

GURPS[®]

Fourth Edition

DUNGEON FANTASY DENIZENS[™]

SWASHBUCKLERS



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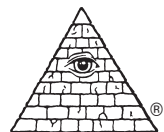
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ABOUT GURPS

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Errata. Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata pages for all **GURPS** releases, including this book, are available on our website – see above.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

INTRODUCTION

Swashbuckling heroes can defeat dozens of foes because the story calls for it.

– *GURPS Basic Set*

Battling monsters while clad in steel and swinging a massive axe? That's just a matter of throwing enough money and muscle at a problem. Counting on skill and speed instead of armor and brute force? *That* takes daring, and explains why many gamers regard the swift, stylish swashbuckler as the ultimate fantasy warrior! Filling this fashionable footwear call for more than a flashing blade and a floppy hat or an eyepatch, though – you need sick combat moves for starters, plus enough dash and audacity in one place to bend reality to favor the bold.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy has all that. The catch is that it's stashed in bits and pieces throughout the series, especially in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1, 3, and 11* (and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8*, for the floppy hats). Then there are the swashbuckler variants and power-ups in various *Pyramid* issues. And *then* there are all the swords scattered across the *GURPS Basic Set*, *GURPS Low-Tech*, and *GURPS Martial Arts*. That spells a lot of digging and page-flipping for players, which is why we've pulled everything together in *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Denizens: Swashbucklers*.

But wait, there's more! *Swashbucklers* also adds piles of previously unseen goodies. New lenses let you play an aging, not-so-slim fencing master – or even a hero who favors the quarterstaff over the sword. New power-ups further emphasize skill, speed, and luck. New combat moves let the oldest dog try new tricks. And there's also tons of advice on how to make *your* swashbuckler unique, the hero of his personal legend.

Adventure awaits!

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

This supplement and the *GURPS Basic Set* give you everything you need to create a swashbuckler for a *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* campaign. Be sure to check out

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers, *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables*, and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 13: Loadouts* for equipment, though – and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies* or *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen* if your hero has Allies. For brevity's sake, *general* power-ups from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups* aren't reiterated here, but you only *require* that volume if you want to do things any old warrior could do!

PUBLICATION HISTORY

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy Denizens: Swashbucklers incorporates the swashbuckler templates from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers* and *Pyramid* #3/64: *Pirates and Swashbucklers*; the cross-profession lenses for swashbucklers from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level* and *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 7: Clerics*; and all of the swashbuckler-specific power-ups from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups* and *Pyramid* #3/61: *Way of the Warrior*. A few elements were adapted from *GURPS Low-Tech* and *GURPS Martial Arts*. Many aspects of the above have been tweaked to work together more smoothly.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985 and ended up as *GURPS* Line Editor in 1995. In 2004, he and coauthor David Pulver redesigned *GURPS* into its Fourth Edition. Since 2008, Sean has served as lead creator of the *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* series. He has also developed, edited, or written some 60 other *GURPS* releases, contributed to many more, and published regular support in *Pyramid* magazine.

Sean has been a gamer since 1979. He spends his spare time learning and dancing Argentine tango. He occasionally moonlights a bartender – the sort who loves mixology and takes forever to make your cocktail. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie, and their cat, Zephyra.

swashbuckler: A swashbuckling person. Mid 16th century: from *swash* + *buckler*.

swashbuckling: Engage in daring and romantic adventures with bravado or flamboyance.

swash: Flamboyantly swagger about or wield a sword.

buckler: A small round shield held by a handle or worn on the forearm.

– *Oxford English Dictionary*

CHAPTER ONE

ALTERNATE

SWASHBUCKLERS

The swashbuckler we know and love originated in costume pieces set against the late Renaissance and the Age of Reason, but proved cool enough to be written into medieval-inspired fantasy like *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy*. Yet even one who raids dungeons and slays monsters might fit any of the classic archetypes – from valiant hero to borderline-villainous pirate, from honor-bound gentleman to antiheroic snob, from rakish showoff to disciplined fencing master. Here to illustrate the range are four re-imaginings of the swashbuckler template from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, plus a version of the original that's been tweaked for contrast and to work better with the power-ups in Chapter 2.

All of these delvers are specialists with the sword, but each has unique strengths and weaknesses. The *aristocrat* (pp. 6-7) represents a transitional step between the medieval(-esque) landed knight and the carefree gentleman-adventurer.

The *buccaneer* (pp. 8-9) is in transition, too, but from some sort of uncouth outdoorsman with a preference for the sea – like a nautical barbarian or scout – to a product of civilization as embodied by ports, navies, and tall ships. The *duelist* (pp. 10-11) is a pure swordsman, stripped of bard-like frou-frou and thievish cunning. The *rogue* (pp. 11-13), by contrast, embraces such intricacy. And the basic swashbuckler (below) strikes a balance between *all* of these extremes!

Stacking Templates and Lenses

You can have only one swashbuckler *template* but may tack on as many *lenses* as you can afford. Apply lenses one at a time, adding up the point costs. There are no forbidden combinations – some might demand convoluted explanations (how does a staff-swinging buccaneer wield a six-foot quarter-staff in a ship's close confines?), but that's just part of the fun!

TEMPLATES

These templates yield 250-point starting characters. For 125-point henchmen, reduce attributes higher than 10 by one or *maybe* two levels (but never to less than 10!); adjust secondary characteristics to keep Will and Per at 10+ and achieve a round Basic Speed; remove the original advantage outlay, both fixed traits and choices; shave one level off melee skills; fine-tune disadvantage choices to freeze total negative-cost traits at -50 points; and finally bring template cost up to 125 points by allocating points to advantage choices, including options to restore reduced scores and purchase any fixed or optional advantage on the original template. See the *Henchman* sections for suggestions.

SWASHBUCKLER

250 points

Never fear quarrels, but seek adventures. I have taught you how to handle a sword; you have thews of iron, a wrist of steel. Fight on all occasions.

– Alexandre Dumas, *The Three Musketeers*

You're living proof that the sword is mightier, speedier, and more stylish than, well, just about *everything*. In the time it takes the plodding knight (*Adventurers*, pp. 8-9) to strike his

first blow, you've struck two, and with more flair – and although you respect the precision of the martial artist (*Adventurers*, pp. 9-10), you would never bring fists to a swordfight. You like nothing better than to leap and tumble through battle, blade a blur, deftly covering the party's flanks and rear.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 13 [30].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 13 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [0]; Basic Move 7 [0].

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15]; Enhanced Parry 1 (Weapon skill of choice) [5]; Luck [15]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1]; and Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. • Another 60 points chosen from among ST +1 to +6 [10/level], DX +1 to +3 [20/level], Basic Speed +0.25 to +2.00 [5 per +0.25], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Ambidexterity [5], Appearance (Attractive, Handsome, or Very Handsome) [4, 12, or 16], Charisma [5/level], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 [15], Enhanced Parry 2 or 3 (Weapon skill of choice) [5 or 10], Extra Attack 1 [25], No Hangover [1], Perfect Balance [15], Rapier Wit [5], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Striking ST 1 or 2 [5 or 10], expanded Weapon Master (p. 29) [5-20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points *or* with Ridiculous Luck [60] for 45 points.

Disadvantages: -15 points chosen from among Code of Honor (Pirate's or Gentleman's) [-5 or -10], Obsession ("Become the best swordsman in the world!") [-10*], or Vow (Use only weapon of choice) [-5] or (Never refuse a challenge to combat) [-10] or (Challenge every swordsman to combat or Never wear armor) [-15]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Impulsiveness [-10*], Overconfidence [-5*], Short Attention Span [-10*], or Trickster [-15*]. • A further -20 points chosen from the two previous lists or Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Compulsive Spending [-5*], Greed [-15*], Jealousy [-10], Lecherousness [-15*], One Eye [-15], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], or Wounded [-5].

Primary Skills: Jumping (E) DX [1]-15 and Acrobatics (H) DX [4]-15. • *Either* Fast-Draw (Knife) and Fast-Draw (Sword), both (E) DX+1 [1]-16†, or just one of those at DX+2 [2]-17†. • *Either* Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword) (E) DX+1 [2]-16 or Throwing (A) DX [2]-15. • *One* of these three 20-point melee skills packages:

1. *One* of Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+3 [12]-18; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+3 [8]-18, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+2 [8]-17.
2. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+4 [16]-19; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+2 [4]-17, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-16.
3. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+5 [20]-20!

Secondary Skills: *Either* Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-16 or Boxing (A) DX [2]-15. • Wrestling (A) DX [2]-15.

Background Skills: Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]-14 and Carousing (E) HT [1]-13. • *Either* Savoir-Faire (High Society) (E)

IQ+1 [2]-11 or Streetwise (A) IQ [2]-10. • *Seven* of Fast-Draw (any) (E) DX+1 [1]-16†; Climbing, Lasso, or Whip, all (A) DX-1 [1]-14; First Aid, Gesture, or Seamanship, all (E) IQ [1]-10; Connoisseur (any), Fast-Talk, or Gambling, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Hiking or Sex Appeal, both (A) HT-1 [1]-12; Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-9; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-10; Search (A) Per-1 [1]-9; or 1 point to raise one of those skills or any required one-point skill by a level.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +1 for Combat Reflexes.

*One, two! One, two! And through
and through*

The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!

– Lewis Carroll,

Through the Looking-Glass

Customization Notes

Any swashbuckler is built around fighting well with one *specific* variety of sword, the choice of which has far-reaching repercussions for customization. Choose your weapon, associate Weapon Bond (and potentially Signature Gear) with such a blade, specialize Weapon Master to that kind of sword, take the correct skill to wield it, and get Enhanced Parry for that skill. If selecting the Vow pertaining to weapons of choice, make sure *that* matches, too.

STATTING A SUPERIOR SWASHBUCKLER

A swashbuckler *can* ratchet up ST and Striking ST, buy a high-damage blade, and clomp around in armor. Those who are delvers often do! But don't lose sight of the profession's *real* strengths.

The consummate swashbuckler succeeds in combat not by going *through* DR but by having enough skill to *avoid* it. That entails targeting vulnerable locations, ideally eyes at -9 (p. B399) or chinks in armor at -8 or -10 (p. B400). With skill left over to absorb -2 or worse for a Deceptive Attack (p. B369). Preferably multiple times thanks to Rapid Strike (p. B370) – meaning another -3 even with Weapon Master.

Swashbucklers also use every trick in *Speed is Armor!* (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, p. 12) to avoid foes and bounce around the battlefield. That means rolling against Acrobatics, or occasionally Climbing or Jumping.

And swashbucklers prefer *not getting hit* to wearing heavy armor. Armor leads to encumbrance, which reduces Move, Dodge, parries *and attacks* with fencing weapons, and rolls for Acrobatic Stand and *Dungeon Parkour* (*Dungeons*, pp. 7-8). Avoiding blows demands excellent Basic Speed and weapon skill, for Dodge and Parry respectively.

Everything above benefits from DX. Swashbucklers *begin* with an impressive 14-16 and should seize any opportunity to raise it using starting options, earned points, or items.

Combat Reflexes – which only basic swashbucklers and duelists start with as a fixed trait – is also key for active defenses. After that, get Basic Speed; this improves Dodge and Move, and swashbucklers can raise it higher than usual (see *Basic Power-Ups*, p. 21, and *Like Lightning*, p. 23). Then buy all the Enhanced Defenses you can.

Never overlook your core Melee Weapon skill, though. Skill 20+ is needed for many power-ups. Every three levels effectively translate into an extra attack via *Extreme Rapid Strike* (p. 18), while every two offset the penalty for an additional parry when using a fencing skill with Weapon Master (p. B376). Four points for +1 to skill is a steal!

Finally, don't pooh-pooh a *little* brute strength and hacking. Strength is great for avoiding the encumbrance penalties that punish many swashbuckler feats. Moreover, not every monster has vital areas to stab, so a *swung* weapon lets you chop through DR. Swing damage is higher than thrust, and receives an extra boost from Weapon Master's per-die damage bonus at ST 13 and every four levels thereafter.

The big attraction of the basic, unspecialized swashbuckler template is the significant degree of customization possible above and beyond choosing weapons. Although lenses (pp. 13-15) can change things even more, the core template offers many options thanks to its generous advantage allowance. This can in turn lead to a distinctive fighting style.

*A sword by itself does not slay;
it is merely the weapon used by the slayer.*
– Seneca

The *aggressive attacker* focuses on offense, charging in with improved Basic Move, garnering higher damage from ST and Striking ST, launching flurries of blows thanks to Ambidexterity and Extra Attack, and perhaps falling back on Daredevil as needed. He's likely to have Overconfidence and a Vow that leads to fighting. Broadsword is the ideal weapon choice, as the associated blades have the best basic damage. Signature Gear can score a fine or magical sword that inflicts even *more* damage.

The *dedicated defender* prefers not to get hit. More Basic Speed and Enhanced Dodge are great against monsters, while Enhanced Parry helps against people. Additional Luck can blunt the sting of critical hits that circumvent defenses. Devoting Signature Gear to strong-but-lightweight armor is strategic, too – and it's best to *avoid* a Vow never to wear armor. Shun Thrown Weapon (Sword), too; never discard the blade you parry with. For a solid defense, pair a fencing skill (Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword) with Shield (Buckler) or Cloak.

The *showy swordsman* goes for dash and flair, making good ol' DX a priority – along with some of Perfect Balance for acrobatics, Rapier Wit for taunts, and Serendipity for convenient objects to jump on and swing from. A few points in Appearance or Charisma are customary. Eschewing armor can maximize agility and earn points as a Vow, while Trickster goes with the territory. Most flashy fighters keep a hand free, picking a single sword skill for a light weapon that can cut ropes (Saber or Shortsword); many add Lasso for securing swing-lines.

A suitable choice of background skills rounds out the image. That might lean toward the aristocrat (Savoir-Faire, plus Connoisseur for the finer things in life), the buccaneer (Seamanship, Climbing for ship's rigging, and Streetwise for time in port), or the rogue (Streetwise, plus Fast-Talk, Gambling, and Sex Appeal). However, no adventurer should overlook First Aid, Hiking, and Search (for looting the bodies!).

Most swashbucklers would benefit from devoting the 5 points they get from quirks to Signature Gear for a nice sword.

Henchman

-125 points

Reduce ST 11 [10] to ST 10 [0] (lowering damage, BL, and HP), DX 15 [100] to DX 14 [80] (lowering DX-based skills), and HT 13 [30] to HT 12 [20] (lowering FP and HT-based skills); change Basic Speed 7.00 [0] to Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; replace all 116 points of advantages with a choice of 25 points of advantages, including more ST, DX, and HT, and Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Parry, Luck, Weapon Bond, and Weapon Master; spend 4 points less on primary Melee Weapon skills.

ARISTOCRAT

250 points

What noise is this? Give me my long sword, ho!

– William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

You're a hero of noble blood, which truth is evident in your manner. A born leader of men, you're destined to rally warriors to glorious causes. If you lack the bodily might of the traditional knight, that's only because your tutors prudently taught you more than the physical arts. Indeed, among your teachers were some of the finest fencing masters money could hire, whose lessons have left you *quite* capable of schooling others – especially those who doubt your quality.

Attributes: ST 10 [0]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 10 [-5]; Per 10 [-5]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [5]; Basic Move 7 [0].

Advantages: Born War Leader 4 [20]; Higher Purpose 1 (Blood Will Tell) (p. 7) [5]; Luck [15]; Wealth (Comfortable) [10]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1]; *and* Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. ● Another 45 points chosen from among ST *or* HT +1 to +4 [10/level], DX *or* IQ +1 or +2 [20 or 40], Basic Speed +0.25 to +1.00 [5 per +0.25], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Allies (p. 24) [Varies], Ambidexterity [5], Appearance (Attractive, Handsome, or Very Handsome) [4, 12, or 16], Charisma [5/level], Claim to Hospitality (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*, p. 16) [5], Combat Reflexes [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 [15], Enhanced Parry 1 to 3 (Weapon skill of choice) [5/level], Extra Attack 1 [25], No Hangover [1], Penetrating Voice [1], Rapier Wit [5], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Striking ST 1 to 3 [5/level], expanded Weapon Master (p. 29) [5-20], replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points *or* with Ridiculous Luck [60] for 45 points, or increase Wealth from Comfortable [10] to Wealthy [20] for 10 points *or* to Very Wealthy [30] for 20 points.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Gentleman's) [-10]. ● Another -30 points chosen from among Bad Temper [-10*], Bully [-10*], Chummy [-5] *or* Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Compulsive Generosity [-5*], Compulsive Spending [-5*], Greed [-15*], Honesty [-10*], Impulsiveness [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Laziness [-10], Lecherousness [-15*], Obsession (“Become the best swordsman in the world!”) [-10*], Overconfidence [-5*], Selfish [-5*] *or* Selfless [-5*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions *or* Nation) [-5 or -10], Short Attention Span [-10*], Vow (Use only weapon of choice) [-5] *or* (Never refuse a challenge to combat) [-10] *or* (Challenge every swordsman to combat *or* Never wear armor) [-15], or intensify Code of Honor from Gentleman's [-10] to Chivalry [-15] for -5 points.

Primary Skills: Leadership (A) IQ+3 [1]-14†; *and* Strategy and Tactics, both (H) IQ+3 [2]-14†. ● *Either* Crossbow *or* Thrown Weapon (Knife *or* Sword), both (E) DX+1 [2]-16.

● *One* of these three 20-point melee skills packages:

1. *One* of Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+3 [12]-18; *one* of Shield or Shield (Buckler), both (E) DX+3 [8]-18, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+2 [8]-17.

2. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+4 [16]-19; *one* of Shield or Shield (Buckler), both (E) DX+2 [4]-17, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-16.
3. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+5 [20]-20 or Two-Handed Sword (A) DX+5 [20]-20!

Secondary Skills: Fast-Draw (Sword or Two-Handed Sword) and Jumping, both (E) DX [1]-15; Acrobatics (H) DX-1 [2]-14; and Savoir-Faire (High Society) (E) IQ+1 [2]-12.

Background Skills: Six of Fast-Draw (any) (E) DX [1]-15; Boxing, Climbing, Dancing, Lasso, Riding (Horse), Stealth, Whip, or Wrestling, all (A) DX-1 [1]-14; First Aid or Gesture, both (E) IQ [1]-11; Armoury (Body Armor or Melee Weapons), Connoisseur (any), Fast-Talk, Gambling, Heraldry, Merchant, Public Speaking, or Teaching, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; Diplomacy (H) IQ-2 [1]-9; Carousing (E) HT [1]-12; Sex Appeal (A) HT-1 [1]-11; Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-9; Observation (A) Per-1 [1]-9; or 1 point to raise one of those skills or any one-point primary or secondary skill by a level.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +4 for Born War Leader (*Adventurers*, p. 14).

Customization Notes

The aristocrat is defined first by his ability to formulate strategies and lead others. He may lack the bard's Charisma, wizard's IQ, and holy warrior's drive to eradicate evil, but he makes a credible party leader nonetheless. Still, because his role is a supporting one in many ways – flashy swordsmanship notwithstanding – the GM might steer players away from the archetype in a campaign where *Onward to Victory!* (*Dungeons*, p. 11) is unlikely to matter much and the PCs won't occasionally get to command sword-fodder. In games where the aristocrat *is* a viable PC, he can go in any of several directions.

The *dissipated fop* leads commoners out of duty, but lives to dress nicely, party, and impress highborn girls with embroidered tales of his daring exploits. He's prone to flaws like Compulsive Carousing, Compulsive Spending, Laziness, Lecherousness, and Short Attention Span, and even darker impulses such as Greed, Jealousy, and Selfish, but he's no coward. His lifestyle would benefit from several noncombat advantages, particularly Alcohol Tolerance, Appearance, No Hangover, Rapier Wit, and higher Wealth. Sword skills favor courtly blades (Smallsword or perhaps Rapier); other abilities are several of Carousing, Connoisseur, Dancing, Fast-Talk, Gambling, and Sex Appeal at serviceable levels.

