

# GURPS®

Fourth Edition

# DUNGEON FANTASY™ 16

## WILDERNESS ADVENTURES™

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# STEVE JACKSON GAMES

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*“And now,” cried Max, “let the wild rumpus start!”*

*– Maurice Sendak,  
Where the Wild Things Are*

# INTRODUCTION

*This can be an adventure in itself: the party is sent to explore and map the trackless waste, virgin planet, mysterious dungeon, steaming jungle, dead city, or whatever.*

– **GURPS Basic Set**

It's strange that hack-'n'-slash gaming is so dungeon-bound, given how many of the sword-and-sorcery tales that sowed the seeds were set outdoors. Conan, the archetypal monster-slaying freebooter, got his start fighting and pillaging his way across the wilds. Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser, fortune-seekers extraordinaire, likewise spent a lot of time trudging and sailing. The saga of Middle Earth saw heroes of all professions slogging through forests, mountains, and marshes – and featured battles involving giant eagles, huge wolves, and walking trees. Yet what stood out was that fantasy adventurers, unlike most others, *also* delved into caves, mines, sewers, and tombs. Which didn't change the fact that they had the wind in their hair most days and slept under the stars most nights.

**GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** tends to overlook the trip in favor of the destination, too. It has “Dungeon” in the name. The supplement on adventure planning and adventuring activities is titled **Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons**. Could it be less subtle?

**Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures** sets out to redress this shortcoming. It looks back over **Dungeon Fantasy 1 to 15** (that's why it's so *long*) and adds extra detail where outdoor action is concerned. Chapter 1 advises players on abilities and equipment for wilderness quests; Chapter 2 holds expanded rules for travel, camping, exploration, outdoor hazards, and fun with rope and wooden stakes; and Chapter 3 counsels the GM on how to use Chapter 2 to challenge heroes built with Chapter 1 in mind. In short, this supplement provides everything needed to drag delvers into the fresh air to discover the joys of quicksand and sunburn!

Not that this stuff is *only* useful under the sun. Many a dungeon is home to wilderness environments and dangers ranging from quicksand pits, through underground vegetation for monsters to lurk in, to subterranean rivers as broad and as swift as the outdoor kind. A mega-dungeon might be so extensive that the GM wants more-detailed rules for travel, camping, and so on. And many a fantasy tale borrows from classical myth, portraying an underworld almost indistinguishable from the outdoors. Everything here works in *those* situations, too.

## PUBLICATION HISTORY

This is the first edition of **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 16: Wilderness Adventures**. It refers to earlier **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy** volumes to enhance rather than reiterate, but invokes **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers** and **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons** often enough that the reader will find it more useful with those supplements in hand. Except for liberties taken in the name of fantasy, equipment stats are consistent with **GURPS Low-Tech**, **GURPS Low-Tech Companion 3: Daily Life and Economics**, and even **GURPS High-Tech**. This work doesn't repeat those ones verbatim, however.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean “Dr. Kromm” Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every **GURPS** product since. He developed, edited, or wrote dozens of **GURPS Third Edition** projects between 1995 and 2002. In 2004, he produced the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition** with David Pulver. Since then, he has created **GURPS Powers** (with Phil Masters), **GURPS Martial Arts** (with Peter Dell'Orto), and the **GURPS Action**, **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**, and **GURPS Power-Ups** series . . . and the list keeps growing. Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, mixology, and most recently tango. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie.

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: [info@sjgames.com](mailto:info@sjgames.com). Resources include:

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*Bibliographies.* Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the resources that interest you! Go to each book's web page and look for the “Bibliography” link.

*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.

# CHAPTER ONE

# WHO GOES THERE?

To fight and loot under the open sky, adventurers need suitable abilities, companions, and equipment. Some heroes live for this stuff – they literally *track down* old friends in town, pitch a tent to sleep indoors, bring their tiger everywhere

(“She’s tame . . . oops.”), and contemplate mounted combat in the dungeon. Others need help. For the unprepared, the wilderness can be as harsh as any labyrinth!

## FROM DELVERS TO OUTDOORSMEN

First, a word to druids and scouts: You’re *already* wilderness-prepared, and can skim this part – though if you do, you’ll miss the gushing about how wonderful you are. That also goes for your illiterate barbarian friends; please read it to them (slowly).

For everyone else, there’s the matter of how to use existing abilities to succeed at the occasional wilderness expedition – because short-term, even the most city-bred thief or agoraphobic dwarf can find ways to be useful. Beyond that, there’s shattering stereotypes to show that barbarians, druids, and scouts aren’t the *only* adventurers who can be career outdoorsmen. The following notes discuss both situations for each archetype, under “Wilderness Adventures” and “Wilderness Campaigns,” respectively. Obviously, anything that goes for adventures also holds for campaigns!

### Artificer

see *Sages*, p. 5

A technophile might seem out of place in the no-tech wilderness, but the artificer can make himself indispensable by providing the party with outdoor gear.

*Wilderness Adventures:* Any artificer can use Gizmos to conjure minor survival gear; e.g., alchemist’s matches, rations, and uses of first aid kits. He can also exploit Quick Gadgeteer to adapt carts into rafts, tents into fishing nets, and so on. Less cinematically, his Armoury skills make him handy at *Makeshift Weapons* (p. 45), while his Traps skill is invaluable for leaving nasty surprises (*Traps*, pp. 36-37).

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A dedicated wilderness artificer should consider associating his starting Equipment Bonds with outdoor gear to get +1 on relevant skills: Climbing for climbing spikes, Fishing for fishhooks and line, Navigation for a compass, Survival for personal basics, etc. He might select additional

Equipment Bonds for such kit, more Gizmos so that he can always start a campfire and whip out food, and Lifting ST to travel swiftly even with a full pack. Cartography, Climbing, First Aid, Knot-Tying, and Stealth all make excellent background skill choices. Finally, he ought to *avoid* Pyromania – too many nature-loving entities take such conduct personally!

### Assassin

see *Ninja*, p. 9

An assassin is an expert stalker, if not a wilderness-optimized one like a scout. He can considerably increase a group’s firepower in outdoor ambushes.

*Wilderness Adventures:* A standard assassin will get good mileage out of his Poisons skill to extract plant toxins (*Poisons*, p. 45) and his Traps skill to set snares, pits, and so on (*Traps*, pp. 36-37). His incredible Stealth skill is *extremely* valuable when scouting ahead or ambushing enemies.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* The wilderness assassin ought to consider increasing Per to improve many key outdoor skills; raising Basic Move for swift travel; adding Flexibility and/or Perfect Balance to assist him at climbing trees and negotiating narrow crossings; and selecting Gizmos in order to pull out survival essentials as well as deadly surprises. Choosing Bow or Crossbow as his main ranged-weapon skill is most effective. At least *some* background skill points should buy Cartography, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, and perhaps Seamanship.

### Barbarian

see *Adventurers*, pp. 4-5

As one of the three main outdoor professionals, the barbarian owns the wilderness. He’s *particularly* good at long hauls with heavy packs.



*Wilderness Adventures:* A barbarian's Outdoorsman advantage makes him the go-to guy for tasks involving Camouflage, Fishing, Mimicry, Naturalist, Navigation, Survival, or Tracking – and the GM may follow the advice in **GURPS Power-Ups 3: Talents** and apply the Talent bonus to Weather Sense, too. High HT makes him exceptional at Hiking and Swimming, while impressive ST and good Basic Move allow him to keep up while lugging supplies for the long haul.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* Even a barbarian can prioritize wilderness adventuring over combat. Advantage points should buy more Per (aiding Fishing, Survival, and Tracking) and some of Absolute Direction (boosting Navigation), Animal Empathy, Discriminatory Smell (excellent for Tracking), and Temperature Tolerance. Lifting ST is nice but almost overkill . . . unless the barbarian wants to haul camping gear for an entire group without slowing down! Bow is the most valuable ranged-weapon skill. Handy background skills are Climbing, First Aid, and Observation, but Seamanship or Skiing suits some origins. A barbarian who *knows* he can avoid technology and crowded cities can pay for much of this with Low TL, Phobia (Crowds), and Phobia (Machinery) without really sacrificing effectiveness.

## Bard

see *Adventurers*, pp. 5-6

While the bard is out of his element away from towns and people, he can help out by sending long-distance signals, speaking with beasts, and boosting perceptions and recall.

*Wilderness Adventures:* Outdoor adventures often involve wild animals, and the bard can use Musical Influence to soothe the savage breast (*Dungeons*, p. 10). His musical skills come in handy for *Signaling* (p. 28), too.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A bard who operates mainly in wilderness needs a lot of fine-tuning. Advantage points not invested in suitable special abilities (keep reading!) ought to go toward a few of Acute Hearing (a keen musician's ear can hear footfalls even when visibility is nil), Penetrating Voice (for calling distant allies), Photographic Memory (for retracing routes), and Wild Talent (to "recall" Area Knowledge and Survival specialties). Skill choices should include Bow to help with ranged combat; a Current Affairs specialty for a major *wilderness* region (bandit-infested desert, haunted forest, etc.); and Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, and Observation. As for special abilities, Musical Influence is the only bardic skill that affects beasts, while Mimicry, Speak with Animals, Subsonic Speech (for its long range), and Telecommunication (for its *longer* range) are all valuable Bard-Song options. The best bardic spells for outdoor scenes are sense-enhancers like Keen (Sense) and Alertness; Vigil, for standing watch; and long-range signals such as Communication, Dream Projection, Dream Sending, Mind-Sending, and Telepathy.

## Cleric

see *Adventurers*, pp. 6-7

As most parties' main healers, clerics are essential wherever the heroes travel. Healing spells, Esoteric Medicine, and First Aid can treat carnivorous-ape bites in the jungle and dungeon alike.

*Wilderness Adventures:* The cleric remains useful by patching up his pals as usual – the GM doesn't *need* to invent ways to make him even more important!

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A wilderness cleric should serve a deity of a nature-oriented realm (see *Wilderness Holy Folk*, p. 6) and consider taking advantage of Holy Might to obtain a suitable divine servitor (p. 15) as an Ally – or even his god as a Patron.

# Wilderness Training

A dungeon explorer may choose to give up blue slime, green slime, and red slime for rain, swamp rot, and mosquitoes. The most decisive way to tackle this is to purchase a lens that adds barbarian, druid, or scout abilities. Such lenses appear in *Dungeon Fantasy 3: The Next Level* for the professions in *Dungeon Fantasy 1: Adventurers*, and alongside the templates for archetypes described in later volumes (mentalists, ninja, scholars, and so on). The -barbarian lens best suits warriors with respectable ST and HT; the -druid lens, high-IQ types; and the -scout lens, paragons of DX and Per. For instance, a thief's ideal choice would be thief-scout, but thief-druid could work; thief-barbarian would be dicey.

Alternatively, the GM might allow a special lens as a power-up for any delver (even a barbarian, druid, or scout who feels inadequate):

*Wilderness-Trained* (+15 points): Spend a total of 15 points on Climbing and Stealth, both (A) DX-1 [1] or DX [2]; Camouflage (E) IQ [1] or IQ+1 [2]; Navigation (Land) and Weather Sense, both (A) IQ-1 [1] or IQ [2]; Swimming (E) HT [1] or HT+1 [2]; Hiking (A) HT-1 [1] or HT [2]; Fishing (E) Per [1] or Per+1 [2]; and Survival (any)

(A) Per-1 [1] or Per [2]. • All skill levels must be 10+. If high attributes or known skills enable this for less than 15 points, spend remaining points on any of HT +1 [10]; Per +1 or +2 [5 or 10]; Boating (Unpowered) or Riding (Horse), both (A) DX-1 [1] or DX [2]; Cartography, Disguise (Animals), Prospecting, or Traps, all (A) IQ-1 [1] or IQ [2]; Mimicry (Animal Sounds or Bird Calls), Naturalist, or Pharmacy (Herbal), all (H) IQ-2 [1], IQ-1 [2], or IQ [4]; Skating or Skiing, both (H) HT-2 [1], HT-1 [2], or HT [4]; or Observation, Survival (any other), or Tracking, all (A) Per-1 [1] or Per [2].

When using *Training Expenses* (*The Next Level*, p. 43) and *Buying Power-Ups* (*Dungeon Fantasy 11: Power-Ups*, pp. 7-8), this is a somewhat common training regimen that costs \$450 – often in the form of a "temple donation" to druids. Unless the GM insists on realism for some reason, PCs who cough up \$450 and 15 points can complete this program in three weeks. As that's no more costly than lounging around town (*Dungeon Fantasy 2: Dungeons*, p. 4), heroes with time, cash, and points should consider doing this before their first big wilderness adventure.

Among the standard ranged-weapon skills for clerics, Sling shoots farthest, which is important outdoors. Good background skills are Climbing, Hiking, Observation, and Stealth. Fitting spells – apart from those for healing – provide protection from the elements (e.g., Coolness, Resist Cold, Resist Fire, Resist Lightning, Umbrella, and Warmth) or supply basic survival needs (Create Food, Create Water, Essential Food, Monk's Banquet, Purify Water, etc.). Breathe Water is useful for exploration, Watchdog is effective at warding campsites, and Earthquake and Storm are impressive in natural settings. Finally, a Vow of vegetarianism goes over well with protectors of wild creatures.

### Wilderness Holy Folk

Not all “nature priests” are druids (below). When using *Dungeon Fantasy 7: Clerics*, a wise choice of patron deity can turn a cleric (pp. 5-6) or a holy warrior (p. 7) into a crack wilderness adventurer. Especially good is a god of the hunt (adding druidic abilities and extensive outdoor skills, and converting the cleric into a variant druid), a god of messengers and rogues (opening the door to Outdoorsman and better Per and Basic Move, and reimagining the holy warrior as a scout), a sea god (granting skills, special abilities, and clerical spells useful when “outdoors” means “the sea”), or a storm god (bestowing abilities tied to flight and the natural elements, and offering clerics many suitable spells). An earth or sun god would also be thematic, though these options aren't backed as strongly with practical capabilities. The GM decides whether sanctity or *Nature's Strength* (p. 53) underlies such delvers' powers, and should inform the players of this.

### Demonologist

see *Summoners*, pp. 6-7

While marginal in wilderness situations, the demonologist can at least conjure flying demons to scout the wilds – and work dire magic to suppress nature spirits who object.

*Wilderness Adventures*: The average demonologist lacks useful outdoor abilities. The GM ought to consider involving *demons* (who are quite willing to haunt deserts, forests, valleys, etc.) to give him something to do.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: The wilderness demonologist should think about spending some advantage points on Photographic Memory (to remember paths) and on Allies capable of scouting and tracking (such as a flying devilkin familiar or a bound standard demon with the Hound of Hell package). He would do well to *avoid* the Frightens Animals disadvantage! Handy background skill choices are Cartography, Climbing, Crossbow, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, and Stealth. Though demonologists don't have spells that are specifically useful outdoors, nature spirits are still *spirits*, subject to Affect Spirits, Banish, Entrap Spirit, Materialize, Pentagram, Repel Spirits, Sense Spirit, Solidify, and Turn Spirit – and Scryguard can thwart rivals who would use magic to track the group or reveal their ambushes.

### Druid

see *Adventurers*, p. 7

Another of the three key outdoor professionals, the druid is the foremost spellcaster in the wilderness, rivaling even a well-rounded wizard.

*Wilderness Adventures*: The druid is almost the *only* choice when it comes to Herb Lore or Pharmacy (Herbal), and the preferred one for tasks involving Animal Handling, Camouflage, Disguise (Animals), Mimicry, Naturalist, Survival, or Weather Sense. With Climbing, Hiking, and Stealth, he's no slouch at physical feats, either – though barbarians (pp. 4-5) and scouts (pp. 8-9) are better. And naturally, *all* spells and Druidic abilities are useful in wild places.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: A druid who wants to be an outdoor adventurer rather than an inscrutable mystic should earmark advantage points to increase Per or Green Thumb, or to add Animal Friend or Outdoorsman. Valuable skill picks are First Aid, Hidden Lore (Nature Spirits), and Observation, plus Sling for long-range combat. Though there are no bad Druidic abilities, Terrain Adaptation and Allies capable of scouting (*Critters*, pp. 12-14) are useful even when animals, plants, and nature spirits are absent. Similarly, all druidic spells are relevant, but while fogs, storms, and volcanoes are fun, allies might hope for spells that aid navigation (Find Direction, Know Location, Pathfinder, Remember Path, and Tell Position), stealth (Conceal, False Tracks, Hide Path, Light Tread, and Walk Through Plants), travel (Quick March, Snow Shoes, and Swim), and protection from the elements (Resist Cold, Resist Lightning, Umbrella, and Weather Dome). Finally, a druid can show his munchkin colors by paying for some of these goodies with disadvantages that won't hurt in the wilderness – e.g., Intolerance (Urbanites), Phobias (Crowds or Machinery), and Vow (Never sleep indoors) – and ones that may actually help him avoid its denizens' ire, notably Sense of Duty (Wild nature) and Vow (Vegetarianism).

### Elementalist

see *Summoners*, pp. 9-10

Elementalists can exploit the connection between *magical* elements and *natural* ones to become surprisingly effective outdoors.

*Wilderness Adventures*: Though elementalists don't automatically get advantages and skills for dealing with the outdoors, it's hard to avoid magical abilities and spells that are useful there. And Hidden Lore (Elementals) *does* cover elementals found in nature.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: A “generalist” makes a better wilderness elemental than a “specialist,” as all the elements are abundant in the great outdoors. (*Exception*: If the GM considers *wood* an element, then access to the Outdoorsman ability and Plant spells makes wood specialists the best wilderness elementalists of all.) Valuable advantages are Elemental abilities such as Amphibious, Doesn't Breathe, and Pressure Support for underwater exploration; Terrain Adaptation, Walk on Air, and Walk on Liquid for travel and scouting; and of course Temperature Tolerance. The common Frightens Animals and Pyromania disadvantages are best avoided. Recommended secondary skill choices are Prospecting, Psychology (Elementals) for “wild” elementals, and Sling for shooting far-off threats, while background skills should include some of Cartography, Climbing, Hiking, Observation, Stealth, and Weather Sense.

When it comes to spells, the Air, Earth, and Water colleges offer many exploration and survival options.

## Holy Warrior

see *Adventurers*, pp. 7-8

Evil can be found everywhere, even outdoors, and the holy warrior is prepared to fight it there – especially if he has a trusty mount to ride or troops to lead.

*Wilderness Adventures*: The typical holy warrior, like the demonologist (p. 6), calls for the GM to taint Nature with Evil to give him something to do. Considering his Born War Leader advantage and associated Leadership, Strategy, and Tactics skills, though, there's another option: Let him lead the sort of crusading army that won't fit indoors!

*Wilderness Campaigns*: The wilderness holy warrior fights for the god of an outdoor realm (see *Wilderness Holy Folk*, p. 6) and picks Holy abilities such as Ally in the shape of a nature- or travel-oriented divine servitor (p. 15), or a celestial steed or a holy hound (*Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies*, p. 13) – or even a deity as a Patron. The GM may also let him choose a Higher Purpose pertaining to killing a wilderness-dwelling evil, or at least Physiology and Psychology specialties for such monsters. The best choice for ranged combat is Crossbow, while good background skill picks are Climbing, Hiking, Stealth, and Observation. The holy warrior is one of the few heroes capable of *Mounted Combat* (pp. 41-42); to gallop down that path, he needs Lance and Riding (perhaps instead of Hiking). Finally, Vow (Own no more than horse can carry) is the defining disadvantage of such worthies!

## Innkeeper

see *Taverns*, p. 8

Though the innkeeper is cut out for town, he can act as the tough camp cook, carrying the group's survival gear and abusing it in surprising ways.

*Wilderness Adventures*: An innkeeper forced outdoors can use Improvised Weapons (Kitchenware) to have his group basics (*Adventurers*, p. 23) do double duty as a hatchet, small mace, and large knife (cleaver, frying pan, and kitchen knife). Wild Talent lets him invoke Area Knowledge and Survival specialties for any locale. And honestly, Crossbow is better-suited for outdoor use than for the barroom. Innkeepers can also acquire polar beer (assume it instantly cancels 4 FP lost to heat, p. 30) and whisker gin, even if other PCs cannot; see *Dungeon Fantasy 10: Taverns*, p. 31.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: The "wilderness innkeeper" is a camp or caravan cook. He should spend his copious advantage points on several of Per, Discriminatory Smell (for tracking), Photographic Memory (never get lost), Gizmos (survival basics on demand), Lifting ST (lug cookware without slowing down), Penetrating Voice (signal allies), and additional Wild Talent – and the GM should consider allowing Jack of All Trades and Piecemeal Knowledge (for Herb Lore and spells like Climbing, Ignite Fire, Seek Water, and Test Food) from *Power-Ups*. Among his many skill choices, the best are Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, Stealth, and improved Crossbow – and the GM may let him swap "urban" skills for Survival skills and Recipe perks (*Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen*, p. 24).

## Knight

see *Adventurers*, pp. 8-9

Outdoors, the knight fills his usual role as "primary fighter" but might back this up by fighting from horseback, leading troops, and being almost as good at archery as the scout (pp. 8-9).

*Wilderness Adventures*: Any knight's primary role on wilderness adventures is killing bandits, monsters, etc. – and like the holy warrior (above), he might even get to command outdoor-sized forces thanks to his Born War Leader advantage, which raises Leadership, Strategy, and Tactics. Also, Armoury is handy for *Makeshift Weapons* (p. 45).

*Wilderness Campaigns*: A knight built for wilderness adventures should put some of his generous advantage allotment toward HT (which governs outdoor movement skills), Basic Speed (to raise Basic Move and better cover long distances), Penetrating Voice (to signal distant allies), and suitable varieties of Weapon Master (for bows, crossbows, or cavalry weapons, especially the lance). Strategic combat skill choices are one of Bow or Crossbow, with Fast-Draw (Arrow), for ranged engagements, and Lance and Riding for *Mounted Combat* (pp. 41-42). Practical background skills are Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, and Stealth.

## Martial Artist

see *Adventurers*, pp. 9-10

Even if he doesn't specialize in outdoor action, the martial artist is good at covering ground and doesn't rely on heavy gear that would slow him down.

*Wilderness Adventures*: Being swift and light on his feet – with high Basic Move and impressive skill at Jumping and Stealth – lets any martial artist excel at outdoor scouting and travel.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: A wilderness martial artist is remarkably effective. Between mundane advantages and Chi abilities, he can stack up Basic Move and Enhanced Move to become a formidable runner outdoors, where high speeds in straight lines make sense; exploit Flexibility and Perfect Balance for climbing; and enjoy the freedom of Super Jump without a roof overhead. Or he could focus his *mind*, raising Per and using Wild Talent to "know" how to survive. Among his mundane skill selections, Sling gives the best range, while Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, and Running are useful for survival. Chi skills that shine are Breath Control for diving, Flying Leap for soaring into the treetops, Light Walk for *Treetop Duels* (p. 40) and foiling enemy trackers, and Parry Missile Weapons to defend against the ranged attacks that dominate outdoor combat. Lastly, note that neither low Wealth levels nor Vows to fight unarmed seriously limit someone who travels light, living off the land.

## Mentalist

see *Psi*, pp. 15-16

Mentalists are another group who chiefly deal with their specialty wherever it arises – in the dungeon or in the wilds – but who can pick abilities to become effective outdoors.

*Wilderness Adventures*: Most mentalists aren't optimal for outdoor adventures. The GM must review a given adventurer's abilities and set things up so that the player has something to do.



*Wilderness Campaigns:* A wilderness mentalist can use psionic Intuition to reduce travel times, Levitation to finesse chasms and thin ice, Psight and Remote Viewing to scout, Psychometry to enhance or *replace* Tracking, and Telesend with the Coordinator or Spotter power-up to signal allies; see ***Dungeon Fantasy 14: Psi***, pp. 31-32 for these applications. Don't overlook the completely *mundane* options of Animal Empathy, Photographic Memory (for routes), Wild Talent (for temporarily remembering outdoor skills), and increased Per. Mentalists have several good skill choices, too – notably Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Observation, Stealth, and Tracking. Just avoid Pyrokinetic Bolt and Pyromania in worlds where nature entities loathe fire.

## Necromancer

see ***Summoners***, pp. 13-14

The most likely role for the necromancer in a wilderness setting is dealing with not-so-dead entities that haunt the wilds instead of towns or dungeons.

*Wilderness Adventures:* With high Night Vision and a respectable Stealth skill, the necromancer can assist with skulking around in the bushes after dark. His broad-based affinity for the undead is valuable in any outdoor destination described as “haunted” or “burial grounds.” On a *lengthy* adventure in the hinterlands, he might even accumulate a troublesomely large zombie army, unless the GM introduces something (probably angry nature spirits) to compensate for the absence of civilized social pressures.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A wilderness necromancer should pick mundane advantages like Photographic Memory (for memorizing trails) and Temperature Tolerance – and not overlook Higher Purpose (Maintain the natural order), which can be *quite* relevant in a natural setting. Necromantic abilities can help, too; a bound lesser ghost Ally can scout unseen nearly anywhere, Reduced Consumption helps conserve rations on the trail, and Silence is handy for night stalking (a recurring theme). Suitable skills are few in number: Climbing and Observation. Deathly spells are helpful only inasmuch as they affect nature spirits, recommending Affect Spirits, Command Spirit, Materialize, Sense Spirit, and Solidify. While Bad Smell, Frightens Animals, and Heliophobia are common, they're a bad idea on outdoor adventures . . . but far from civilized areas, nobody is likely to care about antisocial problems such as Social Stigma.

## Ninja

see ***Ninja***, p. 8

The ninja has so many ways to enhance sneaking and climbing that these define him on outdoor adventures: he scurries up trees and cliffs to pounce on the group's enemies.

*Wilderness Adventures:* Fleet-footed and a master of Climbing, Jumping, Stealth, and ranged combat, the ninja is valuable in wilderness action of the athletic, violent variety – though he must rely on allies to handle survival tasks. Traveling light and avoiding urban areas let the ninja enjoy his gifts while suffering few of the downsides of the mandatory Vow (Own no more than what can be carried) and Social Stigma (Minority Group).

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A wilderness ninja will benefit from Ninja Training abilities such as Lethal Weapon to make sticks

and rocks deadly; Ninja Tools (keep reading!); One With Shadows and Silence for lurking; Perfect Balance for climbing up high (and Catfall for dropping back down on victims); and Super Jump for hurdling inconvenient chasms, rivers, etc. Handy mundane advantages are high Basic Move, Flexibility (again, for climbing), and Signature Gear (ninja hardware). To these traits add skills like First Aid and Observation, plus Bow and Fast-Draw (Arrow) for ranged combat – and Light Walk to leave no tracks and even run across treetops. Suitable equipment (***Dungeon Fantasy 12: Ninja***, pp. 12-19) is *essential*, particularly alongside Ninja Tools and Signature Gear; consider the folding raft, inflatable tabi, neko-de (for climbing), ninja's firebox, ninja-to saya (as a snorkel), waterproof torch, and any Stealth-enhancing ninja suit.

## Scholar

see ***Sages***, pp. 8-9

The scholar isn't the burden that his books are. Given time to study a place, he can survive there. Even without preparation, he can recollect and guess enough to guide and support the party in any environment.

*Wilderness Adventures:* A scholar's core advantages are incredibly useful outdoors: Book-Learned Wisdom to temporarily acquire Area Knowledge and Survival skills for any region; Eidetic Memory to recall the party's route; Intuition to guess the path; and enhanced Wild Talent to “remember” *any* outdoor skill or spell. To all this add skill at Cartography (for mapping the journey) and Observation.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* The scholar who *specializes* in outdoor adventures is even more useful! Good advantage picks are Absolute Direction, Speak with Animals, and improvements to Per, Book-Learned Wisdom, Eidetic Memory, and Wild Talent. His primary skills should include an outdoors-oriented Hidden Lore specialty; secondary skills, several of Naturalist, Pharmacy (Herbal), Poisons, Prospecting, and Traps, plus Crossbow or Sling for ranged combat; and background skills, a few of Climbing, First Aid, Hiking, Navigation, Riding, Stealth, and Survival. Use cash or Signature Gear to acquire a collection of maps (***Dungeon Fantasy 4: Sages***, p. 14). *Avoid* Bad Sight and Hard of Hearing, however – these flaws, while archetypal, are crippling when dealing with long sightlines and concealed ambushers.

## Scout

see ***Adventurers***, pp. 10-11

One of three dedicated wilderness archetypes, the scout is an outdoorsman on a par with the barbarian (pp. 4-5), his archery expertise complementing the latter's melee might.

*Wilderness Adventures:* The scout is an expert at Camouflage, Observation, Survival, and Tracking, and adept at Cartography, Climbing, Hiking, Mimicry, and Navigation. High Per and Outdoorsman help here, and also grant respectable defaults with *other* outdoor skills. Mastery of Bow – alongside fair Stealth and Traps – extend the scout's dominance from survival to guerrilla combat.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* A scout who focuses on outdoor pursuits in themselves rather than as a complement to archery and bounty hunting should consider acquiring Absolute Direction and raising some of Per, Basic Move, and Outdoorsman.



He should also think about dedicating background skill points to improving the skills noted above and adding the likes of Boating, First Aid, Prospecting, Riding, Running, Skiing, Swimming, and Weather Sense. A scout can pay for much of this with disadvantages that won't hold him back in the wilds: Intolerance (Urbanites), Phobia (Crowds), Vows such as "Never sleep indoors" or "Own no more than what can be carried," and so on.

## Shaman

see *Summoners*, pp. 16-17

Usually hailing from primitive tribes, shamans live close to nature – and most possess at least *some* gifts of direct utility around animals, plants, and wild places.

*Wilderness Adventures:* Even the most spaced-out mushroom-eater is of use outdoors, being capable at Naturalist, Pharmacy (Herbal), Stealth, Survival, and Weather Sense.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* The nature guardian is an important shaman archetype; many folks see *all* shamans this way. On the mundane side, he should select advantage options such as Animal Friend, Outdoorsman, Temperature Tolerance, and better Per, plus skills in the vein of Area Knowledge, Bow, Camouflage, Cartography, Fishing, Navigation, Observation, Riding, Sling, and Traps. When it comes to the supernatural, essential gifts are Allies (pp. 10-15) such as animals and spirits of place . . . but there are many appropriate Shamanic abilities, notably Absolute Direction, Animal Empathy, Plant Empathy, Speak with Animals, and Speak with Plants. Spells mainly handle nature spirits (Affect Spirits, Astral Block, Astral Vision, Bind Spirit, Command Spirit, Entrap Spirit, Materialize, Pentagram, Repel Spirits, Solidify, Turn Spirit, and Sense Spirit), but there's practical magic, too: Beast Summoning, Predict Weather, Rider Within, Sense Observation, etc. Shamans can get many disadvantage points from things like Low TL, reduced Wealth, and social problems that won't matter a week's hike from the nearest settlement.

## Swashbuckler

see *Adventurers*, pp. 11-12

The dashing swordsman isn't a wilderness archetype. Though he can skewer bandits with aplomb, his highest priority should be learning outdoor skills.

*Wilderness Adventures:* To be useful, any swashbuckler relies on the GM sending a steady stream of enemies at the PCs. This remains true in wild places – he's a fighter, not an outdoorsman. The best one can say is that with high Basic Move and Stealth, he'll be able to keep up and participate in ambushes.

