queen's palace, built on a foundation of eight enormous oak trees, is still universally recognized as a wonder to behold.

The Theran Empire

In the Selestrean Sea, far southwest of Barsaive, lies the isle of Thera, seat of the Theran Empire that held sway over Barsaive in the years before the Scourge. Though the Scourge cost the Therans control of Barsaive, they regained a small area of the province in the years that followed. The Theran-controlled lands in Barsaive include the city of Vivane, and the surrounding vicinity, which is called Vivane Province. Theran territory extends to the southern edges of Cara Fahd, and border conflicts in the area are common. Adventurers often encounter Theran patrols and airships in these regions. Even though the Therans have established the military installation *Triumph* in Barsaive's heartland, the Therans rarely venture beyond the Twilight Peaks, preferring to consolidate their hold on the territories they already control.

Rumors place Theran spies in virtually every major Barsaivian city, as well as several of the larger towns and villages. The Therans at *Triumph* pose a threat to Barsaive; few people doubt the Therans' intention to one day reclaim Barsaive as part of their empire.

Sky Point

One of the few remaining Theran outposts in Barsaive, Sky Point lies southwest of the city of Vivane. The Eighth Theran Legion quarters at Sky Point, giving the outpost the strongest Theran presence of any Barsaivian settlement. The outpost consists of a large platform supported by several huge pillars, and many small villages beneath the massive platform supply the Therans with necessities and slave labor. Sky Point also serves as the home port of the Theran Armada, comprising more than 25 airships, including three kilas and two dozen vedettes. Half the vedettes are outfitted for elemental mining and unsuitable for combat; the remaining craft boast

fire cannons and can each carry up to 100 troops. General Crotias commands the Eighth Legion's soldiers and cavalry, although half of them have recently been sent to guard *Triumph*. The area around Sky Point is heavily guarded against intruders.

Triumph

Clearly visible from the Serpent River, the grounded behemoth *Triumph* towers over the nearby landscape. Commanded by General Nikar Carinci, a t'skrang related to House K'tenshin, the fortress has a great influence on the region. Slave trade has increased along the southern reach of the Serpent River to provide the Therans with a suitable workforce. In addition to the Fifth Legion and half of Sky Point's Eight Legion, *Triumph* boasts a considerable fleet of airships and kilas which remains detached from the main Armada stationed at Sky Point.

Vivane

Once one of Barsaive's most beautiful cities, Vivane now stands as a testament to Theran power. As the city nearest to the seat of the Theran Empire, Vivane fell to the Therans when they returned to reconquer Barsaive almost 60 years ago. With many of its buildings still in ruins, this southwestern city remains a shadow of its former self. Though the Barsaivian magistrate Quarique Oathstone nominally rules the city, all of Barsaive recognizes his true status as a puppet ruler controlled by the Theran Overgovernor Kypros. Kypros often docks his massive airship, Ascendancy, at Vivane to remind the city's residents of Theran power. A support base for the Theran outpost at Sky Point, Vivane is also the only city near Barsaive with a sizable slave population.

Lankarden

Lankarden is a small garrison town, strongly built and well armed. It boasts two impressive airship towers inside the walls and a number of defenses to keep enemy forces away. The Therans use Lankarden as a waystation between Vivane and northeastern Barsaive, as well as a staging area for raids into Cara Fahd and Landis. Well-maintained roads link this small town to both Vivane and to the city of Parland in the south. Visitors other than the usual merchants who sell provisions are regarded with suspicion, and the town guards write down the names and places of residence for all outsiders entering the place. The town grew up only a few hundred yards from the Longbone River, named for the huge bones (said to be troll limbs) found by the first Therans to explore the river. Local people rarely fish for themselves, instead relying on Vivane for provisions, and devote their own efforts to capturing and selling slaves. Little trading or business goes on in Lankarden; the town exists primarily to serve Thera's military needs.

Lost Nations

Before the Scourge, Barsaive knew more great powers whose realms stretched for many days' walk. Four major political powers of pre-Scourge times fell to the Horrors during the Scourge. One of them, the ork nation of Cara Fahd, has recently risen to prominence again. A fifth great nation, the dwarf Kingdom of Scytha had already fallen before the Scourge.

Landis

A human kingdom, Landis constantly warred with ancient Cara Fahd before, during, and after the Orichalcum Wars. The constant warfare did not fare either nation well. Cara Fahd sacrificed most of its forces to defeat Landis on the lava fields during what is now known as the Inferno of the Eight, and the orks scattered throughout Barsaive, seeking employment and shelter elsewhere. And while Landis' population remained, the wars had emptied the treasury and consumed the efforts that should have been invested into preparing for the Scourge. Despite centuries left to prepare, only a few Landisian kaers and citadels survived. And while Landis retains a relatively dense population, the Landisians were not able to establish their old kingdom again in a land that had turned into thick jungle at the end of the Scourge.