The *heartless snob* knows that his underlings' lives are his to spend to buy objectives, preferably ones that increase his fortune or power. He has several of Bad Temper, Bully, Greed, Overconfidence, and Selfish – though he's also convinced of his Code of Honor and Higher Purpose, which stave off full-on Megalomania. His advantage points are split between combat abilities (good for putting others in their place), Serendipity and extra Luck (evidence of his gods-given station), and higher Wealth. He's likely a member of the equestrian classes, implying Riding and either

Broadsword or Saber. Other skills aid snarling orders (Intimidation and Public Speaking) and building fortunes (Connoisseur and Merchant).

The *selfless hero* believes in his nobility but doesn't lord it over others. He takes his Code of Honor seriously and may even elevate it to Chivalry. Alongside this come traits like Chummy, Compulsive Generosity, Honesty, Selfless, and Sense of Duty. Advantage points are likely to buy not just better combat abilities (particularly decent ST), but also warrior Allies, Penetrating Voice for rallying the troops, and Charisma and higher IQ to assist with leadership. Such swashbucklers are “lead from the front” types who prefer military weapons wielded with Broadsword and Shield – or Two-Handed Sword. Round out the package with chivalrous background skills, especially Diplomacy, Heraldry, and Riding.

Henchman

-125 points

Reduce DX 15 [100] to DX 14 [80] (lowering DX-based skills) and IQ 11 [20] to IQ 10 [0] (lowering IQ-based skills); change Will 10 [-5] and Per 10 [-5] to Will 10 [0] and Per 10 [0]; change Basic Speed 7.00 [5] to Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; replace all 116 points of advantages with a choice of 30 points of advantages, including more DX and IQ, and Born War Leader, Higher Purpose, Luck, Wealth, Weapon Bond, and Weapon Master; adjust disadvantage choices from -30 points to -40 points; spend 4 points less on primary Melee Weapon skills.

SWASHBUCKLER ADVANTAGES

A new Higher Purpose and a new Talent appear on swashbuckler templates.

Higher Purpose (Blood Will Tell)

5 points/level

This Higher Purpose gives +1 per level (maximum three levels) to all rolls made in *unassisted* conflicts against *sapient* (IQ 6+), *civilized* beings of lesser social position, provided the possessor is unwavering in his belief that high birth trumps all else, taking as read that low-born folk cannot best him and that nobility of blood implies nobility of intent. “Unassisted” typically means a Quick Contest between the swashbuckler and one rival, or a duel or other single combat where neither side receives aid from allies; however, if he faces a horde of his social inferiors alone, his advantage still applies! “Civilized” beings are those that could freely walk into town, and excludes monsters. “Lesser social position” normally translates as lower Wealth or a Social Stigma in *Dungeon Fantasy* – although inferior Rank or Status count if the campaign uses those traits.

Seafarer

10 points/level

This Talent gives +1 per level to Boating, Fishing, Knot-Tying, Navigation, Seamanship, Survival (Island/Beach), Swimming, Thrown Weapon (Harpoon), and Weather Sense . . . and to Carousing and Streetwise rolls made in port towns. You also get +1 per level on reactions from sailors, buccaneers, and aquatic races sympathetic to sea travel (but *not* horrid Squid Men and their ilk).

BUCCANEER

250 points

Outlaws in our own land and homeless outcasts in any other. Desperate men, we go to seek a desperate fortune. Therefore, we do, here and now, band ourselves into a brotherhood of buccaneers.

– *Captain Blood*

Surefooted and at one with the ocean, you're a born seafaring warrior. While many a pirate favors whatever weapon slays his enemies most quickly, you have a sense of style, and prefer to swing from the rigging with cutlass, saber, or scimitar in hand. Your rough lifestyle has left you mighty enough to battle inhuman foes – you've faced krakens and sea serpents, after all! – while your experience fighting alongside a ragtag band makes you a natural for the delver's life.

Attributes: ST 13 [30]; DX 14 [80]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 13 [30].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d/2d-1; BL 34 lbs.; HP 13 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 13 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [5]; Basic Move 7 [0].

Advantages: Luck [15]; Perfect Balance [15]; Seafarer 2 (p. 7) [20]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1]; and Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. • Another 40 points chosen from among ST or HT +1 to +4 [10/level], DX +1 or +2 [20 or 40], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +0.25 to +1.00 [5 per +0.25], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Absolute Direction [5], Acute Vision [2/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Ambidexterity [5], Appearance (Attractive) [4], Breath-Holding 1 [2], Charisma [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 or 2 [15 or 30], Enhanced Parry 1 to 3 (Weapon skill of choice) [5/level], Extra Attack 1 [25], Fearlessness [2/level], Flexibility [5], Hard to Kill [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], No Hangover [1], Rapier Wit [5], Seafarer 3 or 4 [10 or 20], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Temperature Tolerance 1 or 2 [1 or 2], expanded Weapon Master (p. 29) [5-20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor (Pirate's) [-5] and Greed (12) [-15]. • Another -15 points chosen from among Appearance (Unattractive or Ugly) [-4 or -8], Bad Temper [-10*], Bloodlust [-10*], Callous [-5], Chummy [-5] or Gregarious [-10], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Distinctive Features (*Dueling Scars*, p. 27) [-1], Odious Personal Habit (Unrefined manners) [-5], One Eye [-15], One Hand [-15], Overconfidence [-5*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], Wounded [-5], Xenophilia [-10*], or worsen Greed from (12) [-15] to (9) [-22] for -7 points or to (6) [-30] for -15 points. • A further -15 points chosen from the previous list or Compulsive Spending [-5*], Impulsiveness [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Lecherousness [-15*], Obsession ("Become the best swordsman in the world!") [-10*], Trickster [-15*], or Vow (Use only weapon of choice) [-5] or (Never refuse a challenge to combat) [-10] or (Challenge every swordsman to combat or Never wear armor) [-15].

Primary Skills: Boating (Unpowered) (A) DX+1 [1]-15†; Climbing (A) DX+1 [2]-15‡; Knot-Tying (E) DX+2 [1]-16†; Seamanship (E) IQ+2 [1]-12‡; Survival (Island/Beach) (A)

Per+2 [2]-12‡; and Swimming (E) HT+2 [1]-15†. • *Either* Thrown Weapon (Harpoon) (E) DX+3 [2]-17† or Thrown Weapon (Axe/Mace, Knife, or Sword) (E) DX+1 [2]-15. • *One* of these three 20-point melee skills packages:

1. *One* of Broadsword, Saber, or Shortsword, all (A) DX+3 [12]-17; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+3 [8]-17, or Axe/Mace or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+2 [8]-16.
2. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+4 [16]-18; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+2 [4]-16, or Axe/Mace or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-15.
3. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+5 [20]-19.

Secondary Skills: Brawling, Fast-Draw (Sword), and Jumping, all (E) DX [1]-14; Wrestling (A) DX [2]-14; and Acrobatics (H) DX [2]-14‡.

Background Skills: *Seven* of Fast-Draw (Knife) or Forced Entry, both (E) DX [1]-14; Lasso, Stealth, or Whip, all (A) DX-1 [1]-13; First Aid or Gesture, both (E) IQ [1]-10; Navigation (Sea) or Weather Sense, both (A) IQ+1 [1]-11†; Streetwise (A) IQ-1 [1]-9/11†; Fast-Talk, Gambling, or Smuggling, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Carousing (E) HT [1]-13/15‡; Hiking or Sex Appeal, both (A) HT-1 [1]-12; Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-9; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-10; Observation, Search, or Tracking, all (A) Per-1 [1]-9; or 1 point to raise one of those skills or any one-point primary or secondary skill by a level.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +2 for Seafarer. This also benefits Carousing and Streetwise rolls in *port towns*.

‡ Includes +1 for Perfect Balance.

Inigo Montoya: Is very strange. I have been in the revenge business so long, now that it's over, I don't know what to do with the rest of my life.

Westley: Have you ever considered piracy? You'd make a wonderful Dread Pirate Roberts.

– *William Goldman,*
The Princess Bride

Customization Notes

Greedy, tough, deadly with a sword . . . the buccaneer is arguably the swashbuckler best-suited to a traditional *Dungeon Fantasy* campaign! His only "special need" is for occasional oceangoing adventure; otherwise, all the points diverted from pure combat ability to Perfect Balance, Seafarer, and nautical skills might sit unused. As with most delver archetypes, there's a good range of possibilities.

The *black-hearted raider* is a murderous ruffian of the high seas. He boasts endearing flaws like Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Callous, Jealousy, and severe Greed, and likely has an unspeakable fondness for maidens (Lecherousness).

COMBAT CUSTOMIZATIONS

While each swashbuckler template recommends combat skills, bear these general principles in mind.

What's in My Hands?

One One-Handed Weapon: Using a single one-handed sword lets you avoid the need to spend money on off-hand equipment and points on an extra combat skill and/or Two-Weapon Fighting (**Power-Ups**, p. 13) or Two-Weapon Mastery (p. 28). However, you'll have half as many good defenses (a barehanded parry isn't "good") and *no* Defense Bonus (DB) – you'll need to invest saved points in higher skill to survive. On the other hand, you won't have to drop anything to swing from the scenery.

Two One-Handed Weapons: This gives twice as many good parries as a one-weapon warrior gets. It doesn't automatically grant two unpenalized attacks – you'll need Ambidexterity to avoid -4 for the off hand, or Two-Weapon Fighting or Two-Weapon Mastery to get around that and -4 for Dual-Weapon Attack – but you *can* buy off the penalties, unlike those for Rapid Strike. The downsides? No block, no DB, the need for extra points in special abilities, and the price of two weapons.

Weapon and Defense: A one-handed sword with a buckler, cloak, or shield is strong on defense. It gives parries *and* blocks, a good defense with either hand, and DB – and cloaks and shields are *cheap*. This is the best option for taking on all kinds of weird monsters.

Two-Handed Weapon: The aristocrat (*any* swashbuckler, if the GM agrees) may select Two-Handed Sword. With *Better Two-Handed Parrying* (p. 18), this can be

more effective defensively than using a single one-handed weapon. Two-handed blades are heavy and hard to break, too. Offensively, such weapons do lots of damage – especially *swing* damage – at reach. The downsides are no DB, no block, and the high price of a huge sword.

Swing or Thrust?

Smallswords, unedged rapiers, daggers, and stiletos offer no swung attack. They can only thrust for impaling damage, which is poor against many monsters; see *Injury to Unliving, Homogenous, and Diffuse Targets* (p. B380) for *why*. *Tip Slash* (p. 32) remedies this somewhat, but damage is anemic. A swung cutting or at least crushing weapon is preferable. See *Choose Your Weapons* (pp. 32-34) for suitable blades, and consider using a swung weapon – if only in the off hand.

Fencing or Not?

The templates offer fencing skills (Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword) and non-fencing skills (Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Cloak, Shield, Shortsword, Two-Handed Sword). While the former define "swashbuckler" for many gamers – and give nicer retreats and multiple parries (*Fencing Weapons*, pp. B404-405) – they take encumbrance penalties on attack and defense, and the associated swords (edged rapier excepted) are weak against flails. If you plan to wear heavy armor, avoid fencing gear. Either carry something that gives DB or exploit *Better Two-Handed Parrying* (p. 18).

To better slaughter enemies and take their booty, he spends advantage points almost exclusively on abilities that aid combat. He favors an intimidating scimitar (Broadsword) and a knife (wielded with Main-Gauche and Thrown Weapon) in combat. To his fighting skills he adds Stealth for sneaking up anchor lines on night raids, Search and Forced Entry for locating and smashing open fat chests of loot, and Intimidation for making prisoners talk.

The *dashing pirate* might not be an actual pirate – just a charming, well-traveled chap with a passion for banter and treasure. He mixes Charisma, Daredevil, Enhanced Dodge, Rapier Wit, and decent Appearance with traits such as Chummy, Compulsive Carousing, Sense of Duty, Trickster, and Xenophilia. He's always up for daring adventure in far-off lands, provided it promises rum and companionship! He favors flashy fighting with Saber, and prefers to leave a hand free for swinging from lines. His background skills are the likes of Carousing, Fast-Draw, Fast-Talk, Gambling, and Sex Appeal . . . a couple of them even at reliable levels.

The *salty dog* is a seaman first. He shares the dashing pirate's respect for fellow crew (Chummy and Sense of Duty), but years far from land have left him gruff (Bad Temper and Odious Personal Habit). Advantage points go toward traits that aid survival at sea: even more ST, HT, and Seafarer, plus some of Absolute Direction, Acute Vision, Breath-Holding,

Fearlessness, Hard to Kill, and Temperature Tolerance. He's likely to fight with cutlass and boarding axe (Shortsword and Axe/Mace), and sometimes chuck the axe or possibly a harpoon (choose Thrown Weapon appropriately). Background skill points go toward nautical pursuits: Navigation, Weather Sense, and higher Boating, Knot-Tying, Seamanship, and Swimming.

In all cases, don't overlook advantages that benefit key skills: Absolute Direction is good for +3 to Navigation, Flexibility grants +3 to Climbing, and boosting Seafarer aids *all* nautical pursuits.

Henchman

-125 points

Reduce ST 13 [30] to ST 12 [20] (lowering damage, BL, and HP), DX 14 [80] to DX 13 [60] (lowering DX-based skills), and HT 13 [30] to HT 12 [20] (lowering FP and HT-based skills); change Basic Speed 7.00 [5] to Basic Speed 6.00 [-5] (lowering Basic Move); replace all 111 points of advantages with a choice of 35 points of advantages, including more ST, DX, HT, and Basic Speed, and Luck, Perfect Balance, Seafarer, Weapon Bond, and Weapon Master; adjust total disadvantage choices from -30 points to -25 points; spend 4 points less on primary Melee Weapon skills.

DUELIST

250 points

We came here to kill each other. Any ground is suitable for that.

– Armand D’Hubert, in *The Duellists*

Like all adventurers identified as “swashbucklers,” you’re a master of the sword. You leave chandelier-swinging wisecracking to dandies and drunkards, however. Your way is that of the slayer of men in formal contests. Unmatched in speed and precision with light blades, you’re willing to sell your skills to anyone who can offer gold, even if this means facing monstrous opponents that call for more than a single, swift stab. What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger – and of course *wealthier*.

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 16 [120]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 8.00 [20]; Basic Move 8 [0].

Advantages: Combat Reflexes [15]; Enhanced Parry 1 (Weapon skill of choice) [5]; Luck [15]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1]; *and* Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. • Another 30 points chosen from among ST *or* HT +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], Will +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +0.25 to +1.00 [5 per +0.25], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Ambidexterity [5], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 or 2 [15 or 30], Enhanced Parry 2 or 3 (Weapon skill of choice) [5 or 10], Extra Attack 1 [25], Fit [5] *or* Very Fit [15], Hard to Kill [2/level], Perfect Balance [15], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Striking ST 1 or 2 [5 or 10], Unfazeable [15], Wealth (Comfortable) [10], expanded Weapon Master (p. 29) [5-20], *or* replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

Disadvantages: -15 points chosen from among Code of Honor (Professional or Gentleman’s) [-5 or -10], Greed [-15*], Obsession (“Become the best swordsman in the world!”) [-10*], Overconfidence [-5*], Vow (Duel to the death)† [-5], *or* Vow (Use only weapon of choice) [-5] *or* (Never refuse a challenge to combat) [-10] *or* (Challenge every swordsman to combat *or* Never wear armor) [-15]. • Another -35 points chosen from among those traits *or* Bad Temper [-10*], Bloodlust [-10*], Callous [-5], Distinctive Features (*Dueling Scars*, p. 27) [-1], Impulsiveness [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Loner [-5*], No Sense of Humor [-10], One Eye [-15], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], Stubbornness [-5], *or* Wounded [-5].

Primary Skills: Fast-Draw (Sword) (E) DX+1 [1]-17‡. • *One* of these three 20-point melee skills packages:

1. *One* of Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+3 [12]-19; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+3 [8]-19, *or* Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+2 [8]-18.
2. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+4 [16]-20; *one* of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+2 [4]-18, *or* Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-17.
3. *One* of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+5 [20]-21!

Secondary Skills: Acrobatics (H) DX-1 [2]-15; Intimidation (A) Will+2 [8]-12; Jumping (E) DX [1]-16; *and* Wrestling (A) DX [2]-16. • *Either* Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-17 *or* Boxing (A) DX [2]-16. • *Either* Thrown Weapon (Knife *or* Sword) (E) DX [1]-16 *or* Throwing (A) DX-1 [1]-15.

Background Skills: *Seven* of Fast-Draw (any) (E) DX+1 [1]-17‡; Climbing, Lasso, Stealth, *or* Whip, all (A) DX-1 [1]-15; First Aid, Gesture, *or* Savoir-Faire (High Society), all (E) IQ [1]-10; Armoury (Melee Weapons), Connoisseur (Weapons), Fast-Talk, Gambling, Streetwise, *or* Teaching, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-9; Hiking *or* Running, both (A) HT-1 [1]-11; Search (A) Per-1 [1]-9; *or* 1 point to raise one of those skills *or* any one-point primary *or* secondary skill by a level.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† In a *formal, declared* duel, the duelist would sooner die than accept defeat. This is worth only -5 points because normally, duels can be turned down. Those whose Code of Honor *or* other Vow prohibits that get full value for both – typically -15 *or* -20 points.

‡ Includes +1 for Combat Reflexes.



Customization Notes

The duelist aims to make high skill pay off, substituting it for raw power by striking rapidly at vital areas. Be warned that not all dungeon denizens can be defeated through such tactics! On the other hand, even the toughest dragon can’t ignore someone who’s agile and precise enough to seriously consider leaping onto its back and driving a blade into an eye . . . and not all duellists fight the same way.

The *fencer* believes that since fighting can get you killed, it’s crucial to look to one’s defenses. Add as much Enhanced Dodge and Enhanced Parry as possible. A sword-and-buckler loadout favors defense, and even-numbered skill levels are optimal for Parry and Block; e.g., Rapier-20 and Shield (Buckler)-18. Heavier fencing blades are more likely to survive parries, so he prefers the Rapier skill. Everything else is up to the individual, though the canny fencer uses Stealth, Fast-Talk, and Streetwise to avoid trouble – and Running to escape it.

The *purist* lives for the first, truest strike. He sacrifices everything – even defense – to skewer his opponent before the hapless victim can react. Give him higher Basic Speed, and extra Basic Move to bridge the gap (Move 11 gives a two-yard step!). One skill at 21 is the way to go here, and Rapier affords the longest reach and thus the earliest hit. Other handy skills are better Fast-Draw for contests where swords start sheathed, Savoir-Faire or Streetwise to know the local “code,” and Armoury or Connoisseur to judge blades.

The *scrapper* favors damage, and plans for multiple and/or inhuman opponents. He needs ST and Striking ST for power, and Ambidexterity or Extra Attack for multiple attacks. Perfect Balance makes it easier to stand atop behemoths before stabbing them in the eye, Unfazeable lets him bring the fight even to Elder Things, and Hard to Kill offers insurance when things go south. Saber exploits swing cutting damage, making it a good primary weapon choice vs. monsters; take it on its own (use two blades!) or pair it with Cloak or Shield (Buckler) for defense against groups. Practical backup skills are those valuable to all delvers: Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Running, Search, and Stealth.

Regardless of *skill* set, duelists tend toward a few basic *mindsets*. The *hired sword* has Greed as his primary motivation, Code of Honor (Professional) as a “selling point,” Bloodlust and Callous to stomach killing for a price, and probably Loner and No Sense of Humor as consequences of his grim profession. The *hot-tempered gent* accepts duels out of Code of Honor (Gentleman’s), Impulsiveness, and/or a Vow, often displays Bad Temper and Jealousy, yet is fiercely loyal to allies (Sense of Duty). And the *perfectionist* is an athlete motivated by Stubbornness and an Obsession to become the best; he’s his own biggest fan in the form of Overconfidence (showing Jealousy toward prospective rivals), and sets himself challenges by taking as many Vows as the gods (GM) will sustain.

Henchman

-125 points

Reduce ST 11 [10] to ST 10 [0] (lowering damage, BL, and HP) and DX 16 [120] to DX 14 [80] (lowering DX-based skills); change Basic Speed 8.00 [20] to Basic Speed 7.00 [10] (lowering Basic Move); replace all 86 points of advantages with a choice of 25 points of advantages, including more ST, DX, and Basic Speed, and Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Parry, Luck, Weapon Bond, and Weapon Master; spend 4 points less on primary Melee Weapon skills. Removing the high DX, Basic Speed, and skill that 250 points allow means this henchman needs to earn some points to be notably good at dueling.