*Wilderness Campaigns:* The wilderness swashbuckler should spend some of his many advantage points on Basic Speed or Basic Move for speedy travel, and Perfect Balance for climbing trees and dashing across rolling logs. To be more useful, he ought to pick Climbing, First Aid, and Hiking – and perhaps Seamanship, if his outdoor life is the *pirate's* life. Truthfully, if anybody needs the Wilderness-Trained lens (p. 5), it's this guy . . . the GM may let the player divert starting advantage points toward this, even if that isn't an option for other PCs. Finally, spare swords are *essential* for those who lack the "insurance" of

## Super Naturals

Not all men are created equal. That goes double for races! A few nonhumans from *The Next Level* are particularly suited to wilderness adventures:

- *Air-infused* can use Walk on Air (or Flight, with power-ups) to scout, while *water-infused* are naturals at adventures involving bodies of water.
- *Celestials* and *infernals* don't all have useful gifts, but many don't breathe (and can venture underwater), can fly, and/or have Temperature Tolerance.
- *Elves* may add a Talent – Forest Guardian – that's of great value outdoors, especially in woodlands. *Wood elves* start with this. *Mountain elves'* vision, *sea elves'* underwater gifts, and *winged elves'* flight make them good at scouting.
- *Faerie folk* are highly thematic for wilderness gaming. *Fauns* have Animal Empathy and good Per, *leprechauns* can cherry-pick three druidic spells, and *pixies* can fly. *Nymphs* enjoy no special advantages outdoors, however.
- *Gargoyles* can fly, and blend in well in rocky environments.
- *Lizard men* are naturally adapted for desert or swamp movement, depending on their tribe.
- *Trolls*, with Discriminatory Smell and high Per, are scarily good trackers.
- *Wildmen* enjoy high Per and a raft of relevant advantages: Animal Empathy, Brachiator, Call of the Wild, Fur, and Temperature Tolerance.

Beast-men (cat-folk, coleopterans, dragon-blooded, etc.) are *thematic*, but be aware that they aren't necessarily *good* at outdoor tasks.

Signature Gear; a swordsman who shatters his only blade 500 miles from the closest armorer is worthless.

## Thief

see *Adventurers*, pp. 12-13

Swift travel, frequent climbs, watching from afar, and sneaky tactics describe outdoor adventures – and thieving. Assuming that thieves are strictly *urban* can be a fatal error.

*Wilderness Adventures:* Every thief contains the makings of a highwayman, pirate, or other outdoor rascal. Excellent Per means being a natural at key outdoor skills; high Basic Move benefits travel; and Flexibility and Perfect Balance almost guarantee success at *Stunts* (pp. 28-29). Add fiendish skill at Climbing and Stealth, and toss in Traps for deadly surprises (*Traps*, pp. 36-37), and the thief excels at guerilla warfare (if not at pitching tents).

*Wilderness Campaigns:* The wilderness thief bumps all that up a notch and threatens to unseat the scout (pp. 8-9) in many regards. He might boost Per and Basic Move even more, and tack on Gizmos to produce food and survival basics (doubtless stolen!). Then he can pick Bow, Crossbow, or Sling for long-range engagements; learn Cartography, Hiking, and Observation; and maybe add Poisons for plant toxins, or Seamanship if he is a pirate. And note that it's hard to get in trouble with traits like Compulsive Spending and Social Stigma (Criminal Record) when adventuring far from civilization.

## Wizard

see *Adventurers*, p. 13

Mana, not whether there's a roof overhead, influences wizardly magic. Animal, Plant, and Weather spells are off-limits, but that leaves plenty of tricks for outdoor adventuring.

*Wilderness Adventures*: The wizard, like the cleric (pp. 5-6), does what he always does: casts spells. Provided that the GM doesn't declare that vast regions lack mana, a wizard's magic is as useful outdoors as underground.

*Wilderness Campaigns*: For the true wilderness wizard, good advantages are Gizmos (which can conjure survival basics, not just occult oddities) and Photographic Memory (to recall routes). Wise skill selections include Cartography, Climbing,

First Aid, Hiking, and Stealth; Hidden Lore (Nature Spirits) and Physiology for outdoor monster types; and Sling for hitting distant targets when magic fails. Intelligent spell choice is critical. There are countless options, but the best are in the colleges of Food and Water (anything that creates or spins out food or water is worthwhile!), as well as Air (No-Smell for throwing trackers off the trail, Walk on Air for scouting, etc.), Fire (from Ignite Fire for campfires to Resist Cold, Resist Fire, and Warmth for harsh weather), Knowledge (especially Find Direction, Pathfinder, Remember Path, and Tell Position), Making and Breaking (when vital gear breaks in the boondocks, Repair is a life-saver), and Movement (from Quick March for hiking, through Flight for scouting, to Cloud-Vaulting for rapid travel). As for disadvantages, *avoid* Frightens Animals and Pyromania.

*Gandalf: I am looking for someone to share in an adventure that I am arranging, and it's very difficult to find anyone.*

*Bilbo: I should think so – in these parts! We are plain quiet folk and have no use for adventures. Nasty disturbing uncomfortable things! Make you late for dinner!*

– J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

# ALLIES

Gamers uninterested in playing outdoorsmen should check out the Allies in *Dungeon Fantasy 15: Henchmen* – and those in *Dungeon Fantasy 5: Allies* or *Dungeon Fantasy 9: Summoners*, if their PC has supernatural capabilities. These offer inexpensive ways for players who prefer dungeon- or town-oriented activities to contribute on outdoor adventures. For instance, a mundane henchman built on 50% of his master's points and around constantly (x4) costs 8 points, or just over half as much as the Wilderness-Trained lens (p. 5), yet can easily afford high levels of every skill on that lens. An extra body *does* mean more rations, tents, horses, and arguments – and more people to drag up mountains and hide in the bushes – but a strong, wilderness-savvy assistant is nearly always a net asset.

## HENCHMEN

A few henchmen from *Henchmen* are “naturals” at wilderness adventure:

*Archer*: A ranged combatant with skill 16+ is handy. As well, it's easy to get most of the skills on the Wilderness-Trained lens at decent levels by making suitable secondary and background choices, and then boosting these with some of Absolute Direction, Outdoorsman, and better Per. Players seeking such archers should specify that they're interested in the “scout” build under *Customization Notes*.

*Initiate*: Going in the “Nature-Worshipper” direction for personality, and selecting the “Druid” special abilities and spells, yields a capable outdoorsman. Players searching for such assistants may specify all of this, and should consider requesting the “hermit” or “itinerant” skill set under *Customization Notes*.

*Sage*: This choice becomes a good one if suitable skills are selected – notably, higher Cartography, plus Naturalist, Navigation, Observation, Pharmacy (Herbal), Prospecting, and Survival. Recruiters might seek a mapmaker or a naturalist, depending on whether they're trying to avoid boring courseplotting or get an advisor on wilderness dangers.

Heroes on a budget might even skimp down to 62-point henchmen. If so, the least-bad choices are:

*Cultist*: A druid followed by a cultist can cast larger outdoors-oriented spells using ceremonial magic. The energy increase is often enough to benefit more than one extra person, making the additional party member a net win. It's reasonable to ask that such NPCs know Naturalist, Pharmacy (Herbal), and outdoorsy secondary and background skills.

*Laborer*: A porter with extreme Lifting ST can carry enough supplies to cover his presence and then some. The “savage pack-bearer” under *Customization Notes* is of at least some use for his outdoor skills, too.

Conversely, delvers with points to burn may prefer extra-capable Allies. If so, two lenses are worth a look:

*Priest:* With the Outdoorsman advantage – and the “Druid” disadvantages and special abilities – this lens can turn any template into a capable wilderness spellcaster. The skill choices allow for respectable levels of Esoteric Medicine (Druidic), Herb Lore, Naturalist, Pharmacy (Herbal), and Weather Sense, too.

*Treasure-Hunter:* If the GM allows the henchman’s master to specify someone who hunts treasure *outdoors*, then it’s quite possible to get an expert at, say, Prospecting and many sorts of Survival, perhaps with nice adjuncts like Danger Sense, Lifting ST, and high Per.

Finally, a player who’s willing to spend points on a permanent Ally at the beginning of a wilderness adventure may get someone specifically suited to upcoming events. The GM might even let him specify advantages and skills! The trade-off? Such a henchman is precisely what’s needed *this* time but possibly never again. If the GM permits heroes to hire guides, though, they won’t be such paragons but merely random, greedy locals.

## Native Guide

62 points

You’re an expert on the region where you live and the terrain that dominates its interior. Nobody’s pack-bearer, you’re a self-motivated outdoorsman whose goals happen to align with the heroes’. You’re most likely impressionable, greedy, or bored, but it’s possible that you’re an outcast among your people – or alternatively, the “chosen one,” acting on some prophecy about foreigners showing up on a great quest.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 10 [0]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-2/1d; BL 20 lbs.; HP 10 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 13 [15]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 6.00 [10]; Basic Move 6 [0].

**Advantages:** Absolute Direction [5]. • 10 points chosen from among ST or HT +1 [10], Per +1 or +2 [5/level], FP +1 to +3 [3/level], Basic Move +1 or +2 [5/level], Acute Senses (any) [2/level], Animal Friend 1 or 2 [5/level], Eidetic Memory [5] or Photographic Memory [10], Fearlessness [2/level], Fit [5], Flexibility [5], Lifting ST 1-3 [3/level], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Outdoorsman 1 [10], Penetrating Voice [1], Resistant to Disease (+3) or (+8) [3 or 5], or Temperature Tolerance 1 or 2 [1 or 2].

**Disadvantages:** -30 points chosen from among Greed [-15\*], Gullibility [-10\*], Language: Spoken (Native)/Written (None) [-3], Low TL 1 or 2 [-5 or -10], Odious Personal Habit (Unrefined manners) [-5], Overconfidence [-5\*], Phobia (Machinery) [-5\*], Sense of Duty (Adventuring companions) [-5], Social Stigma (Minority Group) [-10], Stubbornness [-5], Vow (Never sleep indoors) [-10], or Wealth (Struggling or Poor) [-10 or -15].

**Primary Skills:** Area Knowledge (region of adventure) (E) IQ+2 [4]-12; Navigation (Land) (A) IQ+2 [1]-12†; and Survival (local terrain type) (A) Per+1 [4]-14.

**Secondary Skills:** Hiking (A) HT [2]-12; Tracking (A) Per-1 [1]-12; and Weather Sense (A) IQ [2]-10. • *One* of Knife (E) DX+1 [2]-11; or Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Shortsword, Spear, or Staff, all (A) DX [2]-10. • *One* of Thrown Weapon (Spear or Stick) (E) DX+1 [2]-11; Bolas, Bow, Lasso, or Spear Thrower, all (A) DX [2]-10; or Blowpipe or Sling, both (H) DX-1 [2]-9. • *One* 10-point skill package that matches the Survival specialty:

*Arctic:* One of Skating or Skiing, both (H) HT+1 [8]-13, and the other at HT-1 [2]-11.

*Desert:* Animal Handling (Camels) (A) IQ [2]-10 and Riding (Camel) (A) DX+2 [8]-12.

*Island/Beach:* Boating (Unpowered) (A) DX+1 [4]-11; Fishing (E) Per [1]-13; Navigation (Sea) (A) IQ+2 [1]-12†; Observation (A) Per-1 [1]-12; Seamanship (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; and Swimming (E) HT [1]-12.

*Jungle or Woodlands:* Camouflage (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Mimicry (Animal Sounds or Bird Calls) (H) IQ [4]-10; and Stealth (A) DX+1 [4]-11.

*Mountain:* Climbing (A) DX+2 [8]-12 and Prospecting (A) IQ [2]-10.

*Plains:* Animal Handling (Equines) (A) IQ [2]-10 and Riding (Horse) (A) DX+2 [8]-12.

*Swampland:* Boating (Unpowered) (A) DX [2]-10; Camouflage (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Stealth (A) DX+1 [4]-11; and Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]-13.

**Background Skills:** 4 points spent on known skills, skills from other terrain specialties, or Forced Entry, Jumping, or Knot-Tying, all (DX/E); Acrobatics (DX/H); First Aid or Gesture, both (IQ/E); Armoury (Melee Weapons or Missile Weapons), Disguise (Animals), or Traps, all (IQ/A); Naturalist, Pharmacy (Herbal), Poisons, or Veterinary, all (IQ/H); or Running (HT/A).

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

† Includes +3 for Absolute Direction.

## Lens

*Seasoned* (+63 points): Improve attributes to ST 11 [10], DX 11 [20], and IQ 11 [20], for 50 points; let HP, Will, and Per increase by one each as a result, but hold Basic Speed at 6.00, for -5 points; spend another 15 points on listed advantages; increase all DX-, IQ-, and Per-based skills by one to reflect attribute increases; and spend another 3 points on skills.

## Customization Notes

Select area and terrain of specialty, and then pick advantages and additional skills to match. Suggestions:

*Arctic:* With two HT-based skills and likely the need to make many HT rolls for cold – to avoid losing FP, which *also* depend on HT – spending all 10 advantage points on +1 to HT is smart, though +1 FP, Fit, and Temperature Tolerance 2 do better for pure cold-resistance. Select Axe/Mace for your ice axe, and spend background points on improved Hiking for snowshoeing, and perhaps Fishing for exploiting holes in sea ice.

*Desert or Plains:* Animal Friend 2 is a good advantage investment, cheaply raising both specialty skills and opening the door to other animal skills – though a desert guide who fears being left in the heat might consider the advantage advice for arctic guides. Select Broadsword for a cavalry saber and Bow for long-range shooting, and look at background skills Observation for long vistas and Veterinary for caring for mounts.

*Island/Beach:* Guides who operate near the sea customarily have excellent eyesight, so think about adding Acute Vision and raising Per. As for skills, go with Axe/Mace or Spear for the traditional boarding axe or boarding pike, and then add Knot-Tying to better suit the stereotype, improve Fishing to be invaluable to the group bent on living off the land, and raise Observation to become a useful lookout.



*Jungle or Woodlands:* Both environments offer low visibility and many opportunities to get lost, so Eidetic Memory is useful. Also consider Acute Hearing to detect enemies sneaking around in the bushes, and Penetrating Voice for calling to lost allies. Delvers tend to expect such guides to be skilled at ambushes, so after Shortsword for the machete or Staff for the walking stick, look at Blowpipe for poison darts, and some of Gesture, Poisons, and Traps.

*Mountain:* Climbing is key, so grab the Flexibility advantage (for a cheap +3 to skill) and Lifting ST (to circumvent encumbrance penalties). Good combat skills are Lasso, which can snag handholds as well as enemies, and those for weapons that leave a hand free to hang on, like Axe/Mace to swing a piolet. Then consider Acrobatics, Jumping, and Knot-Tying, for obvious reasons.

*Swampland:* As swamps are unhealthy places, Fit and Resistant to Disease are good investments – although swamps are often trackless, too, making Eidetic Memory nice. Spear or Staff for a long stick is very useful, and Thrown Weapon (Spear) follows if you use a spear. When most of the group falls ill from swamp lung, Pharmacy (Herbal) can ensure that you're seen as indispensable.

Disadvantages are mostly a function of individual motivation. The classic guide has Greed, Overconfidence, and Social Stigma, and comes across as a weird foreigner out to sell his "amazing" wilderness skills to rich travelers setting out for his homeland. But a Poor youngster with Gullibility and Sense of Duty – following the heroes whether they like it or not – is an old standby, as is the proud, easily spooked primitive who can't read, has Low TL, and generally dislikes technology and indoor settings.

A hero who wants a top-notch guide can dish out double points – or, if the GM allows hiring, double pay – to get someone with the Seasoned lens. Follow the above advice on advantages and skills, but try to get *everything* that's recommended. The GM might even have seasoned guides use their extra skill points for Area Knowledge (second area) (E) IQ+1 [2]-12 and Survival (second terrain) (A) Per-1 [1]-13, so that they're effectively two-for-one deals.

## CRITTERS

While animal companions are *thematic* for wilderness adventures, humanoid Allies cost fewer points and make better assistants for complex tasks (sailing, digging pits, brewing toadstool poisons, etc.). Still, beasts have their uses – if only bearing burdens – and tend to boast high levels of outdoor skills, some of which can benefit their masters.

It fits *Dungeon Fantasy* to allow extraordinary animals with SM 0 or more (not tiny kitties and bunnies!) to use Fishing or

Survival on behalf of their masters when it comes to finding food or shelter: they drop tasty rats at the heroes' feet, lead the adventurers to bear-free caves, and so on. Creatures of any size can employ Tracking freely, although something like speech is needed to communicate complex ideas like "This is a false trail" or "There were four of them." And while beasts can't learn Riding, Mount is *incredibly* handy for critters that can be

ridden – having any points in it gives the master +1 to Riding or enables him to use the average of the two skills (round up), if better.

While such Allies can know and use Area Knowledge, Observation, Naturalist, and Weather Sense, their ability to inform their master of details is another thing limited by communication. Druids who plan to use hawks as scouts should invest in being able to communicate with them!

Animals can also have Aerobatics, Climbing, Flight, Hiking, Stealth, Swimming, and similar movement or concealment skills. Except when the GM lets beasts roll against Climbing or Swimming to *rescue* falling or drowning masters, though, these are strictly for personal use. And even *fantasy* animals can't learn skills for vehicles, survival gear, or other technology; e.g., Boating, Cartography, Esoteric Medicine (Druidic), First Aid, Herb Lore, Navigation, Pharmacy (Herbal), Piloting, Poisons, Prospecting, Teamster, and Traps.

The GM will have to adjudicate stranger cases as they arise. For instance, few beasts learn Camouflage, Disguise (Animals), or Mimicry, because they *are* animals and come with natural camouflage, scents, and sound effects. If a template lists such a skill, though, it works normally. The GM might even let the Ally use Camouflage or Disguise (Animals) on its master by rubbing all over him, peeing on him, etc.

Finally, remember that because wild

places in *Dungeon Fantasy* are home to giant and dire animals, chimeras, and so on, even a weird Ally is apt to be seen as "just an animal." If a critter won't be allowed into inns (or town), then it's only fair to assume that bad guys who aren't specifically looking out for a druid's pet or a wizard's familiar, and who have no way to identify such companions, will overlook it in the wilderness. The GM should have most enemies – even intelligent ones – ignore mice, birds, and so on, and regard larger beasts as dangers, or food at worst, but not spies. However, when a creature isn't native to the terrain, like an anaconda in the arctic, it's *also* reasonable to give observers – including delvers, when the shoe is on the other foot – a Naturalist skill roll to realize this, with success meaning they have cause to suspect magic.





## Animal Allies

Druids selecting Allies to match the adventure – or the quest best-suited to their pets – might want to weigh the relative merits (*besides* “eating my enemies”) of the creatures from pp. 6-11 of *Allies*. In all cases, don’t lose sight of the fact that while these beings can understand their master, they have IQ 6 and no special ability to speak back, much less report telepathically.

*Anaconda*: A powerful aquatic scout and swampland Ally, more than capable of rescuing its master from deep water or quicksand.

*Bear or Boar*: Good at finding food and shelter in woodlands, but not particularly versatile.

*Giant Eagle*: An unparalleled aerial scout *if* its master can communicate with it.

*Gorilla*: An expert climber who, thanks to its hands, *can* contribute its skill to group mountaineering efforts. Can also be conscripted to topple trees, roll rocks, etc. (“gorilla warfare”).

*Great Cat*: A superior terrestrial scout (communications permitting), hunter in plains terrain, and rescue swimmer. Cheetahs also offer swift messenger service for light items!

*Hound*: The best tracker, a useful extra hunter in plains (mountains, for the wolf), and a good swimmer.

*Insect Swarm*: Not precisely a skilled scout, but capable of letting a master who can communicate with it know what’s going on – in a general way – over a half-mile radius.

*Kangaroo*: A capable forager in plains terrain and, far better, a swift messenger with serious payload capacity.

*Kraken*: Mostly useful for rescuing its master if he falls overboard, and maybe adding a little extra seafood to his diet.

*Shark*: Though useless on land, this is the best aquatic tracker, a respectable hunter at sea, and a powerful mount.

*Stallion*: The only Ally useful for transportation or mounted combat on land, and not bad at helping its master survive in plains terrain.

*Wolverine*: A competent scout and tracker on land, able to aid survival in woodlands, and the only Ally who *can* help delvers dig pits for traps.

## Familiars

The familiars (“bonded creatures,” to mentalists) on pp. 20-29 of *Allies* are arguably more versatile than animal Allies on wilderness adventures. They combine the natural gifts of beasts with human-level intellect and *built-in* two-way speech. Most grant their masters helpful outdoor advantages, too. Unsurprisingly, they also cost a lot of points!

The Telepathic lens makes a familiar especially valuable in an outdoor setting. This lets it give the equivalent of a verbal report while scouting up to 100 miles away, turning even the weakest critter into an exceptional spy. Regardless of whether the *familiar* has that lens, the *master* who buys himself the Shared Sight lens can use his pet’s senses remotely, which is superior to letting the creature look and hoping that it reports the right details (when in doubt, roll vs. the beast’s IQ for this).

Updating the familiar’s orders while it’s on a mission also depends on the *master’s* abilities. Bards and wizards can use Communication and Empathy spells, mentalists have Tele-sense, and anyone can buy the Shared Thoughts lens for himself. In the absence of such capabilities, the master can only

pray that his pet reacts appropriately to developing situations (again, make an IQ roll if the best course isn’t obvious).

Familiars, like animal Allies, vary a lot in skills and preferred terrain. A few notes for delvers weighing their relative merits:

*Bat*: An aerial scout whose exceptional senses can penetrate fog and darkness. Grants Flight with Controlled Gliding, which is helpful when Climbing attempts go wrong.

*Cat*: A terrestrial scout with excellent senses and Stealth, capable of climbing up high to watch for enemies. The Catfall advantage it grants is a lifesaver in mountain terrain.

*Chimp*: Too large and boisterous to be the best spy, but strong enough to assist group climbing efforts (the granted Brachiator advantage aids its master, especially), and large enough to help forage in jungle terrain.

*Dog*: A superb tracker and sentry (thanks to keen senses *and* speech!), big enough to help hunt in plains terrain and strong enough to act as a rescue swimmer. The granted Discriminatory Smell makes its master a good tracker, too – and Reduced Consumption lets that lucky person eat garbage and thus need *one* meal per travel day.

*Giant Spider*\*: Mainly useful for hanging out in trees (literally!) as a spy, though the granted Clinging is *exceptionally* valuable to mountain explorers.

*Hawk*: The keenest and swiftest possible eye in the sky. Use its Observation skill (14) in place of IQ (10) to answer “Is it looking at the right thing?” Offers insurance against bad Climbing rolls by granting Flight with Controlled Gliding.

*Hellhound*\*: More attack beast than hunter, sentry, or tracker, this familiar isn’t very useful on wilderness adventures that aren’t all about starting wildfires.

*Ice Weasel*\*: A wonderful scout in arctic terrain, capable of dashing over snow at full speed and becoming near-invisible in the whiteness! The granted abilities to negotiate icy terrain and tolerate frigid temperatures are of great value to arctic travelers.

*Imp*\*: Almost unfit for outdoor adventure . . . but it can scout from the air invisibly, which the GM can keep under control by remembering its disadvantages.

*Macaw*: The best *ear* in the sky. Can parrot entire conversations it has overheard, in any language, and use its IQ in place of any Mimicry skill.

*Owl*: A good compromise between bat, hawk, and macaw, with excellent night vision and hearing, and Observation-13 that it can use in place of IQ 10 for judgment calls.

*Rabbit*: A swift terrestrial scout – and keen senses and Danger Sense make it the best sentry. Granted Super Jump comes in very handy around chasms.

*Rat*: Unlikely to be noticed (enemy Vision, at -7 for SM, vs. Stealth-14) – and even if it is, it’s “only a rat.” Thus, it’s a capable spy against even very attentive targets. Granted Reduced Consumption lets its master eat random crud to survive on *one* meal per travel day.

*Salamander*\*: Another minimally useful outdoor assistant, though of value if the plan is to set brush fires, forest fires, etc.

*Shoulder Dragon*\*: A decent aerial scout with the advantage of being able to spy out magic. Granted Flight with Controlled Gliding is good security for those who plan to do a lot of climbing.

*Sylph*\*: An adequate aerial scout.

*Talus*\*: The main appeal is high ST – a talus can be conscripted to pull ropes, roll rocks, and otherwise set off outdoor traps.

*Undine*\*: A top-notch aquatic scout, capable of telling delvers what's at the bottom of a body of water – or of *lurking* in water to send word of hapless bad guys walking past. The granted Amphibious and Doesn't Breathe let its master explore underwater, too.

*Viper*: Remarkable senses are the primary attraction. However, its venom lets it assist with hunting despite its small size.

\* In *any* terrain, anyone who notices such a fantastic creature may roll vs. Naturalist to deduce that unnatural forces are at work. Such familiars are advised to use Stealth!

## SPIRITS

Even weirder than giant or talking animals, and more potentially useful than ordinary henchmen, are the spirits that the supernaturally gifted – particularly druids and shamans – like to bring on outdoor adventures. A few kinds merit special mention in this context.

### Spirits of Place

These entities from p. 24 of *Summoners* are so powerful that they qualify as Patrons rather than Allies. They're also *localized*, meaning that players who pay points for them reap no benefits outside of specific geographical areas. Rather than charge for a near-worthless advantage, it's the GM's job to stage at least some wilderness adventures – if not the entire campaign – on such spirits' home ground. If that isn't workable, then it's fairest to warn players against purchasing such Patrons but to allow shamans (and possibly other spellcasters with suitable spirit-magic) to cut deals with them, provided that the PCs aren't littering fire-starters (see *Despoilers*, p. 43). Always game out such negotiations!

If a spirit of place deigns to aid delvers – as their Patron or as part of a deal – the GM can assume that it will show them where to find food (or anything else in its area), warn them of bad weather, and so on. It knows *all* of the perils native to its domain (though not those brought into it by, say, invading evil wizards) and *everything* that goes on there (save for things screened from it by magic). It can even alter the weather and terrain to a limited extent. It would be fair to let a hero with such a Patron use the *better* of its appearance roll or his final, adjusted skill roll for outdoor tasks in Chapter 2 that don't shed blood or despoil the area. That "9 or less" won't seem especially impressive next to one's own Survival-13 until it's time to roll at -7 for barren terrain and dreadful weather . . .

### Embodied Animal-Spirits

These entities from pp. 21-22 of *Summoners* are smarter than animal Allies (IQ 8 vs. IQ 6) and better at communicating (they can speak to anybody who has Spirit Empathy), making them superior scouts and spies. Still, they aren't in telepathic contact with their masters and there's no easy way to achieve this. Scouting consists of traveling to an area of interest, making Per rolls to look around, and then returning to report. Make an IQ roll if there's doubt as to whether the creature followed up an interesting clue.

Standard embodied animal-spirits are *material* beings large enough (SM 0) that any food or shelter they find with their Survival skills will suffice for their mortal associates. They can pass as mundane beasts around people who lack

Spirit Empathy, and overall amount to modest specimens of similar creatures under *Animal Allies* (p. 13): the bear is much smaller; the herd animal could be regarded as a cut-down stallion; the huge bird, as a not-so-giant eagle; and the predator, as a lesser great cat, hound, or wolverine. The notes there still apply – the bear can hunt, the herd animal can be ridden, the bird can scout, and the predator can track.

Setting aside physical impressiveness, the real difference between animal Allies and embodied animal-spirits is that the latter can perceive and interact with nature spirits. In *enchanted* forests, *magical* swamps, etc., they might drive off weaker hostile spirits and warn of the approach of stronger ones. Make a Per roll in the latter case.

Phantom animals aren't material beings that can bring their masters food; however, delvers with such Allies can use the spirits' Survival skills *instead* of their own, which represents the creature guiding them to Nature's bounty. These powerful spirits are also more effective scouts, as they can explore invisibly and insubstantially, meaning that only spellcasters with spells such as Astral Block and Pentagram

can prevent them from taking a peek. A phantom huge bird can go and look almost *anywhere*, and a shaman with any variety of phantom Ally might spend some of its extra skill points on Observation, which can replace IQ when checking whether the entity investigated an "interesting" lead.

### Elementals

Elementals (*Summoners*, pp. 26-32) are in many ways "nature spirits," and so *might* be useful on wilderness adventures. Like animal Allies (p. 13) and animal-spirits (above), they sometimes possess capabilities that make them valuable scouts, but there's no easy way to communicate with them at a distance – after receiving their orders, they wander off, act within the limits of their (usually low) IQ, and eventually return with a report. Unlike beasts, they lack impressive Per, are clearly unnatural except when in their element, and rarely know Camouflage or Stealth. Still, an elemental's gifts sometimes make up for this.

*Air Elementals*: The predictable gift of flight makes these entities handy aerial scouts.

The *minor flight-spirit* – with Enhanced Move, Per 12, and the ability to speak with birds – is an above-average choice among Allies. The *spirit of the clouds*, with Vision 16 and the ability to predict weather (which can substitute for Weather Sense), is also valuable. All the rest are thematic, good for little more than showing off with natural fury.

*Earth Elementals*: The basic elemental isn't especially useful, despite obvious ties to nature. However, the inexpensive *earth servant* adds Absolute Direction and the ability to dig pits (Burrower); the *spirit of the stone* can find minerals and walk through rock, making it handy on mountain adventures; the *creature of the soil* can walk through earth and speak with plants; and the *engineer's friend* and *earth titan* both suit delvers who like to drop rocks (or mountains) on enemies.

*Fire Elementals:* Such creatures are often liabilities on outdoor adventures, as fire annoys the residents of most wilderness areas (see *Despoilers*, p. 43).

*Metal Elementals:* Most such creatures aren't thematic for wilderness fun, though the *miner's minion* could prove useful when exploring for metal deposits.

*Void, Sound, or Ether Elementals:* Though not "traditional" elementals, these can fit adventures set in the mountains. All can fly, which is valuable for scouting – even if it is loud and unsubtle. The *echo* boasts silent flight and higher Per, making it a better spy; *nothingness* and *abyss* can become insubstantial and go anywhere; and the sonic power of *discord* is equivalent to a Thunderclap spell for signaling or starting avalanches.

*Water Elementals:* Complete comfort with water makes these entities valuable scouts on marine adventures. The *stream spirit* is especially useful, as it can speak with aquatic plants and animals. The GM may let the *whirlpool* and *lord of the tides* use their attacks to counteract rough water, thereby removing penalties to Boating, Swimming, etc.

*Wood Elementals:* These are the most interesting case – and possibly the most useful elementals on jungle and woodland adventures. The *plant speaker* and *woodland spirit* have an excellent rapport with plants, while the *phantom of the forest* has improved Per and powerful stealth abilities that make it an amazing spy. The GM may wish to have all wood elementals resemble trees or vines, meaning that observers who fail a roll against Per-based Hidden Lore (Nature Spirits) – not Naturalist – see vegetation, not a monster.

## Divine Servitors

Functionally speaking, these beings from pp. 12-19 of *Allies* amount to intelligent humanoids. It's best to handle them like mortal henchmen – albeit henchmen with extraordinary abilities! Their gifts vary, but some are remarkably useful in the wilderness.

## Servitor Lenses

*Natural:* Fitting because it adds a Survival specialty that the servitor can use to find food, shelter, etc. for the delver – and also because it changes the thing's innate flaws to ones that aren't terribly crippling in natural settings.

*Telepathic:* For highly mobile servitors (*especially* those with the Winged lens!), this lens offers the benefits noted for it under *Familiars* (pp. 13-14).

*Winged:* The added mobility can turn any servitor – even one that's utterly inimical to Nature – into a powerful aerial scout.

## Celestial Steeds and Holy Hounds

These servitors offer all the benefits noted under *Animal Allies* (p. 13) – and yes, the hound and stallion usually *are* the best servitors for wilderness-oriented holy warriors.

## Divine Elements

Every element has its uses, but a few are *better* out of doors. Remember that a normal servitor gets three elements, allowing powerful combos such as Nature/Travel (Doubled) and Air/Nature/Water, and making it possible to combine one or two "outdoor" elements with other kinds (e.g., Good/Life/Travel or Nature/Travel/Wisdom).

*Air:* Yet another way to get an aerial scout – but if that's that only goal, taking the Winged lens is better than using up an element slot.

*Nature:* Clearly a winner on wilderness adventures, with its exceptional Naturalist skill (which it *can* use for its master) and facility with plants and animals (particularly when the element is doubled to get Speak with Animals and Speak with Plants).