Marrek

The city of Marrek lies on the patch of land between the Caucavic and the Serpent Rivers, marking all that is left from this once-proud human kingdom. Marrek prospered after the Orichalcum Wars, explored lands, fought wars, and gained a reputation for assassinating nobles from other kingdoms. When Marrek became involved in the assassination of a Theran councilor, it lost the support of the Theran Empire. Thera's feelings remained hurt for centuries, and the Therans eventually decided Marrek could do without their magical protections from the Horrors. Today, scholars say the Kingdom of Marrek exists in Name only, having been completely ripped apart during the Scourge. Pro-Theran voices take it as an example for the achievements of the Rites of Protection and Passage that saved so many in Barsaive, while those fearful of Thera take it either as a warning to not defy Theran might or to show the Therans' willingness to abandon those that pose the slightest inconvenience.

Vorst

While not as large a realm before the Scourge as others, the story of Vorst, a nation of humans, is well known among Barsaivians, as are the Vorst themselves, despite their low remaining population. Their kaer was breached by Horrors, but in an unlikely series of events, the Vorst managed to defend themselves against the intruders, fighting Horrors over space to live, food gathered, and for sheer survival. In this time, the Vorst learned to finish the job, and finish it with utmost efficiency of result: undead and Horror constructs are hard to kill, and easy to revive, so they have to be burned or hacked to pieces. A wooden door will hold off a Horror, but a steel-reinforced one will do so for much longer, even if it takes more time to build. Vorst are known today as no-nonsense people, crafting weapons to kill and maim instead of just disabling, never following occupations they consider a luxury but always those that show results. And often the desired result is a dead Horror, as many Vorst turn their talent to hunting down the remaining Horrors throughout Barsaive.

Ustrect

A troll kingdom founded by trolls who emigrated from the Scol Mountains, Ustrect was involved to some extent in the wars between Cara Fahd and Landis. And while it mustered sufficient forces to prepare for the Scourge, building a great citadel to hold all of its people, Ustrect did not survive the Scourge for reasons unknown. Today, what remains of its cities and great citadel is covered in a dense and dangerous jungle known as the *Shroud of Ustrect*.

No one lives in the jungle, but before the Scourge some of its people joined the trollmoots of the neighboring Twilight Peaks, and their ancestors, now following raider ways, are all that remains of this once-proud kingdom.

First Circle Human Air Sailor



"Aye! Of course, good lady. It would be my captain's honor to provide you passage to Bartertown. For you, good lady, no fee is required. The honor of your presence is payment enough. I do apologize, however, but there is a token fee to carry your servants and luggage. Is air travel safe? Of course. Be assured that our crew are among the finest in Barsaive, well-honed and experienced from many flights across the province. Even the fiercest crystal raiders curb their bloodlust when they see our sails! If haste is not important, might I suggest to the captain that he plot a course to take us over some of Barsaive's sights for your pleasure? What say you good lady? Shall I show you to your quarters? I assure you there is no finer ship than the Vexator*!"*

DEX (16): 7 **PER** (13): 6 **STR** (13): 6
WIL (12): 5 **TOU** (14): 6 **CHA** (13): 6

Initiative: 6 **Physical Defense:** 9
Physical Armor: 6 **Spell Defense:** 7
Mystic Armor: 1 **Social Defense:** 7

Death: 36 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 28 **Knockdown:** 6
Wound Threshold: 10 **Movement:** 6

Karma Points: 5/5

Air Sailor Talents: Air Sailing[D] (2): 7, Avoid Blow[D] (1): 8, Climbing[D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Melee Weapons[D] (2): 9, Navigation (1): 7, Versatility (0)

Skills: Airships[K] (2): 8, Barsaive History[K] (1): 7, Conversation (1): 7, First Impression (1): 7, Flirting (1): 7, Haggle (1): 7, Read and Write Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Sail Embroidery[A] (1): 7, Seduction (1): 7, Speak Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Throwing Weapons (1): 8

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Buckler (Deflect 1/0, Phys 1; Shatter 17), Hardened Leather (Phys 5; Init 1)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), Short Sword (Damage 10), Dagger (Damage 8; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Embroidery Kit, Navigation Charts in Map/Scroll Case, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 copper, 8 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the human Versatility racial ability.

First Circle Human Archer



"I live my life like I use my bow. I take careful aim, control thought and breath, and let fly, far and true. I gauge goals as I would a target, by analyzing and understanding them. For if I do not know my target, how can I guide my arrow to it? Forgive me if this sounds too mystical for your liking, but for me life is the Wind. A force of nature, it pushes us forward with purpose or tosses us madly about. Like my arrow, I ride the Wind or cut against it. For our flight to be true we must understand the Wind, its currents, eddies, and surges. I ride the Wind like a sailor on the sea, not a leaf in a storm."

DEX (16): 7 **PER** (14): 6 **STR** (13): 6
WIL (11): 5 **TOU** (14): 6 **CHA** (12): 5

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

Death: 36 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 28 **Knockdown:** 6
Wound Threshold: 10 **Movement:** 6

Karma Points: 5/5

Archer Talents: Avoid Blow (1): 8, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Missile Weapons[D] (2): 9, Mystic Aim[D] (2): 8, Throwing Weapons[D] (1): 8, True Shot[D] (1): 8, Versatility (0)

Skills: Barsaive History[K] (1): 7, Climbing (1): 8, Creature Lore[K] (1): 7, Human Lore[K] (1): 7, Hunting (1): 8, Melee Weapons (1): 8, Read and Write Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Speak Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Tracking (1): 7, Wilderness Survival (2): 8, Wood Carving[A] (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Leather (Phys 3)

Weapons: Dagger (Damage 8; Range 5–10), Longbow (Damage 10; Range 20–40), Quiver (20 Longbow Arrows)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Rope (6 yards), Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb, Wood Carving Tools

Loot: 2 copper, 4 silver, and 2 gold pieces

Notes: Has the human Versatility racial ability.