ROGUE

250 points

They habitually stole all their possessions, even their swords and daggers, which they always named Graywand and Heartseeker and Scalpel and Cat’s Claw, no matter how often they lost them and pilfered replacements.

– Fritz Leiber, *Swords Against Death*

You combine a gift for swordsmanship with a love for procuring wealth through skill and cunning. You’re no thief, and would rather win a fortune in an up-front contest than steal it.

You’re also no fool – you know that fighting can get you *killed*, so you avoid needless violence. Still, you’re an exceptional warrior when the mood takes you, and aren’t easily intimidated by monstrous foes . . . it’s just that you prefer to stab them from behind.

If a man must needs be a knave I would have him a debonair knave.

– Anthony Hope, *The Prisoner of Zenda*

Attributes: ST 11 [10]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 12 [40]; HT 12 [20].

Secondary Characteristics: Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 12 [0]; Per 12 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [5]; Basic Move 7 [0].

Advantages: Luck [15]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon)† [1]; and Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. ● Another 45 points chosen from among DX or IQ +1 or +2 [20 or 40], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], Basic Speed +0.25 to +1.00 [5 per +0.25], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Alcohol Tolerance [1], Ambidexterity [5], Appearance (Attractive, Handsome, or Very Handsome) [4, 12, or 16], Catfall [10], Charisma [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 or 2 [15 or 30], Enhanced Parry 1 or 2 (Weapon skill of choice) [5 or 10], Extra Attack 1 [25], Flexibility [5] or Double-Jointed [15], High Manual Dexterity 1-4 [5/level], No Hangover [1], Perfect Balance [15], Rapier Wit [5], Serendipity [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Smooth Operator 1-3 [15/level], Striking ST 1 or 2 (Only on surprise attack, -60%) [2 or 4], Wealth (Comfortable or Wealthy) [10 or 20], expanded Weapon Master (p. 29) [5-20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points or with Ridiculous Luck [60] for 45 points.

Disadvantages: One of Greed (12) [-15], Kleptomania (12) [-15], or Trickster (12) [-15]. ● Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Bloodlust [-10*], Code of Honor (Pirate’s) [-5], Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Compulsive Gambling [-5*], Compulsive Lying [-15*], Compulsive Spending [-5*], Curious [-5*], Laziness [-10], Lecherousness [-15*], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5]. ● A further -20 points chosen from the two previous lists or Callous [-5], Chummy [-5] or Loner [-5*], Cowardice [-10*], Impulsiveness [-10*], Jealousy [-10], Obsession (“Become the best swordsman in the world!”) [-10*], One Eye [-15], Overconfidence [-5*], Post-Combat Shakes [-5*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], Short Attention Span [-10*], or Vow (Use only weapon of choice) [-5] or (Never refuse a challenge to combat) [-10] or (Challenge every swordsman to combat or Never wear armor) [-15].

Primary Skills: Stealth (A) DX [2]-15. ● One of these three 20-point melee skills packages:

1. One of Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword, all (A) DX+3 [12]-18; one of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+3 [8]-18, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+2 [8]-17.
2. One of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+4 [16]-19; one of Shield (Buckler) (E) DX+2 [4]-17, or Cloak or Main-Gauche, both (A) DX+1 [4]-16.
3. One of the sword skills in option 1 at DX+5 [20]-20!

ONE FOR ALL, ALL FOR ONE

These templates and lenses offer niche protection when several gamers want to play dashing swordsmen. A sufficiently varied group could mix swashbuckling with *most* of what other delvers normally tackle: aristocrats can surpass knights at leadership and innkeepers at credit rating; buccaneers can match barbarians' and scouts' outdoor abilities, and be nearly as strong as knights at melee and assassins at murder; duelists can fill martial artists' high-DX shoes; rogues (with the worldly lens, especially), have the breadth to replace assassins, innkeepers, and thieves; and *any* swashbuckler with the philosophical lens can perform feats worthy of martial artists and ninja. "Most" isn't "all," however.

While these templates include some ranged combat ability, they could benefit from more. The GM may allow players to spend points from quirks to acquire or improve Bow and Fast-Draw (Arrow). The lowest baseline DX on the templates is 14; thus, quirk points alone could buy *at least* Bow (A) DX+1 [4]-15 and Fast-Draw (E) DX [1]-14.

Another combat hole is the absence of solid crushing attacks for destroying skeletons and the like. A swashbuckler with the staff-swinging lens can remedy this. To improve general damage-dealing, at least one party member should get the high-ST portly lens.

Thieving ability could be better, too. The rogue leans farthest in that direction, and as he already has respectable ranged ability, he might spend quirk points to improve criminal skills instead. With complementary advantage picks (Flexibility, High Manual Dexterity, and Perfect Balance), he'd make a respectable burglar.

The biggest gap is magical capability – and as a few points cannot fill this, it's probably best to add "swashbuckling spellcasters" to the party. This describes bards, and also clerics of gods of messengers and rogues (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 7: Clerics*, pp. 22-23). In pirate-themed campaigns, druids, clerics of sea or storm gods (*Clerics*, pp. 25-28), and water-attuned elementalists (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 9: Summoners*, pp. 9-12) are also fitting. To enable such heroes to participate in swordplay, add Enhanced Parry 1 (Weapon skill of choice) [5], Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1], and Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20] to their templates' advantage options; swap existing Melee Weapon skills for a choice of Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword; and permit Cloak, Main-Gauche, or Shield (Buckler) to replace Shield. Alternatively, have one or two party members use advantage allowances and quirk points to buy *Cross-Training* (pp. 16-20) as spellcasters, and perhaps take the old 'n' bold lens for extra IQ.

Secondary Skills: Acrobatics (H) DX-1 [2]-14; Jumping (E) DX [1]-15; and Streetwise (A) IQ [2]-12. • *One* of Crossbow or Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword), both (E) DX [1]-15; Bow or Throwing, both (A) DX-1 [1]-14; or Blowpipe or Sling, both (H) DX-2 [1]-13. • *Five* of Brawling, Fast-Draw (any), Forced Entry, or Garrote, all (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Climbing, Filch, or Wrestling, all (A) DX [2]-15; Escape, Pickpocket, or Sleight of Hand, all (H) DX-1 [2]-14; Fast-Talk, Gambling, Holdout, Lockpicking, Shadowing, Smuggling, or Traps, all (A) IQ [2]-12; Poisons (H) IQ-1 [2]-11; Intimidation (A) Will [2]-12; Observation, Search, or Urban Survival, all (A) Per [2]-12; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or any two-point primary or secondary skill by a level.

Background Skills: Six of Dancing, Lasso, or Whip, all (A) DX-1 [1]-14; First Aid, Gesture, or Panhandling, all (E) IQ [1]-12; Cartography, Connoisseur (any), Disguise, or Merchant, all (A) IQ-1 [1]-11; Carousing (E) HT [1]-12; Hiking, Running, or Sex Appeal, all (A) HT-1 [1]-11; Scrounging (E) Per [1]-12; 1 point to raise one of those skills by a level; or 1 point to acquire another secondary skill option at one level lower.

* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Rogues may *start* with Weapon Bond (Roguish) (p. 24) instead of standard Weapon Bond, if they meet the prerequisites.

Customization Notes

The rogue is arguably what most gamers think of when they imagine a swashbuckler: a swift fighter, surely – but

also a *smart* one. In many ways, while the buccaneer might be the best all-around combatant and the duelist has more to offer in sheer fighting skill, the rogue is the *most versatile* swashbuckler. Possible subtypes range widely.

The *dark rogue* turns his superior swordsmanship to the art of assassination. Greed leads him to sell his skills, after which Bloodlust takes over, likely complemented by negative traits like Compulsive Lying, Cowardice, or Loner (often leading to a Social Stigma). Combat advantages become very important – particularly Extra Attack, and Striking ST for blows from the shadows. Weapons-wise, cutting blades work best on throats, which suggests Saber or Shortsword skill, and this is likely to go with Cloak or Main-Gauche for literal cloak-and-dagger work. Beyond that, ranged weapons aren't a bad idea (Crossbow is deadliest), and consider Garrote, Poisons, and Shadowing.

The *sneaky rogue* resembles a thief with better combat skills. Greed or Kleptomania is *de rigueur*, along with foibles such as Compulsive Spending and Laziness to explain the need to steal, possibly resulting in Social Stigma. To be any good at this, improve DX and consider advantages like Cat-fall, Flexibility, High Manual Dexterity, and Perfect Balance. Higher Stealth is smart, and usually goes with a few of Climbing, Filch, Lockpicking, Pickpocket, and Traps. Background skill points buy even more thieving skills, or supporting abilities like Cartography for the dungeon and Connoisseur and Merchant for moving stolen goods. As for all swashbucklers, combat skills are a focus, but discretion suggests smaller weapons wielded using Main-Gauche, Shortsword, or Smallsword – perhaps alongside Holdout.

The *witty rogue* is like a bard minus the magic. His outgoing personality shows up in such traits as Chummy, Compulsive Carousing, Compulsive Gambling, Overconfidence, Sense of Duty, and Trickster. He has an intelligent, charming manner, as evidenced by high IQ and some of positive Appearance, Charisma, Rapier Wit, and Smooth Operator. Combat skills vary, but Smallsword paired with Cloak or Main-Gauche can allow him to go armed in social situations. A knack for manipulating people is also important – which in this case means superior Fast-Talk, Intimidation, and Streetwise, alongside Carousing, Dancing, Disguise, Merchant, Panhandling, and Sex Appeal.

Rogues should take care to match advantage choices to skills: Flexibility (or Double-Jointed) helps Climbing and Escape; High Manual Dexterity adds to Pickpocket, Sleight of Hand, and many applications of Lockpicking and Traps; Perfect Balance is great for Acrobatics and Climbing; and

Smooth Operator aids Carousing, Fast-Talk, Intimidation, Panhandling, Sex Appeal, and Streetwise.

Henchman

-125 points

Reduce ST 11 [10] to ST 10 [0] (lowering damage, BL, and HP), DX 15 [100] to DX 13 [60] (lowering DX-based skills), and HT 12 [20] to HT 11 [10] (lowering FP and HT-based skills); change Will 12 [0] to Will 11 [-5] (lowering Will-based skills) and Basic Speed 7.00 [5] to Basic Speed 6.00 [0] (lowering Basic Move); replace all 81 points of advantages with a choice of 25 points of advantages, including more ST, DX, HT, Will, and Basic Speed, and Luck, Weapon Bond, and Weapon Master; adjust total disadvantage choices from -35 points to -30 points; spend 4 points less on primary Melee Weapon skills.

LENSES

These lenses offer minor variations on the major themes the templates represent. Old 'n' bold (below), philosophical (below), portly (p. 14), and worldly (p. 15) might suggest – respectively – exceptional access to healing, instruction, feasts, and travel, paid for with wealth that's found in the dungeon (classic swashbuckler), stolen (buccaneer or rogue), earned (duelist), or inherited (aristocrat). Or, like staff-swinging (pp. 14-15), such variants may stem from personal choices. All of these lenses are compatible with one another and with any swashbuckler template. Pay their price, if any, using a combination of points allocated for advantages and those earned from quirks.

For another low-cost lens aimed at starting swashbucklers but closer to a kind of cross-training, see *Holy Warrior of Messengers and Rogues* (pp. 18-19).

OLD 'N' BOLD

+7 points

There are old delvers and there are bold delvers, but there are no old, bold delvers.

– Folk saying

That tired adage doesn't apply to swashbucklers, obviously – and you have the scars to prove it! You may be middle-aged or even elderly, and not as fit or keen-eyed as you once were, but you have learned much along the way and remain deadly in a fight.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Hard to Kill 1 [2]. • Add IQ +1 or +2 [20 or 40] to advantage options, if absent.

Disadvantages: Add an *extra* -10 points chosen from among ST -1 [-10], HT -1 [-10], FP -1 to -3 [-3/level], Bad Sight (Mitigator, Corrective Spectacles, -60%) [-10], Distinctive Features (*Dueling Scars*, p. 27) [-1], Hard of Hearing [-10], Minor Handicap (p. B165) [-1], Missing Digit [-2 or -5], Unfit [-5], and Wounded [-5] – or combine this with -5

points skimmed from any list that distributes points among disadvantages and add One Eye [-15].

Skills: Add Teaching (A) IQ-1 [1] to background skill choices, if absent. • Attribute and secondary characteristic changes increase all IQ- and Will-based skills (but not Per-based ones) by one level.

PHILOSOPHICAL

+0 points

*So Geometry and Music combine
Their scientific virtues in the sword,
To adorn the great light of Mars.*

– Filippo Vadi

Swashbucklers who explore the abstract, internal facet of fighting tend to do so after perfecting the basics. Many forgo it altogether, leaving it to martial artists and ninja. Yet a few dive in as soon as they learn swordplay. Such pursuits are customarily intertwined with some variety of martial philosophy (often learned abroad, in

the case of buccaneers) involving mathematics and mysterious circles drawn on the floor – but not always!

Advantages: Diestro 2 (p. 26) [10]. • Reduce advantage allowance by 10 points. • Add Diestro 3 or 4 [5 or 10] to advantage options.

Skills*: Lower primary Melee Weapon skill by one level to save 4 points, sacrifice as many as three background skill choices for up to 3 points more, and put these 4-7 points – and up to 5 points from quirks, if desired – into any combination of Blind Fighting (Per/VH), Flying Leap (IQ/H), Kiai (HT/H), Mental Strength (p. 14) (Will/E), Philosophy (Martial) (p. 14) (IQ/H), and Power Blow (Will/H).

* All added skills get a bonus equal to Diestro level.

*D'Artagnan: And then he was
older than any of us.*

*Porthos: His gravity made him
look older than he was.*

– Alexandre Dumas,
Twenty Years After

PORTLY

+0 points

"What! to dinner?" said D'Artagnan. "What time is it, then?"

"Eh! why, it is after one o'clock."

"Your home is a paradise, Porthos; one takes no note of time. I follow you, though I am not hungry."

"Come, if one can't always eat, one can always drink."

– Alexandre Dumas, *Twenty Years After*

Not all swashbucklers are sleek action heroes straight out of bodice-rippers. Some prefer to hold court in an inn during their downtime, partaking of fine food and drink. The resulting girth slows them down – a little, to merely "fast" – but has no effect on their precision. And being *big* comes with being *strong*.

SWASHBUCKLER SKILLS

Swashbuckler templates and lenses mention several new skill specialties and variants.

Fast-Draw (Staff)

see pp. B194-195

This Fast-Draw specialty covers quarterstaves carried in back sheaths, slings, and other rigs rarely seen outside of fantasy. It requires two empty hands to use. It replaces sword-oriented specialties of Fast-Draw for swashbucklers with the staff-swinging lens (pp. 1 4-15), enabling them to learn the Dazzling Draw, Flawless Fast-Draw, and Quick-Sheathe perks (see *Perks*, pp. 21-24).

Mental Strength

see p. B209

Works as usual, but swashbucklers substitute the prerequisites Diestro 1+ (p. 26), Weapon Master (any), and Philosophy (Martial).

Parry Missile Weapons (Staff)

see p. B212

In *Dungeon Fantasy*, Parry Missile Weapons is usually reserved for delvers with Chi Mastery (*Adventurers*, pp. 21-22). Staff-swinging swashbucklers replace this prerequisite with Weapon Master (Quarterstaff), but then the skill works only with a staff.

Philosophy (Martial)

see p. B213

This Philosophy specialty serves mainly as a prerequisite for Mental Strength. However, it can also work just like Meditation or Theology for *Seeking Guidance* (*Dungeons*, p. 15).

Thrown Weapon (Sword)

see p. B226

This cinematic specialty of Thrown Weapon is available only to delvers with versions of Weapon Master that encompass swords. See *Thrown Swords* (p. 32) for details.

Attributes: +2 ST [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1.00 Basic Speed [-20].

Advantages: Add even more ST [10/level] to advantage options, if absent.

Disadvantages: Overweight [-1]. • Add Compulsive Carousing [-5*], Gluttony [-5*], Laziness [-10], and increasing Overweight to Fat [-3] for -2 points or to Very Fat [-5] for -4 points (capping HT at 15 or 13, respectively) to any list that distributes points among disadvantages, and devote at least -5 points from that allocation to such traits.

Skills: Carousing (E) HT [1], or 1 point in existing skill to get Carousing (E) HT+1 [2].

STAFF-SWINGING

+1 or +2 points

Thou standest there with a good yew bow to shoot at my heart, while I have nought in my hand but a plain blackthorn staff wherewith to meet thee.

– Howard Pyle, *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*

Some consider "swashbuckler" synonymous with "swordsman," yet many a dashing, storied hero has favored the quarterstaff. This may be for practical reasons that delvers will surely appreciate: the staff is *cheap*, and its combination of +2 to Parry and *Better Two-Handed Parrying* (p. 18) can rival the fencing parry. Legendary staff masters who wield ranged weapons inevitably seem to choose bows (though not all are named John).

Advantages: Relevant template choices become Enhanced Parry (Staff), Weapon Bond (Starting quarterstaff), and Weapon Master (Quarterstaff).

Perks: Combat Pole-Vaulting 1 or 2 (**Power-Ups**, p. 11) [1 or 2].

Skills: In primary skills, take melee option #3 and replace the skill with Staff (A) DX+5 [20]. • Replace Fast-Draw (Knife, Sword, and/or Two-Handed Sword) with Fast-Draw (Staff) (above).* • Replace Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword) (E) DX [1] or DX+1 [2] with Bow (A) DX-1 [1] or DX [2] in ranged combat options – and if this is chosen, Fast-Draw (Arrow) can replace any remaining Fast-Draw skill.

* All swashbuckler templates except for the rogue spend 1 or 2 points on Fast-Draw specialties for blades. The rogue may *opt* to use a two-point secondary skill choice for such skills.

Customization Notes

This lens reduces the number of available power-ups by ruling out those that call for cutting attacks (Coup de Jarnac), fencing skills (Armor Familiarity), swords (A Sword Is A Sword, Relinquishment, and Wall of Steel), and/or one-handed weapons (Quick-Swap, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Two-Weapon Mastery).

To compensate, staff-swingers start with Combat Pole-Vaulting and the slightly cinematic Fast-Draw (Staff) skill. To make up for other lost options, they can later buy:

- *Little John's Blow*. Works as Coup de Jarnac (p. 25) but requires Staff skill and calls for *crushing* damage.
- *Parry Missile Weapons (Staff)*. See p. 14.
- *Wall of Wood*. Works as Wall of Steel (p. 29), but its prerequisite is Parry 16+ with Staff skill and it requires a quarterstaff. Up to DR 2 is possible with a single staff.

If the GM allows newly minted heroes to start with power-ups, the above are options from the outset.

WORLDLY

+0 points

When I was neither man nor boy, but between both, I expressed in repeated conversations a strong desire of seeing the world, from which I was discouraged by my parents.

– Rudolph Erich Raspe, *The Surprising Adventures of Baron Munchausen*

Swashbucklers tend to depend on innate agility (DX, Basic Speed, Basic Move, Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Defenses, and the like), charm (embodied by Appearance, Charisma, and Rapier Wit), and good fortune (Daredevil, Luck, and Serendipity). If they lean on skill, it's skill at arms. Yet some – notably well-traveled aristocrats, port-hopping buccaneers, and rogues and duelists who know better than to stick around after stealing or killing – are freebooters who pick up many valuable *noncombat* skills on their travels.

Advantages: Reduce advantage allowance by up to 15 points. ● Add IQ +1 or +2 [20 or 40] to advantage options, if absent.