*Travel:* The basic special ability multiplies daily travel distance by 1.5. In its doubled form, Travel not only grants *twice* daily travel distance, but also provides effective Area Knowledge of almost all outdoor regions. Arguably, there's no better Ally for travelers!

*Water:* One more way to get an amazing *aquatic* scout.

# EQUIPMENT

Wilderness adventures require different gear from dungeon crawls. Wealthy delvers might boast distinct loadouts for each situation, along with mounts, vehicles, or porters to lug the excess weight. However, not everyone enjoys that luxury. Heroes of modest means should consider erring on the side of wilderness prep – underground adventures only matter if the adventurer survives the trek to reach them!

Three basic principles hold when choosing wilderness kit:

*Travel Light:* Adventurers on foot must keep encumbrance low to travel swiftly (*Feet*, p. 21), minimize missing FP during encounters en route (*Travel Fatigue*, p. 24), and avoid potentially lethal penalties in mountains (*Mountaineering*, p. 29) and around water (*Water Hazards*, p. 29). Even vehicles have limited cargo capacity. All of this argues for lighter packs, weapons, and armor.



*Strike from Afar:* The long distances in outdoor encounters change the face of battle. Some warriors prefer to be mobile enough to close the gap, and either intensify their efforts to minimize encumbrance or ride a mount. Others favor ranged attacks, making projectiles for blowpipes, bows, slings, and other missile weapons a crucial factor – the more, the better! The GM might permit reuse of arrows, bullets, darts, etc. on a roll of 1 on 1d, or simply assume that 1/6 of shots (rounded *up*) are recoverable; delvers with Heroic Archer are more careful, making this 1-2 on 1d or 1/3 of shots; and savvy archers buy a Cornucopia Quiver (*Adventurers*, p. 30).

*Be Prepared:* Special gear – if only tents and rations – is required to survive on long trips away from town. That's the topic of the rest of this section. Much of this stuff adds *more* weight, which seasoned travelers handle by bringing extra transportation or going lighter on armor (an extra DR 1-2 is wonderful for a few seconds of combat but weighs as much as supplies for *weeks* of travel).



## GARMENTS

Savvy wilderness trekkers appreciate the light weight of *fine, giant spider silk*, and *orichalcum* armor – and the way *thieves'* mail waives Climbing and Stealth penalties. See p. 27 of *Adventurers* for details.

Magical garb of special interest includes Boots of Balance for negotiating treacherous slopes and slippery logs, an Ironskin Amulet for near-weightless protection, and armor enchanted with Lighten. Learn more about these goodies on p. 30 of *Adventurers*.

Further items of value appear below. When applying clothing modifications, note that a delver starts with ordinary clothing that weighs 2 lbs. That's free regardless of Wealth, but replacement cost and the price used when applying cost factors (CF) is \$120. Smart travelers bring extra clothes: \$120, 2 lbs. per set.

*Arctic Clothing:* Counts as winter clothing and gives +5 to HT rolls for cold (p. 30) in arctic climates. Also gives +1 DR vs. *all* damage, but -1 to DX if layered with armor. +1 CF and 5 times weight. Upgrade from free starting clothes: +\$120, +8 lbs.

*Camouflage Clothing:* For one of *arctic, desert, jungle/woodlands, mountain, plains, or swampland*. Provides a bonus to Camouflage, and Stealth vs. Vision, *in that terrain*: +1 for +2 CF, or +2 for +7 CF. Weight is unaffected. Upgrade from free starting clothes: +\$240 (+1) or +\$840 (+2).

*Elven Boots:* Light boots (DR 1\*) specifically designed to foil enemy trackers: -2 to Tracking attempts. In a group, only useful if *everybody* wears them. \$50, 2 lbs.

## Sage Supplies

These articles from *Sages* are especially useful on wilderness adventures:

*Cobweb Kite:* Falls of 40+ yards are common with outdoor Climbing failures. Also useful for descending quickly from great heights – make an Aerobatics+2, Acrobatics-2, or DX-4 roll to steer it to a specific spot (e.g., atop an enemy).

*Dwarven Accurizer:* Counts as a telescope for scouting or spotting signals.

*Float Coat:* A lifesaver around *Water Hazards* (p. 29) and freak waves (p. 33).

*Manuals:* Scholars take note that Animal Handling, Camouflage, Cartography, Disguise (Animals), Fishing, Naturalist, Navigation, Observation, Pharmacy (Herbal), Prospecting, Seamanship, Survival, Teamster, Tracking, and Weather Sense all count as *common knowledge*. Herb Lore is *esoteric knowledge*, but might be worth the extra cost on an outdoor quest.

*Maps:* The \$100 map mentioned in *Adventurers* is *annotated* by sage standards. It allows Navigation at +1 and an Area Knowledge default (IQ-4) in its area.

*Universal Tool Kit:* Meets the needs of *all* outdoor tasks that require tools – cutting down trees, making traps, prospecting for minerals, etc.

Sages should also consider investing in scroll belts, scroll cases, and wax tablets to protect their maps and writings from the elements.

*Elven Cloak:* A heavy cloak bought with the CF for camouflage clothing, matched to a particular terrain type. Gives the same bonuses as such clothing when *worn*, functions as an ordinary heavy cloak when *wielded*. A cloak with only this feature is \$150 (+1) or \$400 (+2), 5 lbs.

*Hobnails:* Added to footwear, these cancel the -2 to DX and -1 to active defenses – though not the movement penalties – for bad footing (p. 38), at the cost of -1 to Stealth vs. Hearing. \$25, 1 lb.

*Moccasins:* Light footwear (DR 1\*) optimized for sneaking around. Cancels -1 in Stealth penalties for encumbrance, crunchy leaves, etc. \$40, 1 lb.

*Swarm Suit:* Reduces injury from stinging swarms by 1 HP, granting immunity to the mundane kind (p. 34). Light and tight; layering with armor (which keeps out swarms for only five seconds!) gives no DX penalty. Also protects against insect-borne disease (*Fresh Air Is Good For You*, p. 34). \$80, 5 lbs.

*Winter Clothing:* Prevents -5 to HT rolls for cold (p. 30) in icy places such as arctic and high mountain terrain, and gives +1 DR vs. *cutting* damage. +0.5 CF and 2.5 times weight. Upgrade from free starting clothes: +\$60, +3 lbs.

## SURVIVAL GEAR

Survival isn't merely a matter of dressing nicely (except at Wizards' Guild dinners). It calls for all manner of tools and supplies.

### Same Old Same Old

Many tried-and-true items from pp. 23-26 of *Adventurers* (and included in the basic kits on pp. 5-6 of *Dungeon Fantasy 13: Loadouts*, for players who find gearing-up boring) merit additional notes when using the rules in Chapter 2.

*Blades:* Tasks that involve sharpening stakes or making shelters *assume* a hatchet or a machete. A weapons-grade blade is overkill – a tool-grade (\$15) hatchet works fine. The generous GM *might* allow such tasks at -2 with a knife or -5 with good intentions.

*Blanket/Sleeping Fur:* A camper without a bedroll must sacrifice some other campsite benefit to sleep in comfort (*Sites*, p. 24). In arctic terrain, only sleeping fur avoids this.

*Canteen/Wineskin:* The simplification under *Water Supplies* (p. 43) assumes that each traveler has such an item! A group lugging a barrel is also fine. Delves without *must* roll vs. Survival daily; failure results in the more severe FP losses given under *Starvation* (p. 43).

*Fire:* Heroes without Fire spells need fire-starters. Personal basics suffice; so does a burning glass, on days with no penalty from *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31). Alchemist's matches always work – expending one gives +1 to one fire-related skill roll. Pyromaniacs can use alchemist's fire for +2!

*Fishhooks and Line:* Someone without at least this gear has -2 on the Fishing rolls in *Food and Water* (pp. 42-44).

*Group Basics:* Parties without this suffer -2 to Survival rolls for pitching camp (*Sites*, p. 24) or building shelter (*Shelters*, pp. 24-25), and to any Survival roll involving a combined or group effort.

*Mirrors:* On *sunny* days (no penalty from *Nasty Weather*, pp. 30-31), these enable signaling per *Smoke and Fire* (p. 28) without annoying wilderness denizens who disapprove of flame.



**Musical Instruments:** Handy for signaling (*Noise*, p. 28). Get a whistle for everybody; drums and horns are even better.

**Navigation Equipment:** Unaided Navigation is at -3, so get a miniature sundial (sets the penalty to -1 during daylight) or a compass (no penalty). On overcast days, the -1 or -2 for *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31) adds to the penalty for no gear, and sundials are useless.

**Personal Basics:** A hero without basics suffers -2 to individual Survival rolls to *act* rather than to *notice* or *know* something – including all rolls in *Harsh Climates* (p. 30), to rig noise-makers (*Watches*, p. 25) or trap food (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), and to set fires.

**Poles:** Useful for balancing on ropes over chasms, fishing friends out of quicksand (p. 33), and field engineering (p. 33).

**Rations:** These speed travel by reducing the time given over to foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44). *Elven* rations are light enough not to impact encumbrance much.

**Rope!!!** Most outdoor tasks – *especially* those described in *Mountaineering* (p. 29), *Obstacles* (pp. 31-32), and *Traps* (pp. 36-37) – assume the party has rope. Rope greatly benefits *Field Engineering* (p. 33), too. Load everybody to the limit with rope.

**Shovel:** Digging a covered pit (p. 36) takes four times as long without one.

**Telescope:** Good for *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) and spotting signals (*Signaling*, p. 28).

**Tents:** Count as shelters (pp. 24-25), without which campers suffer FP losses.

## Treasures Worth Keeping

**Dungeon Fantasy 8: Treasure Tables** describes oodles of gear of value to wilderness explorers. Adventurers in town may buy anything under *Climbing and Lifting* (**Treasure Tables**, p. 21) or *Survival* (**Treasure Tables**, pp. 24-25) – and the goods below – rather than wait to find these things. Such equipment is available from better expedition outfitters everywhere!

**Astrolabe/Quadrant:** Give bonuses to Cartography and Navigation (+1 for quadrant, +2 for astrolabe), not cumulative with other equipment bonuses.

**Druidic Fertilizer:** Each dose used causes a single gathering attempt with Naturalist or Survival (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44) to yield meals equal to margin of success plus one, if the party stops for at least an hour. Alternatively, a dose can let a traveler attempt the Quick Contest of Tracking to conceal his trail for one day *without* reducing speed; see *Tracking* (pp. 27-28).

**Endurance Items:** Can “soak up” any kind of *mundane* FP loss incurred on the road (*Sick and Tired*, p. 23).

**Furniture:** Campers with mattresses or couches *always* sleep in comfort (*Sites*, p. 24). They’ll need it after moving house like this!

**Nightingale Carpet:** Gives +2 to the roll to set noisemakers around a camp (*Watches*, p. 24).

**Parasol:** Protects against sunburn and grants +1 to HT rolls vs. heat (*Harsh Climates*, p. 30). Occupies one hand.

**Safety Matches:** As for alchemist’s matches, expending one gives +1 to one fire-related skill roll.

**Spices:** Chiles, huajiao, and pepper (black or white) give “hot on the trail” (pp. 27-28) a whole new meaning! Up to four one-ounce doses can be deployed per day; make an *IQ*-based Tracking roll each time. Success causes *scent* trackers to roll vs. HT-3 or lose one hour of time.

## Machete Table

These machetes are *weapons-grade*. *Tool-grade* ones have -0.6 CF and give -1 to skill in combat.

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST
<b>BROADSWORD (DX-5, Rapier-4, Saber-4, Shortsword-2, or Two-Handed Sword-4)</b>						
Huge Machete	sw+2 cut	1	0U	\$625	4.5	11
or	thr-1 imp	1	0U	–	–	11
<b>KNIFE (DX-4, Main-Gauche-3, or Shortsword-3)</b>						
Small Machete	sw-1 cut	C, 1	0	\$50	1.5	7
or	thr-1 imp	C	0	–	–	7
<b>SHORTSWORD (DX-5, Broadsword-2, Jitte/Sai-3, Knife-4, Saber-4, Smallsword-4, or Tonfa-3)</b>						
Machete	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$400	3	10
or	thr-1 imp	1	0	–	–	10

## And More!

Explorers always appreciate new gear that solves problems – especially if they have henchmen to schlep it all.

**Bug Juice:** Protects vs. insect-borne disease (*Fresh Air Is Good for You*, p. 34), but stinks: -1 to Stealth, +1 to enemy scent-based Tracking. Per daily dose: \$2. 50 doses weigh 1 lb.

**Dwarven Bagpipes:** The loudest nonmagical noisemaker known! For signaling, see *Noise* (p. 28). Also designed to be as good as Sound spells for the specific purpose of starting rock-slides (*Go with the Flow*, p. 35). \$300, 8 lbs.

**Elven Blind:** Netting for concealing tents, parked wagons, etc. Total the Occupancy of every vehicle and the capacity of every shelter. Each blind covers four places’ worth of people, giving an *extra* +1 to the party’s Camouflage roll in any terrain; see *Sites* (p. 24). \$160, 8 lbs.

**Face Paint:** Popular with scouts and ninja, this improves the bonus from camouflage clothing or an elven cloak (*Garments*, p. 16) by *another* +1 for two hours. No bonus by itself. Specify terrain type. Per use: \$1. 50 uses weigh 1 lb.

**Fire Arrow:** Arrows for signaling (*Smoke and Fire*, p. 28) can be used in combat: -2 to hit, but do 1 point of *linked* burning damage (apply to DR separately). Must be shot within three seconds of ignition. No effect on cost or weight.

**Fire Arrow, Alchemical:** As fire arrow, but smaller, hotter fuel packet avoids the -2 to hit without loss of potency. +1.5 CF.

**Gnomish Army Knife:** A mind-boggling spectacle of blades, flints, spoons, etc., for adventurers who begrudge the 1 lb. for personal basics (which it replaces). \$100, neg.

**Lantern Balloon:** A little rice-paper balloon with a small candle inside. Sends a signal light skyward when lit (*Smoke and Fire*, p. 28). Single-use. \$10, 0.75 lb.

**Machete:** Heavy chopping “swords” are equivalent to hatchets for woodcrafts. For weapon stats, see *Machete Table* (p. 17).

**Mapping Kit:** Specialized tools and rulers give +1 to Cartography rolls to make maps. \$50, 2 lbs.

**Piolet:** A climber’s axe, designed to act as a walking stick, ice pick, etc. Gives +1 to Climbing rolls for *Mountaineering* (p. 29) and sheer rock faces, cumulative with other gear. A modification for any *one-handed* axe, hatchet, or pick: +4 CF.

**Tent, Heavy:** For campers worried about attacks. Gives cover DR 1. Weighs 1.5 times as much as an ordinary tent of its capacity. +0.5 CF.

**Tent, Spider-Silk:** For campers who travel light. *Half* the weight of an ordinary tent of its size, and looks kind of creepy. Can also be heavy! +19 CF.

**Yurt:** Portable felt shelter with collapsible wooden frame gives cover DR 1. Makes comfort (*Sites*, p. 24) “cost” one fewer benefit, so it counts as free to those with bedrolls, as one benefit for those without. For five: \$480, 200 lbs. For 10: \$1,200, 500 lbs.

## TRANSPORTATION

*Travel* (pp. 20-24) is an essential part of wilderness exploration. For delvers whose journey into Nature isn’t the thrust of the adventure, but merely incidental to visiting yet another dungeon, it’s the whole deal. Outfitters in town sell transportation solutions for every budget.

### Personal Mobility

There are many ways to circumvent the unfavorable travel-speed modifiers in *Terrain Types* (p. 22). See *Feet* (p. 21) and *Tricky Environments* (pp. 38-39) for further details.

**Doom Cleats:** A dwarven weapon of war, these wicked foot spikes also grant Terrain Adaptation (Ice). On arctic terrain defined as icy rather than snowy, let the wearer ignore *all* effects of bad footing (p. 38) and hike at full speed (not at  $\times 0.50$ ). Give +2 to kicking damage and +1 to Climbing, too, at the cost of -2 to Stealth vs. Hearing and +2 to enemy Tracking rolls. *Permanently* attached to DR 2+ foot armor (boots, sollerets, etc.). \$400, 4 lbs.

**Sandshoes:** On desert or island/beach terrain defined as loose sand rather than hard, let the wearer hike at half speed (not at  $\times 0.20$ ). Can work as snowshoes at -2 to Hiking. Attach temporarily to footwear. \$100, 5 lbs.

**Skates:** On arctic terrain defined as icy rather than snowy, let the wearer use Skating skill to move at  $\times 1.25$  speed on level ground (not at  $\times 0.50$ ). Give +1 to kicking damage, too. Attach temporarily to footwear. \$60, 3 lbs.

**Skis:** On arctic terrain defined as snowy rather than icy, let the wearer use Skiing skill to move at full speed in general, half speed uphill (not at  $\times 0.20$ ). Attach temporarily to footwear. \$175, 10 lbs.

**Snowshoes:** On arctic terrain defined as snowy rather than icy, let the wearer hike at half speed (not at  $\times 0.20$ ). Can work as sandshoes at -2 to Hiking. Attach temporarily to footwear. \$100, 5 lbs.

### Schlepping Schtuff

Heroes – or more likely, henchmen – may serve as beasts of burden. The contrivances below share loads among multiple bearers and/or reduce the *effective* encumbrance of dragged gear. Compare the litter and wheelbarrow on p. 24 of *Adventurers*.

**Sledge:** A platform with runners. Supports up to 500 lbs. Divide weight of it and its cargo by 2 in arctic terrain or by 1.5 in any other terrain defined as “hard.” No reduction on soft ground (jungle, swampland, woodlands, and loose sand). Can be pulled by one or two travelers; split effective load evenly in the latter case. \$50, 20 lbs.

**Travois:** A couple of poles with a bunch of straps and slats hanging between them for lashing up to 500 lbs. of freight. Divide weight of it and its cargo by 2 in arctic terrain or by 1.5 in any other terrain defined as “soft.” No reduction on hard ground. \$25, 12 lbs.

### Beasts of Burden

Rich adventurers prefer to ride. See *Beasts* (p. 21) and *Mounted Combat* (p. 41) for rules.

### Mounts Table

This table summarizes what delvers really need to know about mounts. For detailed beast stats, see *Riding and Draft Animals* (pp. B459-460).

*ST*, *BL*, and *SM* mean what they do for any character.

*Encumbrance Levels* are maximum weights in pounds for No/Light/Medium encumbrance, including riding gear, rider, and rider’s equipment (cargo, for pack beasts). Ordinary mounts won’t go past Medium, though some monstrous ones might.

*Move* is Basic Move adjusted for No/Light/Medium encumbrance, indicating maximum speed change per turn.

*Ground Speed* is *Move* multiplied for Enhanced Move, used in travel calculations and as Top Speed.

*Cost* is that animal’s price in town. Determine sell price exactly as for loot.

### Mounts Table

Mount	ST	BL	Encumbrance Levels	Move	Ground Speed	SM	Cost	Skills
Camel	22	97	97/194/291	7/5/4	14/10/8	+1	\$1,500	–
Cavalry Horse	22	97	97/194/291	8/6/4	16/12/8	+1	\$4,000	Brawling-10*, Mount-12
Donkey	15	45	45/90/135	5/4/3	8/6/5	+1	\$1,000	–
Draft Horse	25	125	125/250/375	6/4/3	12/8/6	+1	\$2,000	–
Mule	22	97	97/194/291	6/4/3	9/6/5	+1	\$2,000	–
Pony	18	65	65/130/195	7/5/4	14/10/8	+1	\$1,500	–
Saddle Horse	21	88	88/176/264	6/4/3	12/8/6	+1	\$1,200	Mount-11
Warhorse	24	115	115/230/345	7/5/4	14/10/8	+1	\$5,000	Brawling-12*, Mount-13

\* Has Combat Reflexes!

*Skills* indicates important skills. All these beasts can be ridden, but those with Mount are best, and those with Brawling (and Combat Reflexes) are preferable in *combat*.

## Riding Gear

To *ride* a beast, generic “riding gear” is required. Heroes may opt to buy additional equipment. All of this hardware counts against the animal’s encumbrance.

Having beasts shod, groomed, or whatever is fussy detail, and mostly beneath delvers. Assume that care and feeding cost a flat \$150/beast between adventures. Failure to pay gives -1 to all rolls involving that animal on the *next* adventure.

The GM may charge more for gear and expenses related to monsters used as mounts!

*Barding, Cloth:* A full set of armor for skull, face, neck, torso, groin, and legs. DR 1. \$275, 33 lbs.

*Barding, Leather:* As above, but DR 2. \$688, 83 lbs.

*Barding, Scale:* As above, but DR 3. \$1,760, 88 lbs.

*Bridle and Bit:* All that’s needed to lead the beast as a pack animal. Animal Handling is at -3 without it. \$35, 3 lbs.

*Lance:* See p. B272. \$60, 6 lbs.

*Riding Gear:* Reins, bit, saddle, blankets, and so on, as befits the specific creature. Without this much gear, all Riding rolls are at -3! \$150, 15 lbs.

*Saddlebags:* Hold 40 lbs. \$100, 3 lbs.

*Spurs:* Give +1 to Riding rolls for control, but *not* to stay mounted or avoid disaster. Noisy (-1 to Stealth vs. Hearing). \$25, neg.

*War Saddle:* Heavy saddle with stirrups, high horns, and so on. Counts as riding gear *and* gives +3 to skill rolls to stay seated (and a 10 or less chance on 3d of staying in the saddle even if incapacitated). Includes attachment points for sheaths, quivers, etc. \$250, 35 lbs.

## Vehicles

Some parties travel in vehicles – typically because the large ones are good deals and keep the group together, though showoffs love their single-seat rides. See *Wheels* (p. 21) and *Boats* (p. 22) for rules. The vehicles on the table below include the following stats:

*HP:* Hit Points. How much injury the vehicle can take before destruction. Mundane vehicles lack ST scores and are Homogenous.

*SR:* Stability Rating. Mainly for boats, where it measures resistance to capsizing; see *Freak Wave* (p. 33). When handling vehicles in *combat*, failures by a margin greater than this upset the vehicle.

*Top Speed:* How fast the thing can move, used to work out travel speed.

*Load:* How much weight the vehicle can carry, including all occupants, gear, and loot.

*SM:* Size Modifier. Affects enemy rolls to hit the vehicle and Vision rolls to see it when trying to be sneaky – and, for a boat, works against attempts to right it if it capsizes.

*Occupancy:* How many SM 0 people can fit aboard, including the operator. An SM +1 delver counts as two (but can always squeeze into a single-seater); SM -1, as 1/2; SM -2, as 1/5; SM -4, as 1/20; and SM -6, as 1/100. Occupant weight counts against Load. Occupancy affects use as shelter (*Shelters*, pp. 24-25).

*DR:* The DR protecting the *vehicle’s* HP. Mundane vehicles are too open to offer DR to those aboard. *Exception:* Elven coaches are enclosed for everyone but the driver.

*Cost:* How much for a new vehicle, *exclusive* of any beasts. Determine sell price exactly as for loot.

*Beasts:* Number, type, and cost of beasts to pull the thing.

## Vehicles Table

<i>Vehicle</i>	<i>HP</i>	<i>SR</i>	<i>Top Speed</i>	<i>Load</i>	<i>SM</i>	<i>Occupancy</i>	<i>DR</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Beasts</i>
<b>TEAMSTER</b>									
Cart	34	3	1	1,200 lbs.	+1	6	2	\$340	2 oxen (+\$3,000)
Chariot, Large	23	2	7	600 lbs.	+2	3	2	\$660	4 horses (+\$4,800)
Chariot, Small	16	1	9	400 lbs.	+1	2	1	\$330	2 horses (+\$2,400)
Dogsled	27	2	6*	280 lbs.	+1	1	2	\$400	14 dogs (+\$2,800)
Elven Coach, Large	54	3	9	2,400 lbs.	+3	10	2	\$11,000	4 draft horses (+\$8,000)
Elven Coach, Small	47	2	10	1,600 lbs.	+2	7	2	\$7,500	2 draft horses (+\$4,000)
Wagon	35	4	8	1,000 lbs.	+2	5	2	\$680	2 draft horses (+\$4,000)
<b>BOATING (UNPOWERED)</b>									
Barbarian Longboat	43	1	3	2,300 lbs.	+5	11	2	\$5,000	–
Kayak	14	1	3	200 lbs.	+3	1	1	\$500	–
Outrigger Canoe	45	2	3	4,500 lbs.	+5	12	2	\$6,000	–
Raft, Large	79	2	1	800 lbs.	+2	4	12	\$240	–
Raft, Small	66	2	1	400 lbs.	+2	2	7	\$140	–
Rowboat	36	1	3	2,000 lbs.	+3	8	2	\$3,000	–
<b>SEAMANSHIP</b>									
Pirate Sloop	43	2	3	3,600 lbs.	+4	6†	2	\$5,000	–

\* Only in arctic terrain!

† *Ships* don’t need to put in for the night – everybody can sleep aboard.

# CHAPTER TWO

# BRAVING THE WILDERNESS

Heroes in the wilderness share the concerns of delvers everywhere: fighting, looting, and looking out for danger. *Dungeons* covers these things. However, it tacitly assumes that Nature's role in the story is to insulate town from dungeon, so it sums up outdoor activities with a few dice rolls. On adventures that put natural hazards front and center – where

they rival monsters and turn the simplest tasks into challenges – the GM might want to “switch on” the more elaborate rules that follow.

It's fine to alternate between these rules and the simplified ones in *Dungeons* from adventure to adventure. That might even happen *during* a quest, if enemies strip the heroes of gear, leaving them to rely on their survival abilities (*Bushwhacked*, p. 48). And if delvers on any kind of mission decide to pillage Nature's bounty, engage in some banditry under the open sky, or otherwise dawdle during a trip the GM planned to gloss over with a few dice rolls, then fair's fair – the players have just given the GM free rein to break out the harsher treatments of terrain, weather, and travel disasters!

These rules refer to *Dungeons* where applicable to show what they expand upon. As in that work, important character traits are in **boldface**.

## *Terra Incognita*

Adventurers exploring regions unknown to them lack **Area Knowledge** by definition. If a roll against this skill is optional, they cannot attempt it; if it's mandatory, they suffer an automatic failure. Use the same rule for **Research** rolls regarding areas commonly held to be unexplored – though suitable **Hidden Lore** specialties might work. The GM may let **Divination** spells substitute for any of these rolls, but at penalties as severe as -10 for local interference such as wild countermagic and uncooperative nature spirits.

## TRAVEL

It isn't necessary to use rules fancier than *Getting There Quickly* (*Dungeons*, p. 5), even in a full-on wilderness campaign. The most important part of many fantasy journeys is the destination. Making the trip a bigger deal can spice things up, however . . . and the *expedition itself* might be the adventure!

First, decide how much ground the party has to cover, be that the distance between town and dungeon, the size of the Haunted Forest they intend to explore, or the route taken by the caravan they're guarding. Next, consult *Terrain Types* (p. 22) and choose the environment involved. Interesting journeys traverse *several* terrain types – break such trips into legs defined by major changes in landscape, and assign a length to each leg. A map is *very* helpful for these steps; see *Maps* (pp. 52-53).

## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

A trip goes best when planned, though this isn't always up to the travelers. Planning tasks come first for the *heroes* – but for the GM to handle these, he must skip forward to *Covering Ground* (p. 23) and calculate how many days each leg of the journey will take, given the group's means of locomotion.

*Knowing What You're Getting Into:* A suitable **Area Knowledge** roll will reveal a region's terrain type(s), and then a **Survival** roll for each terrain type will elaborate on current travel conditions and common dangers in such territory (the GM may require relevant **Hidden Lore** rolls to know *uncommon* dangers). In town, *one* PC with access to books and maps can take a week to try a **Research** roll to cover all such tasks for the entire trip. Whatever skills are used, failure discovers nothing and critical failure gives dangerously flawed details . . . thus, a sloppy researcher can doom an entire expedition. If the delvers are explorers, *Terra Incognita* (above) applies and none of this matters!

*Planning a Route:* Adventurers with a series of clear checkpoints and several routes between them can decide which way to go at any juncture up to when they *must* choose. If they made appropriate **Area Knowledge** and **Survival** rolls, or a **Research** roll, *in town*, the GM should reveal terrain type and estimated travel time along each leg; apply *Covering Ground* (p. 23) to the slowest party member, and simply ignore the randomness of *Mitigating Circumstances* (pp. 22-23) and *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31). This lets them plot a course and lay in supplies, including terrain-specific gear.



If the group's path is chosen for them – as when guarding a caravan – the itinerary won't be their decision, but they can still prepare for the environment.

*Winging It:* Heroes in the field can gauge the terrain in a known area ahead by using **Area Knowledge**, and then use **Survival** to estimate the time to travel a given distance over it, as above. It's too late for **Research** or shopping, however.

*Really Winging It:* Explorers in *Terra Incognita* (p. 20) – and travelers who lack the correct skills – *never* get advance rolls to know terrain or estimate travel time. They can try *Scouting* (pp. 25-26), however. If this succeeds, roll against **Naturalist** or any **Survival** specialty to determine what terrain type lies ahead, unless that's obvious (like towering mountains). Alternatively, if the group has a clear goal – seeking or avoiding a particular terrain type, minimizing distance or travel time, etc. – someone with **Intuition** may use it to pick the best path for that purpose.

## TRUDGING, TROTting, AND TRUNDLING

Unless the adventurers can teleport, they and all their stuff will need to get from A to B – probably with a side-trip to C for some looting. This is another matter best planned before leaving, though hikers who steal horses and riders whose mounts (coincidentally) go missing might change modes mid-journey.

### Feet

The most basic means of traveling is walking or some variation on it. For all options, start with **Basic Move** and adjust for encumbrance (p. B17) to find the Move used with *Covering Ground* (p. 23). For everything except hiking, ignore *Terrain Types* (p. 22) in suitable conditions and instead modify Move as noted, keeping fractions. Each method involves its own skill; for effects, see *Harder Than It Looks* (p. 22).

*Hiking:* One foot in front of the other. Move is unmodified. Affected normally by terrain. Uses **Hiking**.

*Sandshoeing:* Inspired by lizard men. Requires sand. Replace terrain effects (typically Move  $\times 0.20$ ) with a flat Move  $\times 0.50$ . Uses **Hiking**.

*Skating:* Glide like a barbarian – on *blades*. Requires ice! Replace terrain effects with Move  $\times 1.25$  on a level surface, Move  $\times 0.50$  anywhere else. Uses **Skating**. (This skill isn't on any standard template, but assume that where Hiking or Skiing appears, Skating is also an option.)

*Skiing:* Slide like a barbarian. Needs snow! Replace terrain effects with Move  $\times 1.00$  in general, Move  $\times 0.50$  on uphill treks. Uses **Skiing**.

*Snowshoeing:* Traipse like a grouse. Yes, more snow. Replace terrain effects with a flat Move  $\times 0.50$  (a big improvement over  $\times 0.20$ ). Uses **Hiking**.

## Beasts

Heroes with money, large animal Allies, or druidic powers might have a beast do all the work. To find the Move used for *Covering Ground* (p. 23), begin with the *creature's Basic Move*; adjust for encumbrance (p. B17), including the weight of the rider, his gear, and riding equipment; and multiply for **Enhanced Move**, if any ( $\times 1.5$  at level 0.5,  $\times 2$  at level 1,  $\times 4$  at level 2, and so on). Unless the animal has **Terrain Adaptation**, *Terrain Types* (p. 22) applies normally. Use **Riding** skill with *Harder Than It Looks* (p. 22).

## Wheels

Beasts can instead pull land vehicles (p. 19) that have Load and Top Speed stats. Total passenger and cargo weight can't exceed Load, while Top Speed acts as Move for *Covering Ground* (p. 23). Use Move  $\times 1.00$  on a good road – or  $\times 0.50$  on a lousy road or off-road on flat terrain such as plains – *instead* of using *Terrain Types* (p. 22). On worse ground, stack Move  $\times 0.50$  and terrain effects; e.g., mountain ( $\times 0.20$ ) results in a net  $\times 0.10$ . The skill to use with *Harder Than It Looks* (p. 22) is **Teamster**; though this isn't on any standard template, assume it's an option wherever Animal Handling or Riding appears.