First Circle Ork Beastmaster



"Bah! What do you know of me? You see only what you wish. You think animals are crude and dirty, and so therefore I am as well. You have lost sight of their inherent nobility, the purity of their beings, their honor. There is a trust among my animals and between them and me that I do not find among people. My animals do not lie, nor do they betray, nor do they scheme. They are quick to love and forgive, and their loyalty, when earned, knows no bounds. Tell me, where can I find this in civilization? Where can I find this among people? Yes, some men I count as my friends, but only a handful have earned that status."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (11): 5 **STR** (16): 7
WIL (11): 5 **TOU** (14): 6 **CHA** (16): 7

Initiative: 5 **Physical Defense:** 7
Physical Armor: 6 **Spell Defense:** 7
Mystic Armor: 2 **Social Defense:** 9

Death: 36 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 28 **Knockdown:** 7
Wound Threshold: 10 **Movement:** 7

Karma Points: 5/5

Beastmaster Talents: Animal Bond [D] (1): 8, Claw Shape [D] (1): 8, Creature Analysis [D] (2): 7, Karma Ritual [D] (1): 1, Tracking (1): 6, Unarmed Combat [D] (2): 8

Skills: Creature Lore [K] (2): 7, Fishing (1): 6, Melee Weapons (2): 8, Read and Write Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Speak Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Swimming (1): 8, Throwing Weapons (1): 7, Wild Animals [K] (2): 7, Wood Carving [A] (1): 8

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: , Buckler (Deflect 1/0, Phys 1, Shatter 17), Hide (Phys 5; Myst 1; Init 1)

Weapons: Hand-Axe (Damage 11), 2×Daggers (Damage 9; Range 5–10), Whip (Damage 10; Entangle 9)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Fishing Kit, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb, Wood Carving Tools

Loot: 6 copper, 1 silver, and 2 gold pieces

Notes: Has the ork *Gahad* and Low-Light Vision racial abilities.

First Circle Dwarf Cavalryman



"There is nothing, nothing, like a good charge. Spurring my mount, coaxing her forward faster and faster until the land and the sky are nothing but passing blurs. That is when I am at peace. We move as one, my mount and I, as a great, single unstoppable force. Brave and terrible, we ride without fear. When Cavalrymen ride together as a band, nothing can stop them. We become a whirlwind that pushes all else aside."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (11): 5 **STR** (16): 7
WIL (11): 5 **TOU** (20): 8 **CHA** (11): 5

Initiative: 5 **Physical Defense:** 7
Physical Armor: 7 **Spell Defense:** 7
Mystic Armor: 1 **Social Defense:** 7

Death: 44 **Recovery Tests:** 4
Unconsciousness: 36 **Knockdown:** 7
Wound Threshold: 13 **Movement:** 5

Karma Points: 4/4

Cavalryman Talents: Animal Bond [D] (2): 7, Avoid Blow (1): 7, Charge [D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual [D] (1): 1, Melee Weapons [D] (1): 7, Trick Riding [D] (2): 8

Skills: Ancient Weapons [K] (1): 6, Body Painting [A] (1): 6, Craftsman; Leatherworking (1): 7, Read and Write Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Speak Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Tactics (1): 6, Throwing Weapons (2): 8, Tracking (1): 6, Unarmed Combat (2): 8, Weapon Lore [K] (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Rider's Shield (Deflect 2/0; Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19), Padded Leather (Phys 4)

Weapons: Flail (Damage 12), 2×Daggers (Damage 9; Range 5–10), Spear (Damage 11; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer Kit, Leatherworking Tools, Painting Tools, Traveler's Garb, Trail Rations (2 weeks), Water Skin, Troajin (mount)

Loot: 4 copper, 2 silver, and 2 gold pieces

Notes: Has the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

FIRST CIRCLE DWARF ELEMENTALIST



"The world works in balance—air, earth, fire, water, and wood, together and alone, form everything that we know. Control these forces and you control reality. Such forces, however, must not be taken lightly. An Elementalist's power lies in coercion. We coax and push the elements to do our bidding, knowing full well that the slightest wrong move could shift them against us. Elementalism requires concentration and great force of will, for nature is not commanded lightly nor easily, and she is wholly unforgiving."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (16): 7 **STR** (13): 6
WIL (16): 7 **TOU** (15): 6 **CHA** (9): 4

Initiative: 6
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 6

Death: 38
Unconsciousness: 30
Wound Threshold: 10
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 6
Movement: 5