Skills: Spend the 1-15 points siphoned from advantages to add or improve any of Forced Entry (DX/E); Boating (Unpowered), Climbing, Dancing, Filch, Riding (Horse), or Stealth, all (DX/A); Area Knowledge (any), Camouflage, Current Affairs (any), First Aid, Gesture, Panhandling, Savoir-Faire (High Society), or Seamanship, all (IQ/E); Acting, Animal Handling (any), Armoury (Body Armor or Melee Weapons), Cartography, Connoisseur (any), Fast-Talk, Gambling, Heraldry, Merchant, Navigation (Land), Streetwise, Teaching, or Weather Sense, all (IQ/A); Diplomacy (IQ/H); Carousing or Swimming, both (HT/E); Hiking, Running, or Sex Appeal, all (HT/A); Skating or Skiing, both (HT/H); Intimidation (Will/A); Fishing or Scrounging, both (Per/E); or Observation, Search, Survival (any), or Urban Survival, all (Per/A).

Customization Notes

Come up with a backstory and choose skills to match. For instance, “aristocrat forced off family lands by a cruel

SWASHBUCKLER!

If using wildcard skills (*Adventurers*, p. 18), *all* swashbucklers share the Swashbuckler! skill. Buy it with points the template assigns to ordinary skills the wildcard covers – which now include Thrown Weapon (Sword). If such a skill isn't mandatory but appears on a list of options, the player may opt to devote none, some, or all of the points allocated to that list. If desired, take enough points from advantage options to pay for the next full level.

Swashbuckler: As many as 1 point apiece from Jumping and Stealth; 2 points apiece from Brawling or Boxing, Fast-Draw (Knife or Sword), Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword), and Wrestling; 4 points from Acrobatics; 20 points from melee skills; and 7 points from background skill choices. That's up to 41 points. Take up to 7 points from advantages to get Swashbuckler! DX+2 [48]-17.

Aristocrat: As many as 1 point apiece from Fast-Draw (Sword) and Jumping; 2 points apiece from Acrobatics and Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword); 20 points from melee skills; and 6 points from background skills. That's up to 32 points. Take up to 4 points from advantages to get Swashbuckler! DX+1 [36]-16.

Buccaneer: As many as 1 point apiece from Brawling, Fast-Draw (Sword), and Jumping; 2 points apiece from Acrobatics, Climbing, Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword), and Wrestling; 20 points from melee skills; and 7 points from background skills. That's up to 38 points. Take up to 10 points from advantages to get Swashbuckler! DX+2 [48]-16.

Duelist: As many as 1 point apiece from Fast-Draw (Sword), Jumping, and Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword); 2 points apiece from Acrobatics, Boxing or Brawling, and Wrestling; 20 points from melee skills; and 7 points from background skills. That's up to 36 points. Take up to 12 points from advantages to get Swashbuckler! DX+2 [48]-18.

Rogue: As many as 1 point apiece from Jumping and Thrown Weapon (Knife or Sword); 2 points apiece from Acrobatics and Stealth; 20 points from melee skills; and 10 points from secondary skill choices. That's up to 36 points. Take up to 12 points from advantages to get Swashbuckler! DX+2 [48]-17.

prince, and now living in the nearby forest and robbing the unjust rich” would explain Area Knowledge (Local Forest), Camouflage, Stealth, and Survival (Woodlands). “Buccaneer shipwrecked in the Frozen North” would more likely lead to Area Knowledge (Frozen North), Skating, Skiing, and Survival (Arctic). A truly worldly hero has *several* chapters to his story! Either of the previous examples might add “visited countless cities” – be that on family business or smuggling runs – to explain skills like Gambling, Merchant, Streetwise, and Urban Survival.

In an all-swashbucklers campaign (*One for All, All for One*, p. 12), the GM might add further skills to this lens to shore up gaps in the party's knowledge. One possibility is to allow those who choose it to pick “dabbled in another profession” as their backstory, and to add skills from that template – or the associated lens from *Cross-Training* (pp. 16-20) – to *this* lens.

CROSS-TRAINING

Swashbucklers are always looking for ways to be *cooler*, whether through mastering new fighting arts, learning a little showmanship, or picking up a few flashy magic spells. These lenses enable that – unlike the previous set, they add key capabilities from other professions. Most are adapted from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level*, with a handful from other supplements. All work with any swashbuckler template, but some fit better than others:

Choice Lenses: Assassin, Holy Warrior, Innkeeper, Knight, Martial Artist, Ninja, Scout, Thief – plus Barbarian for buccaneers, and Bard for aristocrats and rogues.

Marginal Lenses:* Artificer, Cleric, Druid, Scholar, Wizard.

* Mentalist and specialist spellcaster (demonologist, elemental, necromancer, and shaman) lenses would be worse than marginal. Such professions compete by shoveling a *lot* of points into ultra-narrow areas that align poorly with swashbucklers' gifts. Thus, no such lenses appear here.

Never give a sword to a man who can't dance.

– Confucius

Starting with Lenses

Some swashbucklers have substantial discretionary advantage budgets: 45 points for the aristocrat and rogue, and 60 points for the unspecialized swashbuckler. If these aren't spent on lenses from pp. 13-15, a cross-profession lens is within reach – though possibly only with the help of points from quirks – as most such lenses cost 50 points. The basic swashbuckler could pull this off with points to spare! Players should ask the GM before doing this, but it *is* traditional for swashbucklers to dabble – consider the Gray Mouser's magical apprenticeship or Dr. Peter Blood's medical training (which would make him a swashbuckler-cleric in *Dungeon Fantasy*).

The buccaneer has only 40 points of advantages to play with, though, and the duelist has just 30. The simplest solution for the buccaneer who wants to get in on the fun is to sacrifice some background skills, the logic being that cross-profession training *is* his background. The duelist might instead sacrifice a level of DX – he has enough to spare! In the interest of fairness, the GM may allow *all* swashbucklers to do these things.

SWASHBUCKLER-ARTIFICER

+70 points

Both physical daring and mad inventing put style before sense. Swashbucklers who combine these activities focus on combat gear, learning Armoury (Melee Weapons) and sticking to Weapon Bond instead of adding Equipment Bond. A cunning aristocrat or rogue who's also old 'n' bold (p. 13) might even swing IQ 13+ and be *good* at this!

Advantages: Dungeon Artificer 2* [10]; Gizmos 1 [5]; Quick Gadgeteer [50]. See *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages*, pp. 4-5 for all of these traits.

Skills†: Alchemy (VH) IQ-3 [1]; Armoury (Melee Weapons) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Engineer (Gadgets) (H) IQ-2 [1]; Fast-Draw (Gadget) (E) DX [1]; Scrounging (E) Per [1].

* Gives +2 to Alchemy, Armoury, Engineer (Gadgets), Fast-Draw (Gadget), Scrounging, and Traps.

† Swashbucklers who *already* know Armoury or Scrounging should spend the point in that skill to improve Alchemy or Engineer by one level instead. Those who are also philosophical (p. 13) may instead opt to replace this skill list with Alchemy (VH) IQ-1 [4] and Fast-Draw (Potion) (E) DX [1] to reflect the close ties between alchemy and esoteric philosophy.

SWASHBUCKLER-ASSASSIN

+50 points

All swashbucklers are *good* at slaying their fellow man (elf, dwarf, . . .). In particular, duelists are paid killers already, buccaneers tend toward murder, and rogues are talented backstabbers. The small step from swashbuckler to assassin means the generic assassin lens (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 12: Ninja*, p. 9) boosts areas that need no improvement. This variant adds a dose of wariness and sneakiness instead.

Advantages: 25 points distributed among IQ +1 [20], Per +1 to +5 [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Danger Sense [15], Gizmos 1-3 [5/level], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Peripheral Vision [15], or Striking ST 1 to 4 (Only on surprise attack, -60%) [2/level].

Skills: 25 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Garrote (E) DX+2 [4]; Hold-out (A) IQ+1 [4]; Poisons (H) IQ [4]; Shadowing (A) IQ+1 [4]; Stealth (A) DX+1 [4]; Streetwise (A) IQ-1 [1]; and *one* ranged combat skill from among Crossbow or Thrown Weapon (Knife), both (E) DX+2 [4], Bow or Throwing, both (A) DX+1 [4], or Blowpipe (H) DX [4]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet skill minima on any trait on this lens.

SWASHBUCKLER-BARBARIAN

+50 points

High Pain Threshold *is* nice. Get it from this lens if you foresee wilderness treks, or from swashbuckler-knight (p. 19) if, like most swashbucklers, you're more of a tactician.

Attributes: +2 ST [20].

Secondary Characteristics: +1 Per [5].

Advantages: High Pain Threshold [10]; Outdoorsman 1* [10].

• Buccaneers may opt to raise Seafarer [10/level] (maximum six levels) instead of adding Outdoorsman – and those who already have High Pain Threshold may add *another* level of either Talent, or a further +1 ST [10], in its place.

Skills: Five of Camouflage (E) IQ [1]; Disguise (Animals), Navigation (Land), or Weather Sense, all (A) IQ-1 [1]; Mimicry (Animal Sounds or Bird Calls) or Naturalist, both (H) IQ-2 [1]; Swimming (E) HT [1]; Hiking (A) HT-1 [1]; Fishing (E) Per [1]; or Survival (any) or Tracking, both (A) Per-1 [1].

* Gives +1 to Camouflage, Fishing, Mimicry, Naturalist, Navigation, Survival, Tracking, and Weather Sense.

Yes, a poet . . . and, to such an extent, that while we fence, I will, hop!, extempore, compose you a ballade!

– Edmond Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac*

SWASHBUCKLER-BARD

+50 points

A fitting mix, but one best saved for rogues, aristocrats, and old 'n' bold (p. 13) or worldly (p. 15) swashbucklers with enough IQ to be functional spellcasters. (The worldly lens is a great fit in general – use it to add Acting, Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, Savoir-Faire, etc.) At the start, focus on Bard-Song or bardic skills or one college of magic.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Will [-5]; -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Bardic Talent 1 [8]; Charisma 1* [5]; Musical Ability 1† [5].

Skills: Musical Instrument (any) (H) IQ [4]; Public Speaking (A) IQ [2]; Singing (E) HT [1]. • Aristocrats who already know Public Speaking can raise it to IQ level and invest any leftover points in further special abilities.

Special Abilities: 15 points total in Bard-Song abilities; bardic skills (*Adventurers*, p. 21); or spells from the Communication and Empathy and/or Mind Control colleges, which will be either (H) IQ-1 [1] or (VH) IQ-2 [1] with the +1 for Bardic Talent.

* Gives +1 to Leadership, Panhandling, and Public Speaking.

† Gives +1 to Musical Composition, Musical Influence, Musical Instrument, and Singing.

SWASHBUCKLER-CLERIC

+50 points

The appeal of any warrior-cleric is being able to “buff up” before fights. You may be serious about your faith if Aramis is your role model, but as clerics are dungeon fantasy’s physicians, Captain Blood is no less likely. Like all caster lenses, this one works best for swashbucklers with respectable IQ, old 'n' bold (p. 13) aristocrats being traditional in this instance.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Clerical Investment [5]; Power Investiture 2 [20].

Disadvantages: Honesty (12) [-10] or Sense of Duty (Coreligionists) [-10]. • Some gods may accept an additional -10 points of previously unselected Code of Honor or Vow disadvantages from a swashbuckler template instead.

Skills: Esoteric Medicine (Holy) (H) Per-1 [2]; Exorcism (H) Will-1 [2]; Meditation (H) Will-1 [2]; Religious Ritual (H) IQ-1 [2]; Theology (H) IQ-1 [2]. • Swashbucklers are often outgoing, replacing Meditation with Public Speaking or Teaching, both (A) IQ [2] – or with Diagnosis (H) IQ-1 [2] or Surgery (VH) IQ-2 [2], if pure healers.

Special Abilities: 10 points total in Holy abilities and/or clerical spells, which will be either (H) IQ [1] or (VH) IQ-1 [1] with the +2 for Power Investiture.

SWASHBUCKLER-DRUID

+50 points

Druidic magic is potent on the high seas, and buccaneers who’ve sailed long and far enough to qualify as old 'n' bold (p. 13) or worldly (p. 15) sometimes learn its secrets in distant lands. A more lubberly swashbuckler needs to be clever to make this combination work. Take that as a warning – or a challenge!

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Will [-5]; -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Power Investiture 2 (Druidic) [20].

Skills: Esoteric Medicine (Druidic) (H) Per-1 [2]; Herb Lore (VH) IQ-2 [2]; Religious Ritual (Druidic) (H) IQ-1 [2]; Survival (any) (A) Per-1 [1]; Theology (Druidic) (H) IQ-1 [2].

• Buccaneers who already have Survival (Island/Beach) may spend the point in Survival on further special abilities.

Special Abilities: 11 points total in Druidic abilities and/or druidic spells, which will be either (H) IQ [1] or (VH) IQ-1 [1] with the +2 for Power Investiture (Druidic).

SWASHBUCKLER-HOLY WARRIOR

+50 points

The swashbuckler’s effortless Rapid Strikes double the oomph of many holy gifts. Tip: *cutting* blades, not impaling-only ones, vs. undead.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Higher Purpose (Slay Demons or Slay Undead) [5]; Holiness 1 [5]; Shtick (Foes slain personally can’t rise as undead) [1].

Disadvantages: One of Honesty (12) [-10], Sense of Duty (Good entities) [-10], or Vow (Own no more than horse can carry) [-10]. • Some gods may accept an additional -10 points of previously unselected Code of Honor or Vow disadvantages from a swashbuckler template instead.

Skills: Exorcism (H) Will-2 [1]; Hidden Lore (Demons or Undead) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Leadership (A) IQ-1 [1]; Physiology (monster type) (H) IQ-1 [2]; Psychology (same monster type) (H) IQ-2 [1]; Strategy (H) IQ-1 [2]; Tactics (H) IQ-1 [2]. • Aristocrats already have Leadership, Strategy, and Tactics, and may spend those 5 points on Higher Purpose (different from first) [5], another level of Holiness [5], or additional special abilities.

Special Abilities: 24 points total in Holy abilities and/or the skills above.

Holy Warrior of Messengers and Rogues

+0 points

This alternative holy warrior lens for *starting* swashbucklers – it can't be added later! – is adapted from *Clerics*, p. 23. Well-suited to rogues, it's also surprisingly apposite for aristocrats.

Advantages: Born War Leader 1* [5]; Holiness 2 [10]. • Buccaneers, rogues, and basic swashbucklers reduce advantage allowance by 40 points; aristocrats omit Born War

Leader *here* and lower their allowance by only 35 points; duelists reduce it by 30 points. • Add IQ +1 [20] and Will +1 to +4 [5/level] to advantage options, if absent.

Disadvantages: Add Sense of Duty (Coreligionists) [-10], Trademark [-10], and Vow (Own no more than horse can carry or Never sleep indoors) [-10] to any list that distributes points among disadvantages, and select at least one of those traits. • Add Code of Honor (Professional messenger's) [-5], Kleptomania [-15*], and Social Stigma (Criminal Record or Second-Class Citizen) [-5] to any list of disadvantage options as well.

SWASHBUCKLER MOVES

These combat moves are available to *all* delvers by default (although Extreme Rapid Strike requires Weapon Master or Trained by a Master, which narrows the field). Swashbucklers are more likely to *use* such options, however, and the GM may find it more flavorful to declare some of them exclusive to the profession – a hidden benefit of swashbuckler training! For further ideas, see *Old Blades, New Tricks* (p. 32).

All-Out Attack (Long)

This All-Out Attack is distinct from Determined, Double, Feint, and Strong – you cannot combine it with these. It gives an extra yard of reach; e.g., a Reach 2 rapier could strike someone *three* yards distant. Swung attacks (not thrusts) are awkward: -2 damage or -1 per die, whichever is *worse*. Like any All-Out Attack, this one allows up to half Move forward before attacking. Even without moving, it's useful for leaning over obstacles or kneeling, sitting, or prone allies.

Better Two-Handed Parrying

The size and maneuverability of long, *balanced* two-handed weapons enables them to deflect distant blows in a way that obstructs closer attackers, and to trade reach for reaction time. Any Staff or Two-Handed Sword weapon with Reach 2+ has *half* the usual penalties for parrying more than once in a turn (p. B376): -2 per consecutive parry – or -1 per parry, for those with Weapon Master or Trained by a Master – just like a fencing weapon.

Defensive Attack

Where the Attack maneuver balances offense and defense, the Defensive Attack maneuver favors defense. It's an option for any ready melee attack. It gives -2 damage or -1 damage per die, whichever is *worse* – or +1 to enemy defenses, if grappling rather than striking – in return for the defensive benefits below.

Movement: Step. Movement can come before or after the attack.

Active Defense: Any. Before rolling to hit, select a benefit. If using a balanced weapon (including a hand or a shield), choose between +1 to Parry with one weapon (which can be the weapon used to strike) or +1 to Block.

If using an *unbalanced* weapon (Parry 0U), either claim +1 to Parry or Block with a different weapon, or opt to parry with the same weapon at no bonus, *despite* using it to attack. If kicking, there's no defense bonus, but DX rolls to avoid falling are at +2.

Defensive Feint

This variant Feint maneuver makes it harder for an enemy to hit you *instead of* weakening his defenses. It's valuable against low-DX monsters strong enough to snap your sword and seriously harm you! Treat it as a Feint (p. B365) – but if you win, you inflict a penalty on your foe's next melee attack roll against you rather than on his next active defense roll against you. Compare Acrobatic Guard (*Dungeons*, p. 12).

You *can* try this against several opponents! Work out how many enemies you could attack with a legal combination of Extra Attack, Rapid Strike, Two-Weapon Fighting, etc. Instead of attacking, though, roll feints at the skill level you'd use to attack. Foes who lose suffer a penalty to attack you, as above.

Dropping In

You can rappel down a rope, vine, etc. This requires a free hand, but unfurled sails, banners, or curtains offer the option of using a sword or knife capable of an impaling attack – stick it in and let 'er rip! Each turn, roll vs. Climbing at -1; add an extra -1 if using a blade or a bare hand. Success means you descend one yard if not wearing a glove, four yards if wearing a glove or using a blade. Failure means you don't move. Critical failure means you *fall*.

Extreme Rapid Strike

If you have Weapon Master or Trained by a Master *and* a suitable melee skill at 15+, you can use that skill to make more than two attacks with Rapid Strike (p. B370). Interpret the penalty as -3 per added attack (-3 for two, -6 for three, -9 for four, and so on). Apply it to *all* attack rolls. When making three or more attacks, final, adjusted skill must be 12+.

Example: A swashbuckler making four attacks would apply -9 to all four attack rolls. She would need skill 21+ even to attempt this!

Skills: Expand background skill choices to include Riding (Horse) (A) DX-1 [1]; Hidden Lore (Cult Secrets), Leadership, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ-1 [1]; Tactics (H) IQ-2 [1]; Carousing (E) HT [1]; or Exorcism (H) Will-2 [1].

Special Abilities: 25 points total in Holy abilities for most swashbucklers – but just 15 points for duelists.

* Gives +1 to Leadership, Strategy, and Tactics.

SWASHBUCKLER-INNKEEPER

+50 points

Any delver who has Comfortable or better Wealth and lacks Social Stigma (Criminal Record) can spend \$10,000+ in town to open an inn. Each \$10,000 invested retains one bartender, cook, serving wench, etc. equivalent to a 62-point servant (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen*, p. 23), and lets the owner designate one person – starting with himself! – who can stay without paying the \$150/week noted on p. 4 of *Dungeons*. Such “residents” won’t get kicked out and enjoy +1 on all Carousing rolls, reaction rolls, and rolls for busking or information-gathering made there. This place doesn’t *earn* anything (revenues pay for staff, stock, and upkeep), but after one year can be sold for the original sum plus 0.5% × (months in business); e.g., a total of 112% after two years. For more on inns, see *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 10: Taverns*.

The swashbuckler – especially a portly (p. 14) one – is among the most likely of all delvers to spend treasure to such ends. Doing so makes this lens an option. If the GM uses *Training Expenses (The Next Level*, p. 43), the outlay above replaces those fees.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Advantages: Wild Talent 1 [20].

Perks: Any two of Alcohol Tolerance [1], Honest Face [1], Improvised Weapons (Kitchenware; *Taverns*, p. 8) [1], No Hangover [1], or Penetrating Voice [1].

Skills: Professional Skill (Bartender) (A) IQ [2]. • A further 6 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Carousing (E) HT+1 [2]; Merchant (A) IQ [2]; Streetwise (A) IQ [2]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet skill minima on any trait on this lens.