## Cool Rides

Fantasy heroes *love* fantasy transportation! There are endless possibilities, but some basic principles apply:

- *Animals* use **Basic Move** modified for encumbrance and **Enhanced Move** as in *Beasts* (above). Being muscle-powered limits daily travel time (p. 23), but most critters are faster and/or stronger than people.
- *Vehicles* use their Top Speed stat as Move, and can carry up to their Load stat instead of worrying about encumbrance. Those powered by magic, sails, etc. rather than muscle can travel for 24 hours/day, unless something prevents this.
- *Land* transport is affected by *Terrain Types* (p. 22), unless it boasts **Terrain Adaptation**, moves on blades or skids (terrain works as for skating or skiing; see *Feet*, above), or has wheels (terrain works as for *Wheels*, above).
- *Water* transport ignores *Terrain Types* but must follow water.
- *Aerial* transport ignores *Terrain Types* and can go anywhere.

Some generic examples:

*Flying Carpet:* Has Top Speed and Load fixed by magic, ignores terrain, and can fly for 24 hours/day as long as someone with **Magery** is awake. A flying *ship* is similar, but anyone with **Seamanship** can stand watch.

*Iceboat:* A wind-powered *land* vehicle, with Top Speed and Load stats. Moves on ice as if skating. Requires athletic handling, limiting daily travel time to that for muscle-powered transportation.

*Walking Hut:* Has Top Speed and Load set by magic, experiences standard terrain effects, and can walk for 24 hours/day as long as someone with **Magery** is awake.

*Winged Beast:* An animal with air Move. Affected by encumbrance but not by terrain. Muscle-powered, which limits daily travel time.

Anything flying, ultra-fast, or untiring makes travel less of an adventure. Such transportation should have a high cash or point cost, if available, and demand a rarely taught skill: **Piloting (Contragravity)**, **Driving (Hut)**, **Riding (Gryphon)**, etc.

## Boats

Boats are vehicles (p. 19) with Load and Top Speed stats. Passenger weight plus cargo weight can't exceed Load, and treat Top Speed as Move for *Covering Ground* (p. 23). Terrain

doesn't matter as such, but water is often ice in arctic terrain or absent in desert – and going *up* mountains in a boat isn't usually an option! Use **Boating** skill with *Harder Than It Looks* (below).

If the boat sails (or glides along on magic), it offers one huge advantage: travel can be 24 hours/day, as long as somebody stands watch. Such vessels use **Seamanship** instead.

## Terrain Types

*Wilderness Adventures* uses canonical terrain types that have the effects on the following table unless specified otherwise.

**Terrain:** The terrain type, named after the **Survival** specialty required there; see p. B224. Heroes without the correct specialty can use **Survival** for other terrain at -3, **Naturalist** at -3, or **Per** at -5.

**Foraging:** Modifier to the foraging rolls under *Food and Water* (pp. 42-44). 1d-7 gives from -6 to -1; 2d-7 gives from -5 to +5. In a hurry, use the average: -4 or 0, respectively.

**Tracking:** Modifier to **Tracking** rolls.

**Travel Speed:** Multipliers used for daily travel, given typical conditions, for anyone without **Terrain Adaptation**. In a hurry, use the average.

Terrain	Foraging	Tracking	Travel Speed
Arctic	1d-7 (avg. -4)	-2	×0.20 on loose snow or ×0.50 on slippery ice
Desert	1d-7 (avg. -4)	-2	×0.20 on loose sand to ×1.25 on hard-packed sand (avg. ×0.50)
Island/Beach	2d-7 (avg. 0)	-2	×0.20 on loose sand to ×1.25 on hard rock (avg. ×0.50)
Jungle	2d-7 (avg. 0)	0	×0.20
Mountain	1d-7 (avg. -4)	-2	×0.20
Plains	2d-7 (avg. 0)	0	×0.50 if hilly to ×1.25 if completely level (avg. ×1.00)
Swampland	2d-7 (avg. 0)	-4	×0.20
Woodlands	2d-7 (avg. 0)	0	×0.20 in dense forest to ×1.00 in light forest (avg. ×0.50)

## Mixed Terrain

Terrain types often overlap; e.g., tree-covered mountains mix mountain and woodlands. As well, travelers on the move might cross several terrain types in a day. In either case, the GM should pick *one* type as “dominant” for the day and use its modifiers, but let *all* applicable **Survival** specialties work for the day's rolls.

## Exceptional Terrain

**Aquatic Terrain:** The aquatic specialties on p. B224 are irrelevant unless the party can travel *and* forage underwater for extended periods. In that case, ignore tracking and travel modifiers. Foraging (usually **Fishing**) rolls are at 2d-6 (-4 to +6) for *Bank*, *Deep Ocean Vent*, *Reef*, and *Tropical Lagoon*; 2d-7 (-5 to +5) for *Fresh-Water Lake* and *River/Stream*; and 2d-8 (-6 to +4) for *Open Ocean* and *Salt-Water Sea*.

**Bonanzas:** Any terrain might boast unusually rich spots: a fertile valley hidden in mountains, hot springs in the arctic, an oasis in the desert, wonderful fishing grounds underwater, etc. If the GM includes one of these, the foraging modifier is the *better* of +5 or its usual maximum. When the modifier is left to chance, a traveler can spend a use of **Serendipity** to have the party stumble upon such a place!

**Fantasy Terrain:** Fantasy terrain types needn't make sense. The GM can set any combination of foraging, tracking, and travel effects, and might leave nothing to chance. Truly outré terrain types may call for new **Survival** specialties that default to others at -3 to -7.

## MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Several factors influence *actual* travel speeds. On a wilderness adventure, these make things interesting and give outdoor heroes a chance to show off their knowhow. The rolls below are optional – travelers who aren't adept at this stuff can muddle along, accepting what Fate throws their way, instead of risking anything fancy. Sum the resulting travel speed modifiers as explained in *Covering Ground* (p. 23).

## Harder Than It Looks

Moving efficiently can make a real difference. Each adventurer responsible only for himself may opt to roll against the relevant skill under *Trudging*, *Trotting*, and *Trundling* (pp. 21-22) – **Boating** for a one-seat boat, **Hiking** on foot, **Riding** on a mount, **Skating** on skates, or **Skiing** on skis. Someone in charge of a vehicle rolls once for everyone aboard, using **Boating** for a small craft, **Seamanship** for a ship, or **Teamster** for a cart, chariot, wagon, etc. Roll each day. Success adds 10% to effective speed, failure subtracts 10%, and critical failure subtracts 20% or yields *interesting* results (e.g., *Obstacles*, pp. 31-32, or *Shipwrecked*, p. 48). This rule replaces *Forced March* (*Dungeons*, p. 5).

## Following Directions

The “best” path might prove otherwise, while a skilled guide can make a bad path adequate and a good one better for the entire group.

**Cutting Corners:** Terrain is rarely homogeneous – there might be short bits of road or beaten trail, passes between peaks, and so on that enable swift travel. Even without such things, cutting close to obstacles, avoiding meandering, and watching the lay of the land can save valuable time. Use *The Golden Path* (*Dungeons*, p. 5), but roll daily and modify speed, not time. Success at **Navigation** adds 10% to effective speed, failure subtracts 10%, and critical failure subtracts 20%. A guide with **Area Knowledge** of the region can use that *instead*, to identical effect.

*X Marks the Spot:* If following a map (**Sages**, p. 14), remember to add its **Navigation** modifier as well as that for any navigation equipment (p. 17). A scholar who studies a map for temporary **Area Knowledge** may use the *higher* of the two adjusted skills.

## COVERING GROUND

To find final travel speed, follow these steps, keeping all fractions:

1. Using *Trudging, Trotting, and Trundling* (pp. 21-22), work out each delver or vehicle's Move.
2. Get base travel speed by multiplying this Move for terrain as shown in the "Travel Speed" column in *Terrain Types* (p. 22). The notes for particular means of transportation always override this – follow those *instead*.
3. Sum all applicable percentage modifiers for *Mitigating Circumstances* (pp. 22-23), *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31), and *Tracking* (pp. 27-28). Apply the total to base travel speed. It is possible to get worse than -100%! That means the party accidentally circles, has to back-track, etc.; e.g., dire weather (-75%), failed Hiking (-10%), and critically failed Navigation (-20%) mean *losing ground* at 5% of base travel speed that day.
4. *Halve* the result to convert to final travel speed in miles per hour.

*Sticking Together:* Work out each adventurer's travel speed as shown above. Though *Nasty Weather* and *Following Directions* affect the whole party, travelers often have differing Move, Top Speed, susceptibility to terrain effects, etc.; *Harder Than It Looks* applies per individual or vehicle; and *Tracking* slows only the tracker. The group travels at the speed of its *slowest* member. A delver who's at least 1.5 times that fast may try *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) without slowing the others.

## Daily Travel Time

This is the number of hours dedicated to covering ground in a given 24-hour day. In all cases, remember to subtract time spent fighting, healing, looting, foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), etc.

## Muscle-Powered

Most means of transportation rely on muscle, including everything under *Feet* (p. 21) and *Beasts* (p. 21), and anything under *Wheels* (p. 21) or *Boats* (p. 22) that isn't either a sailboat operated with **Seamanship** or a magically propelled conveyance.

- If *nobody* in the group has **Survival**, the party requires an hour to strike camp; six hours throughout the day for meals, hygiene, rests, and incidentals (e.g., prayer); an hour to pitch camp and argue about watches; and eight hours for sleep. *8 hours/day*.
- If even one person knows **Survival** (for huge groups, the GM may require one in 10 to have it), the group needs half an hour to strike camp; three hours for meals and so on; half an hour to pitch camp; and eight hours for sleep. *12 hours/day*.
- If racial traits, magic, etc. mean that *nobody* sleeps (including any beasts!), there's no camping, either; the day consists of

alternating travel and breaks. To calculate travel time, use the same fraction of the day not spent in camp (8/14 or 12/15), apply it to the day's full 24 hours, and round to the nearest hour. *14 hours/day without Survival, 19 hours/day with Survival*.

## Untiring

Vehicles under *Boats* (p. 22) and *Cool Rides* (p. 21) that require only watch-standing – and entire groups that can ignore not just sleep but also food and FP losses – can travel for *24 hours/day*.

## Daily Travel Distance

At the end of each day, multiply daily travel time in hours by travel speed in miles per hour to learn how many miles the group covers.

## Sick and Tired

Missed meals, camping somewhere unpleasant or forgoing camping to travel all night (*Camping*, pp. 24-25), and illness (*Fresh Air Is Good for You*, p. 34) result in lasting FP losses recoverable only with food, sleep, or treatment. Injuries – from combat or wilderness woes – deplete HP. When either score is below 1/3 of its full value, *halve* the adventurer's Move for the sake of *Covering Ground* (above). This isn't cumulative; don't use quarter speed if both issues apply.

A hero who loses enough FP to failed swimming rolls (p. B354), spellcasting, etc. also moves more slowly. These FP losses *aren't* lasting. If the party is willing to wait for him to catch his breath, he'll no longer slow them down. Subtract his recovery time from daily travel time (above).

If somebody is slowing the whole group, his allies might carry him or put him on a mount. In that case, divide his weight and that of his gear by the number of bearers and use the resulting encumbrance level to figure their Move that day. Putting the patient in a vehicle counts against its Load stat instead. Don't do this calculation twice – if somebody needs an hour to recover FP, the party can *either* travel an hour less that day *or* deal with carrying him all day.

The FP losses under *Travel Fatigue* (p. 24) and *Harsh Climates* (p. 30) *don't* work this way. They're snapshots – how that person is doing if the group stops to fight or solve a puzzle. However, those FP fluctuations *and* lasting losses both count against FP available for spells at that moment, and if the total goes negative, HP losses result as usual.

## TRAVEL LOADOUTS AND SUDDEN STOPS

When bandits or sea monsters suddenly accost the travelers, it's crucial to know what state everyone is in.

## To Arms!

Marching around in full battle rattle has upsides and downsides.



*Travel Gear:* Each delver must specify what gear he's wearing or carrying. This stuff sets his encumbrance level for the purpose of *Feet* (p. 21) and *Travel Fatigue* (below). If violence breaks out on the road, he has that equipment to hand, its DR protects him, and its weight affects his Move and Dodge.

*Stowed Gear:* The adventurer must give all his remaining equipment a location: in the party's boat, on his mount, in his henchman's backpack, or whatever. This stuff doesn't encumber him, but it either counts against a vehicle's Load or burdens the ally or beast who's carrying it. He can snatch *handheld* gear from an animal or a vehicle he's riding by taking one Ready maneuver per item. Things in others' packs, stowed

*Travel is tiring, especially in a hot climate or when clad in armor.*

armor, and articles borne by beasts or vehicles he *isn't* riding won't be useful in the fight.

## Travel Fatigue

Travel is tiring. In a sudden encounter, travelers may find themselves a little short on FP:

- If on foot (*Feet*, p. 21), rowing or paddling, or otherwise doing work, the missing FP depend on the encumbrance of travel gear (above): 1 FP for *None*, 2 FP for *Light*, 3 FP for *Medium*, 4 FP for *Heavy*, or 5 FP for *Extra-Heavy*.

- If mounted (*Beasts*, p. 21), make a *HT*-based **Riding** roll. Any success costs 0 FP; any failure costs 1 FP.

- If in a beast-drawn vehicle (*Wheels*, p. 21): 1 FP on a good road, 2 FP on a bad road or off-road.

- If sitting in a sailboat, on a flying carpet, or otherwise doing no work and having smooth ride: 0 FP.

Regardless of means of transportation, anyone in a hot climate – and fantasy desert or jungle terrain usually qualifies – pays 1 FP *extra*. This becomes 2 FP for delvers clad in plate armor (though not *partial* armor; see **Loadouts**, p. 8), winter clothing, or arctic clothing, even if those things aren't heavy enough to offer encumbrance!

# CAMPING

"Camping requires no special skill" (*Dungeons*, p. 5) is hopeful – ask anyone who has ever pitched a tent on lumpy rocks, next to a nest of agony ants, facing uphill during a rainstorm. *Travel* (pp. 20-24) allocates time to pitching camp at night and striking it come morning, and the GM may want to game out the implied activities. Even when hand-waving it all, travelers without a guide who knows **Survival** above default spend twice as long messing with their camp each day.

*All Night Long (All Night):* Those who opt to march all night instead of camping may do so. For those without **Doesn't Sleep** or a **Vigil** spell, this costs 3 FP per night. These FP can't be recovered until the party *does* stop for a night.

*First Class:* Ignore most of this stuff when traveling aboard a vehicle large enough to provide long-term accommodations, like a ship. *Watches* (p. 25) still applies, however.

## Sites

Careful campsite choice can be a life-saver. Make a **Survival** roll for the terrain type – at default, if necessary – before pitching camp each night. This is at -2 without group basics. Critical success allows the campers to claim all three benefits below; success, two of them; failure, just one; and critical failure, *none*. Any party member with **Serendipity** can expend a use to stumble upon a site that offers all three.

*Comfort:* Not choosing this means everybody gets cold, wet, bitten by bugs, a lumpy night's sleep, etc., and is down 1 FP (2 FP in arctic or mountain terrain), cumulative over multiple nights. To recover these FP, the party must spend a night at a campsite that *does* offer this benefit, or in town.

Campers without even rudimentary sleeping arrangements – bedrolls, furs (in arctic terrain), the **Fur** advantage, or animal Allies of larger SM (tiger pillow, boo-yah!) – must "spend" *two* benefits to claim comfort unless **Serendipity** was invoked for a perfect campsite.

*Concealment:* Per *Wilderness Camps* (*Dungeons*, p. 5), a well-hidden camp can grant a second chance to detect night visitors. Choosing this benefit gives -1 to the raiders' Vision roll *and* +1 to the party's **Camouflage** roll in the Quick Contest.

*Lines of Sight:* Choosing this benefit means that enemies must approach over open ground, giving the party +1 to the **Perception** or **Observation** rolls under *Camping and Posting Watches* (*Dungeons*, p. 5). If the intruders attempt to sneak, *they* have -1 to Stealth in the Quick Contest as well.

## Shelters

No less important than the campsite is the shelter set up there. This is distinct from the spot's concealment and comfort – you can pitch tents and find caves in both great and lousy locations! Unless noted otherwise, time to prepare and break down shelter is included in the process of pitching and striking camp (*Daily Travel Time*, p. 23). All **Survival** rolls below are at -2 without group basics.

*If I Don't Get Some Shelter:* A night sans shelter costs FP exactly as if the site didn't offer comfort (above). If *both* problems exist, the FP losses are *additive* – one night in a crummy arctic camp costs 4 FP!

*Good In Tent:* A tent or a yurt provides shelter for a number of people up to its capacity.



**Hole-IsM:** A cave – or gaps between rocks or ancient tree roots – is good shelter. To find something like this quickly enough to matter, roll vs. **Prospecting**. Use full skill in mountain terrain, -2 in most terrain, and -4 in swampland (where holes are full of slime and leaping leeches). Also subtract the SM of the *largest* camper who has to fit; e.g., -1 for an SM +1 ogre, but +6 for an SM -6 pixie. Any success locates something big enough for everyone; failure doesn't; and critical failure turns up shelter claimed by bandits, bears, dragons . . .

**Igloo You:** In arctic terrain, snow mounded into temporary huts or windbreaks works. Those building the shelter roll against the *highest Survival (Arctic)* among them, with a bonus equal to the number of them who know the skill (no defaults!) but a penalty equal to shelter capacity. Any failure means the shelter doesn't count! A genuine igloo takes time away from travel – hours equal to twice its capacity – but creates *lasting* shelter (cover DR 1) that gives +2 to later **Survival** rolls.

**Lean-To, Too:** A makeshift shelter of branches is a possibility where there's sufficient vegetation (any terrain but arctic, desert, or mountain). This requires some sort of axe, hatchet, or machete. Follow the rules for temporary snow shelters (above), but substitute the local **Survival** specialty and apply an extra -2 in island/beach, plains, or swampland.

**Road Warriors:** A wagon, beached boat, or other vehicle without long-term quarters can offer shelter to as many people as *half* its Occupancy.

**Sorcerous Shelter:** A **Weather Dome** spell of radius R offers shelter to  $R^2-1$  people but *won't* do anything about ants, lumpy ground, natural noise, etc., so it doesn't provide comfort.

**Is That Your Foot?** Most shelter is for a certain number of SM 0 people. Count SM +1 folk (barbarians, ogres, etc.) as two; SM -1 gnomes as 1/2; SM -2 halflings as 1/5; SM -4 leprechauns as 1/20; and SM -6 pixies as 1/100. If overcrowded, all benefits of comfort are lost for everyone.

## Watches

The watch-standing rules under *Camping and Posting Watches* (*Dungeons*, p. 5) apply normally when taking this

more-detailed approach, but the GM may entertain further considerations.

**Site for Sore Eyes:** When camping, a good campsite can greatly enhance these tasks; see *Sites* (p. 24).

**Snap!** The *Dungeon Camps* rules (*Dungeons*, p. 5) work fine outdoors. If intruders aren't seen by sentries or fooled by **Camouflage**, roll one last Quick Contest: the *higher* of **Survival** or **Traps** for the hero who set the noisemakers vs. enemy **Vision**. Victory awakens the party, as usual. Casters with **Forest Warning** or **Watchdog** will always be awakened at this stage, and can alert allies.

**You Have the Conn:** On a vehicle capable of traveling for 24 hours/day, somebody skilled must man the helm to make progress – default skill *won't* do. Ships (oceangoing or flying) call for **Seamanship**. Weird magical transports might need esoteric **Piloting** specialties! Use the *worst* skill level throughout each 24-hour period with *Harder Than It Looks* (p. 22).

**A Little Help Here:** On a vehicle that travels all night, a person watching for enemies *and* steering can't spend equal time on both. He must distribute -4 between **Seamanship** (lowering his skill for the previous rule) and his **Perception** or **Observation** roll to spot danger. He may allocate -4 to one, -3 to one and -1 to the other, or -2 to both. Posting separate people for these tasks solves this problem.



# EXPLORATION

Most adventurers don't wander the wilds to hike, camp, and experience swamps and nasty weather. Perhaps they're being paid to explore a region, track down bad guys, or spy on an enemy army. Even if they're simply going from A to B, they may want to look before they leap, and then leap *in style*.

## SCOUTING

A party trying to reconnoiter as it travels has three options:

1. *Send fast movers ahead while moving.* As *Covering Ground* (p. 23) notes, this limits scouting to those who are at least 50% faster than the bulk of the group, but it doesn't slow progress. It also doesn't limit stealth.
2. *Stop periodically to send people ahead.* This *halves* daily travel distance, but anyone who wants to scout may try, and

may do so stealthily. Travelers who aren't scouting can use up to half the daily travel time for other tasks.

3. *Scout in force.* The whole party reconnoiters while moving at full speed, but stealth is a casualty. (If *everyone* moves slowly enough to preserve stealth, that's the previous case: stealthy scouting at half travel speed.)

These approaches affect *Scouting Ahead* (*Dungeons*, p. 7) as described in the next two sections.

## Sneaking

To reconnoiter undetected, fast movers or people sent ahead must roll against **Stealth**. A party scouting in force can still *try* to be stealthy but uses the group's *lowest Stealth*, at -5 for haste – and the *largest* SM among the adventurers and their mounts and vehicles modifies enemy **Vision**.

Here and in all later rules, **Stealth** failure – blown skill rolls, Quick Contests lost to sentries, successful enemy Perception rolls against those not using Stealth, etc. – means being detected . . . *if* there are enemies around! There might not be. If there are, only the adventurers out reconnoitering are in danger. Usually.

*Where Did **That** Come From?* In all cases, anyone handling a mount or a vehicle uses the *lower* of **Stealth** or the applicable **Boating, Riding, or Teamster** skill.

*Size Matters:* Against an active sentry, the **Stealth** attempt becomes a Quick Contest against Vision. Remember that SM modifies Vision! A pixie (SM -6) or someone who can shapeshift into a rat (SM -7) can sneak even with mediocre skill. Those not moving on foot had better be good – a horse has SM +1, a wagon has SM +2, and so on.

*Stealth from Above:* Flying characters can't sneak but *can* fly high enough to be hard to see. The flyer may pick a range penalty of any size (although the GM might set limits, even in fantasy). His enemies get a Vision roll at this modifier – cumulative with SM – to spot him flying search patterns. The spy's own **Vision, Observation, Tracking, Traps**, etc. (see *Information Gathering*, below) suffer the *same* distance penalty. *Both* sides add **Acute Vision**, and ignore -2 per level of **Telescopic Vision**. Thus, this works best for, say, an SM -4 hawk or SM -6 pixie with excellent eyesight.

*It's Just a Mouse:* When the scout outwardly resembles a beast, the guidelines under *Critters* (pp. 12-14) hold. Being seen won't provoke hostility unless *either* the observer has cause to be wary of animal scouts *or* the creature is remarkable for the surroundings and the viewer makes his **Naturalist** roll to realize this.

## Information Gathering

Spotting buildings, counting orcs, noticing smoke, and so on requires no special roll. Most other things do, including:

*The Hills Have Ears:* If the goal is to get close enough to hear speech without being noticed, then scouting in force, with mounts, or in vehicles won't work. People ahead of the party on foot (and flyers who risk landing) may roll an additional Quick Contest of **Stealth** vs. enemy Hearing. *Winning* means getting close enough for a **Hearing** roll. *Losing* works like any **Stealth** failure.

*Lay of the Land:* Gathering enough information to guess at upcoming terrain (**Really Winging It**, p. 21) calls for a **Naturalist** or **Survival** roll. Terrain is obvious once you're *in* it, so a useful prediction calls for someone to use one of the first two scouting options. If he lacks suitable nature skills, he can use **Observation** to collect details for someone else – but failure gives his associate a penalty equal to the margin. **Observation** can act as a complementary skill to the daily **Cartography** rolls under *Mapping* (p. 27), too; if also surveying terrain, roll separately for each task. All this assumes the scout can somehow communicate with the naturalist or mapper; animals aren't much good at this.

*Look, Footprints!* Those scouting may also look for a trail. Picking this up initially is a **Tracking** roll at the penalty under *Terrain Types* (p. 22).

*I See Trouble Up Ahead:* Detecting an ambush involves an **Observation** roll. Noticing a trap uses *Per*-based **Traps**. Either must *win* a Quick Contest against any enemy Camouflage skill in use – and most wilderness foes do take this precaution.

## THERE AND BACK AGAIN

Knowing where you've been is as important as looking ahead!

### Getting Lost

The GM decides whether the adventurers can get lost on their current adventure. If they're following a road or a person (*Tracking*, pp. 30-31), or heading toward a visible, static landmark (mountain, ray of celestial light stabbing down from the heavens, etc.), this shouldn't happen. Explorers who have **Absolute Direction** don't get lost, either – skip this rule for a party that includes even one such individual.

But if the heroes are roaming through trackless arctic or desert terrain, thick jungle or woodlands, supernatural mists, etc., the GM may require daily rolls to remain on course. Use **Navigation** anywhere, **Area Knowledge** in known parts, **Observation** for flyers, or a spell such as **Find Direction, Know Location, or Pathfinder**. If none of that applies, use IQ at -5. Make one roll for the *highest* score in the group – or, if everyone is trusting a guide without second thoughts, use that person's best applicable ability. Also do this *after* a tracking mission (*Bounty Hunting*, pp. 47-48), if the party's quarry knew the territory better than they did.

Failure means getting lost. The adventurers make no progress toward their goal. They can perform all usual wilderness tasks, but waste one day's worth of supplies and travel, and face the joys of *Camping* (pp. 24-25), *Natural Threats* (pp. 30-35), and *Wandering Monsters* (p. 56) for another day. If it matters *where* the delvers strayed, the GM can roll for a random direction (see *Maps*, pp. 52-53) or send them somewhere interesting (*Lost*, p. 48); either way, limit deviations to half a day's travel so that a day is "there and back again."

Each day after that, they may try one of the above rolls, an IQ roll for somebody with **Eidetic Memory, Tracking** (modified by *Terrain Types*, p. 22) to retrace their trail, or the **Remember Path** spell. Success resumes travel; failure costs another day. Someone with **Photographic Memory** can get the party on track after one day, no roll required.

*The Forest of No Return:* There are cursed, unnatural regions that *want* visitors to get lost! Some magical fogs have this effect even in known parts. In those situations, all the skill and spell rolls above are at -5 to -10; people with **Absolute Direction** must roll to avoid getting lost, though they ignore -3 of the penalty; and travelers with **Photographic Memory** have to roll to get back on track, but avoid -5 of the penalty.

### Getting Separated

Anywhere the party could get lost, individuals or small groups detached for *Scouting* (pp. 25-26), foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), etc. – or fleeing combat or pursuit – may get separated from their allies. Such people must roll as for *Getting Lost* (above) to reach their rendezvous point (which might be overrun, if they fled combat!). Otherwise, they or their allies will have to use magic (like **Seeker**) or *Signaling* (p. 28) to find each other. The first attempt to regroup wastes no appreciable time, but later ones cost a day apiece. Days spent searching allow no travel, and each fragment of the group faces *Wandering Monsters* (p. 56) on its own.

## Aerial Scouting and Mapping

Flying wizards, winged shapeshifters, carpet-riders, etc. represent a massive plot complication. Realistically, they enjoy long lines of sight that make surprise nigh impossible. A compromise solution is best.

*Eye in the Sky:* The land is laid out in plain sight for airborne adventurers, but keen eyes and overhead concealment (e.g., forest canopy) still matter. A flyer engaged in *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) automatically spots all *unconcealed* targets in arctic, desert, mountain, or plains terrain soon enough to prevent surprise; in other terrain, a roll against the *higher* of **Vision** or **Observation**, at -4 in jungle or woodlands, achieves this. For *concealed* targets in any terrain, winning a Quick Contest of **Vision** or **Observation** (still at -4 in canopied terrain) vs. Camouflage or Stealth is needed. Horizontal distance is left abstract, but if it really matters, call it a mile and assume that the two groups will encounter each other in whatever time they need to cover that distance. Foes who notice an aerial watcher (see *Stealth from Above*, p. 26) will be expecting trouble!

*Aerial Mapping:* Mapping (below) assumes a route map, valued by merchants and road-builders. Conquerors and delvers prize area maps. Creating these on foot means

zigzagging across a region for longer than is fun for most players. Mapping from the air is much faster. Use the standard mapping rules, but each day's roll maps a radius in miles that depends on the speediest flyer's Move:

Move	1-3	4-8	9-15	16-24	25-35	36-48	49-63
Radius	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

And so on. If the mapmaker doesn't personally do the flying, he must rely on the flyer for most of his information, and uses the *lower* of his ally's **Observation** or his own **Cartography** *instead* of receiving a complementary skill bonus. An aerial map means that the next few miles ahead of the party count as mapped.

*Popping Up for a Look:* The above rules assume somebody who can fly all day. Occasional aerial glimpses – as by wizards who can't maintain the **Flight** spell for free – *don't* offer these benefits. Enemies may be hidden briefly at that moment, while mapmaking calls for extended note-taking. If someone flies up to look at something, then simply game out the scene with normal movement and skill use. *Exception:* A flying adventurer with **Serendipity** can spend a use to be fortuitously airborne when something interesting is visible, in which case *Eye in the Sky* applies.

## Mapping

With a day's travel often subsumed into a few rolls for weather, daily progress, and random badness, the "GM describes, players inscribe" model recommended in *Mapping* (*Dungeons*, p. 6) isn't viable. Describing everything would grow tedious – and anyway, it's the rare maniac who'd spend eight or more hours sketching the trail a yard at a time. It's fairer and less annoying for everyone if the GM reveals progressively more of *his* map (*Maps*, pp. 52-53) to the players.

*Mapmaker, Mapmaker, Make Me a Map:* Player knowledge provides no guarantees for the *explorers'* map! The GM should make a daily **Cartography** roll in secret for each mapper. Keep a running total as follows: critical success gives +1, success adds 0, failure is -1, and critical failure is -2. Each day's roll is at a modifier equal to the current tally plus the effects of any complementary **Observation** roll (*Information Gathering*, p. 26). This total matters for the next two rules.

*Terra Cognita:* Mapped areas are no longer subject to *Terra Incognita* (p. 20) for the purpose of later *Travel Arrangements* (pp. 20-21), and can be used for the **Navigation** rolls in *Following Directions* (pp. 22-23) and *Getting Lost* (p. 26). When the heroes use their map-in-progress this way, apply its current running total as a skill modifier.

*Maps-R-Us:* The running total at journey's end determines map quality. In the lingo of **Sages**, p. 14, any penalty indicates a *sketchy* map, the sort that might sell for \$25; 0 means an *average* map that would go for \$50; and a bonus corresponds to an *annotated map* that rates an *extra* \$50 per +1. These are base prices. An original map of new territory should rack up at least twice as much; a private commission, at least 10 times base price, plus time and expenses. This rule replaces *Selling the Tale* (*Dungeons*, p. 15).

## TRACKING

*Tracking* (*Dungeons*, p. 5) works normally for wilderness adventures set on land – but if that's the whole point of the story, it deserves some elaboration.

*Days on the Trail:* Instead of rolling vs. **Tracking** once for the whole adventure, check *daily*, using the more-detailed modifiers under *Terrain Types* (p. 22) and *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31). Any success lets the trackers follow the trail at full speed. Failure or critical failure wastes time, subtracting 10% or 20%, respectively, from travel speed. Use these rules *instead* of those for *Following Directions* (pp. 22-23), as the hunters don't get to pick the route – that's at their quarry's discretion. Ignore *Getting Lost* (p. 26) for the same reason, though the heroes might have to roll at the end of the hunt to see whether they know where they've ended up!