Karma Points: 4/4

Elementalist Talents: Air Speaking[D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Read and Write Magic[D] (1): 8, Spellcasting[D] (2): 9, Spell Matrix[D] (1): 1, Spell Matrix (1): 1, Thread Weaving [Elementalism][D] (1): 8

Skills: Alchemy (1): 8, Alchemy and Potions[K] (1): 8, Magical Lore[K] (1): 8, Melee Weapons (2): 8, Read and Write Language (2): 9—Dwarf (Dwarf/Throalic, *Sperethiel*), Robe Embroidery[A] (2): 6, Speak Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Sperethiel*), The Horrors[K] (1): 8, Throwing Weapons (1): 7, Wilderness Survival (1): 8

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Elementalism Spells: Earthblend, Earth Darts, Flameweapon, Plant Talk, Purify Water, Resist Cold, Resist Fire

Armor: Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), 2×Daggers (Damage 8; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Booster Potion, Embroidered Robe, Embroidery Tools, Grimoire, Traveler's Garb, Trail Rations (1 week)

Loot: 4 copper, 8 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

FIRST CIRCLE TROLL ILLUSIONIST



"What you see is rarely what truly is, as mystery and guise embrace all aspects of life. We all wear masks to hide and protect our true selves, and we tell our friends half-truths for their own good. We change things to what they are not, so that we may live comfortably with them. Why deny this? I do not. Trickery is my trade. Deception and guile are my friends, illusion my life's work. Yes, illusions entertain, but they serve other purposes as well. They hide and reveal, change and maintain, obscure and enlighten."

DEX (11): 5 **PER** (15): 6 **STR** (16): 7
WIL (16): 7 **TOU** (15): 6 **CHA** (13): 6

Initiative: 5
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7

Death: 38
Unconsciousness: 30
Wound Threshold: 10
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7
Movement: 7

Karma Points: 3/3

Illusionist Talents: Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Read/Write Magic[D] (1): 7, Speak Language[D] (1): 7—(Human), Spellcasting[D] (1): 7, Spell Matrix[D] (1): 1, Spell Matrix (1): 1, Thread Weaving [Illusionism][D] (2): 8

Skills: Alchemy (1): 7, Alchemy and Potions[K] (1): 7, Climbing (1): 6, Magical Lore[K] (1): 7, Magical Theory[K] (1): 7, Melee Weapons (1): 6, Missile Weapons (1): 6, Read/Write Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Troll), Robe Embroidery[A] (1): 7, Speak Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Troll), Streetwise (1): 7, Unarmed Combat (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Illusionism Spells: Assuring Touch, Best Face, Disguise Metal, Displace Image, Rope Guide, Unseen Voices

Armor: Leather (Phys 3)

Weapons: Quarterstaff (Damage 11), Sling (Damage 9; Range 10–20)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Booster Potion, Embroidered Robe, Embroidery Tools, Grimoire, Rope (6 yards), Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 silver and 2 gold pieces

Notes: Has the troll Heat Sight racial ability.

First Circle Human Nethermancer



"Why do you fear me? If you think I mean you harm, you are mistaken. My concerns lie in worlds beyond this one. The netherworlds are mine to explore, its denizens mine to command. They whisper only to me, revealing the quiet secrets of impossible depths. They scream to me the terrible truths of the brilliant heights. Their words caress me like music, giving my soul flight and my mind freedom. My body may be flesh, but magic fills my mind and my soul soars through the netherworlds."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (16): 7 **STR** (12): 5
WIL (14): 6 **TOU** (13): 6 **CHA** (13): 6

Initiative: 5
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 2
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 7

Death: 35
Unconsciousness: 27
Wound Threshold: 9
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5*
Movement: 6

* Knows the Wound Balance skill

Karma Points: 5/5

Nethermancer Talents: Astral Sight[D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Read/Write Magic[D] (1): 8, Spellcasting[D] (2): 9, Spell Matrix[D] (1): 1, Spell Matrix (1): 1, Thread Weaving [Nethermancy][D] (1): 8, Versatility (0)

Skills: Alchemy and Potions[K] (1): 8, Magical Lore[K] (1): 8, Magical Theory[K] (1): 8, Melee Weapons (1): 7, Missile Weapons (1): 7, Read and Write Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Robe Embroidery[A] (1): 7, Scourge History[K] (1): 8, Speak Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Throwing Weapons (1): 7, Unarmed Combat (1): 7, Wound Balance (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Nethermancy Spells: Bone Dance, Chilling Circle, Command Nightflyer, Detect Undead, Experience Death, Spirit Grip, Undead Struggle

Armor: Leather Armor (Phys 3)

Weapons: Quarterstaff (Damage 9), 2×Daggers (Damage 7; Range 5–10) Sling (Damage 7; Range 10–20) Knife (Damage 6; Range 4–8)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Booster Potion, Embroidered Robe, Embroidery Tools, Grimoire, Hooded Lantern, 2×Oil Flasks, Traveler's Garb, Trail Rations (1 week)

Loot: 1 copper, 3 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the human Versatility racial ability.