SWASHBUCKLER-KNIGHT

+50 points

This lens – a quick “level up” for fighters who want to remain fighters – adds military skills and battle-hardening to the civilian swordsman.

Attributes: +1 ST [10].

Advantages: Born War Leader 2* [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]. • One of Enhanced Block 1 [5], Fit [5], Rapid Healing [5], or Striking ST 1 [5]. • Aristocrats who start with Born War Leader and buccaneers who already have High Pain Threshold may omit those traits and spend the points on another +1 ST [10] or more advantages off the previous list.

Skills: 11 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Armoury (Melee Weapons) (A) IQ+1 [4]; Connoisseur (Weapons) (A) IQ+1 [4]; Leadership (A) IQ-1 [1]; Strategy (H) IQ-2 [1]; Tactics (H) IQ-2 [1]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet these

minima on any Melee Weapon skill or any skill on this lens.

• Spend 4 points on *one* of Crossbow or Shield, both (E) DX+2 [4]; Axe/Mace, Bow, Lance, Polearm, Riding (Horse), Spear, or Two-Handed Sword, all (A) DX+1 [4]; Flail (H) DX [4]; or improving primary swashbuckler Melee Weapon skill by one level.

* Gives +2 to Leadership, Strategy, and Tactics.

SWASHBUCKLER-MARTIAL ARTIST

+50 points

Having Trained by a Master *and* Weapon Master enables a special option: Learning Breaking Blow, Pressure Points, and Push variants adapted from bare hands to specific weapon skills covered by your Weapon Master; e.g., Pressure Points (Smallsword) for combat acupuncture. In addition, Invisibility Art and Light Walk are valuable for rogues, Parry Missile Weapons works with any sword (no need to specialize), and Throwing Art makes thrown swords (p. 32) scary instead of silly. Swashbucklers with Diestro (p. 26) may add it *and* Chi Talent – yes, both at once! – to Blind Fighting, Flying Leap, Kiai, Mental Strength, and Power Blow.

Advantages: Chi Talent 1 [15]; Trained by a Master [30].

Disadvantages: Disciplines of Faith (Chi Rituals) [-10].

Skills: Judo (H) DX-1 [2]; Karate (H) DX-1 [2]. • Remove points spent on Boxing, Brawling, or Wrestling (0-4 points for the aristocrat, 0-8 points for the rogue, 3-4 points for the buccaneer, and 4 points for the duelist and basic swashbuckler) and spend them on more Judo, Karate, or special abilities.

Special Abilities: 11 points total in Chi abilities and/or chi skills (*Adventurers*, p. 22). Chi skills get +1 for Chi Talent.

*A sword by itself rules
nothing. It only comes alive
in skilled hands.*

*– Sir Te, in Crouching
Tiger, Hidden Dragon*

SWASHBUCKLER-NINJA

+50 points

Ninja don’t just slay monsters and members of rival clans, but also pursue targets into lands where citizens of the Forbidden East stand out. For this task, *jinin* recruit travelers who exhibit honor and mastery of the fighting arts, which describes many swashbucklers – especially worldly (p. 15) ones with Code of Honor or Vow. This variant of the generic lens (*GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 12: Ninja*, p. 11) is typical of the training such people get. Delvers with Ninja Talent and Diestro (p. 26) may add *both* to Blind Fighting and Mental Strength.

Advantages: Ninja Talent 1 (*Ninja*, p. 4) [10]. • Change Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20] to Weapon Master (All) [45], for 25 points.

Disadvantages: Vow (Ninja Secrecy; *Ninja*, p. 7) [-5]; Vow (Own no more than what can be carried; *Ninja*, p. 7) [-10].

Skills: 10 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Poisons (H) IQ-1 [2]; Stealth (A) DX [2]; *one* ranged combat skill from among Thrown Weapon (Knife or Shuriken) (E) DX+1 [2], Bow or Throwing, both (A) DX [2], or Blowpipe (H) DX-1 [2]; and *two* Melee Weapon skills from among Axe/Mace, Jitte/Sai, Polearm, Shortsword, Spear, Staff, or Tonfa, all (A) DX [2], or Kusari (H) DX-1 [2]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet these minima on any trait on this lens.

Special Abilities: 20 points total in more Ninja Talent [10/level], Ninja Training abilities (*Ninja*, pp. 5-6), and/or ninja skills: Blind Fighting (Per/VH), Hypnotism (IQ/H), Invisibility Art (IQ/VH), Light Walk (DX/H), and Mental Strength (Will/E). Ninja skills get a bonus equal to Ninja Talent.

SWASHBUCKLER-SCHOLAR

+50 points

The archetypal swashbuckler endeavors to be “a gentleman and a scholar,” as the old saying goes. Scholarly pursuits are a reach for those who are more physical than cerebral, but old ‘n’ bold (p. 13) and worldly (p. 15) types who eke out high IQ sometimes make it work.

Advantages: Book-Learned Wisdom 1 (2) [9]; Eidetic Memory [5]; Wild Talent 1 (No Advantage Requirements, +50%) [30]. See *Sages*, p. 8 for the special abilities.

Skills: Cartography (A) IQ-1 [1], or 1 point in existing skill to get Cartography (A) IQ [2]. • Hidden Lore (Demons, Elementals, Faeries, Lost Civilizations, Magic Items, Magical Writings, Spirits, or Undead) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Hidden Lore (second choice) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Hidden Lore (third choice) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Research (A) IQ-1 [1]; Speed-Reading (A) IQ-1 [1].

SWASHBUCKLER-SCOUT

+50 points

This is arguably the ultimate in DX-based melee *and* ranged dominance!

Secondary Characteristics: +2 Per [10].

Advantages: Heroic Archer [20].

Skills: 20 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Bow (A) DX+3 [12]; Camouflage (E) IQ [1]; Climbing (A) DX-1 [1]; Fast-Draw (Arrow) (E) DX [1]; Navigation (Land or Sea) (A) IQ-1 [1]; Observation (A) Per-1 [1]; Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]; Survival (any) (A) Per-1 [1]; Tracking (A) Per-1 [1]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet these minima on higher levels of these skills – starting with Bow!

SWASHBUCKLER-THIEF

+50 points

The swashbuckler-thief is proof that idle hands are the devil’s workshop: when not fighting, he’s applying his impressive

DX to crime. This lens adds roguish skills to any swashbuckler and *greatly* enhances the rogue.

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Will [-5]; +1 Per [5].

Advantages: Flexibility* [5]; High Manual Dexterity 1† [5].

• *One* of Per +1 [5], Basic Move +1 [5], Ambidexterity [5], or High Manual Dexterity 2† [5]. • Buccaneers or rogues who already have Flexibility or High Manual Dexterity may omit those traits and spend the points on more advantages off the previous list.

Skills: 15 points to add or improve the following skills to obtain these minimum levels: Climbing (A) DX-1 [1]; Escape (H) DX-2 [1]; Filch (A) DX-1 [1]; Forced Entry (E) DX [1]; Lockpicking (A) IQ+1 [4]; Pickpocket (H) DX-2 [1]; Stealth (A) DX [2]; Traps (A) IQ+1 [4]. • Spend points in excess of those needed to meet these minima on higher levels of these skills or on Sleight of Hand (DX/H); Holdout, Shadowing, Smuggling, or Streetwise, all (IQ/A); or Search or Urban Survival, both (Per/A).

* Gives +3 to Climbing and Escape.

† Gives +1/level to Knot-Tying, Pickpocket, and Sleight of Hand.

In the first, blazed piles of golden coin; in the second, were ranged bars of unpolished gold, which possessed nothing attractive save their value; in the third, Edmond grasped handfuls of diamonds, pearls, and rubies.

– Alexandre Dumas,
The Count of Monte Cristo

SWASHBUCKLER-WIZARD

+50 points

Although combat magic would aid a warrior more, illusions seem more fitting for *this* flamboyant dabbler! Classic possibilities are the aristocrat with the money for a wizardly tutor, the rogue drawn to the Movement college and other thieving spells, and the old ‘n’ bold (p. 13) buccaneer who learned black magic “in the islands.”

Attributes: +1 IQ [20].

Secondary Characteristics: -1 Will [-5]; -1 Per [-5].

Advantages: Magery 2* [25].

Skills: Alchemy (VH) IQ-2 [2]; Occultism (A) IQ-1 [1]; Thaumatology (VH) IQ-2 [2].

Special Abilities: 10 points total in wizardly spells, which will be either (H) IQ [1] or (VH) IQ-1 [1] with the +2 for Magery.

* Gives +2 to Thaumatology.

CHAPTER TWO

POWER-UPS

Power-ups offer experienced swashbucklers ways to expand their capabilities. *Basic Power-Ups* (below) mostly favor depth, pushing the template's limits. *Perks* (below) and *Swashbuckler Finesse* (pp. 24-29) lean toward breadth, adding entirely new tricks.

For each power-up, the GM is advised to read the description and decide whether the ability suits the campaign before permitting it. There are possibilities between "allowed" and "forbidden." First, prerequisites are merely suggestions, and can be tweaked to make potent abilities harder to get. Second, any power-up might require a quest for a fencing master who can teach it! For more on how to phase in power-ups, see *Acquiring Power-Ups (GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups, pp. 7-9)*.

This chapter includes all swashbuckler power-ups from *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1-16*. It also presents those from *Pyramid #3/61: Way of the Warrior*, along with a few of that work's general power-ups which especially suit swashbucklers. General options from *Power-Ups* don't appear here, so that supplement still has its uses; *Picking Power-Ups* (p. 22) offers advice on this.

BASIC POWER-UPS

Swashbucklers have access to everything on their template, all general and utility power-ups for which they have the prerequisites (see *Picking Power-Ups*, p. 22), plus these options:

- Basic Speed up to +4.00 [20/level].
- Blind Fighting, Flying Leap, Kiai, and Power Blow skills *without* needing Chi Mastery.
- Enhanced Block up to 3 [5/level].
- Enhanced Time Sense [45] can replace Combat Reflexes [15], for 30 points.
- Extra Attack up to 2 [25/level].

Alternative Power-Ups

To better differentiate between different swashbuckler types, the GM may trade off a few basic power-ups for other options in the case of specialists:

Aristocrat: Limit Basic Speed to +3.00 and remove the Enhanced Time Sense option. Add Armor Mastery (*Power-Ups*, p. 29) [5] from the knight's power-ups list; this requires Combat Reflexes and Armoury (Body Armor) at 12+. The aristocrat may spend points on henchman Allies or Signature Gear – retainers or an inheritance, respectively – wherever the GM agrees his family's emissaries can reach him. Born War Leader [5/level] can go to level 6, while Higher Purpose (Blood Will Tell) (p. 7) [5/level] can go to level 3.

Buccaneer: Limit Basic Speed to +3.00 and remove the Enhanced Time Sense option. Add Damage Resistance 1 or 2 (Tough Skin, -40%) [3 or 6] and Ragnar's Breath (*Power-Ups*, p. 19) [5] from the barbarian's power-ups list, and Sure Grasp (*Power-Ups*, p. 35) [5/level] from the thief's list. The latter requires Climbing at 18+, usually attained by buying Flexibility first. Luck can range up to Ridiculous Luck [60], while Seafarer (p. 7) [10/level] can go to level 6.

Duelist: Remove Enhanced Block completely and replace it with the option to have Enhanced Dodge [15/level] at up to level 3. Luck can range up to Ridiculous Luck [60].

Rogue: Limit Basic Speed to +3.00 and remove the Enhanced Time Sense option. Remove Enhanced Block completely and replace it with the option to acquire Enhanced Dodge [15/level] at up to level 3. Add Craftiness [5/level] and Street-Smart [5/level], both up to level 4, from the thief's power-ups list (*Power-Ups*, p. 35), and Jack of All Trades (*Power-Ups*, p. 28) [10/level] up to level 3 from the innkeeper's list.

PERKS

1 point/perk

These count as Combat Perks (*Power-Ups*, pp. 11-12), but with one or two exceptions – notably Acrobatic Feints – only swashbucklers may select them.

Like all delvers, swashbucklers may buy one Combat Perk (from *Power-Ups* or this list) per *full* 20 points in combat skills. They may also purchase one extra *from this list* per full 20 points in Broadsword, Fast-Draw (Sword), Fast-Draw (Two-Handed Sword), Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, and Two-Handed Sword.

Perks marked with a † require specialization. Those with a ‡ come in levels.

A Sword Is A Sword†

You've practiced using *balanced* (Parry 0 or 0F, but never 0U) swords that have *one-handed* stats listed under Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword on the weapon table, but with another of those skills. When you wield a weapon this way, treat it as a member of its new class for the purpose of skill-dependent special abilities (e.g., Botte Segrete, Interdiction, and some Weapon Master specialties) and rules (notably, superior parries and retreats – but also encumbrance penalties – when using fencing skills). You can still wield the blade with its usual skill and *its* tricks and rules; decide how you're using it at the start of your turn.

You must specialize by adaptation. For example, “Shortsword to Rapier” allows you to use cutlasses, long knives, and shortwords with the Rapier skill. Similarly, “Broadsword to Smallsword” lets you use backswords, broadswords, cavalry sabers, and edged rapiers – and katanas and longswords held in one hand – with the Smallsword skill and all of its benefits and drawbacks, but excludes bastard swords held one-handed because they’re unbalanced (Parry 0U).

Armor Familiarity††

You’re accustomed to fighting in armor. You must specialize by skill. Each level (maximum four levels) lets you ignore -1 in encumbrance penalties to attack and parry with *one* of Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword.

Blinding Strike‡

You’re hard to beat to first blood. For the sole purpose of determining *who acts first* in a situation settled by Basic Speed – usually but not limited to the combat sequence – add your Blinding Strike level (which cannot exceed Basic Speed) to your Basic Speed. For instance, with Basic Speed 7.00, you could buy up to Blinding Strike 7 – and if you did, you’d act when someone with Basic Speed 14.00 would act, though Basic Move and Dodge would still be determined from 7.00.

This is priced by noticing that Basic Speed [20/level] is equivalent to Basic Move [5/level] plus Enhanced Dodge [15/level], leaving little room for the price of acting first.

Rather than call that a zero-cost feature, this power-up makes it a leveled perk.

Caped Crusader

When wearing (not wielding!) a cape or a cloak that weighs at least 2 lbs., you can baffle foes by swirling it in their faces. Once *per opponent* in a given battle, you may invoke this perk to add cloak DB to a Feint (meaning an extra -1 or -2 to defenses if you win) or a Deceptive Attack (half as effective, but works immediately).

Clean Fighting‡

You fight super-honorably! In any combat where you have yet to attack, feint, taunt, use a hostile special ability (e.g., Rapier Wit), deploy an item that causes baneful effects (be it a smoke bomb or a Wand o’ Doom), or do anything else the GM deems “offensive action” against *anyone*, you may take a Wait maneuver against a specific foe. Point your melee weapon at him, shout “En garde!”, and make your honorable-if-violent intentions clear. The trigger is him attacking you first – and if he does, resolve his attack and your defense normally, and then immediately attack him at +1 per level of Clean Fighting (maximum three levels). After that, the perk cannot be used again this battle.

Clean Fighting can never be “stacked” with Dirty Fighting (**Power-Ups**, p. 11) on the same blow. You *can* start a fight with it, though – draw steel and cry “Arm yourself, sir!”

PICKING POWER-UPS

These general and utility options from **Power-Ups** suit swashbucklers almost as well as their specialized power-ups do:

Claim to Hospitality (Power-Ups, p. 16): A *starting* option for aristocrats, for whom it represents family contacts.

Combat Perks (Power-Ups, pp. 11-12): Acrobatic Feints, Dual Ready (if you can’t or don’t want to use Fast-Draw), Flourish, Follow-Through (especially good for duelists), Quick-Sheathe, Sacrificial Parry, and Trademark Move.

Hero (Power-Ups, p. 16): Swashbucklers don’t suffer from reaction penalties that make this power-up a pressing need, but being widely admired is a common goal among the flamboyant souls in this profession.

Master at Disarms (Power-Ups, p. 12): Disarming being skill-dependent and swashbucklers being highly skilled, this move is a great choice against foes with deadly weapons and armor too heavy for light blades to pierce. The ST bonus to break weapons helps boost the swashbuckler’s typically low ST, too.

Mortal Foe (Power-Ups, p. 12): Swashbucklers gravitate to this one because they can meet the steep skill prerequisite almost effortlessly. They often pick the Faerie class (such foes are prone to dueling) – but buccaneers prefer the Dire Animal class (for fighting sea monsters).

Not Without My Weapon (Power-Ups, p. 12): Given that all swashbucklers start with a Weapon Bond and

most have specialized fighting abilities that rely on being armed, this is almost a must – especially alongside Relinquishment (p. 28).

Perfect Recovery (Power-Ups, p. 12): Swashbucklers depend on mobility as much as weaponry. In non-standing postures, penalized defenses, reduced Move, and limited retreating can be *fatal*. With a good Acrobatics skill, this ability is a no-brainer.

Run and Hit (Power-Ups, p. 12): This is well worth the expense, given that all swashbucklers have Weapon Master and high Basic Move. Uncapped skill is *especially* nice at their skill levels, -2 to DX rolls is tolerable given their high DX, and the ST bonus helps compensate for their low ST relative to barbarians and knights. There are defensive drawbacks, but the prohibition against parrying limits only *the weapon used to attack*. Compare **Flying Lunge** (p. 26).

Slayer Training (Power-Ups, p. 13): Slayer Thrust to Vitals is a classic duelist tactic. Slayer Thrust to Eye is favored by all swashbuckling delvers. For **Slayer Swing** options, be sure to use a cut-and-thrust sword.

Two-Weapon Fighting (Power-Ups, p. 13): A bargain-priced extra attack for swashbucklers who prefer two blades (see *What’s In My Hands?*, p. 9). It isn’t any *cheaper* with Main-Gauche skill – that’s for *defending* with the off hand, not attacking. Many swashbucklers go for Specialized Two-Weapon Fighting.

Combat Haberdashery

You ignore penalties the GM assigns for floppy hats, billowing capes, etc. You may *willingly* wear garb so outlandish that you suffer -1 to hit; if so, foes have -1 to hit *you* through all that! See *Fashion Statements* (pp. 30-31) for suitable clothing.

Dazzling Draw†

Prerequisite: Fast-Draw for a melee weapon.

When you use Fast-Draw to ready a melee weapon *and* are standing where you could attack enemies with that weapon without stepping or turning, you may claim a *free* feint against one such opponent. Use Fast-Draw (*not* Melee Weapon) skill and don't roll again – if your Fast-Draw attempt succeeds, compare your margin of success to your foe's skill roll to determine who wins. You cannot invoke this perk if you've used Quick-Sheathe (*Power-Ups*, p. 11) this turn, or vice versa. You must specialize by Fast-Draw skill.

Feints with Flair†

Prerequisite: See below.

Masters of dazzling enemies with displays of agility and daring, some swashbucklers use noncombat skills for Feint maneuvers (p. B365). Each skill requires a separate perk. While this might *seem* redundant for high-skill swordsmen, consider that swords can be dropped or broken, and aren't handy in the bedchamber, when swimming pirate-infested seas, or while both hands are full of booty.

Acrobatic Feints: Uses Acrobatics. You must be unrestrained but needn't be standing. Affected by attack modifiers for posture, footing, etc.

Fancy Footwork: Uses Dancing. Can get a complementary skill modifier (*Dungeons*, p. 11) from Musical Instrument or Singing. You must be unrestrained *and* standing. Affected by attack modifiers.

Jumpin' Jack Flash: Uses Jumping. You must be unrestrained *and* standing. Affected by attack modifiers.

Sexy Feints: Uses Sex Appeal. Requires that you and your target are of reasonably compatible species and able to see each other. Unaffected by footing, posture, or low light; in fact, candlelight and lying down each give +1!

Stare-Down: Uses Intimidation. Requires that you and your foe can see one another. Doesn't work on enemies with IQ 0-5, Indomitable, or Unfazeable. Unaffected by most attack modifiers – but posture penalties *do* apply. If you also know Flourish or Follow-Through (*Power-Ups*, p. 11), you may use Stare-Down in place of *Taunt and Bluster* (*Dungeons*, p. 12) after knocking down or killing a foe, either rolling the feint at +4 on your next turn or as a free action at the end of this one.