*Hot on the Trail:* If time is of the essence, the GM should set the initial lead that the heroes' quarry enjoys. Then looking at their prey's stats, use *Travel* (pp. 20-24) to establish a plausible daily travel distance for the target and add that to the lead each day. Work out the pursuers' daily distance normally – remembering that time spent on tasks other than pursuit is time wasted – and subtract that from the lead each day. If the result is zero or negative, the adventurers overtake their target that day and successful *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) can spot him.

*Losing the Trail:* To keep things interesting, these rules assume that critical failure at **Tracking** merely slows the trackers. If the GM prefers, critical failure might mean losing the trail completely. Instead of a 20% speed penalty, the party makes *no* progress that day while their quarry widens his lead. The party can try a **Tracking** roll each day, with success meaning normal progress again but *any* failure wasting another day.



*Active Countermeasures:* Someone who knows he might be tracked can try to thwart this. Success at the **Light Walk** skill (a secret of martial artists, ninja, and elves) makes tracking impossible without a sense other than sight; e.g., **Discriminatory Smell**. The **Hide Path** spell inflicts a flat -8 on the trackers' roll, while **Walk Through Plants** gives -1d if there are any plants at all, with an extra -2 in jungle or woodlands. Taking mundane precautions allows a traveler to turn **Tracking** attempts against him into Quick Contests vs. his own **Tracking** by reducing his daily speed by 10% (the **False Tracks** spell lets him use **Naturalist** at no speed penalty) – and if the trackers lose, they suffer an effective critical failure.

## SIGNALING

While *Signaling* (*Dungeons*, p. 7) works outdoors, distance and visibility quickly become issues. **Gesture** and **Body Language** remain useful if the person who's being "read" is no further away in yards than the viewer's **Perception** adjusted by Vision modifiers – particularly **Acute Vision**, any combat penalty assessed under *Poor Visibility* (p. 39), and the subject's SM (it's easier to see an ogre waving than a pixie!).

Magic offers many ways to signal almost flawlessly: **Great Voice**, **Message**, **Mind-Sending**, etc. If such a spell works, the intended recipient (and nobody else) gets the alert.

Failing all that, it's time to resort to things that enemies might notice. The following methods communicate general location, plus a *simple, prearranged* message ("Attack!", "Flee!", "Gold!", etc.). For complex systems like "One fire arrow if by land, two if by sea, three if I need snacks," apply -2 to all relevant rolls to simulate tricky timing and the possibility of the recipient missing part of the signal. A *whole alphabet* gives -8!

### Noise

Sound is an effective way to hail allies outdoors – especially when part of the group is far ahead, engaged in *Scouting* (pp. 25-26). Anyone who might find the signal interesting gets a **Hearing** roll with these modifiers:

*Distance:* -1 at 8 yards, -2 at 16 yards, -3 at 32 yards, and another -1 per doubling. A mile is -9, two miles is -10, and so forth.

*Duration:* +1 if the signal is ongoing, not a brief blast of sound like a startled shout or a **Concussion** or **Thunderclap** spell; +2 if it lasts for a minute or more.

*Source:* 0 for shouting, most musical instruments, or a **Sound** or **Voices** spell; +2 for a whistle or a woodwind instrument; +3 for a horn, a drum, regular bagpipes (*Treasure Tables*, p. 22), or shouts with **Penetrating Voice**; +4 for dwarven bagpipes; +5 for a **Noise** spell; +7 for a **Concussion** or

**Thunderclap** spell. Shouted **Subsonic Speech** carries twice as far, giving a further +1, but only individuals who can hear subsonics get to roll.

*Skill:* Those using instruments may make a **Musical Instrument** roll, while anyone shouting can try **Singing**. Success adds +1; critical success, +2.

Success means friends receive the signal. *Foes* get to roll, too, of course! Those who fail their rolls may well hear the noise, just not clearly enough to realize its significance.

*Hoo, Who?* Alternatively, there's the classic trick of signaling with **Mimicry** (**Animal Sounds** or **Bird Calls**). This *must*

be prearranged to be useful! The recipient still needs to make a **Hearing** roll; treat the source as shouting, with bonuses for **Penetrating Voice** and success or critical success at **Mimicry**. Enemies have to win a Quick Contest against this skill roll with **Naturalist** – at -3 if they don't suspect trouble (they haven't triggered traps, seen someone flying search patterns, etc.) – to realize that it's a signal.



### Smoke and Fire

There are many choices for visual signaling. Options include hilltop bonfires, burning arrows shot into the sky, lantern balloons, someone flying with a torch, **Flash** spells cast directly upward (at -1 per yard), and luminous **Missile** spells (**Fireball**, **Lightning**, **Sunbolt**, etc.) hurled skyward as flares. Assume that as long as such things rise above local

obstacles (trees, castle walls, hills, etc.), there's a chance they'll be seen. Smoke signals waft about 500 yards above the ground.

For this kind of signaling, make a **Vision** roll at +10 for a deliberate and unmistakable signal (that's the point!). Apply range penalties (p. B550) – but *halve* effective distance for each level of **Telescopic Vision** (racial trait, **Hawk Vision** spell, telescope, dwarven accurizer, etc.). Fog, dense brush, or other obscuration *along the line of sight* applies its usual penalty; someone looking for a signal may be able to avoid this by climbing above the problem. Darkness penalties matter for smoke signals; for light sources, invert them into equal-sized bonuses for contrast.

Success means being noticed (by friend or foe, as the case may be).

## STUNTS

When it comes to athletics, outdoor explorers use the same rules as dungeon delvers, but with some extra considerations. The following notes elaborate on *Dungeons*, pp. 7-8.

As always, the GM must specify the *height* of vertical challenges (distance to the crevasse floor, from treetop to ground, etc.), the *width* of horizontal ones (ravines, swift rivers, and so on), and modifiers to related skill rolls. If nothing else, all DX-based rolls take a penalty equal to encumbrance level, and the GM may add weather penalties to the mix (*Nasty Weather*, pp. 30-31).

**Balancing:** **Acrobatics** is at -5 to traverse a log floating in water, -2 for a swaying tree branch, or +2 for a log resting on solid ground at *both* ends. These modifiers assume walking (occupies no hands, gives full Move); apply another +2 if scooting along while seated (uses one hand, Move is at 1/3 speed), or +4 if hugging with arms and legs (uses two hands, Move is 1). To claim the bonus for a balancing pole, the adventurer needs two hands free to grasp it. As always, failure means a fall and individuals with **Perfect Balance** needn't roll.

**Climbing:** **Climbing** rolls to negotiate ordinary trees are at +5. See also *Mountaineering* (p. 29).

**Hand Over Hand:** To cross a gap on a rope by going hand over hand instead of by walking along it like a circus clown, make a **Climbing** roll at -2 (or at no penalty with **Brachiator** – wildmen are naturals). This uses two hands and gives Move 1. If the line has a slope, climbing up isn't appreciably different, but hanging from a belt, short bit of rope, etc. and sliding down is easier: use the *higher* of **DX** or **Climbing**, at -1.

**Hoisting:** Raising or lowering a load on a rope while planted firmly on high ground calls for a **Climbing** roll (*without* bonuses for **Brachiator**, **Flexibility**, **Perfect Balance**, climbing spikes, etc.) – or a **Knot-Tying** roll, if there's a secure place to anchor a line. Roll at +4 minus the encumbrance level the load represents; e.g., a total of +1 at Heavy. Failure works like a failed climb. It's possible to go past Extra-Heavy to 15xBL, but this is at a net -1 and any failure counts as critical failure.

**Skidding:** Those who wish to slide across ice can attempt a DX-based **Skating** roll, if that would be better than DX or DX-based **Skiing**.

**Swinging:** Assume that the effective length of a natural vine is the height of the tree it's hanging from, for the purpose of distance calculations. At launch, roll against **Survival (Jungle or Woodlands)** for whoever chose the vine. Failure means a weak specimen that snaps, dropping Nature Boy before he gets to try his **Acrobatics** roll!

## Mountaineering

Explorers climbing a mountain can be at it for a long time, and may work together as a team. This demands more detail than the ordinary climbing rules (*Dungeons*, p. 7). In all cases, **Climbing** takes a penalty equal to encumbrance level, and the GM sets a *further* modifier for steepness: 0 to scramble up a slope too steep for ordinary hiking, -2 if any stretch is vertical enough to require rope, or -3 or worse if a sheer rock face or overhang is involved.

**Don't Look Down!** The GM should set a random range for the distance to the nearest horizontal surface (*splat*): 1d yards for a shallow slope, 6d yards for a serious one, all the way up to insane cliffs that merit death sentences like "You smash into the rocks 2d×100 yards below the party at terminal velocity, suffering 6d×2 crushing damage!"

**All in a Day's Work:** Climbs imposed as specific obstacles require one **Climbing** roll apiece. When using *Travel* (pp. 20-24) to journey up a mountainside, however, roll once per day – the travel speed reduction for mountain terrain accounts for this.

Failure means a fall from a random height (see above); critical failure, from the *maximum* height.

**United We Climb:** When the whole party climbs, they may opt to do so cooperatively. Use the lead climber's skill, at -1 per person who doesn't know **Climbing** at better than default; e.g., eight explorers, six of them skilled and led by someone with skill 18, would roll at 16. Apply the usual penalties – and for encumbrance, use the *worst* modifier in the group. Failure and critical failure mean that somebody chosen at *random* suffers a fall, as above.

**Every Man for Himself:** Those using **Climbing** for daily travel may opt out of group efforts to roll separately. Explorers who can fly or otherwise avoid climbing don't have to roll at all. Such people neither affect nor are affected by the group roll.

**United We (Hopefully Don't) Fall:** Climbers can rope themselves together for safety. When someone falls, make a group **Climbing** roll for those remaining, even if they were climbing individually (or flying while tethered!). Only the skill of those who didn't fall matters, and the roll is at an extra -1. Success saves the victim; failure doesn't. Critical failure means *another* person chosen at random falls, allowing *another* group roll at -2, and so on, at a cumulative -1 per falling victim. The downside to being roped together is that a strong enemy can cause everyone to fall by winning a Quick Contest: his ST vs. the ST of the strongest climber plus (others' total ST)/5, rounded down.

**Yeti Attack!** Every climber should know who is *above* and *below* him; see *Marching Order* (*Dungeons*, p. 6). The topmost climber is the lead – if making group rolls, use his **Climbing** skill. When *Wandering Monsters* (p. 56) attack, he'll face them alone for 1d turns, then the next person in order will join him, and so on, with 1d turns between reinforcements.

## Mountaineering calls for teamwork.

### Water Hazards

These work as on p. 8 of *Dungeons*, but often need elaboration outdoors. Remember that all **Swimming** rolls take *twice* the usual encumbrance penalty.

**Boating Accidents:** Critical failures on **Boating** or **Seamanship** capsize the boat and dunk the occupants. Everybody must try an immediate **Swimming** roll. Those who succeed get one attempt to right the vessel using the best vehicle-handling skill among them, minus *twice* the vehicle's SM (or just SM, if a kayak); failure means that it and everything aboard is lost. Destroyed craft also result in a plunge, and cannot be saved.

**Fording:** Shallow water can be forded by wading. This requires a **DX** roll, and those with **Perfect Balance** are exempt. Failure means falling in, leading to a **Swimming** roll. Critical failure counts as a *failed* swimming roll; see p. B354.

**Unscheduled Swims:** Those whose swim starts with falling from a bridge or out of a boat, failing to make a jump or a swing to cross a river, slipping while fording, etc. *never* enjoy the +3 to **Swimming** for entering the water intentionally!

**Rough Water:** Swift rivers, crashing waves, etc. can give up to -5 to **DX**, **Boating**, **Seamanship**, and **Swimming** rolls. The GM may roll 1d-1 for the penalty's size (0 to -5).

# DANGERS

Beyond the consequences faced by explorers who overreach their skills – e.g., getting lost, sleeping in discomfort, and having gory climbing and boating accidents – are things that can harm even the most cautious traveler.

## NATURAL THREATS

Many of the woes that travelers face are entirely natural. Cynics might blame the gods (often justifiably!) – but from the perspective of most mortals, such troubles just *happen*, and are distinct from those that result from enemy action or their own incompetence. In addition to the new and wonderful problems here, don't forget that rough terrain can be a threat in itself, slowing movement and defying efforts to forage, track enemies, etc.; see *Terrain Types* (p. 22).

### Harsh Climates

Some places are unbearably hot or horribly cold. Rather than roll constantly, make a daily **HT** roll to see how terrible everybody feels. Failure means spending that day down as many FP as the margin. That's how the hero is faring at any given moment during the day, and *not* cumulative between days . . . but it *is* additive with other FP losses, be they fleeting (like *Travel Fatigue*, p. 24) or lasting (like those under *Camping*, pp. 24-25), and going below 0 FP costs 1 HP per FP.

**Cold:** Roll at -5 without proper winter clothing, or at +5 with genuine *arctic* clothing. The GM may apply a penalty of any size for low temperatures or extreme winds; genuine arctic climates give from -1 to -5, but fantasy realms are often scarier. Adventurers with **Survival (Arctic)** may use *HT*-based skill instead of raw HT for the roll. The **Warmth** spell gives +3, while **Resist Cold** waives the roll.

**Heat:** Roll at a penalty equal to encumbrance level. The GM may apply a penalty of any size for high temperatures or extreme humidity; deserts and jungles can be as severe as -5, though most aren't. Adventurers with **Survival (Desert or Jungle)** may use *HT*-based skill instead of raw HT in suitable terrain. The **Coolness** spell grants +3, while **Resist Fire** waives the roll.

**Adaptation:** Suitable **Temperature Tolerance** gives a HT bonus equal to advantage level. Furry races (e.g., cat-folk and wildmen) get their bonus against cold; fire-infused and lizard men are heat-resistant. Everybody else may choose which way their advantage works – and distribute multiple levels between heat and cold – unless noted otherwise.

**Sudden Exposure:** If a hero suddenly finds his situation worse, the GM may require a second roll at the more severe penalty, and use the *poorer* of the two results. This is most often a risk in cold climates, when warm clothing is destroyed or somebody is soaked with water (make a new roll at -5).

**Sunburn:** Travelers bereft of clothing in an environment with intense direct sun must roll vs. HT or *HT*-based **Survival (Desert)** each day to avoid 1 HP of injury to sunburn. Anyone with **Fur** or natural **Damage Resistance** is immune. A parasol or the **Shade** spell grants immunity *and* gives +1 to HT rolls vs. heat in such places.

### Nasty Weather

In addition to climate, most places have *weather*: wind, precipitation, etc. Its effects are largely subsumed into *Terrain Types* (p. 22). However, the GM may optionally roll 3d daily – on each *boring* day, anyway – for fluctuations that make things worse or, just occasionally, better:

**3-6 – Perfect.** The wind is at the travelers' back or in their sails, and the terrain's usual hell abates – say, a dry day in jungle terrain, or a warm, snowless one in arctic. Add 10% to travel speed. All **Survival** and **Tracking** rolls that day are at +1.

**7-11 – Passable.** As bad or as fair as usual for the terrain. No effect on travel speed or skills.

**12-14 – Bad.** In fantasy, every region has conditions harsh enough to qualify: *any* rain or snow in most terrain, *extra* rain in jungle, bonus snow in arctic, sandstorms in desert, etc. Subtract 50% from travel speed. **Survival** and **Tracking** rolls that day are at -1.

**15-18 – Dire.** As above, but the gods hate you. Subtract 75% from travel speed. **Survival** and **Tracking** rolls that day are at -2.

Adjustments to travel speed affect adventurers' progress by land, water, and air alike.

**Survival** and **Tracking** modifiers affect all uses of those skills, for any reason. If the GM wants to challenge explorers even more, he can extend the penalties (only) to the rolls in *Stunts* (pp. 28-29), have them limit visibility (*Poor Visibility*, p. 39), and complicate almost anything else that wind or dampness could believably make harder. In that case, *perfect* and *passable* weather have no effect, but *bad* weather gives -1 and *dire* weather gives -2.

The exact weather is best left abstract. However, if it really matters – say, somebody wants to cast **Umbrella** to offset those skill penalties – then assume that bad or dire conditions are *wind*-related in *desert* and *precipitation*-related in *jungle*. In other terrain, roll 1d:

**1-2 – Precipitation.** As suits the terrain: snow in arctic, monsoon rains in jungle, and so on. Magic that deals with that sort of precipitation can eliminate the whole penalty.

**3-4 – Wind.** Spells for coping with wind can wipe the entire penalty. The visible effects may be terrain-specific (e.g., sandstorms in desert), but the root cause isn't.

**5-6 – Combination.** Magic for coping with either precipitation or wind is enough to get rid of -1 for bad weather or *half* the penalty for dire weather. Dealing with the full -2 for dire weather calls for both.

**What a Beautiful Day!** Anyone in the party may use **Luck** to make the GM reroll the day's weather. Someone with **Serendipity** can expend a use to get perfect weather for a day.

**Weather Witching:** Most **Weather spells** affect too small an area for too short a time to benefit daily travel. However, **Storm** can dispel the day's worst weather, making dire weather merely bad, or bad weather passable.

**Walking Between Raindrops:** Optionally, travelers may have someone with **Weather Sense** or the **Predict Weather** spell roll once for the party after the GM determines the weather.



Success means knowing what's coming early enough to travel in the best part of the day, skirt the storm's edge, reach high ground, etc.; shift the result *up* one category from dire to bad to passable to perfect (perfect weather gets no better). Failure or critical failure wastes time on unnecessary prep or detours, or leads to being caught unaware – the shift is now *down* one or two steps, respectively (dire weather gets no worse). This rule replaces *Wind at Your Back* (*Dungeons*, p. 5).

## Obstacles

Most terrain has its share of obstacles: swift streams, trees fallen across the path, etc. The travel speed multipliers in *Terrain Types* (p. 22) account for time to skirt these, but the GM may want to game out negotiating such barriers in two situations:

- When a specific impediment stands between the PCs and their destination as part of the adventure. This might be

*programmed* (“After covering 111 miles, our sturdy heroes must cross River Drownsalot”) or *random* (similar to *Wandering Monsters*, p. 56). The obstacle needn't alter daily progress; e.g., the speed reduction for mountain terrain might cover slowing down to climb, but the GM could ask for the rolls under *Mountaineering* (p. 29) to check for injuries. However, it's valid to reduce the day's travel by any amount up to 100% while the adventurers solve the puzzle – perhaps bringing their skills into it by halving the speed penalty if *all* the necessary rolls succeed, adding 10% per failure, etc.

- When one or more PCs critically fails the daily skill roll under *Harder Than It Looks* (p. 22) and the GM wants to make the experience more interesting than “-20% to daily travel speed” (yawn). The GM may offer an alternative route that avoids the obstacle or uses a handy bridge, but this should *really* punish travel speed (-30% or worse).

A few broad suggestions, with references to relevant feats described in *Stunts* (pp. 28-29) and on pp. 7-8 of *Dungeons*:

## Unnatural Threats

Everything in *Natural Threats* (pp. 30-35) exists in reality. Oh, the rules take a simplified, cinematic approach, but bothers such as sunburn, nasty weather, and stinging plants plague boring, real-world campers. Dungeon delvers expect more – and like a mad cosmic bartender, the GM can satisfy their cravings by mixing “realistic” elements into crazy concoctions. There are no rules, only principles:

*With Thorns*: Remember “. . . *With Spikes*” (*Dungeons*, p. 7)? The same idea applies in the wilderness! A precipice might be *icy*, *rain-slicked*, and *trembling*, for -3 to Climbing. Jungle might be *impenetrable*, for -1 to all Survival, Tracking, and Vision rolls. And so on. Weather penalties (*Nasty Weather*, pp. 30-31) are specific examples of this.

*Danger, Dialed to 11*: Suggested modifiers can be intensified; recommended damage, increased. Weather could go down to “hellish,” for -3 or worse to skills – or up to “awesome” in some paradise, for +2 or more. Cold and heat penalties might extend beyond the typical -5. Falling rocks and trees, lightning strikes, etc. can have any damage roll the GM likes (especially if the PCs possess potent healing magic and high DR from gear and spells). Many threats can be worse in several senses; e.g., in East Thermopia, sunburn might be resisted at a penalty, inflict more than 1 HP, or *both*.

*All Bad, All the Time*: Effects that depend on dice rolls never have to. Fantasy lands often boast *perpetual* bad weather, which might always take the same form (intense winds but not precipitation, or vice versa). Particular dangers might happen regularly, without any randomness, forcing heroes to suck it up. Trees in the Enchanted Forest could sprout, grow, and topple constantly. On the Blasted Plains, a tornado may touch down daily, with only its intensity being unpredictable. Near a volcano (p. 32), all kinds of severe conditions apply.

*Mix-and-Menace*: Dangers needn't match the obvious or suggested terrain! Just as a swift watercourse might cut

through a parched desert in the real world, fantasy may place a swamp on *high* ground gashed by dry gulches. Travelers could encounter thin ice and deep cold in a jungle; stinging plants and sweltering heat in arctic terrain; a desert where nasty weather means precipitation that instantly vanishes into the sands; a mountain where sinkholes appear in thick rock and mad goats stampede down the side; and plains pounded by falling rocks and inundated by freak waves miles from the nearest cliff or closest sea.

## The Outré Limits

Beyond intensifications and odd mixes are dangers invented wholesale. The only limit is imagination! Two examples:

*Acid Swamp*: Swampland terrain where each day of overland travel dissolves a point of DR from foot armor, cart wheels, etc. that aren't either indestructible (like orichalcum) or specially treated (\$50 per wheel or pair of boots). Those with DR 0, including most mounts, lose 1d-1 HP/day – and injury over HP/3 cripples a foot!

*Rain of Frogs*: Amphibians fall from the sky. These do no damage but count as worse-than-dire weather (-3 to skills, though still only -75% to travel speed) *and* put all combat on bad footing due to squished frog. On days like this, heroes whose disadvantages forbid harm to animals *can't* travel, but those willing to eat frog needn't forage or consume rations.

## I Wasn't Trained for This

If conditions are weird enough, ordinary skills and spells – Survival, Weather Sense, the Storm spell, etc. – should have a penalty, at least until the PCs have spent a week in the environment. The collective effect might be so severe as to define a fantasy terrain type that merits a distinct Survival specialty (see *Terrain Types*, p. 22).

*Abyss*: Arroyo, chasm, crevasse, gorge, gulch, ravine, rift . . . a crack in the land or ice runs between where the heroes are and *want to be*. The GM determines width, depth, and what's at the bottom (river, lava flow, razor-sharp rocks that convert falling damage from crushing to cutting, etc.). Depending on these particulars, the delvers might have to cross by climbing down one side and up the other (**Climbing**), jumping (**Jumping**), swinging on a rope or a vine (**Acrobatics**), or using a spell such as **Flight**. If the gap is narrow, it may be possible to position a log or a pole for balancing (**Acrobatics**). If it's wide, one hero can carry a line across so that the others can go hand over hand – or lower his pals on a rope, climb down after them, climb up the far side, and finally hoist his allies (all **Climbing**). A huge break might call for everyone to risk climbs using *Mountaineering* (p. 29).

*Drop or Rise*: Going up or down a cliff, mountain, or huge rock is like dealing with a one-sided abyss. The GM needs to specify the height and what's at the bottom, in case someone falls. Balancing, jumping, and swinging aren't options, because the important movement is vertical. Thus, the usual solution is an application of **Climbing** – including lowering or hoisting others, and stringing lines for hand-over-hand or sliding movement.

*Volcano*: A fiery death mountain may bar the way or be the heroes' destination. Treat as any **Climbing** challenge, but use *Fire* (below) to simulate the effects of fumaroles and small vents. For lava flows, see *Flow* (below). Climbing failures over large vents work as on p. 19 of *Dungeons*: replace falling damage with 8d+2 burn *per second*.

*Water*: A stream, river, etc. works much like an abyss, but a fall means getting wet and encountering dire gators. The heroes can opt to try **Boating** (if they have suitable vessels) or **Swimming** (if not); see *Water Hazards* (p. 29). For a *serious* river, lake, or sea, boats are the only sensible choice!

## Disasters

Beyond mere inconveniences are actual catastrophes. These don't *necessarily* reduce travel speed – even if carrying the wounded or stopping to heal someone has that effect – though some do. Mostly, they consume HP and healing resources, and afford the party's opponents excellent opportunities to attack. The GM might assign random odds to these calamities, just as with *Wandering Monsters* (p. 56), or mercilessly inflict one per game session on each traveler who suffer from **Unluckiness** (this *can* hose his associates).

An unlucky 13 examples follow. Disasters marked with an asterisk (\*) are more likely in *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31); if rolling dice to determine whether they occur (see *Bolts from the Blue*, pp. 54-55), consider adding +1 to the odds in *bad* weather, +2 in *dire* weather. In all cases, anyone whose **Danger Sense** provides a warning receives an *unpenalized Dodge* roll to avoid the hazard's effects at the last instant, even if the calamity doesn't normally allow that!

### Falling Rocks\*

Rain, tremors, and gusting wind can dislodge boulders in hilly areas or mountain terrain. Roll 1d:

- 1 – Rock bounces in from ahead, allowing full **Dodge**.
- 2-3 – Rock comes from the side, giving victims without **Peripheral Vision** or **360° Vision** -2 to **Dodge**.
- 4-5 – Rock falls from above, giving almost everybody -2 to **Dodge**.

- 6 – Rock strikes from behind, and only people who possess **360° Vision** enjoy a defense.

Heroes traveling with shields ready may add DB to their defense rolls against rocks from *ahead* or *above*. Roll 1d to determine dice of crushing damage (1d to 6d cr). Bigger and faster-moving projectiles are possible; e.g., the GM might decree that in Squih-Shu Gulch, huge stones plunging from towering hoodoos inflict 2d dice!

### Falling Tree\*

Particularly in jungle or woodlands terrain, moribund trees and those gnawed by dire beavers may randomly keel over onto the unlucky. This is slow and loud enough to permit a defense: those who succeed at *Per*-based **Naturalist** or **Survival** rolls enjoy full **Dodge**, everybody else defends at -2, and shield DB never matters. Roll 1d to determine dice of crushing damage (1d to 6d cr). In scrubby and young-growth forest, reduce the damage range; in primeval woods, increase it. Where a falling rock (above) ricochets and keeps going, a tree pins its victim until someone can *win* a Quick Contest of ST vs. the damage rolled to lift it off – which is when the dire beavers like to spring their trap.

### Fire

Forest fires in woodlands terrain, wildfires in plains, or flame- and vapor-spewing fissures in volcanic areas. To detect this in time, roll against *Per*-based **Naturalist** – **Prospecting**, for volcanoes (above) – or a suitable **Survival** specialty. Any success in the group means they lose 20% travel speed that day as they avoid the danger. Failure indicates last-minute discovery: -20% travel speed, anyone who breathes inhales smoke for 1d-3 HP of injury, *and* all vision-based efforts (**Observation**, **Tracking**, etc.) are at -4. Critical failure means being overtaken by fire and fleeing – treat as failure, but add 1d burning damage and, in woodlands, check for falling trees (above).

Traversing fire is a death sentence for those who aren't *immune* to inhaled poison and have less than DR 6 vs. fire (or a **Resist Fire** spell). Heroes with such abilities can avoid lost progress and fire-related damage, but automatically suffer visibility penalties and the risk of falling trees.

### Flow\*

Moving snow (avalanche), mud (mudflow), or rocks (rockslide) may strike in or adjacent to hilly areas or mountain terrain. Whenever adventurers are in range of such a peril, they get a *Per*-based **Prospecting** or **Survival (Mountain)** roll to realize it, with success meaning they may sacrifice 20% travel speed that day to avoid the risk – unless their quest specifically takes them into danger! In adventure-fiction tradition, if anyone uses skills or spells to cause a racket as described in *Noise* (p. 28), the GM might make an *extra* check for this calamity.

A flow striking the party affects everyone. Those who make *DX*-based **Prospecting** or **Survival** rolls find cover. Everybody else is damaged as for falling rocks (above) *and* buried until they or a friend *wins* a Quick Contest of ST vs. this damage roll (in heroic fantasy, ignore the realistic risk of suffocation).

Lava flows are similar, but weather and noise won't trigger them, victims who don't reach cover are grilled instead of buried (change "falling rocks" for 1d to 6d cr to "lava" for 1d to 6d *burn*), and those who critically fail end up in lava (8d+2 burning *per second* until rescued).

Halve the group's daily progress on a day in which they're hit by any kind of flow.

### Freak Wave\*

Huge waves can overwhelm boaters and island/beach travelers. On water, the lookout gets an **Observation** roll. Then the vessel's handler must roll **Boating** or **Seamanship**, at +1 if the lookout succeeded or +2 if he critically succeeded, a bonus equal to the vehicle's Stability Rating (SR), and a penalty for severity. Intensity is from -1 to -6 (roll 1d), or worse if you've annoyed lake spirits or a sea god. Any failure capsize the craft as explained in *Boating Accidents* (p. 29), with the consequences described there (notably, **Swimming** rolls).

On land, the wave sweeps everyone into the water and forces **Swimming** rolls to return to land.

If **Observation** works on water – or if someone succeeds at **Survival (Island/Beach)** on land – there's enough warning to get +3 to **Swimming**, at least.

### Lightning Strike\*

In flat terrain (plains, on water, etc.) or up high (mountain terrain), being blasted by bolts from the blue is a concern. It isn't a *big* concern except for delvers who offend local druids or spirits, annoy a thunder god, fail to donate after being saved by prayer (*Dungeons*, p. 15), suffer from **Social Stigma (Excommunicated)** or **Unluckiness** . . . well, quite a few people, actually. Handle this like being zapped by a Lightning spell for 6d burning damage. A *Per*-based **Naturalist** or **Weather Sense** roll detects hair standing on end soon enough to try **Dodge**, at -2 for attack from above and optionally +3 for diving for cover (if any); otherwise, there's no defense.

### Quicksand

Anyplace with loose soil and water – especially island/beach, jungle, and swampland terrain – might have pits of wet, sucking grit. In real life, the danger is becoming stuck and dying of exposure. In fantasy, you're dragged to your doom!

A potential victim may try **Survival (Island/Beach, Jungle, or Swamp)**, with failure meaning stepping in it and critical failure causing the next roll to fail automatically. If he steps in, he must roll vs. **Swimming** (or HT-4) every second, at *double* encumbrance penalties. Any success lets him flop to safety. Each failure costs 1 FP – and at 0 FP, each FP costs 1 HP.

Rescuers must *win* a Quick Contest of their highest ST plus (others' total ST)/5 against *twice* the victim's ST to pull him out. Rescue attempts take one second apiece. The rescuee decides whether to cooperate or attempt **Swimming** – he can't do both.

### Sinkhole\*

Anywhere but in rock-solid mountain terrain, the ground or ice might give way beneath an adventurer, dropping him into a pit. A successful *Per*-based **Prospecting** roll or

**Survival** roll for the terrain lets the would-be victim spot and avoid such danger. Otherwise, he takes falling damage (*Dungeons*, p. 19) for the hole's depth. The GM might pick depth randomly – say, 1d yards, but possibly much more in areas famed for the sorts of hidden caves where delvers go treasure-hunting.

## Field Engineering

Most wilderness is full of building materials: wood, stone, etc. Though *GURPS Dungeon Fantasy* isn't *GURPS Construction Work*, artificers might be inspired to turn their craft-related abilities to outdoor challenges. These traits cost a lot of points, so it's only fair to allow this.

When the heroes encounter a major barrier to travel (*Obstacles*, pp. 31-32), **Quick Gadgeteer** gives the option of rolling against **Engineer (Gadgets)** to rig a solution: log raft, pulley hoist, rope bridge, etc. Each associate with **Survival** for the terrain can roll to find useful materials – apply the local foraging modifier (*Terrain Types*, p. 22), and have the *best* result complement the attempt. Every \$250 in poles, ropes, spikes, and similar basic hardware dedicated to the task gives another +1. This is a major piece of work, so it slows travel speed no less than skirting the problem another way *unless* the artificer uses a **Gizmo**. In that case, there's no appreciable slowdown!