First Circle Human Scout



"You did not take me for an adept? Well, that is a common mistake. We Scouts may not be as flashy as Swordmasters, or as brash as Cavalrymen, but neither of these Disciplines could lead your caravan through the wilderness as I can. I will find you the quickest route possible if you choose, though this might mean facing more hardships. Do not mistake me for a simple hunter or ranger! If you are taking your caravan to a new town I will still prove useful to you. As a stranger you will stand out in the marketplace; this might make the local populace suspicious of your intentions, especially in the hinterlands. A Scout can quickly find out which people you should make contact with to receive the best welcome. You would be surprised to find just how useful a Scout can be."

DEX (16): 7 **PER** (14): 6 **STR** (13): 6
WIL (12): 5 **TOU** (13): 6 **CHA** (11): 5

Initiative: 6
Physical Armor: 5
Mystic Armor: 1
Physical Defense: 9
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 7

Death: 35
Unconsciousness: 27
Wound Threshold: 9
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 6
Movement: 6

Karma Points: 5/5

Scout Talents: Climbing[D] (2): 9, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Search[D] (1): 7, Silent Walk (1): 8, Tracking[D] (2): 8, Versatility (0), Wilderness Survival[D] (1): 7

Skills: Avoid Blow (1): 8, Barsaive History[K] (1): 7, Creature Lore[K] (1): 7, Melee Weapons (1): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Resist Taunt (1): 6, Speak Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Human), Streetwise (1): 7, Swimming (1): 7, Throwing Weapons (1): 8, Unarmed Combat (1): 8, Wood Carving[A] (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Hardened Leather (Phys 5; Init 1)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), Dagger (Damage 8; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Carving Tools, Climbing Kit, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 copper, 8 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the human Versatility racial ability.

First Circle Ork Sky Raider



"Don't even think about opposing me—I am a Sky Raider! My people have bred powerful warriors for as long as the sun has shone in the sky. The mountaintops are our kingdom and the sky, our ocean. Our lives are simple. Today we raid and tomorrow we will raid again; it is the course of things. We take what your societies deny us. Your ancestors drove our forefathers high into the mountains, beyond the lands that could sustain us. So be it. We raid."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (11): 5 **STR** (16): 7
WIL (11): 5 **TOU** (18): 7 **CHA** (12): 5

Initiative: 4
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 1
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7
Social Defense: 7

Death: 42
Unconsciousness: 34
Wound Threshold: 12
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 7*
Movement: 7

* Knows the Wound Balance skill

Karma Points: 5/5

Sky Raider Talents: Air Sailing[D] (1): 6, Battle Shout[D] (2): 7, Fireblood[D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Melee Weapons[D] (2): 8, Parry (1): 7

Skills: Avoid Blow (1): 7, Military History [Cara Fahd][K] (1): 6, Missile Weapons (1): 7, Ork Lore[K] (1): 6, Read/Write Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Speak Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Or'zet*), Tactics (1): 6, Throwing Weapons (1): 7, Unarmed Combat (2): 8, Wood Carving[A] (1): 6, Wound Balance (1): 8

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Footman's Shield (Deflect 2/0; Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19), Hardened Leather (Phys 5; Init 1)

Weapons: Flail (Damage 12), Sling (Damage 9; Range 10–20), Dagger (Damage 9; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Carving Tools, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 5 copper, 3 silver, and 2 gold pieces

Notes: Has the ork *Gahad* and Low-Light Vision racial abilities.

First Circle T'skrang Swordmaster



"A twist of the wrist, a slip of the blade, and your posturing is ended! Defend yourself, sir! You have insulted me and I demand satisfaction. Support your gibes with steel or be silent! Overconfident? 'Tis true I fear no blade, nor any foolish enough to draw one against me. But I merely display my prowess so that all may save themselves the embarrassment of their own spilled blood. What? Have I ever lost? Nay, sir, I have only learned."

DEX (19): 8 **STR** (13): 6 **TOU** (14): 6
PER (11): 5 **WIL** (10): 5 **CHA** (14): 6

Initiative: 6/D10
Physical Armor: 8
Mystic Armor: 0
Physical Defense: 10
Spell Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 7

Death: 36
Unconsciousness: 28
Wound Threshold: 10
Recovery Tests: 3
Knockdown: 6 *
Movement: 6

* Knows the Wound Balance talent

Karma Points: 4/4

Swordmaster Talents: Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Maneuver[D] (1): 9, Melee Weapons[D] (2): 10, Parry[D] (2): 10, Taunt[D] (1): 7, Wound Balance (1): 7

Skills: Avoid Blow (2): 10, Barsaivian Legends[K] (1): 6, Conceal Weapon (1): 9, Conversation (1): 7, Dancing[A] (1): 7, First Impression (1): 7, Read and Write Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, T'skrang), Speak Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, T'skrang), Swimming (1): 7, Throwing Weapons (1): 9, T'skrang Lore[K] (1): 6, Unarmed Combat (1): 9

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Footman's Shield (Deflect 2/0; Phys 3; Init 1; Shatter 19), Hardened Leather (Phys 5; Init 1)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), Short Sword (Damage 10), Dagger (Damage 8; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 copper, 9 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the t'skrang Tail Attack (Damage 6) racial ability.