Flawless Fast-Draw†

Prerequisites: Weapon Master *and* Fast-Draw for a related weapon at 16+.

You've practiced the quick draw to the point where you no longer fail under ordinary circumstances. You must specialize by particular Fast-Draw skill for melee weapons. As long as

your effective level with that Fast-Draw specialty is 16+, don't bother rolling – you succeed *automatically*. However, if penalties (e.g., shock) reduce effective skill below 16, or if you want to use Dazzling Draw (above), you must roll the dice.

Like Lightning‡

Swashbucklers can already raise Basic Speed by +3.00 or even +4.00, where ordinary delvers are limited to buying +2.00 at most. You can break the rules even further! Each level of this perk (maximum two levels) allows you to buy a *further* +1.00.

Naval Training

You've trained at fighting on a rocking ship or boat. You may ignore the -2 to attack and -1 to defend for bad footing under those circumstances.

Put It In HIS Eye

You're vengeful in a very specific way: If a foe successfully attacks a hit location and you fail to defend, you're highly motivated to return the favor. Regardless of whether *he* struck that body part on purpose, you enjoy +1 on your next attack on that enemy if *you* target that location intentionally. Elapsed time is unimportant – your next shot at him receives this benefit no matter how many turns (or years!) pass between the offending strike and your reply – but targeting any other hit location first wipes out the bonus.

Quick-Swap†

You've perfected the art of juggling one-handed weapons between hands. Shifting a weapon to an empty receiving hand normally demands a Ready maneuver, but is a free action with this perk. Swapping two weapons between full hands normally takes *two* Ready maneuvers, but requires just one with Quick-Swap. You can use this perk once per turn, on your turn.

You must specialize by one-handed weapon skill: Quick-Swap (Rapier), Quick-Swap (Saber), etc. If two *different* weapons are involved, you need this perk for both skills.

Sharp-Dressed‡

Looks can't kill – but they can keep you alive, especially if they involve enough bits of bling and lace to impede blows! If you're clad in garments that provide neither natural nor magical DR, *and* the outfit is ornate enough to grant +1 to reactions, you gain DR 1. If you wear armor, the benefit is lost completely over the armored areas; use the armor's DR instead. Any DR granted by magical jewelry is cumulative, however.

You can have up to three levels of this perk. The second gives DR 2 at +2 reactions; the third, DR 3 at +3 reactions. The above conditions continue to apply.

For rules for suitable clothing, see *Dressing to Kill* (pp. 30-32).

Sheer Speed†

You must specialize in Flying Leap or Power Blow; each requires its own perk. When you learn that skill as a power-up, base it on *DX*, not *IQ* or *Will* as usual.

Superstylin'

The reaction bonus of your ornate clothing (+1 to +3) doesn't only impress potential buyers of that garb – it also adds to all uses of *Taunt and Bluster* (*Dungeons*, p. 12) on IQ 6+ foes. See *Dressing to Kill* (pp. 30-32) for suitable clothing.

ALLIES

If using *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies* or *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen*, Allies make reasonable power-ups for all swashbucklers, and are common among aristocrats even at the start of their adventuring careers.

Animals: Any swashbuckler other than a buccaneer might have a stallion – but a buccaneer may choose a kraken, macaw, monkey, or shark instead! An aristocrat has the further option of a dog, hawk, or hound, while a rogue might befriend a cat or rat. These creatures are the fantastically intelligent specimens from *Allies* but *do not* grant their masters magical powers, and the Ally advantage never bears Special Abilities, Summonable, Sympathy, or a power modifier. Cats, dogs, hawks, macaws, monkeys, and rats are 62-point Allies with the overtly supernatural Familiar meta-trait replaced with Lucky Mascot*; hounds, krakens, sharks, and stallions are 125-point Allies with the standard Animal Ally meta-trait.

Henchmen: Any swashbuckler might have a skirmisher as an understudy or admirer. Many have a servant as a lackey or weapon caddy – although the buccaneer and rogue are more likely to employ a laborer (usually a dockworker or porter). Agents suit aristocrats in need of heralds, duelists who want the best rates for their work, and rogues seeking better returns on stolen goods; brutes, cutpurses, and killers befit buccaneers and rogues who pal around with crew or gang members; and guards and squires are common aristocrats' retainers. Most of these are 125-point Allies; guards, laborers, and servants are just 62 points. More competent examples add 125 points in the form of the treasure-hunter or veteran lens.

Such Allies are generally constant companions. At the power levels assumed above, a 250-point swashbuckler would buy the following:

62 points: Ally (Built on 25%; Constantly) [4].

125 points: Ally (Built on 50%; Constantly) [8].

187 points: Ally (Built on 75%; Constantly) [12].

250 points: Ally (Built on 100%; Constantly) [20].

* *Lucky Mascot*: Bestial [-10]; Cannot Speak [-15]; Extraordinary Luck (Defensive, -20%) [24]; Native Language (Accented/None) [-4]; Sense of Duty (Master) [-2]; Speak with Animals (Specialized, Own Family, -60%) [10]; and Wealth (Dead Broke) [-25]. -22 points.

Third Hand†

You can use the hand(s) holding a weapon, cloak, or shield to wield a single piece of noncombat gear *at the same time*. Lanterns, torches, scrolls, potions ready to drink, etc. are fine; cloaks, shields, weapons, or potions ready to *hurl* aren't. Maximum item weight is Basic Lift/20 lbs. in one hand, BL/10 lbs. in two.

The item is considered ready – a torch offers light, a scroll can be read, a potion can be quaffed – and neither penalizes nor is endangered by fighting with the same hand(s). If the

weapon, cloak, or shield is dropped or taken away, however, then so is anything else in hand. Likewise, if you're stunned, you drop the object as usual.

You must specialize by armed combat skill.

Unarmed Parry†

You've adapted armed parrying motions to the empty hand. You must specialize by Melee Weapon skill. This perk lets you figure your unarmed parry from that skill. (For bare-handed *striking*, use DX, Boxing, Brawling, or Karate.)

Unarmed parries are never modified for a weapon's Parry stat. You parry at -3 against non-thrusting weapons and risk arm injury if you fail; see *Parrying Unarmed* (p. B376). Repeated unarmed parries with the same hand are at a cumulative -4 no matter what skill is involved, even if you use a fencing skill or switch to an unarmed skill – and Weapon Master doesn't halve this penalty, though Trained by a Master does.

Van Gogh My Van Dyke

There's a reason for those snappy beards swashbucklers favor – they can save your life! Once per *adventure*, you may declare that a successful frontal attack on your *face*, however nasty, merely lopped off your beard. You suffer no other ill effects. After that, you must grow out your beard . . . which conveniently happens in time for the next adventure.

Weapon Bond (Roguish)†

Prerequisites: Serendipity or Weapon Master (same weapon type); *one* of Greed, Kleptomania, or Trickster; and *one* of Filch, Pickpocket, Scrounging, or Search.

Some heroes have a knack for acquiring replacement weapons that suit them as well as the originals. Weapon Bond (Roguish) works like standard Weapon Bond, except that if the chosen weapon is irretrievably lost – broken, confiscated by The Devil, sunk to the bottom of the sea, etc. – it can be replaced. The former owner must *steal* a weapon of the same type (e.g., "light edged rapier" or "long knife"), *loot* one after battle, or *find* one as treasure. Obtaining it risk-free, as from a friend or by purchasing it, never counts!

After fighting one battle with it, the Bond transfers to it.

SWASHBUCKLER FINESSE

These power-ups focus on agility – particularly great combat skill and acrobatic flash – with a liberal dose of fortune favoring the bold, often on the meta-game level (Destiny, Higher Purpose, Luck, etc.). The GM seeking inspiration for original creations need look no further than this!

In all cases, a † means you must specialize.

Acrobatic Evade

5 points

Prerequisite: Acrobatics.

When you substitute Acrobatics for DX while evading (*Dungeons*, p. 12), you roll at +5. In the worst-case situation of a standing foe approached from the front, this cancels the -5 and makes getting past him a Quick Contest of your *full* Acrobatics vs. his DX.

Techniques: Evade (A) Acrobatics+5 [5].

*We need audacity, and yet more
audacity, and always audacity!*
– Georges Jacques Danton

Audacity

5 points/level

Prerequisites: Special (see below).

Nothing succeeds like showing off! For every *full* 15 points you have in luck-related advantages – Daredevil, Dramatic Entrance (p. 26), Every One's a Critical (p. 26), Luck, Serendipity, and anything similar the GM opts to count – you may buy one level of Audacity (maximum three levels). Each level gives you one Audacity Point per game session to spend on *Buying Success* (p. B347) as if it were a character point. Audacity Points refill at the start of each game session.

There are limits on what Audacity Points can accomplish. They work only in battle. Moreover, they're restricted to aiding attack and defense rolls; combat-related DX and DX-based skill rolls, notably the tasks described in *Speed is Armor!* (*Dungeons*, p. 12); rolls to use swashbuckler power-ups (e.g., Flying Leap) in a fight; HT or resistance rolls where failure would leave you unable to attack the enemy on your next turn; and rolls for *Taunt and Bluster* (*Dungeons*, p. 12). Finally, you can't buy *critical* success – you're limited to turning failures into successes (1 point), or critical failures into failures (2 points) or successes (3 points).

Advantages: Destiny [5, 10, or 15]. This cribs Destiny Points from *GURPS Power-Ups 5: Impulse Buys* and gives them the faster regeneration of Wildcard Points in return for extra prerequisites tying them to specific feats.

Avenger

5 points

After *you* suffer injury over HP/4 in combat or *anyone on your side* is knocked out, killed, or otherwise taken out of the fight, you have one turn to launch an All-Out Attack, Attack, or Move and Attack on whoever did the deed – or to use Move to rush him until you can attack. If you do, you receive +1 on all rolls to fight that foe (attacks on him, defenses and resistance rolls vs. him, damage rolled against him, and so on) until he's defeated or the battle ends. If you delay your revenge by so much as a second, there's no benefit.

Advantages: Higher Purpose (Revenge!) [5].

Botte Segrete†

20 points/skill

Prerequisites: Luck, Weapon Master, and Melee Weapon skill at 20+.

This legendary strike allows no defense. Maybe a *worthy* foe could defend . . . but still. It forces you to move so fast that even trying it costs you 1 FP – and *any* critical failure means a dropped weapon in addition to the other results. Your victim has -5 on all active defense rolls against it, and likely ends up paying in HP. For 2 FP, the -5 affects Blocking spells, too!

You must purchase this power-up for one specific combat skill. Rapier is traditional. Roll against *full* skill to hit. You may combine this awesomeness with any other special ability or option, including Deceptive Attack. You can use it with multiple attacks, but the FP cost is also multiplied.

Perks: Unique Technique (Botte Segrete) [1].

Techniques: Botte Segrete (H) Skill+0 [19].

Chandelier Leap

10 points

Prerequisites: Weapon Master and Jumping at 18+.

This power-up lets you pay 1 FP to *double* your horizontal leaping distance. First, work out your standard broad jump under the circumstances. You may do the math on p. B352 or simply approximate: the better of Basic Move/4 or Jumping/8 yards, doubled out of combat *or* with a running start, or quadrupled for both. Activating Chandelier Leap doubles this result – and if your leap constitutes the movement portion of a maneuver that allows a feint or an attack, you get +3 with that feint or attack!

The name of this ability is whimsical. You don't need a chandelier or similar feature to use it.

Advantages: Super Jump 1 (Costs Fatigue, 1 FP, -5%; Horizontal Only, -25%) [7].

Perks: Ha-ha! 3 [3].*

* Similar to Dirty Fighting (*Power-Ups*, p. 11), but works after Super-Jump – not when combat starts – and can be used repeatedly. (Be a sport and shout "Ha-ha!" each time.)

Coup de Jarnac†

15 points/skill

Prerequisites: Luck, Weapon Master, and Melee Weapon skill at 20+.

This epic cut has the precision to cleave through any armor the target is *wearing* (not natural protection, magic spells, etc.). You must purchase the power-up for a particular combat skill used with a *cutting* weapon. Roll against full skill to hit. Halve the DR of your foe's armor against the blow.

The Coup is a feat of pure skill (well, that and luck), equivalent to striking at chinks in armor; you can't do both at once. However, if you manage to learn Breaking Blow, get hold of a sword with Penetrating Weapon, etc., you *can* combine them. Multiply together all applicable armor divisors.

Perks: Unique Technique (Coup de Jarnac) [1].

Techniques: Coup de Jarnac (H) Skill+0 [14].

Diestro

5 points/level

Prerequisite: Weapon Master.

This new Talent gives +1 per level (maximum four levels) to the versions of Blind Fighting, Flying Leap, Kiai, and Power Blow learned by swashbucklers – and to Mental Strength (p. 14) and Philosophy (Martial) (p. 14), if you're philosophical (p. 13). You also enjoy +1 per level to reactions from martial artists, ninja, fellow swashbucklers, and any other admirer of swordsmanship or internal warrior discipline. Though labeled a Talent, Diestro is never inborn and always acquired through practice as a Weapon Master.



Dramatic Entrance

15 points

Prerequisites: Luck and Weapon Master.

Some swashbucklers have a knack for arriving with a splash! Once per game session, you may invoke this power-up to enter combat in an astonishing way. This works much as though you had spent three character points on *Player Guidance* (p. B347) so extreme that it strains willing suspension of disbelief.

For this to work, the GM must agree that the proposed use won't simply short-circuit the adventure *and* that either the architecture of the situation allows it or that the change to the game world needed to make it work is acceptable. The results usually take one of three forms:

- *Stunning arrival.* You arrive unexpectedly. Swinging in on a rope is a classic, as is kicking down the door with such vim that those behind it are caught unprepared . . . but anything's possible. This is too showy to cause total surprise that leaves foes defenseless, but they're still off-guard. A single *fodder* monster of your choice is mentally stunned (-4 to defend, cannot retreat, etc.) if not Unfazeable, or at -2 to defend if Unfazeable; these effects limit the victim's defenses against everyone until *you* have had one turn to act, after which they end. All accompanying fodder in the same group have a flat -1 to defend for the same interval.

- *Taking the fight to the boss.* As above, but instead of penalizing fodder, you start the fight toe-to-toe with the boss or a worthy henchman of your choice! You end up in front of him and he suffers no penalties, but you don't have to fight your way through hordes of guards. Of course, the hordes are probably behind *you* . . .

- *Timely aid.* A friend off on his own got into a fight – and somehow, you anticipated it and got there to help him. Perhaps you just happened to be in the area, or maybe a sixth sense warned you and you quietly snuck off to join him. Whatever the case, if you could have reached him in a minute of running, jumping, swinging from ropes, etc., you appear at his side *instantly*, at your usual place in the combat sequence.

If the GM overrules a proposed use, this doesn't count as your Dramatic Entrance for the game session – you may ask again at the start of the *next* fight.

Advantages: Destiny [15]. Like Audacity (p. 25), this cribs Destiny Points from *GURPS Power-Ups 5: Impulse Buys* and gives them faster regeneration in return for narrower limitations on their use.

Every One's a Critical

15 points

Prerequisites: Luck, Weapon Master, and Melee Weapon skill at 17+.

Not *every* attack, but fortune favors the bold: You score critical hits remarkably often in melee combat. When your effective melee combat skill is 17+, an attack roll of 3-7 is a critical hit. What's more, if your result on the *Critical Hit Table* disappoints you, you may reroll it – but then you *must* take the second outcome, even if you have second thoughts.

Advantages: Daredevil (Variant) [15]. Instead of +1 when doing crazy things, you have +1 to your critical-hit range, which is more potent but doesn't come up as often. And instead of rerolling critical failures, you reroll critical hit results. If allowing this to other delvers, *ranged* combat should require its own, separate 15-point power-up.

Flying Lunge†

5 points/skill

Prerequisites: Weapon Master, Jumping, and a thrusting Melee Weapon skill.

This devastating stab gains extra power from a full-on run and jump at the enemy! It requires a *thrusting* weapon. You must buy this power-up for one specific weapon skill capable of making such an attack.

Flying Lunge counts as Move and Attack (p. B365) but uses the rules below *instead*. It's all you can do that turn, no matter how fast or skilled you are. In particular, you can't use it in a series of multiple attacks (from Rapid Strike, Extra Attack, etc.) or combine it with Run and Hit (pick one or the other), though it *can* benefit from Botte Segrete, Coup de Jarnac, Striking ST, and so on.

To use Flying Lunge, you must first make a running jump, which requires a Jumping roll. See *Chandelier Leap* (p. 25) for how to quickly approximate jumping distance (you *can* combine this power-up with that one or the Flying Leap skill).

If the jump succeeds, roll against *full* weapon skill to attack upon landing. Your opponent parries at -2 and a hit inflicts your weapon's usual thrusting damage at +2 – or at +1 per die, if better.

Afterward, you cannot retreat. You can't parry with the weapon used to attack, either. All your remaining active defenses are at -2, too, as are any DX rolls. These effects last until your next turn.

If you fail the roll for your jump or your attack – or if your target successfully defends – you *fall down* unless you can make a DX-8 or Acrobatics-4 roll. This wipeout inflicts thrust+2 crushing damage to a random body part.

Techniques: Flying Lunge (H) Skill+0 [5].

Great Void

10 points

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Weapon Master, and Basic Move 7+.

You're *very* mobile when fighting. When retreating, you may step an *extra* yard away from your foe. This doesn't boost your retreat bonus – it just lets you cover more ground when falling back.

Perks: Unique Technique (Great Void) [1].

Techniques: Great Void! Defense+0 [9]. This “wildcard technique” is priced as if Hard and then tripled in cost to allow it to work with *all* active defenses.

Greater Weapon Bond†

5 points/weapon

Prerequisites: Any Melee Weapon skill, plus Armoury (Melee Weapons) or Connoisseur (Weapons).

You own a melee weapon so suited to you that you enjoy +1 to skill rolls (including Melee Weapon and Fast-Draw rolls), +1 to Parry, and +1 to damage with it. This is a higher level of standard Weapon Bond; the two don't “stack.” Like that perk, this gift doesn't supply the weapon – obtain that by buying it, finding it, taking Signature Gear, etc.

There are two catches. First, if you permanently part ways with the weapon, you lose the 5 points spent on this power-up – no refunds! Second, any melee fought without the weapon in hand puts you off-kilter. You must fight *another* battle using the weapon at no bonuses before the benefits return. The GM decides what a “battle” is, but cheesy tricks like squishing vermin and sparring with allies never count.

Advantages: Higher Purpose (Always use this one weapon) [5]. The rules for losing and regaining bonuses cover the built-in Code of Honor.

DUELING SCARS

Not every power-up is an advantage. Shedding the negative consequences of one's adventures can be equally attractive. The most grievous of misfortunes for swashbucklers – who exemplify combat prowess and mobility – are permanent physical injuries.

Fixes exist (*Replacement Parts*, below) – but in a hurry, a swashbuckler with points to burn can replace One Eye [-15] with Distinctive Features [-1] by paying 14 points. Though obvious, the resulting eye-patch has no appreciable effect on DX or combat ability. Buccaneers can go one better and convert One Hand [-15] or Missing Legs [-20] to Distinctive Features for 14 or 19 points, respectively, for a hook or a peg leg that's as good as the original!

The idea here is that swashbucklers are so cinematically skilled and lucky that they can work around serious infirmities. The GM thinking about extending such benefits to other delvers is counseled to require Luck and Weapon Master. Even that might grant access only to dashing eye-patches, with hooks and peg legs that lack appreciable downsides being strictly a buccaneer thing.

Replacement Parts

Magic is the usual dungeon-fantasy fix for lost body parts. Restoration and Regeneration spells are available to everyone and cost no points, but take one month to solve the problem. Though the Instant versions are fast enough to be practical in the field, the need for Power Investiture 4 or 5 and 50 or 80 energy points puts them out of reach of many adventuring clerics.