Successful field engineering lets the *whole party* avoid brute-force rolls that could result in mishaps – **Climbing**, **Swimming**, etc. It doesn't waive skill rolls to operate the resulting solution; e.g., an artificer can use **Engineer** and a **Gizmo** to whip up a raft quickly enough that a water hazard won't slow travel, but someone still has to roll against **Boating**, with the usual consequences on a failure. However, the engineer's solution is optimized for *that specific problem*, so reduce situational penalties by half his margin of success (rounded down); e.g., skill 16, +1 for a successful **Survival** roll, and +2 for \$500 worth of rope, lets a roll of 11 to lash together a raft offset up to -4 for swift current.

Field engineering is normally disassembled after use, allowing the travelers to recover any hardware tied up in it. If left intact, that equipment stays behind, too. The group can return later to reuse the setup and recover their stuff, but the GM should check to see whether it's still there or somebody else found it; treat this as an extra roll for wandering monsters.

### Stampede

This pain falls mainly on the plains: a herd of ordinary herbivores gets spooked (often by fire) and comes charging. Realizing what the noise and dust mean in time to react requires a *Per*-based roll against **Naturalist**, suitable **Animal Handling** (say, for cattle or horses), or **Survival (Plains)**. Success gives the party time to try **Climbing**, magic spells, etc. to move out of harm's way. Each person gets one try, and failure (at warning or evasion) means facing 1d slams or tramples. Maniacs with **Animal Empathy** may forgo evasion to stand fast and attempt a Quick Contest of **Intimidation** vs. the beasts' Will (10 to 12), with margin of victory or loss subtracting from or adding to the number of attacks faced.

A successful **Dodge** roll avoids one collision plus impacts equal to margin of success. Delvers *can* exploit **Acrobatics** for +2, though neither retreating nor shield DB helps. Damage per hit is 1d cr for small deer, 2d to 3d cr for typical critters, and 4d cr for elephants.

### Stinging Plants

Almost anywhere but arctic or mountain terrain can have a bunch of mundane plants that cause discomfort on contact.



A *Per*-based **Herb Lore** or **Naturalist** roll spots these in time to avoid them . . . otherwise, accidental exposure occurs during a “hygiene break” or while eating. Potential victims must roll vs. **HT** at up to -5 (roll 1d-1 for penalty size). Failure means sneezing or moderate pain (p. B428) for the rest of the day, penalizing many vital rolls; failure by 5+ or critical failure adds an allergic reaction for 1d HP of injury. This hazard counts as poison: **Resistant to Poison** aids the HT roll, **Neutralize Poison** cures afflictions, and so on.

### Swarm

Handle *monster* swarms using *Wandering Monsters* (p. 56) – but in any non-arctic terrain, somebody might disturb a colony of ordinary biting ants, knock down a mundane hornets’ nest, etc. Spotting such a nuisance requires a *Per*-based **Naturalist** roll. Failure triggers a swarm, which pursues whoever messed up. Critical failure stirs up 1d swarms, with the extras plaguing random allies! Use the stats and rules for bees on p. B461: Move 6, stings inflict 1 HP per turn, armor prevents injury for five seconds, and the swarm is Diffuse and takes 12 HP to disperse.

### Thin Ice

Frozen bodies of water – common in arctic terrain – aren’t always as solid as they seem. A successful **Survival (Arctic)** or *Per*-based **Skating** roll reveals this. On a failure . . . sploosh! Handle this as an unscheduled swim (*Water Hazards*, p. 29) and

sudden exposure to cold with the extra -5 for being wet (*Harsh Climates*, p. 30). As failed **Swimming** rolls (p. B354) and cold can both drain FP, the victim may reach 0 FP, suffer injury, and/or pass out. If he remains conscious, his *next* success at **Swimming** extricates him, while any failure cracks the ice dramatically, costs 1 FP, and allows the usual repeated attempt after five seconds.

An associate can roll against **Survival (Arctic)**, plus or minus the difference between his ST and the victim’s, to save the swimmer. This, too, is allowed every five seconds. A conscious victim must decide whether to cooperate or try **Swimming** again. A critically failed rescue attempt dumps the would-be rescuer in the water.

### Tornado\*

Wind funnels can form anywhere flat (plains or desert terrain, over water, etc.). Mobile victims may roll against the *best* of 10, **DX** or *DX*-based **Running** if on foot, or **Boating**, **Riding**, **Teamster**, etc. if handling a vehicle or a mount; those with **Weather Sense** may use that instead; and immobile ones roll vs. a flat 10. Huge or swift-moving tornados can give a penalty of up to -10, and all rolls to see or hear anything in the vicinity suffer the same penalty. Success on this roll evades the thing (and benefits everyone on a vehicle).

Failure, however, means that every affected victim, mount, or vehicle is pummeled by debris or dumped from a height for *dice* of crushing damage equal to margin of failure.

## Fresh Air Is Good for You

Some locales harbor *disease*. While this isn’t specific to wilderness areas, those are the worst offenders (well, after necromancers’ conventions and the town sewers). The GM picks the effects, but here are some guidelines:

**Exposure:** The trigger for a resistance roll needn’t be realistic! In moist jungle or swampland, sure – call it insects and say that expensive, evil-smelling “bug juice” (p. 17) prevents it. In the Frozen North, though, you might catch your death by getting too cold (FP loss to cold triggers a roll). And in some regions, disease is the land’s revenge; anyone who rolls to scrounge or forage must *also* check for illness (see also *Despoilers*, p. 43).

**Resistance:** Ordinary diseases are resisted at HT to HT-6. Supernatural ones, like curses, might use Will to Will-6 instead. **Resistant to Disease** usually helps, but against curse-like illnesses, **Magic Resistance** or even **Power Investiture (Druidic)** might take its place. Some ailments require one roll upon first entering the affected area, others call for daily checks, and still others demand a roll a day until the subject succumbs, which grants future immunity for the rest of the adventure or for life.

**Schedule:** Incubation times and cycles are possible, but may add an annoying amount of record-keeping when *already* tracking arrows, FP, HP, Major Healing castings per cleric per subject per day, etc. The GM is free to specify a duration: “a week,” “2d days,” “until **Cure Disease** is cast,” whatever.

**Effects:** Generic jungle fever, swamp lung, etc. work like sewer rot (*Dungeons*, p. 4): -1 on all attribute and skill rolls until cured. Other illnesses cost FP or HP, on an ongoing basis (“1 HP/day for 2d days”) or in an acute bout (“3d HP”). Still others inflict specific penalties or disadvantages (“Hard of Hearing for 1d weeks”).

**Recovery:** If ignoring fancy schedules, recovery is automatic once duration is up. For something like daily HT rolls to avoid HP loss, recovery might follow any success, *three* consecutive successes, a *critical* success, etc. With acute FP or HP loss, “recovery” occurs once losses heal.

**Treatment:** Most diseases respond to **Cure Disease**, which is at -5 without a **Diagnosis** roll. Curse-like ones might call for **Remove Curse**, at -5 without an **Occultism** roll. Nasty ailments often penalize or ignore spells! Any illness might respond to a day out from traveling for treatment with **Esoteric Medicine** (+1 with healer’s kit) or a cure brewed from local ingredients using **Pharmacy (Herbal)**.

A word on infecting adventurers with harsh, life-altering real-world diseases like Ebola and malaria: Don’t. In fantasy, horrid ailments are plot devices that ravage NPCs. Heroes find cures and save the day – and though it’s reasonable to sicken them temporarily to heighten the challenge, it isn’t *fun* to slaughter beloved PCs or saddle them with new disadvantages. Save such fates for combat. While battling severe illness is a heroic struggle, *Dungeon Fantasy* is about the kinds of fights that involve swords and fireballs.

Then make *two* **HT** rolls at -1 per full five points of basic damage received, one for Hearing and one for Vision; appropriate **Protected Senses** grant +5. Failure means the relevant sense suffers a penalty equal to the margin – and failure by 10+ or critical failure, deafness or blindness – for (20 - HT) minutes, minimum one minute.

## DELIBERATE DANGERS

Assuming the heroes survive the journey and aren't eaten by bugs or swallowed by a sinkhole, they're likely to encounter not only random monsters but also rivals intelligent and skilled enough to exploit a natural setting: brutal barbarians, devious druids, sinister scouts, and all manner of elves, fauns, lizard men, and wildmen who don't want them in their territory. Naturally, delvers will want to turn the wilderness against their enemies, too! In the rules below, the PCs must make the rolls to *set up* the situation when they're the predators, those to *spot* or *avoid* it when they're potential prey.

### Nasty Tricks

The most basic exploits involve giving Nature the encouragement She needs to inflict *Disasters* (pp. 32-35) on one's enemies. All of these tricks use outdoor skills, not brute-force magic. They aren't traps set, detected, or disarmed using the Traps skill – but as they're traps in spirit, the GM may allow trap-detection *spells* to work.

### Detour Ahead

Most cunning, perhaps, is channeling enemy travelers along routes with high odds of disaster. First, search out the area's perils with *Per*-based rolls against the skills normally used to detect them: **Naturalist** for stretches that are home to edgy herds, stinging plants, or territorial swarms, or which enjoy regular fires, lightning, or treefall; **Prospecting** for geological threats like sinkholes, flows, and falling rocks; **Survival** for the local terrain to assess risks like avalanches, falling trees, fires, quicksand, sinkholes, stampedes, and thin ice; and **Weather Sense** to realize that the expanse is plagued by lightning strikes or tornados. Stopping for an hour to do this enables attempts against *all* appropriate skills; in a group, use the best level of each. Every two points of success reveals a relevant hazard that the GM previously decided was present. Critical failure means an up-close, personal run-in with such a problem!

To get travelers to venture through the danger zone involves leaving signs of one hazard so that, in veering away from it, they encounter another. This is a Quick Contest of *IQ*-based **Tracking**, rolled at the moment of truth. Use the highest skill on each side. The trickster rolls at -2 per hazard he wants his prey to stumble into and +2 per genuine hazard he reveals to drive people in that direction; e.g., leaving fake signs to steer others toward a hidden danger means a roll at -2, but using the threat of one real, obvious hazard to guide them into a *different*, hidden peril gives no modifier. Potential victims roll at +3 if they previously spotted trouble (traps, smoke signals, flying spies, etc.), and at +3 if they're following a road, where this ruse looks fishy ("Ah, the old 'tree blocking the road' trick!").

If the trickster wins, his targets stray toward the chosen perils, facing the usual chance of danger (unless the troublemaker sticks around to increase the odds) but steering clear of anything revealed to make the path look inviting. On a tie,

the travelers keep their current course, with whatever threats *that* brings. And if the would-be victims win, they avoid being tricked because they detect the ruse, giving them +3 next time.

*Such an opponent must not be encountered with brute force, but may be lured into an ambush and slain.*

– Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*

### A Little Push, A Tiny Shove

... and your foes will feel your love. Brute-force methods – e.g., dropping rocks on people – only work with threats that can be "aimed" to a certain extent. To get enemies to walk over completely static or unpredictable threats, use *Detour Ahead* (above) instead. Where a method below specifies preparation time, subtract this from the time available for travel. In all cases, if the GM agrees that a suitable spell would provide a shortcut, its casting time and skill level replace the mundane specifics.

*Burning Ring of Fire:* In a region with natural fuel, pyromaniacs can exploit **Weather Sense** and **Naturalist** to gauge how wind and the lay of the land will channel fire. The same person needn't provide both skills. Preparations take an hour, but are made far enough away that being seen isn't an issue unless the enemy has aerial scouts. When the fire is set (requires a torch, Fire magic, etc.), roll against the *lower* of the relevant skills. Success meets the victims' *Per*-based **Naturalist** or **Survival** in a Quick Contest, with loss, victory by 0-4, or victory by 5+ causing the results under *Fire* (p. 32) for success, failure, or critical failure at detection, respectively. If the arsonists fail, the stratagem is simply ineffective ... but if they critically fail, *they* suffer the effects given for critical failure at detection!

*Go with the Flow:* Locating an unstable mass of mud, rock, or snow over the enemy's path takes an hour and a *Per*-based **Prospecting** or **Survival (Mountain)** roll. Mundane preparations take another hour and a **Prospecting** or *IQ*-based **Forced Entry** roll, after which it's a matter of hiding up there (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38) and setting things off when the guests arrive. Those with a magical trigger such as **Concussion**, **Thunderclap**, **Shape Water** (for snow), or **Shape Earth** (for rock) – or dwarven bagpipes – can start the fun *without* an hour of prep! Victims who spot the ambushers can avoid the area; otherwise, see *Flow* (pp. 32-33). Critical failures while setting up this kind of thing inevitably mean that the predators become the prey.

*If a Tree Falls in the Woods:* In a wooded area, choose dice of damage befitting the local trees – from 1d to 6d cr, unless the GM rules otherwise – and spend five minutes per die chopping away and hiding wood chips. Cutting *almost* through requires an axe or a hatchet and a **Forced Entry** or *DX*-based **Naturalist** roll, with failure felling the tree and critical failure squishing the woodsman. Then the trickster lurks nearby (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38) to push on the tree or yank a rope just as his enemy appears. If his victim doesn't detect him, he may attack at **DX**, at -1 per full 2d damage (larger trees are tricky to time) but adding any **Forest Guardian** or **Outdoorsman**. Defenses and results are as per *Falling Tree* (p. 32).

*Like a Rolling Stone:* Finding a suitable boulder above the enemy's path takes a *Per*-based **Prospecting** or **Survival (Mountain)** roll. Choose damage dice (up to 6d cr) and spend five minutes per die digging, rigging a lever, etc. This calls for a **Forced Entry** or *DX*-based **Prospecting** roll, with failure wasting the effort and critical failure shifting the stone onto the hapless quarryman for half damage. Someone must stay near the rock to shove or lever it as the target appears; this requires **ST** plus **Lifting ST** of 6 + 2/die (e.g., **ST** 18 for 6d). If the victim doesn't spot him (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38), he may attack at **DX**, at -1 per full 2d damage but adding any **Pickaxe Penchant**. Use *Falling Rocks* (p. 32) to determine direction and allowed defenses.

*Not the Bees!* In an area with nasty bugs, half an hour and a success at *Per*-based **Naturalist** will find them, while critical failure will find them painfully. Stirring up (or flinging!) a hive so that the occupants go after a particular target within yards equal to their Move is a *DX*-based **Naturalist** roll at -5. Weirdos who know **Animal Handling (Insects)** can use that instead. Any success means the intended victim is attacked, per *Swarm* (p. 34); any failure draws the swarm to the trickster. This *can* be done openly, even in combat, but is more effective if done from concealment (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38).

*Yippee Ki Yay!* There's no point to searching for a herd – beasts far from potential targets aren't useful – but one that's present can be incited to *Stampede* (p. 33). This calls for *winning* a Quick Contest: *either* suitable **Animal Handling** – or **Intimidation**, at -5 without **Animal Empathy** – against the critters' Will, *or* the lower of **Disguise (Animals)** or **Mimicry (Animal Sounds)** vs. their *Per*. A tie, or loss by 1-4, means the herd wanders off; on a loss by 5+, the agitator is stampeded! This trick is obvious unless the herder can be invisible to man but not beast, but lets the trickster emerge from hiding (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38) at a distance in yards equal to the beasts' Ground Speed × 10; e.g., 80 yards for cattle with Move 4 and Enhanced Move 1. Successfully setting a fire (p. 32) triggers a free stampede, if the herd is between fire and target.

## Traps

Which brings us to entirely manmade dangers. What would wilderness adventures be without people falling into pits and dangling from trees? Outdoor traps use the rules and definitions in *Dealing with Traps (Dungeons)*, pp. 8-9) and *Fiendish Traps (Dungeons)*, pp. 19-20), with a few comments:

- *Detecting:* Clever wilderness killers conceal their handiwork. Detection involves *winning* a Quick Contest of *Per*-based **Traps** – still adjusted for **Acute Vision** and darkness, with -5 if rushed, and using the best modified skill in the group – against the trapper's **Camouflage** skill. Simple success won't suffice unless the trap is hidden but not camouflaged.

- *Circumventing:* Where **DX** or **Jumping** can circumvent a trigger on the path, riders use **Riding** instead.

- *Setting:* Time spent setting traps counts against available travel time, but the trapper may reduce this by up to 90% at -1 to skill per 10% shaved off. Wilderness traps call for **Traps** when targeting IQ 6+ beings who know about trickery and technology, **Survival** when trapping IQ 1-5 beasts. Either skill is at -5 against the other kind of prey. A failed roll means an ineffective or obvious trap. *Critical* failure traps the trapper!

Some classics follow, which should let the GM adjudicate others.

## Bow Trap

A crude "crossbow" cobbled together from a supple branch and a yard of cord, rigged to a trigger. Shoots an arrow when set off. The necessary woodcraft takes 30 minutes and a **Traps** roll; camouflage adds five minutes. If set point-blank to trigger and thus target, there's no roll to hit. A trapper with plentiful cord can give trap-finders a range penalty in return for a required **Traps** roll to hit at that penalty; e.g., 10 yards of cord gives -4 to detect the trap, but the trap must roll to hit at skill-4.

*Detect:* *Per*-based **Traps**, possibly at a range penalty, most often vs. **Camouflage**.

*Disarm:* *DX*-based **Traps**, plus **High Manual Dexterity**. Failure triggers!

*Circumvent:* **DX** or **Jumping**, if the trigger is on the only path; otherwise, automatic (don't walk on trigger).

*Evade:* **Hearing** roll at -2 allows **Dodge** at -2.

*Effects:* Thrust+2 impaling damage for trapper's **ST**, to a random hit location. Arrows that are fine, magical, poisoned, etc. have their usual effects.

*Shots:* 1.

*Rearm:* Yes.

*Steal:* Yes. Gives a yard of useful cord (more, for long-range versions) and an arrow.

## Covered Pit

A hole covered with fronds, woven branches, etc. Dig wide to block a path (the GM may roll 1d for necessary width in yards), long to challenge jumpers, deep to do damage. For a **ST** 10 man, work takes hours equal to 1.5× volume in cubic yards; for strong or multiple workers, divide time by (total Basic Lift)/20. For instance, a pit two yards/side is eight cubic yards and takes 12 hours to excavate – but four knights with **BL** 39 apiece could dig it in roughly 1/8 that time, or 1.5 hours. Modify time as needed: double in frozen soil, *quadruple* without shovels . . . but **Shape Earth** reduces it to 1/10 normal (for the cover). Adding sharp stakes requires a blade and 10% extra time. The foreman rolls against **Traps** and uses his **Camouflage** skill for concealment.

*Detect:* *Per*-based **Traps** vs. **Camouflage**.

*Disarm:* No.

*Circumvent:* **DX** or **Jumping**, if it blocks the only path. Otherwise, automatic – don't step in it.

*Evade:* No.

*Effects:* Falling damage (*Dungeons*, p. 19). Stakes make this *impaling*.

*Shots:* Constant.

*Rearm:* No.

*Steal:* No – but if staked, each square yard of wall or floor yields 1d wooden stakes.

## Deadfall

Heavy logs or stones hoisted into a tree, hidden over a cliff top, etc. Such free-falling weights are *far* deadlier than rolling rocks or tipping trees! The radius attacked, odds of someone there being hit, damage per victim, and time to set all depend on the trap's **SM**, which also modifies rolls to detect it.

<b>SM</b>	<b>Radius</b>	<b>Roll to Hit</b>	<b>Damage</b>	<b>Time to Set</b>
0	1 yard	9	10d cr	24 hours
+1	2 yards	10	15d cr	65 hours
+2	3 yards	11	20d cr	180 hours



Larger deadfalls are engineering projects, not woodcrafts. Divide time by the number of laborers. The project overseer makes the **Traps** roll and uses his **Camouflage** skill for concealment (which adds negligible time).

*Detect:* *Per*-based **Traps**, modified by SM, vs. **Camouflage**.

*Disarm:* IQ-based **Traps**. Failure triggers!

*Circumvent:* **DX** or **Jumping**, if the trigger is on the only path; otherwise, automatic (don't walk on trigger).

*Evade:* **Dodge**, at -2 without **Danger Sense** but +3 for diving for cover. Those whose step is smaller than the radius attacked are hit regardless.

*Effects:* 10d, 15d, or 20d crushing damage.

*Shots:* 1.

*Rearm:* Yes.

*Steal:* No.

### Elven Clothesline

A rope across a trail at riders' level. Requires a **Knot-Tying** roll, or a **Traps** roll at +4. Rigging is quick enough not to slow daily travel but consumes 1d+1 yards of rope. Can't be camouflaged, but is hard for riders to see.

*Detect, Disarm, Circumvent:* Automatic for those on foot and warned riders.

*Evade:* Unaware riders get a *Per*-based **Riding** or **Traps** roll, at the speed penalty for current Move (p. B550); e.g., -4 on a warhorse galloping at Move 8. Those in a position to witness another rider's peril may roll vs. full **Per**, if better. Success allows **Dodge**.

*Effects:* Dice of crushing damage equal to (mount's Move)/5; round 0.5 or more up. Roll 1d for hit location: 1 is face, 2 is neck, and 3-6 is torso. Rider must roll vs. **Riding** – at -4 if he suffers stun or knockback – or be unhorsed. If damage neither penetrates DR nor unhorses the rider, the rope snaps.

*Shots:* Constant (until rope snaps).

*Rearm:* Yes.

*Steal:* Yes. Gives 1d+1 yards of useful rope.

### Spiked Branch

This oldie can't drop multiple victims down a hole, or a mountain on several foes, but at least one person will get the point. It consists of a springy branch or sapling held under tension – or a *rigid* stick relying on rope torsion – adorned with wooden stakes. When triggered, it spikes the target. Make a **Traps** roll to set it. Finding a cunning location, cutting stakes, setting the trigger, etc. takes 30 minutes; camouflage adds five minutes.

*Detect:* *Per*-based **Traps**, most often vs. **Camouflage**.

*Disarm:* *DX*-based **Traps**, plus **High Manual Dexterity**. Failure triggers!

*Circumvent:* **DX** or **Jumping**, if the trigger is on the only path; otherwise, automatic (don't walk on trigger).

*Evade:* **Dodge**, at -2 without **Danger Sense**, **Peripheral Vision**, or **360° Vision**.

*Effects:* Swing impaling damage for trapper's ST (or ST of beefy assistant).

*Shots:* 1.

*Rearm:* Yes.

*Steal:* Yes. Gives 1d-2 yards of useful rope, minimum a yard, and 1d wooden stakes.

### Spring Snare

Another one-target wonder, this trap snares the victim's foot and dangles him from a tree as an easy target. If he's alone and can't get free, he's doomed to starve. It takes 30 minutes, 1d+1 yards of rope, and a **Traps** roll to set; camouflage adds five minutes.

*Detect:* *Per*-based **Traps**, most often vs. **Camouflage**.

*Disarm:* **Knot-Tying** or *DX*-based **Traps**, plus **High Manual Dexterity**. Failure triggers, with the would-be disarmer caught by *both* arms.

*Circumvent:* **DX** or **Jumping**, if the trigger is on the only path; otherwise, automatic (don't walk on trigger).

*Evade:* No.

*Effects:* *Target of ST up to twice that of trapper or assistant:* Dangled by one leg until ally takes five seconds to free him, or *cutting* or *burning* damage destroys rope (DR 1, HP 2). A dangling person needs a **DX** or **Fast-Draw** roll at -2 to reach his weapon (any failure drops it out of reach) and then attacks at -4 (best-case odds, *including* modifiers for target size, All-Out Attack, etc.), with failure attacking his own leg at 9 or less. This approach results in a fall for 1d+2 crushing damage. An **Acrobatics** roll lets him kip up, grab the rope, and cut it at -2 without risk of self-injury or falling. *Stronger target:* Held by a leg until he makes three successful **DX** or **Escape** rolls; each attempt is a Ready maneuver.

*Shots:* 1.

*Rearm:* Yes.

*Steal:* Yes. Gives 1d+1 yards of useful rope.

*In perils in the city, in perils  
in the wilderness, in perils  
in the sea.*

*– 2 Corinthians 11:26*

### Ambushes

In wilderness as in the dungeon, the worst lurking dangers attack with teeth, arrows, swords, and spells . . . and outdoors, distance and concealment make ambush attractive. Handle this as follows:

1. Moving ambushers stalk using their group's *worst Stealth* skill after adjusting for encumbrance. Static ones waiting for prey to come to them use **Camouflage** instead – and while a hasty attempt still suffers from the worst skill, preparing for at least 30 minutes (subtract prep time from daily travel!) allows them to use the *best* skill at -1 per person who lacks **Camouflage** at better than default.

A group that dedicates 30 minutes or longer to setting traps (*Traps*, pp. 36-37) can always claim the latter benefit. In all cases, natural concealment grants no bonus but penalizes enemy **Vision**.

2. Potential prey uses the *higher* of **Hearing** or **Vision** vs. **Stealth**, or **Vision** against **Camouflage**. Adjust **Hearing** for helmets (-4) and **Vision** for darkness (remember **Night Vision**), *Poor Visibility* (p. 39), etc., and then use the *best* applicable roll on that side. In either case, a party may substitute the **Observation** skill of whoever is in the lead, while a group member with **Discriminatory Smell** (like a dog) may substitute **Smell** at +4, unless the stalkers have a **No-Smell** spell.

3. Roll a Quick Contest and record the margin; e.g., if the targets fail by four and the ambushers succeed by three, the ambushers win by seven. If the ambushers win, they achieve surprise! They can commence their attack at any range down to (15 - margin) yards, and enjoy *one* turn in which their opponents get no active defenses against their attacks; anyone tasked with shoving a rock, tree, etc. (*A Little Push*, *A Tiny Shove*, pp. 35-36) can use his turn for that. If the ambushers lose or tie, their would-be victims detect them at (15 + margin) yards and aren't surprised.

4. Run combat normally, using the combat sequence. If surprise occurred, those who suffered from it are mentally stunned and must take Do Nothing maneuvers to make **IQ** rolls to recover, at +1 per turn after the first and +6 for **Combat Reflexes**. Until they succeed, they can only do that and defend at -4 and without retreating. If traps were set but not triggered, use the standard rules for traps in battle (*Dungeons*, p. 12).



*Stealth vs. Camouflage:* Being able to set traps, use the highest skill, and face **Vision** without the complication of **Hearing** might make **Camouflage** seem superior – which it is, if the enemy is moving! It's tricky for travelers who are crunching and clanking along to notice trouble sitting quietly behind a dune, shrubbery, snow bank, etc. However, this isn't an option against *encamped* foes, who must be stalked with **Stealth**. **Stealth** offers another benefit, too: stalkers may launch their attack on *any side* of the enemy, perhaps picking off weaker members in the rear. Those using **Camouflage** get the opportunity that presents itself; roll 1d, with 1-2 meaning the enemy's front, 3-5 indicating a side, and 6 giving the rear.

*Leadership:* If someone with the **Leadership** skill makes his **IQ** roll to recover from mental stun, he may try an *immediate* skill roll. Success or critical success gives his *side* +1 or +2, respectively, on later recovery rolls. This isn't cumulative – a party can have but one true leader.

*Danger Sense:* Those with **Danger Sense** get a **Per** roll whenever their side *loses* the Quick Contest to spot an ambush. Success means they receive an active defense against the ambushers' opening attacks, and aren't mentally stunned afterward. Critical success lets them alert their friends: instead of no defense against that salvo, their side is merely mentally stunned and defends at -4, and enjoys +1 to later recovery rolls. This bonus *is* cumulative – if five twitchy delvers roll amazingly, then all their shouting gives allies +5 to recover! The bonus from a leader also stacks.

*Close Encounters:* Rarely, two hostile parties might stumble upon each other without either knowing of the other, and one side might exploit the opportunity more effectively. Roll 1d for each side, at +1 if *any* of them have **Combat Reflexes**. Leadership is crucial: no designated leader gives -2 (most critters with IQ 0-5 have an "alpha" who counts as a leader), a leader with **Combat Reflexes** gives an *extra* +1, and each leader may roll vs. **Tactics** and claim +1 for success, +2 for critical success. If one side's 1d plus modifiers is higher, they achieve surprise at 15 yards plus or minus yards equal to the difference, as they prefer. A tie means hostilities begin at 15 yards with no surprise.

*Total Surprise:* Delvers and dread monsters rarely freeze up for long. However, if a group has posted *no* watches, and *every* member is engaged in some other task (reading, spellcasting, etc.), it may be caught flat-footed. In that case, insert 1d seconds of guaranteed mental stun (-4 to defend and so forth) between the initial attack and the IQ rolls to recover. People with **Combat Reflexes** never suffer this extra interval.

## COMBAT GONE WILD

Regardless of whether it starts with an ambush, combat is typically the biggest threat delvers face on wilderness adventures, if only because it actively seeks their end in a way that storms and sinkholes don't, and can endanger them even if they finesse their rivals' tricks and traps. And naturally, the great outdoors adds new wrinkles.

### Tricky Environments

Outdoor clashes are often fought on awkward or unstable battlefields.

*Bad Footing:* Terrain that slows travel (*Terrain Types*, p. 22) regularly features areas of ground treacherous enough to influence combat. Examples are *ice* and *snow* in arctic terrain, *pebbles* in island/beach and mountain, *sand* in desert and island/beach, all *swampland*, and *wet ground* anywhere. These cost +1 movement point per yard (hex) to cross; give -2 to attack rolls, **DX** rolls to remain standing, and **Acrobatics** and **Jumping** rolls; and inflict -1 on active defense rolls. Combatants with the appropriate **Terrain Adaptation** advantage – including most monsters native to harsh environments – avoid these issues.

*Who's the Master Now, City Boy?* When fighting in a situation that requires a skill for movement – **Acrobatics** when balancing on a floating log, **Climbing** mid-climb, **Skiing** on skis, **Swimming** in deep water, etc. – combat skills can never exceed one's *DX*-based level with that skill. This is *instead* of bad footing. Fighters may change the situation to exploit this. A swashbuckler with Rapier at 20 and *DX*-based Skiing at 13 would be far better off losing the skis and fighting at -2 for snow, while a hero with *DX*-based Swimming at 14 and Knife at 13 could paddle around in waist-deep water to avoid the -2 for standing in it.

*No Room for Error:* When fighting on slippery footing (like ice or wet rocks) or in a skill-limited situation where failing the skill roll out of combat would spell an accident (as when balancing on a log or climbing), the GM may require a roll after each attack or defense roll. Make a *DX*-based roll against the skill for that environment, if there is one, or a **DX** roll otherwise – and if this usually takes a penalty in the situation, apply it! In environments that allow a generic **DX** roll (e.g., walking rather than skating on ice), the -2 for bad footing *does* apply. **Perfect Balance** always gives +4. Failure has the usual bad effects, most often falling down on a slippery surface, or off a log or a ledge. If this doesn't remove the combatant from the fight, clambering back up requires calls for two successful rolls in a row, each counting as a Change Posture maneuver.

## Poor Visibility

Another fun wilderness fact is that you can't always see the long vistas and high skies sung of in bards' tales! Limited visibility penalizes attack rolls in ranged combat – not to mention **Observation** and **Vision** rolls to spot lurking foes, and even specialized abilities such as **Body Language** and **Lip Reading**. Some repeat offenders, cumulative except as noted (and additive with darkness and range penalties):

*Atmospheric Conditions:* The -1 or -2 for *bad* or *dire* weather (*Nasty Weather*, pp. 30-31) penalizes ranged combat and **Vision** when it represents something like fog on or near water, wind-blown sand in desert terrain, snow in arctic, or rain. In the vicinity of intense local phenomena – e.g., a tornado (pp. 34-35) – the penalty can grow as severe as -10. Smoke from brush or forest fires (p. 32) also gives a penalty, typically -4.