First Circle Windling Thief



"No, it is you who needs me. My skills are invaluable. Would you know a dart trap if you saw one? Certainly you could muscle your way through a door, but would it give before the Horror ate your head? Scoff at my skills and that's the chance you take. Some call me secretive, but I am [A] Thief, am I not? I must move undetected, unseen by prying eyes, and so I need solitude. Can you trust me? Of course you can. I am a Thief, not a fool."

DEX (18): 7 **PER** (14): 6 **STR** (7): 4
WIL (12): 5 **TOU** (11): 5 **CHA** (14): 6

Initiative: 7
Physical Armor: 3
Mystic Armor: 1
Death: 32
Unconsciousness: 24
Wound Threshold: 8
Physical Defense: 12
Spell Defense: 8
Social Defense: 8
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 4
Movement: 3/8*

* Flying Movement Rate

Karma Points: 6/6

Thief Talents: Astral Sight (1): 7, Karma Ritual [D] (1): 1, Lock Picking [D] (1): 8, Melee Weapons (1): 8, Picking Pockets [D] (1): 8, Silent Walk [D] (2): 9, Trap Initiative [D] (1): 8

Skills: Alchemy (2): 8, Alchemy and Potions [K] (2): 8, Avoid Blow (1): 8, Forgery (1): 8, Poetry [A] (1): 7, Read and Write Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Windling), Speak Language (2): 8—(Dwarf/Throalic, Windling), Streetwise (1): 7, Dwarf/Throalic Law [K] (1): 7, Windling Lore [K] (1): 7

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Leather (Phys 3)

Weapons: Windling Sword (Damage 7), Sap (Damage 5)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Booster Potion, Leather Gloves, Windling Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 copper, 4 silver, and 4 gold pieces

Notes: Has the windling Astral Sight, Flight, and Increased Physical Defense racial abilities.

First Circle Elf Troubadour



"Tell me your tale, good friend, and I will share one of mine. Stories are meant for telling, after all. What good do they serve if they are held inside to wither, unused, and slowly die as they fade from memory? Yes, of your tale speak, brave adventurer, that it may nourish your legend as the spring rains nourish the fields. Old is the world, and much of it lost. What little of our past that remains lies hidden in the tales told by our grandfathers, tales passed down through the years by Troubadours long dead. Through those stories their voices reach us from across the gulf of time, speaking of things gone and nearly forgotten, of splendors waiting to be re-discovered. Hear my songs of brave heroes who fight to regain the glories of the past and create the wondrous future, for these men and women are the legends of tomorrow."

DEX (13): 6 **PER** (16): 7 **STR** (11): 5
WIL (11): 5 **TOU** (11): 5 **CHA** (18): 7

Initiative: 5
Physical Armor: 4
Mystic Armor: 3
Death: 32
Unconsciousness: 24
Wound Threshold: 8
Physical Defense: 7
Spell Defense: 9
Social Defense: 10
Recovery Tests: 2
Knockdown: 5
Movement: 7

Karma Points: 4/4

Troubadour Talents: Emotion Song (2): 9, First Impression [D] (2): 9, Impress [D] (1): 8, Item History [D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual [D] (1): 1, Mimic Voice [D] (1): 8

Skills: Elven Lore [K] (2): 9, Etiquette (1): 8, Legends and Heroes [K] (2): 9, Melee Weapons (1): 7, Music [A] (1): 8, Read and Write Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Sperethiel*), Speak Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, *Sperethiel*), Streetwise (1): 8, Throwing Weapons (2): 8

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Ferndask Shield (Deflect 1/2; Phys 1; Myst 2; Init 1; Shatter 16), Leather (Phys 3)

Weapons: Short Sword (Damage 9), Bola (Damage 8; Range 6–12; Entangle 9), 2×Daggers (Damage 7; Range 5–10), Knife (Damage 6; Range 4–8)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit; Musical Instrument; Trail Rations (1 week); Waterskin; Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot: 1 copper, 8 silver, and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the elf Low-Light Vision racial ability.

FIRST CIRCLE OBSIDIMAN WARRIOR



"I am a Warrior, pure and simple. I need no fancy theories or exotic weapons to fight. I need only myself and my skill, for my ways follow the forces of nature. I draw my abilities from the natural order, and I need nothing else. I have honed my skill through years of training and study. I know my enemies. I study their strengths and weaknesses, and I know how to defeat them. I am a Warrior. My word is my honor and my cause true and just. I am a Warrior. I am a hero."

DEX (11): 5 **PER** (11): 5 **STR** (21): 8
WIL (13): 6 **TOU** (19): 8 **CHA** (11): 5

Initiative: 3 **Physical Defense:** 7
Physical Armor: 8 **Spell Defense:** 7
Mystic Armor: 1 **Social Defense:** 7

Death: 43 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 35 **Knockdown:** 8
Wound Threshold: 15 **Movement:** 5

Karma Points: 3/3

Warrior Talents: Acrobatic Strike (1): 6, Avoid Blow[D] (1): 6, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Melee Weapons[D] (2): 7, Unarmed Combat[D] (2): 7, Wood Skin[D] (1): 9

Skills: Ancient Weapons[K] (1): 6, Disarm (1): 6, Military History[K] (1): 6, Read and Write Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, Obsidiman), Riposte (1): 6, Speak Language (2): 7—(Dwarf/Throalic, Obsidiman), Stone Carving[A] (1): 6, Throwing Weapons (3): 8, Wilderness Survival (2): 7

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Body Shield (Deflect 4/0; Phys 5; Init 2; Shatter 21)

Weapons: Battle-Axe (Damage 14), 2×Spears (Damage 12; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Carving Tools, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 7 silver and 1 gold pieces

Notes: Has the obsidiman Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor racial abilities.