Relying on dungeon-fantasy *technology* usually means ending up with a peg leg (\$250; p. B141), eye-patch (\$10; p. B147), or hook (\$200; p. B147). Artificer NPCs in town can replace a hand or a leg with a clockwork prosthetic that's as good as the original for \$7,000 or \$9,500, respectively. This allows any delver to shed the disadvantage without spending points – just like magic – but leaves the buyer with Distinctive Features [-1].

Heroic Reserves

3 points/level

Prerequisites: Special (see below).

You have hidden reserves of vigor, traditionally flowing from your zeal to avenge a real or perceived insult, the rush of battle, or even a quick swig of wine or rum. You may spend Heroic Reserves (HR) as FP to fuel athletics, martial feats, and physical extra effort – including *Extra Effort in Combat* (p. B357) and nonmagical special abilities such as Botte Segrete, Chandelier Leap, Flying Leap, Kiai, Power Blow, Springing Attack, and Wall of Steel.

You can't burn HR on spells or *magical* abilities, if you have them, nor on extra effort the GM deems “mental.” However, effects that sap FP – starvation, and some spells, poisons, and monster abilities – never deplete HR. You can tap HR even at fully negative FP! Moreover, HR recharge separately from FP regardless of your activities: 1 point/10 minutes normally, or 1 point/5 minutes with Fit or Very Fit.

You may purchase one level of HR per *full* 10 points in combat skills (melee, ranged, or unarmed – but chi skills *don't* count). For instance, a swashbuckler with 31 points in Brawling, Fast-Draw, Main-Gauche, Rapier, Thrown Weapon, and Wrestling could buy up to HR 3.

Advantages: Energy Reserve (Heroic) [3/level].

Interdiction†

5 points/skill

Prerequisites: Any melee combat skill, plus Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Interdiction lets you make a quick, low-damage melee attack against anyone who tries to charge past you in combat. Your target must be moving from in front of you to behind you (consulting the diagram on p. B389, from any white hex to any gray or black one) *and* pass within reach of an attack currently possible for the skill for which you have this power-up. For example, a shortsword (Reach 1) could cut at anybody running within one yard to flank you, while a greatsword (Reach 1, 2) could intercept a foe who approaches to within two yards at some point during his pass.

Roll against Parry for your combat skill as your opponent moves by. This never gets a bonus from retreating, shield DB, Shield spells, or special parry options – although Combat Reflexes and Enhanced Parry help as usual, and any *penalties* for bad footing, repeated parries, etc. apply. Failure means your foe slips past untouched. Success lets you roll against skill to attack a *random* hit location.

A successful skill roll means a potential hit. Your target defends normally. If he fails, you inflict your attack's damage at -2 or -1 *per die*, whichever is worse. Though you're technically "parrying" your foe's entire body, contact is sufficiently light that this move doesn't count as a parry against a heavy weapon. Failure on your skill roll indicates that you didn't even make light contact – again, your opponent slips past untouched.

Whatever the outcome, each Interdiction attempt counts as a parry with the weapon or hand used (thus, this power-up is worthless after you All-Out Attack). You may try Interdiction more than once per turn – and intersperse it with true parries – subject to standard penalties for successive parries in a turn. For instance, if you use Interdiction and then parry with the same hand (or vice versa), the second roll suffers the usual penalty for repeated parrying.

You must specialize by melee combat skill.

Perks: Unique Technique (Interdiction) [1].

Techniques: Interdiction (H) Parry+0 [4].

Relinquishment†

5 points/skill

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, Weapon Master, *and* any fencing or sword skill at 20+.

You can sense when your blade is about to shatter on a parry, and allow it to be swept from your grasp instead. This transforms weapon breakage on a parry into a disarm (this power-up synergizes nicely with Not Without My Weapon). Such a parry still counts if odds of breakage don't exceed 6 in 6 (p. B376). If they do, you're disarmed and the parry *doesn't* count – but you may try a dodge at +1 for the heroic effort, and if you retreated on the parry, the dodge gets the retreat bonus, too.

You must specialize by sword or fencing skill.

Perks: Unique Technique (Relinquishing Parry) [1].

Techniques: Relinquishing Parry (H) Parry+0 [4].

Springing Attack

10 points

Prerequisite: Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

To use this power-up, you must first spend one full turn crouching, bracing against a solid object, or otherwise "storing up energy." This counts as a Ready maneuver; you can do nothing else but a free action (e.g., use Fast-Draw). On your *next* turn, you have +2 to ST with your attacks, normally giving +2 to swing or +1 to thrust. If you take an Attack or Defensive Attack maneuver, you may opt to spend 1 FP for an extra step, springing an extra yard forward to attack, or springing one yard and then stepping away at the end.

Perks: Extra Option (Giant Step) [1].

Advantages: Striking ST 2 (Takes Extra Time 1, -10%) [9].

Two-Weapon Mastery

20 points

Prerequisites: At least *three* one-handed Melee Weapon skills, *and* Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Lets you use Two-Weapon Fighting (*Power-Ups*, p. 13) with *any* two melee weapons you're capable of wielding simultaneously, regardless of Melee Weapon skill. As a side benefit, you're fully ambidextrous and never suffer -4 for using the "off" hand.

There's no need for Two-Weapon Fighting if you have Two-Weapon Mastery. Those with the former may upgrade to the latter by paying the cost difference. The GM might *require* this progression – or call for delvers to acquire

one, two, and then three kinds of Two-Weapon Fighting – and specify a minimum number of adventures between steps.

Advantages: Ambidexterity [5].

Techniques: Dual-Weapon Attack! Skill+0 [15]. This is another "wildcard technique," tripled in cost to allow it to work with *all* one-handed Melee Weapon skills.

Ultimate Slayer Training†

Variable

Prerequisites: Weapon Master *and* Melee Weapon skill at 20+.

This advanced version of Slayer Training (*Power-Ups*, p. 13) works exactly as that power-up except that it cancels the *entire* penalty for a specific hit location (neck, skull, eye, or vitals) when using one particular weapon skill for the prescribed attack form (swing or thrust). The GM may require you to learn standard Slayer Training before "upgrading" to the associated Ultimate version, and specify a minimum number of adventures between steps. Varieties are:

Ultimate Slayer Swing at Neck: No penalty for swinging attacks to the neck. 8 points.

Ultimate Slayer Swing at Skull: No penalty for swinging attacks to the skull. 10 points.

Ultimate Slayer Thrust to Eye: No penalty for thrusting attacks to the eyes. 12 points.

Ultimate Slayer Thrust to Vitals: No penalty for thrusting attacks to the vitals. 6 points.

Perks: Rules Exemption (Technique Mastery allowed on Targeted Attack) [1]; Technique Mastery (Targeted Attack) [1].

Techniques: One of Targeted Attack (Weapon Swing/Neck) (H) Skill+0 [6], Targeted Attack (Weapon Swing/Skull) (H) Skill+0 [8], Targeted Attack (Weapon Thrust/Eye) (H) Skill+0 [10], or Targeted Attack (Weapon Thrust/Vitals) (H) Skill+0 [4].

Wall of Steel

3 points/level

Prerequisite: Parry score of 16+ with a fencing weapon or a sword, counting *only* (skill/2)+3, the +1 from Combat Reflexes, and any Enhanced Parry bonus.

When wielding a ready sword or fencing weapon, you can whirl it around so quickly that it seems to fill the air in front of you. Frontal attacks are slightly deflected – partially dissipated, if something like dragon’s breath or a Missile spell – granting you (including your eyes!) and anything you’re carrying +1 DR, cumulative with all other DR. This DR applies even against attacks that get past a parry with the whirling blade. Touches must penetrate it *first* to affect you. Only non-frontal attacks and Cosmic ones that bypass DR may ignore it completely.

Wall of Steel has no effect on your ability to move, attack, or defend. You can keep it up while striking, parrying,

running, etc. It is tiring, though: 1 FP *per second* to maintain. Declare whether you’re using it (or not) at the *start* of each turn.

Those who use two blades may buy a second level of Wall of Steel. This increases DR to 2 when two suitable weapons are ready. It’s up to the GM whether coleopterans and similar races can have further levels for additional weapons.

Advantages: Damage Resistance 1 or 2 (Accessibility, Requires ready fencing weapon(s) or sword(s), -30%; Costs Fatigue, 1 FP/second, -10%; Directional, Front, -20%; Force Field, +20%) [3 or 6].

Wizard-Hunter

15 points

Prerequisite: A combat skill at 18+ when floated from DX to Per.

Your aim is so keen that you can penetrate magical defenses with mundane weapons! Spells cannot block your armed attacks, permitting you to stab across the edges of Force Domes, ignore Shield and Armor spells, shoot arrows through Missile Shields, and so forth. This is intensive mundane training, not a supernatural gift.

Advantages: Blessed (Anti-Magic Weapon) [15]. This new form of Blessed costs 15 points by comparison to Blessed (Ghost Weapon) in **GURPS Powers: Divine Favor** – but despite the name, it isn’t Holy.

MASTERING YOUR WEAPONS

The following Weapon Master options are available to swashbucklers during character creation or as power-ups:

Weapon Master (Weapon of choice): Any one weapon type, almost always a blade wielded with Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, or Two-Handed Sword. Pick a specific weapon listed on the weapon table; e.g., Weapon Master (Cutlass), Weapon Master (Dress Smallsword), or Weapon Master (Light Edged Rapier). Benefits don’t extend to other weapons used with the same skill. 20 points.

Weapon Master (Two weapons): Two different weapons that can be used at the same time. This usually means a specific one-handed sword, as above, plus an off-hand choice wielded using one of Axe/Mace, Cloak, Main-Gauche, Shield, or Shield (Buckler). Again, select particular weapons; however, you need not go narrower than “buckler,” “cloak,” or “shield” for items used to block. Examples are Weapon Master (Cutlass and Hatchet), Weapon Master (Dress Smallsword and Cloak), and Weapon Master (Light Edged Rapier and Long Knife). 25 points.

Weapon Master (Skill of choice): Every weapon appearing under your choice of Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, or Two-Handed Sword on the weapon table. For instance, Weapon Master (Rapier) covers the rapier, light rapier, edged rapier, light edged rapier, and every other kind of rapier. 25 points.

Weapon Master (Two skills of choice): Every weapon listed under any one of Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, or Smallsword *plus* one of Axe/Mace, Cloak, Main-Gauche, Shield, or Shield (Buckler). Weapon Master (Rapier and Shield) covers anything used with Rapier or Shield, Weapon Master (Shortsword and Axe/Mace) covers anything wielded with Shortsword or Axe/Mace, and so on. If you use a fencing sword and a main-gauche, compare the next option. 30 points.

Weapon Master (Fencing weapons): Every weapon listed under any of Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, or Smallsword. 30 points.

Weapon Master (Fencing weapons and shields): Everything listed under Cloak, Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, Shield, Shield (Buckler), and Smallsword. 35 points.

Weapon Master (Swords): Everything listed under Broadsword, Knife, Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, and Two-Handed Sword. 35 points.

Weapon Master (Swords and shields): Everything listed under Broadsword, Cloak, Knife, Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, Shield, Shield (Buckler), Shortsword, Smallsword, and Two-Handed Sword. 40 points.

Where logical, existing Weapon Master specialties can be broadened in play as a power-up. The new version must encompass everything covered by the old one. Point cost equals the difference in advantage costs.

CHAPTER THREE

GEAR

To facilitate their mobile fighting style (i.e., avoid encumbrance penalties to fencing attacks and parries), swashbucklers travel light: sword; buckler, cloak, or dagger; and a snazzy outfit, including shiny boots. Some tote a lasso or a whip – not as a weapon, but to swing from. Those seeking to equip themselves *quickly* should see **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 13: Loadouts**, pp. 26-27. Delvers interested in shopping (aren't they all?) might want a few *special* items.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers, pp. 23-30 offers many goods of particular value to swashbucklers: bandoleers (filled with throwing daggers), dwarven whetstones (for the first, truest stab), giant spider silk cord (the lightest, strongest swing-line), and quick-release backpacks (to shed encumbrance when the fighting starts) – and traditional buccaneers carry compasses and telescopes. Fine or enchanted blades can redress low ST (see *Ultimate Weapons*, p. 34). As weight is often an issue, consider the fine, giant spider silk, and orichalcum options, or the Lighten enchantment, for armor . . . or splurge for an Ironskin Amulet (which won't negate Sharp-Dressed, p. 23). Boots of Balance suit the image, and a Bottomless Purse is yet another way to reduce one's load.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 6: 40 Artifacts has some high DR-to-weight protection the GM might be willing to sell at Ye Olde Magick Shoppe. Bracers of Force (**40 Artifacts**, p. 5) won't interfere with Sharp-Dressed. Though a Hooded Robe of Protection (**40 Artifacts**, p. 7) will, rogues value its low-flash anonymity.

GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables is a real trove! Anybody with Sharp-Dressed or Superstylin' (p. 24) will welcome decorative embellishments (**Treasure Tables**, pp. 53-55). The quadrant (**Treasure Tables**, p. 16) is a common buccaneer tool. Rogues and aristocrats, especially, appreciate sword canes, edged capes, and spring knife bracers (**Treasure Tables**, p. 32). And tempered glass blades (**Treasure Tables**, p. 33) and dragonbone armor (**Treasure Tables**, p. 35) are *wonderful* if the GM allows them.

Much of this equipment is *expensive*. When starting out, consider obtaining it as Signature Gear.

DRESSING TO KILL

Swashbucklers are without a doubt the best-dressed adventurers. *All* delvers start with a "free" suit of common clothing that weighs 2 lbs. and costs \$120 to replace. Some wear it, others discard it in favor of armor, and swashbucklers customarily buy something a bit more stylish. Regardless, the basic outfit has no resale value and doesn't contribute even one copper toward fancier garb, which always costs its *full* price.

The perks Sharp-Dressed (p. 23) and Superstylin' (p. 24) need fancy clothing to work. This uses the *ornate* modifier

for armor (**Adventurers**, p. 27), which results in the following outfits:

Courtly Couture: +1 to reaction rolls from potential buyers and to Merchant skill rolls made as Influence rolls (p. B359) on such people – and with Superstylin', to all uses of *Taunt and Bluster* (**Dungeons**, p. 12) on IQ 6+ foes. Allows Sharp-Dressed 1, for +1 DR on unarmored areas. At least \$240. 2 lbs.

Aristocratic Attire: As courtly couture, but *double* all benefits. At least \$600. 2 lbs.

Regal Robes: As courtly couture, but *triple* all benefits. At least \$1,200. 2 lbs.

None of these garments provide innate DR or withstand violence well; repeated blows eventually tear and bloody them. Any physically damaging effect (weapons, teeth, traps, fire, etc.) that hits the wearer ruins 10% of the original value, even if it inflicts no injury. Base bonuses on the *remaining* value; thus, spending more than the minimum is worthwhile. To repair this, pay the *full* cost difference.

Example: A \$2,400 outfit is more than enough to give +3 to reactions – and with the right perks, to taunts, DR, etc. It could sustain up to five hits (-50%, to \$1,200) and still offer +3. Six or seven (-60% or -70%, to \$960 or \$720) would reduce this to +2. Eight or nine (-80% or -90%, to \$480 or \$240), to +1. And 10 hits would leave rags that preserve modesty but offer no bonuses.

*Oh, never mind the fashion.
When one has a style of one's
own, it is always 20 times better.*

– Margaret Oliphant

Fashion Statements

Swashbucklers often go for two further clothing modifiers:

Outlandish: Everything is billowing, floppy, fringed, and generally overstated. This gets in your way, giving -1 to DX. However, if you have the Combat Haberdashery perk (p. 23), you suffer only -1 to hit (*not* to general DX, feints, etc.) and your enemies have -1 to hit *you*. You can add this modifier to any full set of clothing, including your "free" starting clothing – but if you do the latter, you won't have less garish duds unless you pay \$120 or more for them. Clothing only: +0 CF.

Sexy: These clothes are too form-fitting or revealing for Sharp-Dressed, and aim to seduce, not intimidate, and so don't work with Superstylin'. That makes this modifier incompatible with ornate (but it *can* be combined with outlandish). As with ornate, apply it to the \$120 for a suit of clothing and don't count the price of the "free" starting outfit toward it; however, such a getup weighs 1 lb., not 2 lbs. Clothing only: +1 to Sex Appeal (including Sexy Feints, p. 23) for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF, and +3 for +9 CF.

Boots

Big, shiny boots are classic swashbuckler fashion. Ordinary boots that cover only the feet are DR 2*, \$80, and 3 lbs. Two further styles are common:

Knee-High Boots: Protect the feet with DR 2*, and also the legs on a roll of 1-3 on 1d. \$110, 5 lbs.

Thigh-High Boots: Protect the feet and legs with DR 2*. \$140, 7 lbs.

These are no cheaper or lighter than separate boots and leggings, and make it harder to selectively strip off armor. However, they're sealed against liquid hazards that reach no higher than the knees or thighs. They're also capacious enough to give +1 (knee-high) or +2 (thigh-high) to Holdout for one item per boot. And while worn, subtract the cost of either cut from the price needed to get a bonus from the sexy modifier, because – oh, my! For instance, a rogue with thigh-highs pays \$600 - \$140 = \$460 for sexy +2, but gets the full bonus only while wearing them.

Capes and Cloaks

The cloaks on p. B287 are common among swashbucklers. A light cloak is \$20, 2 lbs.; a heavy one, \$50, 5 lbs. Such garments can be bought in flashier versions, with embellishments and fine fabrics adding any amount to price.

Worn on the back, any cloak enables the Caped Crusader perk (p. 22). If it's fancy, add value past \$20 for a light cloak or \$50 for a heavy one to the price tag of any ornate outfit. An aristocrat seeking the benefits of aristocratic attire could wear a \$620 light cloak or \$650 heavy one – or pay \$240 for courtly couture and make up the remaining \$360 with a \$380 light cloak or \$410 heavy one. Worn cloaks are depleted in value by 10% per hit, along with clothing; don't try to work out where the blow hits.

Held in hand, a light or heavy cloak offers DB 1 or 2, respectively. With Cloak skill, it can block and attack (p. B404). However, it *can't* be used with Caped Crusader, and *doesn't* count for Sharp-Dressed or Superstylin'. Each successful block depletes its value by 10%, making it less impressive when you put it back on. At 0%, it's too tattered to block or provide DB.

Leather Cloaks: Leather cloaks are tougher. Worn, they work with Caped Crusader and give +1 DR from behind, *not*

cumulative with DR from Sharp-Dressed. A light one protects the neck, and the torso on 1-4 on 1d; a heavy one, the neck, torso, and legs. Welded, they're slightly ungainly: -1 to Cloak skill. Cloaks thick enough to provide DR are stiff and unflattering, and never add value to ornate outfits (to emulate supple leather ones that do, use the rules for ordinary DR 0 cloaks), but lose just 5% of value per block – that is, they can block 20 times before being shredded. Light: \$40, 4 lbs. Heavy: \$100, 10 lbs.



Masks

Domino Mask: Buccaneers and rogues classically prefer to remain anonymous – as do aristocrats who don't want to lose face. A cloth or soft leather mask around the eyes isn't enough to give DR but will obscure identity *completely* if you're glimpsed in battle or in the midst of climbing, swinging, etc. If you interact with others outside of such action, they merely have -1 on rolls made to recognize you or recall meeting you. \$25, 0.25 lb.

Fencing Mask: The fine-mesh mask of modern-day sport fencers is known in fantasy worlds that feature dwarven alloys, Shape Metal spells, and pixie craftsmanship! Good-looking aristocrats favor them. This gives the *skull*, *eyes*, and *face* DR 2 from the front. It has no effect on the wearer's vision but obscures his features as effectively as a domino mask. If made of orichalcum (+29 CF), weight is unchanged but DR triples to 6. \$50, 3 lbs.

Wigs

Wigs (**Treasure Tables**, p. 16) are popular with swashbucklers about town. There are two basic styles, neither subject to clothing modifiers:

Small Wig: Gives DR 1 to the skull, like a cloth cap. \$75, 1 lb.

Large Wig: From behind, gives DR 1 to the entire head and neck, and to the torso on a roll of 1-2 on 1d. From the sides or front, grants DR 1 to the skull, and to the face and neck on 1-3 on 1d. \$500, 6 lbs.