*Concealment:* As well, there's a penalty when looking for or shooting at foes actively hiding in shrubs, rubble, tall grass, etc. (*Ambushes*, pp. 37-38). The "generic" modifier is -2, which applies to opponents concealed among boulders in mountain terrain, the crests of dunes in desert or island/beach, snow banks in arctic, or weedy growth in plains. Jungle, swampland, and woodlands terrain offer vegetation dense enough to give -4. The GM might instead roll 1d-1 for penalty size and interpret that to suit the terrain; e.g., plains could range from "flat and featureless" (0) to "overgrown with brightly colored, chest-height ling in distracting psychedelic colors" (-5).

*Can't See the Forest for the Trees:* Tall growth blocks sight-lines even when nobody is hiding. Shooting at or spotting someone in jungle or woodlands terrain – or any other place the GM has put thick vegetation – is at -2. Overhead canopies in such lands give -4 for those looking up or down through them (notably aerial scouts and their rivals). This *replaces* the penalty for concealment; e.g., someone hiding in woods gives -4, and if he stands up and starts running, he's *still* attacked with ranged weapons at -2.

## High Ground

Hills and cliffs can result in significant tactical effects:

- *Ranged Combat:* The GM can simplify *Firing Upward and Downward* (p. B551) to +1 to hit for fighters shooting down-slope and -1 to hit for those shooting up-slope.

- *Melee Combat:* The GM can simplify *Combat at Different Levels* (p. B402) to +1 to active defenses for the higher fighter and -1 to active defenses for the lower fighter.

- *Movement:* Moving up or down a slope costs +1/2 movement point per yard (hex).

On steep slopes, found mainly in mountain terrain, *double* all these modifiers:  $\pm 2$  to ranged combat and defenses, and +1 movement point/yard.

Slopes are often bad footing (p. 38), too. If so, all combat effects are cumulative.

## Old Elven Tree Tricks

Outdoor warriors love to clamber into trees. If everyone participating in an ambush makes the necessary **Climbing** roll at +5 (*Stunts*, pp. 28-29), their victims' visual detection rolls suffer the regular -4 for *Concealment* (above) and an *extra* -2 for elevation, reducing encounter distance in *Ambushes* (pp. 37-38).

Everyone who climbs must specify how high, but always at least three yards. Use this height for falling distance (*Dungeons*, p. 19). Subtract a yard to find *minimum* Reach for melee attacks exchanged with opponents on the ground. For instance, an elf three yards up can only attack or be attacked with a Reach 2+ melee weapon or a ranged weapon, and takes 1d+2 cr if he falls.

Treat someone in a tree as being up a steep slope relative to foes below: +2 to hit with ranged attacks and to active defenses vs. melee attacks, while enemies shoot at him and defend against his melee attacks at -2. However, his combat skills can't exceed the *better* of his **Acrobatics** or **Climbing**, and he must roll against the higher of those skills after each attack or defense roll, with failure meaning he falls out of the tree; see *Tricky Environments* (pp. 38-39).

Someone in a tree can't usefully move or climb in combat time, or step or retreat up there, unless he has **Brachiator**. He can try some special tricks, though:

*Dropping In:* Drop out of the tree to join the battle on the ground by making an **Acrobatics** roll. Any success means he suffers falling damage for five yards less than the actual distance, and lands in a crouch; any failure results in falling damage for the full height and ending up flat on his back. This counts as a step, not a Move maneuver, and gives the leaping maniac -2 to hit and any enemy he attacks -2 to defend that turn, instead of using *High Ground* (above). He can opt to land *on* a victim beneath the tree as part of any melee attack: kick, slam, weapon blow, etc. In that case, regardless of how much falling damage he took, roll falling damage for that distance separately and add *half* of it, rounded down, to the damage of his first melee attack; e.g., an elf who drops three yards and spears someone with a rapier takes 1d+2 cr *and* rolls 1d+2, halves it, and adds it to rapier damage.

*Going Ape:* Use a Move maneuver to leap to another tree. This calls for a **Climbing** or **Jumping** roll. Maximum distance is Move/2 or skill/4 yards, rounded down, whichever is better.



Failure means a fall; critical failure means a fall that damages the *skull*. Someone with **Brachiator** can swing along at Move/2 without rolling.

*Just Hangin'*: Hang by the legs! This reduces the needed melee Reach by one (e.g., someone three yards up could strike with a Reach 1 weapon), but gives him -2 on all attack, defense, **Acrobatics**, and **Climbing** rolls.

### Treetop Duels

Martial artists, ninja, and elves with **Light Walk** and a way to reach the canopy (e.g., **Flying Leap**) may roll at -8 to stay there – a free action each turn. Any failure indicates a fall; any success means being able to operate at full Move and skill, as if on terra firma. The GM sets treetop height, which is always too great for melee combat with enemies on the ground. Ranged attacks in either direction take relative elevation modifiers and -4 for the canopy being in the way (*Poor Visibility*, p. 39).

*In the dark of the wood,  
amongst branches severed from  
disenchanted trees, with a blow  
like that of a thunderbolt riving  
an oak tree, Alveric slew him.*

– Lord Dunsany,  
*The King of  
Elfland's Daughter*

### Taking Cover

Boulders and thick trees are plentiful outdoors. Fighters behind such cover have three options at the start of each turn they remain there, limiting foes to attacking particular exposed areas at hit location penalties, but *also* restricting available actions:

- *Cower*. Enemies cannot hit anything. The hidden fighter cannot attack at all, while his supernatural abilities function as if they cannot see their target; e.g., Regular spells are cast at an extra -5.
- *Glance out*. Enemies can attack the skull (-7), eyes (-9), face (-5), and neck (-5). The hidden fighter can only attack with gaze and breath weapons, but his supernatural abilities work as if they can see their target.
- *Lean out*. Enemies can attack the skull (-7), eyes (-9), face (-5), and neck (-5); any hand (-4) or arm (-2) making a weapon attack (both, for two-handed attacks); and the torso and vitals at an extra -2. The hidden fighter can use all attacks and supernatural abilities.

Stone stops fantasy attacks, but a powerful attack *might* pierce trees! An attacker can opt to target the torso at no special penalty – or any other hit location at an extra -2 if he can't see it – and try to punch right through. Rather than define every tree, assume DR 36 for one that fills a hex on a battle

map, blocking movement; DR 27 for one bulky enough to cost +1 movement point to squeeze past; and DR 18 for a tree barely wide enough to hide behind.

This is mostly an issue for *ranged* attacks. Melee attackers can step around cover and ignore it. Still, if a melee fighter can't or won't do so, the same rules apply.

*Diving for Cover*: Anybody with cover like this within his usual step distance may try a **Dodge** roll at +3 to dive behind it as an active defense against *any* attack. Whatever he rolls, he ends up lying down behind cover. Success means the dodge works normally and the cover shields him from an area attack (like dragon's breath or a Concussion spell). Failure means the attack affects him and *then* he lands behind cover.

### Outdoor Skills in Combat

Though outdoor skills' chief combat role is avoiding or setting up ambushes, some can be pressed into service once a fight has started. Talents such as **Forest Guardian**, **Green Thumb**, and **Outdoorsman** add to all uses of skills they affect regardless of attribute base, meaning that they give effective combat bonuses when attempting the DX-based rolls below!

*Backstabbing Revisited*: Outdoors, DX-based **Camouflage** can replace **Stealth** when backstabbing (*Dungeons*, pp. 11-12). Either skill works, and whichever one is used, these modifiers *replace* the usual ones:

*Modifiers*: A basic -9; any encumbrance penalties; +5 if the party is ambushing, no modifier in a stand-up fight, or -5 if the party is ambushed; and a *bonus* equal in size to the total *Poor Visibility* (p. 39) penalty for atmospheric conditions and concealment.

*Dirty, Sandy, Leafy Tricks*: Wilderness environments are full of sand and soil to toss at eyes, branches to snap in faces, and so on. There are two ways to exploit this with DX-based rolls against **Naturalist** or **Survival** for that terrain. The first is to use such a skill roll for a Feint – and the target may *resist* with such a roll, if that's better than his combat skill. The second is an attack made at -5. The enemy may dodge or block, but not parry, and if he fails, he's stunned for one second and then recovers automatically. Using either version of this trick more than once per encounter against the same opponent gives him a cumulative +1 to resist the Feint or defend against the attack.

*Sinkhole Samba*: Wilderness traps obey the usual rules in combat (*Dungeons*, p. 12), but some outdoor battlefields conceal *natural* dangers such as those described in *Disasters* (pp. 32-35). The *Per*-based skill rolls to notice these – **Survival (Island/Beach, Jungle, or Swamp)** for quicksand, **Prospecting** or **Survival** for sinkholes, **Herb Lore** or **Naturalist** for stinging plants, **Naturalist** for stinging bugs, or **Skating** or **Survival (Arctic)** for thin ice – are at -5 when distracted by battle. A fighter alerted to such a thing (whether by rolling at full skill before the clash or at -5 during it) can try to maneuver so that his enemy steps in it if he misses *his* roll. A real risk-taker might step lively through or over a known hazard, turning his foe's unopposed check at -5 into a Quick Contest: the trickster's **DX**, **Acrobatics**, **Jumping**, or DX-based detection skill vs. his rival's unpenalized detection skill. Losing means his opponent notices he's avoiding trouble and is warned, a tie has no special effect, and victory fools his victim into believing the ground is safe, denying a chance to spot that danger later.

## Aerial Combat

Like *Mounted Combat* (below), this can get ridiculously complex. So don't let it! Use these simplifications:

**Movement:** Vertical and horizontal movement cost the same. Ignore turning radii, diving speed, etc. – fantasy physics rarely cares! Ignore ground conditions (bad footing, pit traps, quicksand, etc.), too. Tasks that require athletic skills (e.g., **Acrobatics** for Acrobatic Dodge) use **Aerobatics**.

**Attack:** Flying fighters get +2 to hit enemies below them with *ranged* attacks, and give such prey -2 to defend against their *melee* attacks.\*

**Dropping Things:** Roll vs. **DX** (or **Dropping**, if better) at the range penalty for altitude, plus modifiers for target SM and hit location. The victim may dodge. A hit does falling damage (*Dungeons*, p. 19), *halved* for something that weighs 1 lb., doing full damage at 10 lbs., *double* damage at 100 lbs., *quadruple* damage at 1,000 lbs., and so on.

**Defense:** Against enemies below them, flying warriors enjoy +2 to defend vs. *melee* attacks and are hit at -2 with *ranged* attacks.\* A flyer can retreat *vertically* as part of an active defense against a *melee* attack, adding another +1 to his retreat bonus.

**Crashing:** Flyers who are stunned, knocked out, etc. suffer falling damage if they hit ground. This takes multiple turns, but rather than work out the real-world physics, use

seconds equal to half the dice of falling damage, rounded *down* but with a minimum of one second: a second at under 20 yards, two seconds below 45 yards, three seconds below 80 yards, etc.

\* These modifiers are the same as those in *High Ground* (p. 39). Don't apply them twice!

### But Is It Fun?

Flyers can use missiles and spells with near-impunity. If they deign to fly low, they have a significant *melee* advantage. Ground-bound fighters are essentially second-class citizens.

To avoid having this wreck the game, the GM might have worthy foes bring air power of their own to challenge parties known to include flyers, and ensure that bosses plan for flying opponents. The heroes can exploit their aerial advantage freely against fodder. However, it only works *once* against worthies, after which the region's serious bad guys get wind of their tactics and they'll find they need to dedicate those assets to fighting the enemy air force.

The other thing to do is toss in lots of nasty weather (pp. 30-31) and apply the current weather penalty to *every* *roll* flying warriors make.

If the would-be deceiver fails his roll, though, forget about the Quick Contest – he falls in, warning everyone!

## Mounted Combat

For many delvers – knights, especially – the real appeal of the great outdoors is being able to charge enemies with lances, cut them down from horseback, and crush the bloody remains under hooves. This is a *complicated* subject, so to keep things moving, the GM may wish to use these rules in place of pp. B396-398.

Below, *Move* means the mount's Basic Move modified for encumbrance: riding gear, rider, and rider's gear. *Top Speed* is Move multiplied for any Enhanced Move. A mount can change its speed by up to Move each turn; e.g., a horse with Move 4 and Enhanced Move 1 could go from 0 to 4 yards/second in one turn, to 8 yards/second next turn, down to 4 yards/second on the following turn, and come to a stop the turn after that.

### Handling

All combat **Riding** rolls are at -1 with only one hand on the reins (a shield hand can do that as well) – or at -3 if using *no* hands (as when a human is wielding a bow). Since even a donkey has the heart of a monster in *Dungeon Fantasy*, don't apply extra penalties for non-war-trained mounts! However, exotic mounts require exotic **Riding** specialties.

**Mounting Up:** Takes two consecutive Change Posture maneuvers but requires no skill roll. Doing anything between these maneuvers – or being stunned, grappled, etc. – necessitates restarting. A roll against **Acrobatics**, **Riding**, or **Jumping**

(at -3 if bareback) reduces this to one Change Posture, but any failure means falling off.

**Stunts:** Urging a mount to use its maneuver to jump, climb stairs, etc., or to stop faster than its Move allows, calls for a **Riding** roll. Success means that the stunt works; failure, that the mount refuses; and critical failure, falling off.

**Dismounting:** Takes a Change Posture maneuver. If the mount's last maneuver was Move or Move and Attack, also roll against **Acrobatics** or **Jumping**; any failure means falling off. Diving off a horse to tackle someone is a slam made as an Attack or All-Out Attack, but using **Acrobatics** or **Jumping** to hit and the *mount's* current speed.

**Being Unhorsed:** Make a **Riding** roll at no penalty whenever the *mount* attempts any resistance roll or Fright Check, or a DX-based roll to negotiate terrain, obstacles, etc.; at the shock penalty suffered by the *mount* if the critter is wounded; at -4 if the *rider* is stunned; or at -4 per yard of knockback if the *rider* suffers knockback. Failure at any of these rolls means falling off. Treat pulling a rider off his mount after grappling him as a takedown (p. B370); the rider may resist with **Riding**, if that would be advantageous.

**Falling Off:** Falling off a mount allows the rider to attempt one last **Acrobatics** roll. Success lets him land harmlessly. Failure (or not trying) means he takes 1d+1 crushing damage – or 1d+2 if the mount's last maneuver was Move or Move and Attack. Either way, he's now on his back.

**Even Worse!** If the *mount* falls – due to an attack, bad terrain, or whatever – the rider gets a **Riding** roll. Success means he falls off, as above. Failure means his mount falls on him, preempting an **Acrobatics** roll and adding thrust crushing damage for its ST to the falling damage!

*Passengers:* Any passengers give the rider an extra -1 on **Riding** rolls. In situations where a rider would have to roll to avoid a mishap, passengers must roll vs. their **Riding** at the same penalties to avoid identical bad effects.

*Unattended Mounts:* A mount with no rider does whatever the GM decides it does. If it flees, wanders off to stomp somebody, etc., then mounting up involves getting next to it or calling it over. In battle, the latter requires an **Animal Handling** roll at -3, and each attempt calls for a Concentrate maneuver.

## Fighting

In melee combat, riders enjoy the benefits of *High Ground* (p. 39) relative to those who aren't mounted: +1 to defend and -1 to enemy defenses. Ignore this in ranged combat.

*Maneuvers:* The mount acts on its rider's turn – don't confuse things by tracking two different turns. Mount and rider each receive a maneuver, and the rider picks the mount's maneuver. The *mount* can always use Do Nothing, Move, or Move and Attack; Attack or All-Out Attack if running no faster than Move (that is, when not using Enhanced Move); or Change Posture if knocked down. The *rider* can try anything but Move or Move and Attack. The mount's movement always replaces the standard movement portion of the rider's maneuver. The rider can execute the non-movement portion at any point during that movement.

*Attacks by Riders:* Riders attack at the *lower* of their combat skill or **Riding** skill. If the mount's last maneuver was Move or Move and Attack, *melee* attacks have -1 to hit, +1 to damage.

*Exception:* *Lance* attacks do use the lower of **Lance** or **Riding**, but don't suffer this -1 to hit. Instead of a damage bonus, work out (mount's ST × encumbered Top Speed)/100 dice, rounded to the nearest die, ahead of time; e.g., for a horse with ST 24 and Top Speed 8, that's 2d. Use this roll – halved and rounded down when moving no faster than Move – at +3 to find impaling damage.

*Attacks by Mounts:* A mount that takes Attack, All-Out Attack, or Move and Attack can strike for its usual damage – most often a slam, or a kick or a trample for thrust crushing damage. Someone who's lying down (e.g., knocked down by a slam) or two or more Size Modifiers smaller than the mount is *automatically* overrun for half trampling damage – no rolls to hit necessary – if the mount moves through his location! Some fantasy mounts can bite, breathe fire, gore, etc. On any turn when a mount attacks or overruns, rider and passengers have -2 to hit with *their* attacks.

*Defenses by Riders:* If a rider is attacked, or if an attack aimed at his mount misses by one, he's hit unless he makes his active defense roll. His mount cannot dodge for him! He may use whatever defenses his maneuver allows, at -1 per level his **Riding** skill is below 12. He cannot retreat, and uses the *lower* of **Acrobatics** or **Riding** when trying Acrobatic Dodge (p. B375).

*Defenses by Mounts:* If a mount is attacked or if an attack aimed at the rider misses by one, the mount is hit unless it makes its active defense roll. A mount that hasn't made an All-Out Attack may attempt to dodge. The rider may *also* attempt to parry for his mount, though without shield DB and at the usual penalties for low **Riding** skill.

# MOTHER NATURE'S BOUNTY

Everything so far candidly assumes that the heroes set out with packs full of rations, weapons, tools and rope, spare weapons, healing supplies, emergency weapons, and conceivably a vehicle or a mount (laden with weapons). However, adventurers who stay in the wilderness for longer than anticipated, lose to bandits and get stripped naked (*Bushwhacked*, p. 48), or feel cheap might be inclined to do a little gathering. Here's how!

## FOOD AND WATER

The detailed foraging rules on p. B427 give a traveler a daily **Survival** or **Naturalist** roll to gather *one* meal, plus a daily missile weapon or **Fishing** roll to catch *two* more – all without slowing travel. In effect, looking after just oneself is incidental to the three hours a day that a skilled survivalist dedicates to breaks in travel.

*Dungeons* simplifies this to minimize dice-rolling. In a comfy camp outside town, *Starving* (*Dungeons*, p. 4) requires a single weekly **Survival** roll not to starve while engaging in other activities. *Foraging* (*Dungeons*, p. 5) goes with one **Fishing**, **Naturalist**, or **Survival** roll per trip – but now success effects just *half* the necessary food, simulating the negative effects of inhospitable terrain, natural hazards, and monsters.

If the heroes find supplies running low – probably because they underestimated travel time, got lost or shipwrecked, or wandered off on a side-quest – they'll end up having to

attempt more frequent foraging rolls. In that case, observe that the detailed foraging rules permit *five* **Survival** or **Naturalist** rolls a day (giving up to five meals) and *five* missile or **Fishing** rolls a day (for up to 10 more) if that's all a voyager does. This means that if a seasoned survivalist seeks food for the entire 15 hours per day he wouldn't use for sleep or fussing with his campsite, and makes all his rolls, he averages one meal per hour.

Thus, it's fair to let adventurers make one skill roll per person per hour dedicated to foraging *instead* of travel. The foraging modifiers under *Terrain Types* (p. 22) always apply. Taking extra time gives a bonus: +1 for two hours, +2 for four, +3 for eight, or +4 for a day spent not traveling *at all*. Experts can try once per half hour at -5.

Critical success finds two meals, success gives one, failure yields nothing, and critical failure means 1 HP lost to poison berries, piranha bites, "hunting accidents," etc. At the *end* of each stretch of foraging, total each forager's meals and wounds, and spin a yarn around it – a hero who gathers lots of food might claim he shot a deer, while one missing many HP can claim the first hunter accidentally shot him. When taking time to roll dice, also take time to be creative; the GM can encourage this by awarding a bonus character point for the best fish story!

Food can be consumed or added to rations. Don't worry about the details. Assume that it will keep for the length of the trip and weighs as much as rations: 0.5 lb./meal.



Options for foraging rolls include:

**Fishing:** Near water, or when traveling by boat, a **Fishing** roll (at -2 with improvised gear) catches fish, molluscs, crustaceans, etc.\*

**Gathering:** On land – or underwater, if capable of spending at least an hour there – a **Naturalist** or **Survival** roll finds roots, berries, honey, nuts, eggs, and so on. Or grubs.

**Hunting:** On land, roll against any ranged-weapon skill (**Bolas**, **Crossbow**, **Lasso**, etc.) at -4 plus the weapon's Accuracy. For missile weapons, each roll costs *one* arrow, bolt, dart, etc.; thrown weapons are recovered on any roll but a critical failure. Alternatively, heroes can try **Spear** to hunt up close, but critical failure costs 1d HP due to mauling! When traveling by water, the GM may allow hunting with **Thrown Weapon (Harpoon)**. Whatever the skill, success catches game.\*

**Trapping:** On land, a **Survival** roll, or a **Traps** roll at -5, captures *small* game.\*

\* This kind of food won't help those with **Vow (Vegetarianism)**. If using **Despoilers** (below), it also lead to Affronts – there's no way to roll at -2 to “gather” animals without killing them!

## Water Supplies

Since it isn't *fun* to keep track of every drop of water the party has, assume that each meal carried or found comes with sufficient water to meet survival needs. Thus, stopping to forage finds extra water in proportion to meals; e.g., if the group forages 40 meals, or about 13 man-days of food, they also stockpile 13 man-days of water. However, in desert terrain – or for fools who don't bring canteens or wineskins (or who have theirs stolen) – the GM may require each person to make one *additional* daily **Survival** roll, unless they can cast suitable **Water spells**.

## Starvation

Each missed meal costs the 1 FP (and 1 HP per FP below 0) noted in *Getting There Quickly* (**Dungeons**, p. 5). If the GM is enforcing **Water Supplies** (above), this doubles if there's insufficient water (failed **Survival** and no spare water). Magic *cannot* directly restore FP lost this way – the only way to recover is to rest with food and water, taking one day per 3 FP lost.

## Despoilers

Wilderness denizens ranging from elves and wildmen, through nature spirits and walking trees, on up to druidic gods might take exception to desecration of the pristine outdoors. The GM who adds this wrinkle to a wild place must decide what deeds count as Affronts. Suggestions:

- Any battle in which the heroes kill wild animals – even giant or dire ones – is an Affront, as is each attempt to exploit a swarm or a herd as a weapon (*Nasty Tricks*, pp. 35-36).

- Any vehicle operated with Teamster tears ruts in soft ground. Each day of travel involving such transportation is an Affront.\*

- Any woodcraft verging on a “construction project” is an Affront. This includes each crack at *Field Engineering* (p. 33); each avalanche started or tree felled for tactical purposes (*Nasty Tricks*, pp. 35-36); and each covered pit, deadfall, or similar large trap rigged (*Traps*, pp. 36-37).

- Camping involves impaling Mother Nature with tent pegs, lighting campfires, littering, etc. Each night's camping is an Affront.\*

- Certain bodies of water are protected or sacred. A day on which one or more delvers enter these – willingly or otherwise – is an Affront.

- Fire is *always* trouble! Each time the heroes employ it to signal (*Smoke and Fire*, p. 28) or as a weapon is an Affront. Count each battle involving fire just once.

- Foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), and gathering for the purposes of *Natural Preparations* (pp. 44-45) or *Naturally Occurring Loot* (p. 44), often cause ill will. Each day involving such activities is an Affront.\*

- Magic that directly manipulates animals, plants, watercourses, weather, etc. is insulting. Druids and shamans *usually* get a bye; clerics do only if they serve the local gods; and demonologists, elementalists, necromancers, and wizards *never* do. Each casting is an Affront!

- Tetchy residents may insist on silence. Each time the adventurers signal as described in *Noise* (p. 28) is an Affront.

- \* Delvers who show respect by camping without littering or using fire, driving carts over firm ground, or collecting only “freely given” plant products (nuts, dead wood, etc.) have -2 to success rolls for these tasks, but only cause an Affront on a critical failure. The GM may extend this option to other actions – say, if an artificer pointedly uses only dead wood for his projects.

How Affronts work varies by location and is subject to GM judgment. First, not all Affronts are equal. Fire might count double, foraging might not count if people are truly starving, etc.

Each Affront might trigger an extra check for wandering monsters (p. 56) – immediately, that night, or the following day. Or each could give +1 to the odds of such an encounter, accumulating until monsters attack, which resets the modifier to zero. Encounters may involve angry elves, wildmen, etc., or creatures sent by them or their gods.

For spiritual or divine ire, the GM might start a tally at zero. Each Affront adds one *and* triggers a roll of 3d against the total. “Success” means everyone suffers a stroke of **Unluckiness**, a lightning strike (p. 33), disease (*Fresh Air Is Good for You*, p. 34), or similar. This resets the tally, but to the number of “successes” so far (one after the first punishment, two after the second, etc.), *not* to zero!

Affronts may be forgiven with time, the tally shrinking by one per day, week, season, etc., as the GM desires. Such “cooldown” is often contingent on no *new* Affronts accruing over that interval. Alternatively, despoilers might have to make amends; e.g., a \$100 fine per Affront, paid to local druids. And certain realms *never* forget.

## Pet Food

For simplicity's sake, assume that herbivorous beasts of burden (horses, oxen, etc.) find forage while carnivorous pets (dogs, tigers, and so on) hunt. On any day when the group isn't traveling, or takes at least two hours to forage, this is *automatic*.

However, it's a classic "bit" in adventure fiction for horses to drop dead in the desert, break ankles in the mountains, and so on. At the GM's option, adventurers traveling with beasts must try one *extra* **Naturalist** or **Survival** roll, with foraging modifiers, each day; creatures with these skills can roll for themselves. Any success means the beasts eat and drink during downtime, failure reduces travel time by an hour, and critical failure costs *two* hours. If reduced travel is indicated and the heroes can't spare the time, the animals lose 1 FP per hour denied, which works like *Starvation* (p. 43).

## NATURAL PREPARATIONS

Not everything worth foraging for is food. Some things are good for you in other ways, while others are downright *bad* for your enemies.

### Naturally Occurring Loot

*Naturally Occurring Money* (*Dungeons*, p. 14) is *especially* relevant outdoors. No amount of searching will find valuables where none exist. But if the GM desires an outdoor treasure-hunt – whether as the adventure's objective, a tempting side-quest, or a rare result on some encounter table – then *Treasure Tables* is full of ideas.

**Animal Products:** Use *Dead Monster Bits* (*Dungeons*, p. 13) for loot butchered from the local fauna: fur, horn, ivory, and so on. Combat isn't always necessary; a *Per*-based **Naturalist** roll may locate birds with valuable feathers, oysters with pearls, rare eggs, bones or bezoars left in animal "burial grounds," etc.

**Minerals:** Possibilities include exposed ore deposits, nuggets in streambeds, and curiosities of interest to sages and wizards: lodestones, fulgurites, geodes, etc. Make a *Per*-based **Prospecting** roll to find these, at up to -10 if thoroughly buried.

**Plant Products:** Dyes, rare woods, raw fibers, resins, and spices can be worth a lot. Such riches are particularly common in jungle and woodlands terrain. Make a *Per*-based **Naturalist** roll to recognize them.

Handle extraction like foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), reading each "meal" as a fixed quantity (in \$) of loot until the supply runs out. Rolls for this might be against **Fishing** to gather pearls; **Forced Entry** or *DX*-based **Naturalist** to chop down trees without waste; **Pharmacy (Herbal)**, possibly *DX*-based and with any **High Manual Dexterity** bonus, to carefully collect fragile plants; **Prospecting** to mine minerals; or **Survival** to trap birds or fur animals. The GM needn't require a roll – backbreaking labor expressed in man-hours/\$ works, too.

In all cases, if the value is mainly magical, recognition becomes a *Per*-based **Alchemy**, **Herb Lore**, or **Thaumatology** roll (GM's choice); extraction, a regular IQ-based or even *DX*-based roll against that skill.

**Determining Value** (*Dungeons*, p. 14) works normally on such loot. Heroes can use **Merchant** before they go to work to estimate the \$ per hour or per successful roll, and again after they're done to gauge their haul's actual value.

## Healing Herbs

The wilderness holds cures for almost everything. That's a point of professional pride with druids, many of whom feel that clerics overprescribe healing spells and overtax their gods. These rules elaborate on *Patching Up* (*Dungeons*, p. 13).

**Antidotes:** The **Pharmacy (Herbal)** roll to find an antidote for a known poison takes foraging modifiers (*Terrain Types*, p. 22). Time modifiers apply, too: +4 for a day spent not traveling *at all*, +3 for eight hours' work, +2 for four, +1 for two, 0 for an hour, -5 for half an hour, and -10 for an instant "Why look, that's the exact herb I need!" Skilled druids can stop the fastest poisons! A use of **Serendipity** allows an instant roll with no haste penalty. When treating poison from a *local* plant or beast (not that from an ancient dungeon trap or a random assassin's blade), **Naturalist** can replace **Poisons** to determine whether the poison counts as "known" *and* the Balance of Nature ensures that there will be something local to counteract it: +2 to **Pharmacy**.

**Diseases and Parasites:** If someone falls ill with a *local* disease (*Fresh Air Is Good for You*, p. 34) or if *indigenous* parasites creep under somebody's skin, **Naturalist** can replace **Diagnosis** to determine whether the condition counts as

"known" *and* reveal a local cure. This makes it possible to treat the problem with **Pharmacy (Herbal)** instead of **Cure Disease** for sickness or **Surgery** for grubs. In either case, roll exactly as for a poison antidote.

**Nature Provides:** Someone without a healer's kit can attempt a **Herb Lore** roll before trying an **Esoteric Medicine (Druidic)** roll to restore HP, treat a supernatural affliction, etc. Apply the foraging and time modifiers described for antidotes. Critical success on **Herb Lore** grants +2 to **Esoteric Medicine**; success, +1; failure, -1; and critical failure, -2. These modifiers replace the +1 for a kit.

**Boil and Bubble:** Those with time on their hands can spend a *full day* not traveling to try a **Herb Lore** roll to create one stable item that anyone can use instantly (as opposed to a fleeting cure administered by a professional medic). Apply foraging modifiers, plus -1 for a repellent equivalent to garlic or wolfsbane, or an anti-toxin for a specific poison; -3 for a minor healing potion; -4 for a healer's kit for **Esoteric Medicine (Druidic)**; -7 for a major healing potion; -15 for a universal antidote; -18 for a balm of regeneration; or -20 for a great healing potion. Repellents, anti-toxins, and healer's kits can be worked up in four hours at -5; the others can't be rushed. Cures more potent than major healing potions are *practically* impossible for druids of sensible skill (that's why they sell for big money!), but in a place with a +5 foraging modifier, all the lesser ones are in reach.

**Snake Oil Salesmen:** The GM may worry that heroes will give up adventuring to cook seven major healing potions a week and abuse *Getting a Good Price* (*Dungeons*, p. 14) to sell these for \$2,450, netting \$2,300 after living expenses.

The reality is that cloudy “bush potions” produced by itinerant druids (rather than by local grove members in good standing) are seen as dubious folk remedies even by most folk, and never sell at better than 10% of list price. The concoctions in the example would gross \$245 and net \$95. A delver who can’t clear more than \$95/week isn’t trying – that’s barely superior to begging, and worse than selling maps of the woods. And as each day will be fraught with wandering monsters, the pot-tending druid will need to pay for guards, too.

## Poisons

Those wonderful cures have a flipside: the unsavory brews that pygmies and pixies put on darts. Every environment has its own range of toadstools and plants with “death” in their name. To turn these into a blade venom that inflicts toxic damage without delay, exactly like the fantasy poisons in *Adventurers*, requires a **Poisons** roll with the modifiers below. Critical failure means being poisoned with whatever was being made! Such agents only affect *living* victims that have blood and aren’t immune to poisons.