FIRST CIRCLE DWARF WEAPONSMITH



"Do you know what it is that you carry? Of course it is a weapon, that is obvious. But do you see it? Do you understand it? Can you call up its power? I understand weapons. I can feel their patterns and see the truths of their existence. Sharpening an edge is mere child's play compared to calling forth a weapon's power. You must coax a weapon's secrets from it, bring them forth carefully and slowly. Then and only then will its blade be truly sharp and its full power revealed."

DEX (11): 5 **PER** (16): 7 **STR** (13): 6
WIL (16): 7 **TOU** (16): 7 **CHA** (10): 5

Initiative: 5 **Physical Defense:** 7
Physical Armor: 4 **Spell Defense:** 9
Mystic Armor: 2 **Social Defense:** 7

Death: 39 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 31 **Knockdown:** 6 *
Wound Threshold: 11 **Movement:** 5

* Knows the Wound Balance skill

Karma Points: 4/4

Weaponsmith Talents: Evaluate[D] (1): 8, Forge Weapon[D] (2): 9, Haggle[D] (2): 7, Karma Ritual[D] (1): 1, Melee Weapons (1): 6 , Steel Thought[D] (1): 8

Skills: Ancient Weapons[K] (2): 9, Avoid Blow (1): 6, Bribery (1): 6, Read and Write Language (1): 8—Dwarf (Dwarf/Throalic), Research (1): 8, Rune Carving[A] (2): 7, Speak Language (1): 8—Dwarf (Dwarf/Throalic), Streetwise (1): 8, Throal History[K] (1): 8, Throwing Weapons (2): 7, Wound Balance (1): 7

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Armor: Padded Leather Armor (Phys 4)

Weapons: Broadsword (Damage 11), Hand-Axe (Damage 10), 2×Daggers (Damage 8; Range 5–10), Knife (Damage 7; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit w/Tent, Carving Tools, Forge Tools, Trail Rations (1 week), Traveler's Garb

Loot: 1 copper, 6 silver, and 3 gold pieces

Notes: Has the dwarf Heat Sight racial ability.

First Circle Obsidiman Wizard



"Adepts may be very good at what they do, but they do not understand what they do. They act and react based on instinct and intuition, but their lack of knowledge forever denies them true power. Only those who understand how and why things work can truly comprehend the world. Understanding, then, is the province of the Wizard. And only through learning and discipline does that understanding come. Yet gladly does a Wizard endure, for understanding is the purpose of his life."

DEX (11): 5 **PER** (16): 7 **STR** (19): 8
WIL (14): 6 **TOU** (15): 6 **CHA** (11): 5

Initiative: 5 **Physical Defense:** 7
Physical Armor: 3 **Spell Defense:** 9
Mystic Armor: 1 **Social Defense:** 7

Death: 38 **Recovery Tests:** 3
Unconsciousness: 30 **Knockdown:** 8
Wound Threshold: 13 **Movement:** 5

Karma Points: 3/3

Wizard Talents: Astral Sight [D] (1): 8, Karma Ritual [D] (1): 1, Read/Write Magic [D] (1): 8, Spellcasting [D] (2): 9, Spell Matrix [D] (1): 1, Spell Matrix (1): 1, Thread Weaving [Wizardry] [D] (1): 8

Skills: Creature Lore [K] (1): 8, Magical Lore [K] (1): 8, Magical Theory [K] (1): 8, Melee Weapons (2): 7, Missile Weapons (1): 6, Physician (1): 8, Research (1): 8, Read/Write Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, Obsidiman), Robe Embroidery [A] (1): 6, Speak Language (2): 9—(Dwarf/Throalic, Obsidiman), Throwing Weapons (1): 6

[A] Artisan skill; [K] Knowledge skill

Wizardry Spells: Astral Sense, Crushing Will, Dispel Magic, Divine Aura, Ignite, Iron Hand, Mind Dagger

Weapons: Mace (Damage 12), Troll Sling (Damage 12/2D10; Range 10–20), 2×Spears (Damage 12; Range 5–10)

Equipment: Adventurer's Kit, Embroidered Robe, Embroidery Tools, Grimoire, Trail Rations (1 week), Wealthy Traveler's Garb

Loot: 2 silver pieces

Notes: Has the obsidiman Increased Wound Threshold and Natural Armor racial abilities.