Wig DR *is* cumulative with that from the Sharp-Dressed perk!

Adventuring wigs are made to slip off if grabbed. If grappled by the skull for a small wig, or by the neck or any part of the head for a large one, your *first* attempt to break free (p. B371) uses the best of your DX, Escape, or grappling skill vs. the better of your foe's DX or grappling skill, unmodified for number of hands. Victory means your wig comes off but you're free! Otherwise, it's clamped on tight and later Contests use ST normally.

Wigs add their *full* value to that of ornate outfits. For instance, \$240 for courtly couture plus \$500 for a large wig gives \$740 and surpasses the criterion for aristocratic attire (\$600).

OLD BLADES, NEW TRICKS

Two new ways of abusing swords are possible for anyone, but of particular interest to swashbucklers.

Tip Slash

Some blades favored by swashbucklers lack a cutting edge, which is a drawback against monsters with the more powerful forms of Injury Tolerance – and when trying to sever ropes and rigging! Fortunately, any weapon that can thrust for impaling damage can also be swung so the tip rips across the target. This is considered a *swung cutting* attack for all purposes, and is distinct from the other attacks listed for the weapon on the weapon table. There's no special penalty to attempt it. Reach is as usual for the impaling attack. Cutting damage equals the weapon's impaling damage at -2, adjusted normally for blade quality, power-ups, magic, etc.; e.g., a fine rapier (thrust+2 imp) can Tip Slash for thrust cutting damage.

Thrown Swords

The desperate and the daring can *hurl* blades wielded using the Broadsword, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, or Two-Handed Sword skill. Roll against DX-4, Thrown Weapon (Sword) (p. 14), or Throwing Art to hit. Ranged combat stats are Acc 0; Range $\times 0.5 \times 1$ for swords up to 4 lbs. or $\times 0.2 \times 0.5$ for heavier ones; RoF 1; Shots T(1); ST as usual for the weapon; and Bulk equal to weight in pounds plus longest Reach in yards, rounded up (e.g., -5 for a rapier). Damage is exactly the same as what the weapon inflicts when used for a melee thrusting attack, modified as usual for quality, magic, Weapon Master, and so on.

This is depleted by 10% per hit, along with clothing (ignoring where the blow hits). In the example, each hit knocks off \$74.

Wigs are often *powdered* to add a pleasant color and scent. This gives +1 to reactions in polite social situations (including honest commerce, but never underworld or dungeon dealings), but also +1 to scent-based Tracking rolls. Effects last one day per use. \$12 per use, 50 uses weigh 1 lb.

CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

Swashbucklers favor hilted stabbing and cut-and-thrust blades, often alongside cloaks or bucklers (p. B287), or – for buccaneers – hatchets (p. B271). To hasten weapon choice and aid comparison, the *Swashbukler Weapons Table* (below) lists *all* the “classic” swords and knives from the **Basic Set**, plus extras looted from **GURPS Low-Tech** and **GURPS Martial Arts**. The higher thrusting damage for the shortsword is a deliberate revision that benefits *all* delvers. This table excludes strangely named weapons from the Forbidden East, which are the tools of martial artists and ninja.

Swashbukler Weapons Table

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST	Notes
BRAWLING or DX							
Backsword	thr cr	C	0	\$550	3	–	[1, 2]
Cutlass	thr cr	C	0	\$500	2	–	[1, 2]
BROADSWORD (DX-5, Rapier-4, Saber-4, Shortsword-2, or Two-Handed Sword-4)							
Absurd Rapier	sw+1 cut	1-3	0U	\$1,500	4.5	11	[3]
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	2, 3	0	–	–	11	
Backsword	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$550	3	10	[2]
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	10	
Bastard Sword	sw+1 cut	1, 2	0U	\$650	5	11	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 cr	2	0U	–	–	11	
Broadsword	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$500	3	10	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 cr	1	0	–	–	10	
Cavalry Saber	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$500	3	10	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	10	
Edged Rapier	sw cut	1, 2	0	\$1,000	3	10	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1, 2	0	–	–	10	
Estoc	thr+2 imp	1	0	\$500	3	10	[4]
<i>or</i>	sw+1 cr	1	0	–	–	10	
Longsword	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$700	4	10	
<i>or</i>	thr+2 imp	1, 2	0	–	–	10	
Thrusting Bastard Sword	sw+1 cut	1, 2	0U	\$750	5	11	
<i>or</i>	thr+2 imp	2	0U	–	–	11	
Thrusting Broadsword	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$600	3	10	
<i>or</i>	thr+2 imp	1	0	–	–	10	

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>Reach</i>	<i>Parry</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Notes</i>
MAIN-GAUCHE (DX-5, Knife-4, Rapier-3, Saber-3, or Smallsword-3)							
Dagger	thr-1 imp	C	0F	\$20	0.25	5	[5]
Large Knife	sw-2 cut	C, 1	0F	\$40	1	6	
<i>or</i>	thr imp	C	0F	–	–	6	[5]
Long Knife	sw-1 cut	C, 1	0F	\$120	1.5	7	
<i>or</i>	thr imp	C, 1	0F	–	–	7	[6]
Main-Gauche	sw-3 cut	C, 1	0F	\$50	1.25	6	[2]
<i>or</i>	thr imp	C, 1	0F	–	–	6	[6]
Rondel Dagger	thr imp	C	0F	\$40	1	6	[4, 6, 7]
Small Knife	sw-3 cut	C, 1	0F	\$30	0.5	5	
<i>or</i>	thr-1 imp	C	0F	–	–	5	[5]
Stiletto	thr-1 imp	C	0F	\$20	0.25	5	[4, 6]

RAPIER (DX-5, Broadsword-4, Main-Gauche-3, Saber-3, or Smallsword-3)

Edged Rapier	sw cut	1, 2	0F	\$1,000	3	10	[8]
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1, 2	0F	–	–	10	
Light Edged Rapier	sw-1 cut	1	0F	\$700	2.25	8	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0F	–	–	8	
Light Rapier	thr+1 imp	1	0F	\$400	2	8	
Rapier	thr+1 imp	1, 2	0F	\$500	2.75	9	

SABER (DX-5, Broadsword-4, Main-Gauche-3, Rapier-3, Shortsword-4, or Smallsword-3)

Saber	sw-1 cut	1	0F	\$700	2	8	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0F	–	–	8	

SHORTSWORD (DX-5, Broadsword-2, Knife-4, Saber-4, or Smallsword-4)

Cutlass	sw cut	1	0	\$500	2	8	[2]
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	8	
Long Knife	sw-1 cut	1	0	\$120	1.5	7	[9]
<i>or</i>	thr imp	C, 1	0	–	–	7	
Shortsword	sw cut	1	0	\$400	2	8	
<i>or</i>	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	8	

SMALLSWORD (DX-5, Main-Gauche-3, Rapier-3, Saber-3, or Shortsword-4)

Dress Smallsword	thr imp	C, 1	0F	\$300	1	5	
Smallsword	thr+1 imp	1	0F	\$400	1.5	5	

TWO-HANDED SWORD (DX-5 or Broadsword-4)

Bastard Sword	sw+2 cut	1, 2	0	\$650	5	10†	
<i>or</i>	thr+2 cr	2	0	–	–	10†	
Greatsword	sw+3 cut	1, 2	0	\$800	7	12†	
<i>or</i>	thr+2 cr	2	0	–	–	12†	
Longsword	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$700	4	9†	
<i>or</i>	thr+3 imp	1, 2	0	–	–	9†	
Thrusting Bastard Sword	sw+2 cut	1, 2	0	\$750	5	10†	
<i>or</i>	thr+3 imp	2	0	–	–	10†	
Thrusting Greatsword	sw+3 cut	1, 2	0	\$900	7	12†	
<i>or</i>	thr+3 imp	2	0	–	–	12†	

Notes

- [1] Hilt punch. Receives Brawling damage bonuses.
 [2] Metal hilt gives hand (only) DR 4, cumulative with glove DR, but is too cramped to accommodate *metal* gauntlets.
 [3] A 59" monstrosity of overcompensation, designed to beat even a halberdier to the first strike. Does *not* work with the Rapier skill or give a fencing parry, despite the name.
 [4] Reduces penalty for targeting chinks in armor (p. B400) by -2.
 [5] Can be thrown using Thrown Weapon (Knife).

- [6] Cannot be thrown *well* using Thrown Weapon (Knife) – but a clumsy attempt can be made at -4 to skill. Use the ranged combat stats in *Thrown Swords* (p. 32).
 [7] When wearing DR 4+ gauntlets, locks into place to give +2 to resist disarming.
 [8] Heavy and rigid enough to parry flails at the usual -4, despite being a fencing blade – even when using Rapier skill.
 [9] Considered a knife and cannot parry flails – even when using Shortsword skill.

ULTIMATE WEAPONS

With modest ST and light weapons, swashbucklers have low damage output even with their Weapon Master bonus. Consider some modifications to remedy this:

- *Fine* (+3 CF) or *very fine* (+19 CF), for +1 or +2 damage, respectively.
- *Penetrating Weapon* enchantment (+\$5,000), for armor divisor (2).
- *Puissance* enchantment (+\$5,000), for +1 damage.
- *Silver coating* (+2 CF), for bonus damage vs. certain monsters (p. B275).
- *Tempered glass* (+29 CF), for +1 cutting or impaling damage *per die*; see *Treasure Tables*, p. 33.
- *Vital Seeker* enchantment (+\$100 or +\$8,000), for +1 or +2 only to offset penalties to target the vitals; see *Treasure Tables*, p. 49.

Everything here “stacks.” Multiply the price of a good weapon by (1 + total CF) and add enchantment costs at the end. Divide final price tag by \$500 and round up to calculate the blade’s point cost as Signature Gear.

Swashin’ Weapon Modifiers

The true swashbuckler sometimes pays the armorer a little extra for a fancier blade.

Basket Hilt: A blade can have a wraparound hilt that works just like that of the cutlass and backsword on the weapon table: a hilt punch inflicts thrust instead of thrust-1, plus any Brawling bonus, and footnote [2] applies. This adds 0.25 lb. Any sword or fencing weapon: +0.25 CF.

Elaborate Hilt: Some hilts are fantasies of prongs and projections. Such a hilt (which can also be a basket hilt!) gives +1 to Parry, *not* cumulative with the DB of bucklers, cloaks, etc. For instance, a duelist wielding a DB 1 buckler and a sword with an elaborate hilt would get +1 to Block, Dodge, and Parry for the buckler – but struck from the side where the buckler doesn’t count, or fighting without the buckler, she would *still* get +1 to Parry from the hilt. This adds 0.25 lbs. Any sword or fencing weapon: +0.5 CF.

Whippy: Any good sword is flexible, but some are made so thin and so well that they spring back unharmed from crazy amounts of bending. Such a blade cannot parry flails even if that type normally could; it just bends aside. This lets it flex around shields and weapons, for -1 to enemy Block and Parry rolls – and when *it* parries, it enjoys -1 to odds of breakage (cumulative with -1 or -2 for fine or very fine). Finally, its Tip

Slash (p. 32) gets +1 to damage and forces anyone wounded on the arm or hand to roll against Will, modified by the shock penalty, to avoid dropping anything held in that hand. A whippy weapon cannot be cheap, solid silver, or tempered glass. Any sword or fencing weapon: +3 CF.

MAGIC ITEMS

Swashbucklers most often seek out magic swords (for ideas, see *Ultimate Weapons*, above), cloaks or bucklers with the Deflect enchantment, and clothing or light armor with enhanced DR. Several artifacts almost seem to have been created with such heroes in mind, however. Here are a few examples, none of which are *exclusive* to swashbucklers.

Astounding Swing-Line

Power Item: 7 FP (lariat) or 13 FP (whip)

This shimmering 10-yard lariat – apparently woven from spider silk and gold thread – functions normally in combat (*Lariats*, p. B411) or when used to snare objects in order to drag them closer. Either function requires the Lasso skill and a standard ranged attack.

When thrown to snag an inanimate object for daring acts, this artifact’s true properties are revealed. If the holder utters the command word woven into the rope while tossing it (the throw takes an Attack maneuver in combat), the noose will seek out the sturdiest anchor in the chosen direction; e.g., chandelier, flag pole, rocky protrusion, or ship’s rigging. Roll against the *highest* of DX, Lasso, or Throwing to hit, ignoring penalties for range, darkness, posture, and footing. On a failure – or if nothing capable of bearing the user’s weight is within 10 yards (plus his height, if thrown upward) – the lariat can be reclaimed with a tug and a single Ready maneuver. If the line successfully finds a suitable target, though, it instantly secures itself and remains fastened until the owner says the command word, which again makes it possible to ready the lasso in a mere second.

The Astounding Swing-Line works normally for climbing, swinging, and other stunts (*Dungeons*, pp. 7-8). If the person who threw it would fall because of a failure or critical failure on Acrobatics or Climbing, it will attempt to seek his grasp and save him! Reroll the botched attempt and choose the *better* of the two results.

The rope can support an amazing 3,000 lbs. This great strength makes it harder to cut: DR 3, HP 2. It loses its magic if severed. \$20,800, 3 lbs.

A whip-based version made of monster-hide leather has only *seven* yards of reach and functions as a whip in combat. The magic is identical. It uses the Whip skill, can support 1,000 lbs., and has DR 3, HP 6. \$19,200, 3.5 lbs.

Was a great swordmaker, my father. When the six-fingered man appeared and requested a special sword, my father took the job. He slaved a year before it was done.

– William Goldman, *The Princess Bride*

Hero's Mask

Power Item: 4 FP

This domino mask (p. 31) bears a supernatural imbue ment flowing from the residual spiri tual energy of its legendary owner. Wearers with any of Impulsiveness, On the Edge, Overcon fidence, or Trickster grow foolishly carefree in their anonymity: -3 on self-control rolls for those dis advantages – and also for Com pulsive Gambling, Greed, or any similar problem when rolling to avoid accepting a bet, fee, or dare to do something outrageous. However, they also gain the ben efits of Daredevil (p. B47), and those who *already* have Daredevil are at +2 on all skill rolls when taking unnecessary risks!

Wearers who lack all of Impul siveness, On the Edge, Overcon fidence, and Trickster experience no special effects, good or bad.

Such masks generally get their owners killed and thus show up at magic shops at low prices. Each is named for its original owner. \$7,500, 0.25 lb.

Indestructible Garb

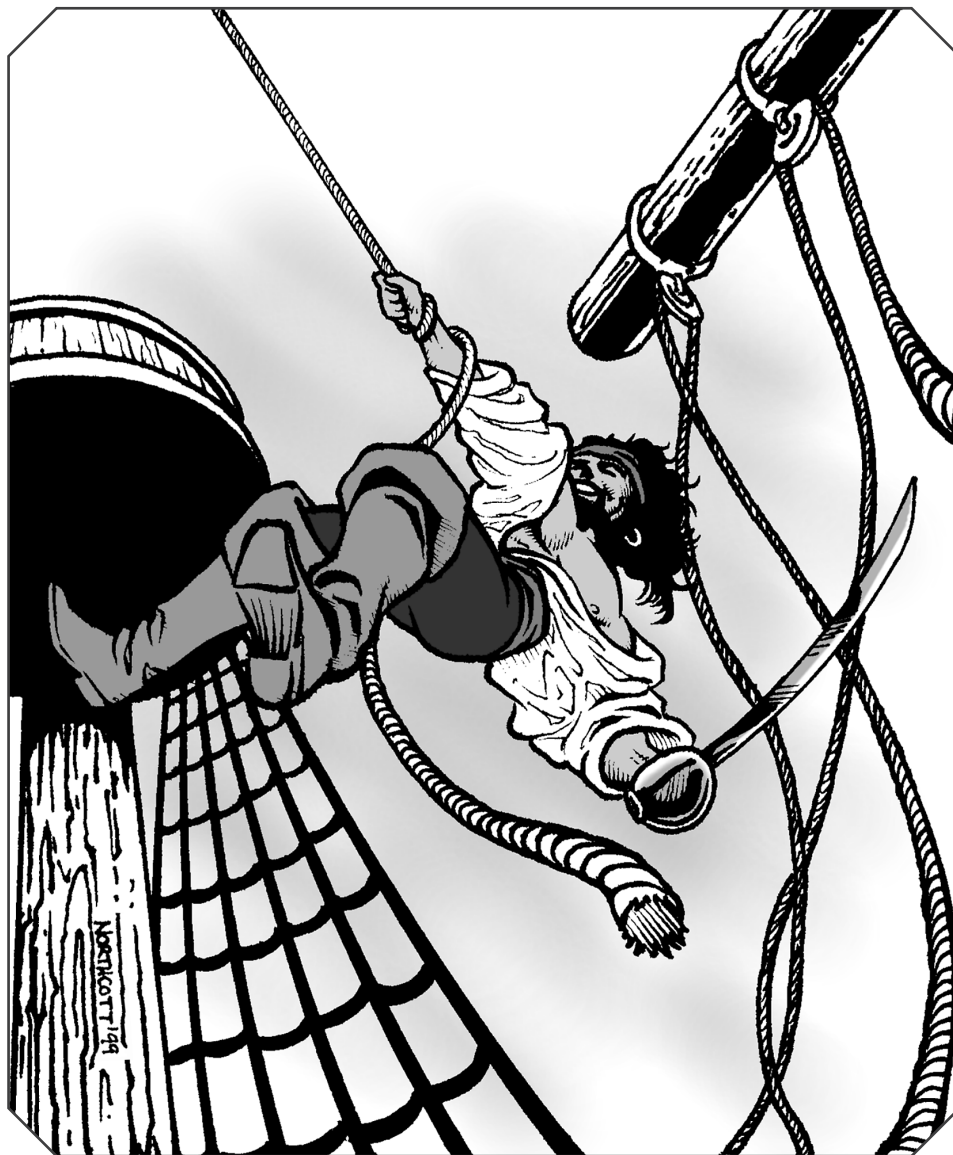
Any garment can be enchanted to be proof against soiling, stain ing, tearing, and so on – though the high cost of such magic makes it rare on anything besides cloaks and regal robes. Such clothes never lose value as described under *Dressing to Kill* (pp. 30-32). While this doesn't give the *wearer* DR, the filth-repelling properties do mean that only exposed body parts ever get dirty or are vul nerable to contact agents. Adds \$12,000 to the price of any cloak or suit of clothing.

Scabbard of the Smith

Power Item: 6 FP (S), 7 FP (M), or 8 FP (L)

This ornate, magical scabbard keeps any sword it holds in top condition. If the blade has spent at least one hour in the sheath, the first blow that connects within a minute of the weapon being drawn gets +1 cutting or impaling dam age for sharpness. The bonus is lost if the sword is out for more than a minute.

Even better, if the sword is shattered – by a deliberate attack, parry, Shatter spell, etc. – but not dissolved or disin tegrated, and the pieces can be gathered (make a Search roll if in doubt) and placed in the sheath, the sword will be fully repaired after one day, as if by a Repair spell (*GURPS Magic*, p. 118). This won't restore supernatural properties unless



they have the *artistic, materials, or racial* origin (*Treasure Tables*, p. 50).

The scabbard doesn't magically resize itself to all blades. The smallest can hold only daggers and knives (Reach C to C, 1): \$8,600, 0.5 lb. Mid-sized ones can accommodate any sword with maximum Reach 1: \$16,800, 1 lb. Large ones suffice for weapons up to Reach 2: \$24,900, 2 lbs. Users of even bigger blades are out of luck!

Swift-Strike Weapon

Swift-Strike is a new enchantment for weapons that have an associated Fast-Draw specialty *and* don't become unready after attacking. In practice, this means knives, fencing weapons, swords, and (occasionally) sticks or staffs. The weapon gives the user a bonus to Fast-Draw, to offset Rapid Strike penalties (for the total number of attacks, and this cannot give a *net* bonus), and in any Quick Contest to see who attacks first – but only with that weapon. This is +1 for \$4,000, +2 for \$16,000, or +3 for \$80,000. Only the +1 level is usually for sale at magic shops.

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The pen is mightier than the sword . . . if the sword is very short, and the pen is very sharp.

– Terry Pratchett, *The Light Fantastic*

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