Optional Rules

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NAME: _____

DISCIPLINE: _____ CIRCLE: _____

RACE: _____ GENDER: _____ AGE: _____

HAIR: _____ SKIN: _____ EYES: _____

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____

RACIAL ABILITIES: _____

ATTRIBUTES

	BASE VALUE	LP INCREASE	CURRENT VALUE	STEP	ACTION DICE
DEXTERITY					
STRENGTH					
TOUGHNESS					
PERCEPTION					
WILLPOWER					
CHARISMA					

CHARACTERISTICS

MOVEMENT RATE | CARRYING CAPACITY | KARMA POINTS | MAX

INITIATIVE — STEP | ACTION DICE

ARMOR RATINGS

ARMOR _____

DEFENSE RATINGS

			DEFLECTION BONUS
PHYSICAL DEFENSE		SHIELD _____	
SPELL DEFENSE		PHYSICAL ARMOR	
SOCIAL DEFENSE		MYSTIC ARMOR	

HEALTH

RECOVERY — TESTS PER DAY | STEP | ACTION DICE

CURRENT DAMAGE

UNCONSCIOUSNESS — BASE | ADJUSTMENT | CURRENT VALUE

DEATH — BASE | ADJUSTMENT | CURRENT VALUE

WOUNDS — THRESHOLD | PENALTIES: -1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9

WEAPONS

WEAPON	DAMAGE STEP	SIZE	TIMES FORGED	SHORT	LONG

DISCIPLINE BONUSES

CIRCLE	BONUS/ABILITY	CIRCLE	BONUS/ABILITY

EXPERIENCE

TOTAL LEGEND POINTS | CURRENT LEGEND POINTS | RENOWN | REPUTATION

DISCIPLINE TALENTS

INITIATE/NOVICE

TALENT NAME	ACTION	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	

JOURNEYMAN

				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	

OTHER TALENTS

INITIATE/NOVICE

TALENT NAME	KARMA?	ACTION	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	

JOURNEYMAN

	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	
	☐				+	=	

SKILLS

SKILL NAME	ACTION	STRAIN	ATTRIBUTE	RANK	STEP	ACTION DICE
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	
				+	=	

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SPELLS

SPELL NAME	IN MATRIX?	TYPE	CIRCLE	THREADS	WEAVING/ REATTUNING DIFFICULTY	CASTING DIFFICULTY	RANGE	DURATION	EFFECT
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								
	☐								

MAGICAL TREASURE

NAME: _____

MAX. THREADS: ____ SPELL DEFENSE: _____

DESCRIPTION: _____

THREAD RANKS

RANK	KEY KNOWLEDGE/DEED	LP COST	EFFECT

PATTERN ITEMS

ITEM	TYPE

EQUIPMENT

ITEMS	WEIGHT

BLOOD MAGIC

TYPE	DAMAGE	DR	EFFECT

THREAD MAGIC

TARGET	RANK	LP COST	EFFECT

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Canal
Topos
Elf Queens Palace
the Blood Wood
MOTHINGALE RIVER
Scol Mountains
SERPENT RIVER
Eidolon
SERPENT RIVER
Scytha Mountains
Caucavic Mountains
CAUCAVIC RIVER
Haven
Parlainth
BARSAIVE PROVINCE
Major City
City
Town or Village
Place of Importance
Seven days walking
Four days riding
Throal Mountains
Marrek
ONMAN RIVER
Barter town
Throal
Syrtis
ALIDAR RIVER
Cansiarda
Ardanyan
COIL RIVER
Old Theran Road
Pilgrimage Route
Darrantis
Derlikiyan
Vorst
Lake Ban
Adipae Rapids
Triumph Ayodhya
Vastrimon
Axalalan
Lake Pyros
Servalen
Urupa
Aras Sea
Axalekso
Glenwood Deep
Lake Vors
Ishkarat
the Wastes
Poison Forest
Jerris
Liaj Jungle
LIAJ RIVER
Delaris Mountains
Tylon Mountains
Kratas
Daiche
TYLON RIVER
SERVOS RIVER
Servos Jungle
GALANGA RIVER
Ustrect
Claw Ridge
Twilight Peaks
Scavia
Mist Swamps
Crosk
SERPENT RIVER
Farrum
Ktenshin
BYROSE RIVER
IONTOS RIVER
Travar
Thunder Mountains
Cara Fahd
Scarlet Sea
the Badlands
GREENHEART RIVER
Landis
FLAMEWALK RIVER
Vivane
Sky Point
Lankarden
Death's Sea
Dragon Mountains
N
W
E
S
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The Age of Legend





Before science, before history, an era of magic existed in our world's dim past. Magic flowed freely, touching every aspect of the lives of men and women of the Namegiver races. It was an age of heroes, an age of fantastical deeds and mythical stories. It was the Age of Legend.
Bold heroes from all across Barsaive band together ready to fight for life and freedom against the remaining Horrors and the oppressive Theran Empire, which seeks to bend the rebellious province again to their yoke. Through noble deeds and sacrifice, the heroes of the world forge Barsaive's future, arming themselves for their daunting task with powerful magical spells and treasures.

Earthdawn is a roleplaying game set in a world of high adventure, high magic, and terrible danger. The **Player's Guide** takes player characters from the First to Eighth Circle in their Disciplines and contains everything you need for years of play, featuring revised game mechanics, including hundreds of spells, talents, and skills, and much more!

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