**Foraging Modifiers:** The foraging modifiers from *Terrain Types* (p. 22) always apply.

**Damage:** 0 for 2 points, -1 for 1d, -2 for 1d+1, -3 for 1d+2, -4 for 2d-1, or -5 for 2d toxic damage, the maximum.

**Resistance Roll:** A penalty equal to the modifier to the HT roll to resist, from 0 to -5, if success prevents all damage. Another -2 if success merely halves damage.

**Doses:** 0 for one dose, -1 for two, -2 for four, -3 for eight, or -4 for 16 doses.

**Time:** 0 for an hour, +1 for two hours, +2 for four hours, +3 for eight hours, or +4 for a full day not traveling. Haste isn’t an option – cooking too fast yields something that isn’t concentrated or sticky enough.

**Example 1:** Poison akin to monster drool does 2 points of toxic damage (0) and offers a flat HT roll to resist all damage (0). Making 16 doses – enough for a quiver of arrows – gives -4. Taking a day out would cancel this with +4, for a net 0.

**Example 2:** The deadliest such toxin would do 2d tox (-5), or 1d tox on a HT-5 roll (-7), for -12. For decent odds of success, take all day to make this at -8.



## MAKESHIFT WEAPONS

In an emergency, heroes might need to adapt whatever they can find into weapons! Don’t bother with dice rolls for ordinary stones shot from slings, wielded as fist loads, etc. – in *any* terrain, these require a Change Posture maneuver to kneel, followed by a Ready maneuver to stand up with the rock ready in hand.

**Sticks:** A stick adequate for use as a baton, light club, quarterstaff, or similar melee weapon that amounts to a gussied-up branch is always available in jungle or woodlands terrain; it’s 2d-2 yards away, and anybody standing next to it can grab it with a Ready maneuver. Anywhere else, precede this with a **Per** or **Scrounging** roll – or a *Per*-based roll against **Armoury (Melee Weapons)** or **Connoisseur (Weapons)** – subject to the local foraging modifier. Each search attempt requires a Concentrate maneuver. In *any* terrain, a **Gizmo** or use of **Serendipity** finds something suitable right next to the seeker! Such a whacker is rough (-1 to skill) until somebody takes five minutes to clean it up with an **Armoury** roll.

**La-De-Dah, Mr. Caveman:** Any stick that allows a ranged attack or has a weighted or pointed end – atlatl, blowpipe, boomerang, knobbed club, spear, throwing stick, wooden stake, etc. – can’t be improvised in combat. Neither can anything involving cord (bolas, lariat, sling, etc.), as that involves labor-intensive twine-making. And neither can stone knives, or arrows, axes, or spears with stone heads. Out of combat, roll against **Armoury (Melee Weapons)** or **Armoury (Missile Weapons)**, as appropriate; apply the local foraging modifier, unless the weapon is a 100% stone knife. Each attempt takes the time shown on the *Makeshift Weapons Table* (below), based on the weapon’s list price.

**The Artificer of War:** Anyone can spend a **Gizmo** to pull out a non-makeshift weapon he owns but didn’t specify he was carrying, if it’s no heavier than Basic Lift/10 lbs., and has Reach 1 or less if melee or Bulk no worse than -4 if ranged. An artificer with **Quick Gadgeteer** can expend a **Gizmo** to take a Ready maneuver, roll vs. **Engineer (Gadgets)** at -1 per \$250 of weapon value, and craft a makeshift weapon (that is, one with the usual drawbacks of wood or stone) of *any* kind that endures for one battle. If he doesn’t want to invoke a **Gizmo**, this takes 1d×5 minutes. If he dedicates a **Gizmo** and 1d×5 minutes, the result is a permanent weapon – though still a makeshift one, without **Serendipity** to happen to be sitting atop metal ore.

## Makeshift Weapons Table

Weapon Type	Time	Examples
All-wood melee or thrown	1 minute/\$*	Knobbed club (20 min.), wooden stake (4 min.)
All-wood missile	2 minutes/\$*	Atlatl (40 min.), blowpipe (1 hr.)
Any weapon with some cord	5 minutes/\$*	Nunchaku (1 hr. 40 min.)
Any weapon that’s nearly all cord	10 minutes/\$*	Bolas (3 hr. 20 min.), lariat (6 hr. 40 min.)
Non-composite bow	10 minutes/\$*	Longbow (33 hr. 20 min.)
Any weapon involving shaped stone	20 minutes/\$	Axe (16 hr. 40 min.), large knife (13 hr. 20 min.)

\* Double these times without a blade, if only a small one.

Arrows can be all-wood missiles (4 min.) or have stone tips (40 min.), while spears can be all-wood melee/thrown weapons (40 min.) or have stone heads (13 hr. 20 min.). Wooden *impaling* weapons such as these have -1 to damage, and all DR is doubled against them. Stone *cutting* or *impaling* weapons don’t get the damage penalty, but still face double DR. All makeshift non-crushing weapons are *cheap*: +2 to odds of breakage.



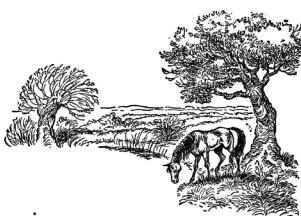
# CHAPTER THREE

# OUTDOOR

# ADVENTURES

Superficially, wilderness adventures are a lot like dungeon crawls. There are goals to reach and perils blocking the way. This leads to fighting and looting, which might make the heroes rich or see them blow all their money on the resources they need to survive.

There are many important differences, however. Wilderness areas are larger than most underground labyrinths and old castles, and are rarely “closed systems.” They don’t offer the luxury of ignoring weather, terrain, or time spent strolling between areas. This inverts the relative importance of story elements in a way that can be summed up in a dramatic axiom:



Dungeon adventures focus on monsters and traps, with occasional breaks while the heroes move between areas. Wilderness adventures emphasize the journey, periodically interrupted by dangers.

There can be just as much violence and booty in Nature’s bosom! It’s just that rolling dice for outdoor tasks – traveling from A to B, pitching a good camp, etc. – merits extra *play* time. This shines the spotlight on delvers who have excellent wilderness skills.

## WHAT COULD POSSIBLY HAPPEN?

The GM controls the extent to which wilderness concerns (travel, camping, foraging, exploration, and natural hazards like quicksand and avalanches) dominate the foreground while outdoor versions of good old hacking and pillaging move into the background.

### ON THE ROAD AGAIN

The most basic outdoor adventures concern travel. The heroes might be on the road quite literally, or braving the wilderness with the aim of reaching someplace on the other side, or taking a sea voyage to a faraway land. Events focus on alternating *Travel* (pp. 20-24) and *Camping* (pp. 24-25), spiced up with *Dangers* (pp. 30-42). Any *Exploration* (pp. 25-29) is incidental. The adventurers aren’t specifically questing after *Mother Nature’s Bounty* (pp. 42-45) and hopefully won’t need to forage, if they prepared adequately . . . but of course things can go wrong (*Accidental Explorers*, p. 48).

This kind of adventure is the most “civilized” in the sense that there’s a settlement at one or both ends of the trip, plenty of time for *Travel Arrangements* (pp. 20-21), and often no need to worry about *Terra Incognita* (p. 20). The travelers can stock up on suitable gear, with emphasis on *Transportation* (pp. 18-19). They might even rely on *Allies* (pp. 10-15) to handle outdoor challenges while they think about defense or plan for events at the end of the voyage. In terms of *From Delvers to Outdoorsmen* (pp. 4-10), such missions suit dungeon delvers who are following the advice for “Wilderness Adventures” rather than “Wilderness Campaigns,” though dedicated outdoorsmen will have an easier time!

### A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Dungeon

The simplest travel adventures are the sorts candidly assumed in *Dungeons*: If the heroes are making their way to the dungeon, the journey may serve to deplete their resources (arrows, healing potions, FP, HP, etc.) in order to make upcoming events more challenging – or, if the trials ahead are unusually deadly, an outdoor “side-quest” might be an opportunity to toughen up (that is, earn a few extra character points). If the delvers are on their way *back*, they could be so laden with booty that they make a tempting target for bandits . . . or so unsuccessful that the GM opts to shore up player morale with a few profitable encounters en route (“Aha, we found no treasure because the last party these brigands waylaid took it all!”).

These sorts of adventures consist of using *Covering Ground* (p. 23) to establish how much time passes, which in return determines the number of opportunities for bad guys to attack. Delvers are likely to expect trouble and thus use *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) on the move, *Watches* (p. 25) when they stop. Conflict eventually comes in the form of *Deliberate Dangers* (pp. 35-38) – particularly *Ambushes* (pp. 37-38) – that force the PCs to engage in *Combat Gone Wild* (pp. 38-42) while coping with FP losses to *Travel Fatigue* (p. 24) and *Harsh Climates* (p. 30), and perhaps actual injuries caused by *Disasters* (pp. 32-35). If the heroes prevail, they can loot the bodies or stumble upon *Naturally Occurring Loot* (p. 44) guarded or carried by their attackers.

The GM can otherwise ignore large swaths of Chapter 2, perhaps not worrying at all about terrain, weather, and the ideal campsite. The goal isn't to demonstrate how harsh the wilderness is but to exploit it as a backdrop for combat encounters. The rules subset recommended above ought to give outdoorsmen a chance to show off, which the players of such characters will appreciate – *especially* if their PCs tend to take background roles in the dungeons and towns at the end-points of such trips.

## Guard Duty

A great adventure possibility for heroes who aren't strong outdoorsmen is as guards for a traveling merchant caravan, princess, wealthy wizard, or whatever. The delvers can get away with being hired muscle, leaving their patron and noncombatant retainers to handle *Transportation* (pp. 18-19), *Travel Arrangements* (pp. 20-21), and the nonviolent outdoor tasks mentioned in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Dungeon* (pp. 46-47). This leaves the adventurers free to look out for danger (*I See Trouble Up Ahead*, p. 26, and *Watches*, p. 25), deal with pitfalls (*Traps*, pp. 36-37), prevent *Ambushes* (pp. 37-38), and fight (*Combat Gone Wild*, pp. 38-42) – all tasks that any party with fair Observation, Traps, and weapon skills should be able to manage, even a gang of pure knights and thieves.

That said, it's important to give outdoorsmen their due. Adventurers who come with their own outdoor loadouts (*Equipment*, pp. 15-19) should get to pocket at least *some* of what the client would have paid for such kit. Those skilled at navigation (*Following Directions*, pp. 22-23), picking good

stopping places (*Sites*, p. 24), overcoming obstacles through *Field Engineering* (p. 33), foraging to reduce expenses (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44), and so on ought to earn a little more, too. If the whole party is good at this stuff, they might even be trusted to arrange the entire expedition, picking out gear, plotting routes, and keeping whatever portion of their operating budget they can save by being more efficient than their backer realizes ("And now, a local delicacy – fresh food, not the dried-out jerky most travelers must suffer.").

## Bounty Hunting

A completely different travel adventure is tracking bad guys, be they brigands, dark-elf woodsmen, or dire rabbits preying on livestock in the King's Swampward Marches. There's still a route to follow, but now *someone else* is choosing it while the heroes give pursuit. Unlike a trip to or from the dungeon, the objective is on the move, and not some town or ancient tomb that isn't going anywhere. And in an inversion of *Guard Duty* (above), if all goes well, the *adventurers* are the ones setting traps and ambushes.

For this to work, the group *must* be accomplished at *Tracking* (pp. 30-31). Catching their prey depends on aptitude at tasks attendant to *Covering Ground* (p. 23), too – especially if there's a time limit ("If the Lich Lord reaches Mount Tomb, he'll raise a zombie army and we'll be doomed!"). When they get close, *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) is important, followed by everything under *Deliberate Dangers* (pp. 35-38). If the party can't do the job with traps and surprise attacks, they'll also need to be adept at *Combat Gone Wild* (pp. 38-42).

# The Wilderness Campaign

This chapter's advice assumes that the heroes mostly explore dungeons, that the GM is dragging their pasty keisters outside as a change of pace, and that he plans to enforce the rules in Chapter 2 only when relevant to the story. The focus will eventually return underground, whereupon Nature will again content Herself with the simplified model of *Dungeons*. That's the fairest approach if the GM hasn't warned the players to expect outdoor action, or if the adventurers aren't cut out for the wilderness. To better appreciate the problem of character suitability, see *From Delvers to Outdoorsmen* (pp. 4-10).

However, a campaign can *start* and mostly *stay* outdoors, making wilderness fun the whole dish, not just the spice. If so, the GM should warn everyone at the outset so that they can create PCs consistent with the "Wilderness Campaigns" notes in Chapter 1, and perhaps swap 15 points of advantage, secondary skill, or background skill choices for the Wilderness-Trained lens (p. 5). Players are free *not* to do so – but that's *their* problem.

With that foundation laid, the advice in *What Could Possibly Happen?* (pp. 46-50) typifies *most* adventures, while dungeon crawls become rare challenges. All the rules and suggestions in *Wilderness Adventures*, particularly Chapter 2, apply full-time . . . exactly as a dungeon-centered campaign involves carrying torches, rolling to determine who notices secret passages, and worrying about the DR and HP

of every door. Enemies become outdoor-themed: highway-men, angry druids, huge spiders in the treetops, etc.

## Balanced Campaign

Alternatively, there might be lots of dungeon- or town-based quests, but travel between these is always an adventure. In this picture, the GM uses *Wilderness Adventures* at full strength whenever the PCs venture into Nature, meaning that the group *needs* outdoor abilities and gear. He also warns everyone in advance, as for a full-time wilderness campaign – but now the party requires outdoorsmen, dungeon explorers, and urban adventurers. This is the best approach for a group that can't agree on what it likes.

## Transitional Campaign

When the heroes can steamroll any dungeon with ease, it's no longer unfair to throw them to the wolves and elements. Adventurers *that* powerful can survive a little poison ivy, starvation, and burial under mud. Adapting to deal with Nature soaks up points and cash as the delvers work toward buying the Wilderness-Trained lens – or a -barbarian, -druid, or -scout lens from *The Next Level* – and obtaining high-end wilderness gear. The sharp change of direction can save a campaign that might otherwise need retiring for lack of challenge.

## Accidental Explorers

Not all wilderness adventures go as planned – or are planned at all!

### *Bushwhacked*

A common game-changer is *losing* the fight that follows an ambush. Brigands seek loot, not blood – and superstitious bandits who assume that all adventuring parties include clerics, necromancers, shamans, wizards, etc. prefer looting and running to slitting throats and ending up cursed by gods or haunted by undead. After defeating adventurers laden with coin, weapons, armor, and magic items, they take *everything* but leave the wounded to their fate. Even bestial predators may “pluck” and discard inedible junk before stashing unconscious prey for later consumption.

When this happens, the group’s top concern shifts to *Mother Nature’s Bounty* (pp. 42-45) as they seek healing herbs, forage for food, and improvise weapons. After that, most heroes will want their stuff back – and often revenge. Whatever adventure they *were* on becomes *Bounty Hunting* (pp. 47-48).

### *Lost*

*Getting Lost* (p. 26) can happen to adventurers who lack maps, landmarks, or sufficient pathfinding skill; those using *Tracking* (pp. 30-31) to pursue prey into *Terra Incognita* (p. 20); and ones who tangle with teleportation, swirling portals, and dodgy wizardly patrons. Whatever they were doing ends up paused for a day or two of wandering. In a

region with a name like “Valley of the Forgotten,” navigational penalties can turn this into *weeks*.

Unless the heroes brought extra provisions, foraging (*Food and Water*, pp. 42-44) becomes important. Having brave adventurers starve to death is *boring*, though. At a minimum, they should have extra encounters (*Wandering Monsters*, p. 56), perhaps with *edible* critters. The GM may seize the opportunity to have them stumble upon something unexpected: a mysterious henge sacred to unfriendly druids, bizarre travelers (“You hear strains of circus music, and then a clown’s face emerges from the fog – but by Odin, that isn’t makeup!”), and so forth. If the PCs do collapse from starvation, they might awaken far from where they fell, courtesy of someone who wants a favor . . .

### *Shipwrecked*

“Everybody drowns” is a lackluster resolution for boating accidents (p. 29) and for *Disasters* (pp. 32-35) such as freak waves and waterspouts (tornados). Similarly, critical failure on the daily roll to pilot a ship or a magical aircraft carrying the entire party (*Harder Than It Looks*, p. 22) needn’t result in a boring -20% to daily travel. Instead, the outcome might resemble *Lost* (above). However, the heroes may know where they are – the problem is that they lack a way off the island, out of the caldera, or whatever. They might rush to solve this via *Field Engineering* (p. 33), but real adventurers will engage in *Exploration* (pp. 25-29), giving the GM a natural opening for unscheduled side-quests.

On the other hand, the GM may ignore *Travel Arrangements* (pp. 20-21), because there’s really no way of knowing where the quarry will go – indeed, *Terra Incognita* (p. 20) is probable and *Getting Lost* (p. 26) is a possibility. Likewise, there isn’t much call for the tasks under *Mother Nature’s Bounty* (pp. 42-45), as stopping to forage means losing the trail. Delvers should be aware that not knowing the route and being unable to live off the land necessitate bringing a good range of equipment (pp. 15-19).

These conditions mean that such hunts are best suited to true wilderness adventurers, particularly trackers such as barbarians and scouts, and druids or summoners with suitable pets (*Critters*, pp. 12-14). Wizards might think they can use *Seeker* or similar magic as an “I win” button, but they would be wrong. Long distances mean big penalties and high odds of areas without mana – and that aside, there’s the question of getting there and dealing with the target.

## HEDGE MAZE, SIZE L

Though tales of travel (“Journey from A to B while stuff happens”) are the most *basic* wilderness romps, the most *popular* variety in hack-n-slash fantasy amount to dungeon crawls with sky in place of ceilings, unfettered druidic powers (*Nature’s Strength*, p. 53), and the bloody thrill of lancing monsters from horseback. The GM maps a region (*Maps*, pp. 52-53), stocks it with encounters and traps, and turns the delvers lose. Such stories often open with *Bounty Hunting*

(pp. 47-48), but that’s merely a prologue – the real action starts at the end of the trail. For instance, “Find where the orcs are coming from and stop them!” inevitably ends up being more about raiding the orcs’ outdoor lair than about tracking orcs. There might be elements of *Boldly Going* (pp. 49-50), too, but the focus is on exploring a *small, contained* area that promises danger and treasure; when dealing with this opens up a lengthy route or vast lands for trade and settlement, that’s an incidental outcome.

Such “hedge maze” adventures customarily occur in *Terra Incognita* (p. 20) – that’s part of the point. *Transportation* (pp. 18-19) and *Travel* (pp. 20-24) mostly matter when the delvers are journeying to and from their destination; inside it, the GM may hand-wave such matters, much as *Dungeons* does for subterranean labyrinths (the distances might even be comparable). Likewise, *Camping* (pp. 24-25) can be dialed back to the simpler *Dungeons* rules for posting watches at night. Climate, terrain, and weather are unlikely to change much, having fixed effects if the GM bothers with them at all.

The focus is heavily on *Scouting* (pp. 25-26) – *Mapping* (p. 27) along the way – to find the area’s dangers, and then dealing with those threats. The hedge maze offers a combination of natural *Disasters* (pp. 32-35), *Unnatural Threats* (p. 31), and *Deliberate Dangers* (pp. 35-38) put there by its denizens, all of which fill the same roles as traps and tricks in classic dungeons. And just as on an underground adventure, the heroes might need *Stunts* (pp. 28-29) to circumvent obstacles.



However, most of the action is *Combat Gone Wild* (pp. 38-42), which needn't begin with an ambush; delvers in hostile territory are liable to be so badly outnumbered that their rivals feel bold enough to attack head-on!

*Mother Nature's Bounty* (pp. 42-45) becomes nuanced on such adventures. On one hand, foraging is unlikely to be necessary in a confined area where travel times aren't a major concern. On the other, raiders who go seeking trouble are at greater risk of being *captured*, at which point they had better be good at improvising healing kits and spears! On the third hand, such regions are often home to entities that don't appreciate outsiders, so *Despoilers* (p. 43) is likely to apply and transgressions may rile inhabitants other than the ones the adventurers came to tangle with – an accommodation between bandits and elves, or druids and the area's spirits, in no way extends to strangers who upset the balance, however similar they might be to the bandits or druids. This is especially likely to come to a head when delvers who prevail over the locals decide to exploit *Naturally Occurring Loot* (p. 44) as their prize.

The hybrid dungeon-outdoors nature of hedge-maze adventures makes them ideal for parties that include both dedicated outdoorsmen and traditional dungeoneers. There are wilderness tasks that let scouts and druids prove their worth, yet enough straight-up traps and combat for uncomplicated thieves and knights to pull *their* weight. Almost every sort of Ally is useful, too – druids can call upon pets, holy warriors can ride celestial steeds, demonologists can raise Hell, and everybody but the group's enemies is happy.

Classic hedge mazes include:

*Grove*: An area of lush jungle or woodlands – or occasionally swampland – sacred to druids or claimed by elves, faerie beings, or similar nature-dwellers. It might be sculpted into a *literal* maze by magic or millennia of silviculture, and often boasts a third dimension at treetop level or in the form of realms entered through hollow hills or trees. Such places typically contain profoundly ancient and magical sites (e.g., henges), and outsiders who so much as glimpse these can trigger Nature's wrath. Beyond the residents or caretakers, likely foes are classic wilderness monsters such as guardian beasts and animated trees – but even the smallest insects and birds will spy on visitors.

*Isolated Place*: A region characterized by seclusion – perhaps geographical (as with an island, caldera, or valley), or maybe in the form of a curse or a shift in druidic power or mana. Limited size and hard boundaries enable exact, dungeon-style mapping: quicksand *here*, a dire bear cave *there*, and little muffin-shaped huts of horde pygmies in the center of the Acid Swamp, which is *this* wide and has *these* effects. Nothing says the monsters must be animals, bushwhackers, and wildmen, either. Plenty of forgotten places conceal monasteries, villages, and towers full of martial artists, orcs, wizards, and zombie armies for whom the area is a fortress or a prison.

*Lair*: The outdoor home of mundane or dire carnivores, trolls, brigands, or someone else who doesn't like to live in town or underground. Size ranges from "easily explored in an afternoon" to "a mountain" (the classic dragon's lair), and there might be a genuine dungeon (cave, mine, etc.) somewhere in the middle. What's guaranteed is defensibility, terrain and weather that favor the residents, and the fact that the locals have access to all their resources, which the delvers might want to capture as loot. Any fighting that ensues involves ordinary violence – ambushes by tigers whose stripes

let them blend in, bandit attacks involving traps and arrows, etc. – not mystic Nature powers.

*Natural Dungeon*: A geographical labyrinth such as a branching canyon, a pattern of icebergs separated by leads and polynyas, or land thick with hoodoos and buttes. This is an obstacle until the GM stocks it with perils, transforming it into a traditional dungeon minus a roof. The crucial difference from the isolated place is that there are no borders inside of which the entire region is explorable – delvers must stick to specific paths, and the network might meander indefinitely, generated randomly as the group travels. Pirates use such locales to hide treasure (the proliferation of landmarks makes it easy to return to the booty), while mad wizards turn them into giant mazes for grandiose experiments.

*Unnatural Place*: A weird piece of land that makes no sense – yet there it is anyway. This doesn't mean an isolated clump of trees or a desert oasis, but something like glassy black rocks that emit unnerving whistling sounds, thrusting obscenely out of the sea as an affront to the gods. Usually, Elder Things are involved. It could superficially resemble any of the previous examples. However, explorers who look up may count the wrong number of suns; terrain and weather rarely match the expectations of standard Survival skills and Weather spells; gravity gets tricky; and arch-shaped rocks tend to be portals. Dwellers are either twisted (*giant fungus*, *mutant animals*, etc.) or distressingly squiddy.

*A hideously amplified world of  
lurking horrors.*

– H.P. Lovecraft,  
*At the Mountains of Madness*

## BOLDLY GOING

The most expansive kind of wilderness tale involves outdoor exploration for its own sake. The GM presents the players with a region – perhaps a modest forest or swamp for a brief adventure, but up to a *continent* if the whole campaign is about explorers – and a reason to go look at it. Traditional fantasy motivations are being paid well by a ruler or a guildmaster to find a mythical place, forge a new trade route, open up virgin territory for pioneers, or scout a rival nation . . . and *somebody* has to create all those maps that other delvers get sold in taverns. Whatever their mission, the heroes roam the area not with the objective of journeying from A to B (*On the Road Again*, pp. 46-48) or hacking and slashing (*Hedge Maze, Size L*, pp. 48-49), but simply to learn what's there.

This is grand stuff, so *any* rule in *Wilderness Adventures* might arise. *Exploration* (pp. 25-29), particularly *Information Gathering* (p. 26) and *Mapping* (p. 27), comes first for obvious reasons; *Natural Threats* (pp. 30-35) outweighs *Deliberate Dangers* (pp. 35-38) unless the heroes are specifically scouting hostile territory; and the need to function away from town for long periods gives extra weight to *Mother Nature's Bounty* (pp. 42-45). On the other hand, it's difficult to use *Travel Arrangements* (pp. 20-21) when going into *Terra Incognita* (p. 20), and *Tracking* (pp. 30-31) isn't likely to be central to the mission.

## Sandbox Play

It's possible to run a campaign where the delvers crisscross a *huge* desert at their whim. Think of the desert as a sandbox and what the heroes get up to there as play. Okay, that's stretching the metaphor – there's also icebox play in arctic lands, bento-box play in settings with a variety of tasty terrain, and so on. "Huge" and "at their whim" are the operative terms, as they confront the GM with serious challenges.

The GM could spend every waking moment mapping territory and stocking it with planned encounters, but that's a *ridiculous* workload, even for something the size of a county. A more practical approach is in order:

1. Sketch a large-scale map in vague terms; e.g., "500 square miles of swamp here, a mountain there, and a 666-mile-long river in between."
2. Create tables of *random* encounters, disasters, weather, etc. for each major zone (in the example above: swamp, mountain, and river). Also think about supernatural conditions there; see *Despoilers* (p. 43) and *Nature's Strength* (p. 53).
3. Draft reusable record sheets for opponents met in random encounters.
4. Dot the map with towns where heroes can heal, train, trade, and so on.
5. Not too close to the towns, scatter dungeons – both standard ones and the groves, lairs, etc. in *Hedge Maze, Size L* (pp. 48-49).

*Note:* Don't write up those towns or dungeons just yet!

That's still a massive undertaking, but the delvers' speed limit (*Travel*, pp. 20-24) lets the GM tackle it in stages. Create random tables for a place – and work out details about towns and dungeons – only when the heroes are poised to go there. Stat opponents on the same basis, and recycle old ones when possible; the players need never know that Desert Bandits are Lake Pirates with Survival (Desert) replacing Boating.

For the deluxe treatment, don't restrict available quests to assorted hedge mazes. Each town and neutral-to-friendly wilderness encounter might offer *Guard Duty* (p. 47) and *Bounty Hunting* (pp. 47-48) missions – which could be random (like weather and disasters), set (*this* town has *this* offer), or inevitable (wherever the PCs go next, a wealthy merchant needs guards). Fantasy lands should also boast weirdness such as portals that open in certain places at particular times, and ghost ships and mythical cities that blink around the map.

Most sweeping is an epic story: war, undead invasion, creeping ice age sent by the Frost God, or whatever. This unfolds alongside the adventurers' activities, moving enemies through the region, triggering time-dependent quests, and perhaps altering the map. The heroes enjoy free will but aren't the only ones playing in the sandbox.

This advice is best-suited to exploration campaigns (*Boldly Going*, pp. 49-50), but not limited to them. *Any* game with wilderness adventures and player choice could benefit from such an approach.

The GM is also going to want to make extensive use of all the rules for climate, terrain, and weather – discovering what a place is like is one of an explorer's tasks, and throwing the adventurers into new environments is part of the fun!

The scope of the job and the need to prepare for the unknown practically demand a party with dedicated outdoorsmen. Even if they follow all the "Wilderness Adventures" advice in *From Delvers to Outdoorsmen* (pp. 4-10) to the letter, a completely dungeon- or town-oriented group won't be able to cut it, however brief the adventure. This is truly a challenge best saved for a campaign about wilderness experts with suitable abilities, allies (pp. 10-15), and equipment (pp. 15-19) – see *The Wilderness Campaign* (p. 47).

The scope of a full-fledged exploration campaign has major ramifications for the GM, too. Follow the advice in *Sandbox Play* (above), paying extra attention to towns and side-quests. Strategically place towns so that the heroes can periodically visit known territory to report to their patron's factor, draw pay, and resupply – but also throw in *unexpected* settlements (wood-elf tree villages, forgotten city-states, mountain-top monasteries, etc.) that double as discoveries and opportunities to stock up on cool stuff. Side-quests might include rumors and offers acquired while visiting civilization, missions proposed by total strangers encountered in the wilds, and hedge mazes and subterranean dungeons to raid. Don't lose sight of the fact that *Dungeon Fantasy* explorers are still delvers in search of slaying and looting, and that ultimately their mission isn't to roam but to *find* – whether that means strange civilizations, forgotten valleys, or ancient ruins.

## UNDER THE BIG SKY

Every *Dungeon Fantasy* supplement before this one assumed a nameless town with a generic Town Watch, in a realm with vague Merchants', Thieves', and Wizards' Guilds, all ruled over by an unnamed King. There's a Frozen North for barbarians to come from, a Forbidden East for ninja, and a Steamy South for savage guards, but that isn't exactly specific. Where names appear – as with the drinking establishments of *Taverns*, certain items in *Dungeon Fantasy 6: 40*

*Artifacts*, the land of Teclá mentioned in *Dungeon Fantasy Monsters 1*, and the locales in *Dungeon Fantasy Adventure 1: Mirror of the Fire Demon* – that's all they are: names. Nothing sits on a well-defined map.

For the most part that's fine! The GM never *has* to map a *Dungeon Fantasy* backdrop, because the object of the game is slaying and looting – not politics or visiting Marge the Barbarian's in-laws (certainly an adventure, but not the fun kind).

*It is always sunrise somewhere; the dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on seas and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.*

– John Muir, *John of the Mountains*

The Area Knowledge skill doesn't even show up on standard templates. The whole world can be left in terms of travel times and whimsical names.

That doesn't fly for campaigns with lots of wilderness adventures, much less for full-on wilderness campaigns (p. 47). ("Fly" is an apt choice of words when the heroes travel by magic carpet or Flight spells, and expect to see landmarks zipping past.) It's *especially* inadequate for tales of discovery (*Boldly Going*, pp. 49-50) and for sandbox play (p. 50) of any kind. Roaming and exploration call for definiteness, if only so that the GM can answer questions like "What's along the way?" and "Where do the delvers end up if they get lost?"

In short, wilderness adventures call for *settings*.

## SCALE

How large a realm is good? The GM decides, but given that adding new lands at the edges of a map is easy while convincing adventurers that a location didn't exist after all is nearly impossible, it's wise to start small. One day's travel around a town at the party's best possible speed (*Covering Ground*, p. 23), a nominal parish or canton, is reasonable; even a county is getting ambitious. Remember that area increases with distance *squared*; e.g., going from a 20-mile to a 40-mile radius *quadruples* the enclosed territory, allowing four times as many adventures to take place there without overlap.

Travel adventures (*On the Road Again*, pp. 46-48) call for the GM to plot a route long enough to generate a story, however. A solid approach is to decide on a length of time – using the length of the caravan-guard contract, the number of daily encounters planned, or whatever – and multiply this by the party's speed to get a distance. Map that path, plus a swath one day's travel to either side of it (or a distance equal to sighting radius, for travelers capable of *Aerial Scouting and Mapping*, p. 27) in case the adventurers get lost or nosy.

Exploration adventures should heed the advice in *Sandbox Play* (p. 50) and *start* with large-but-vague maps: counties at least, maybe even countries. Fill in detail ahead of the group as they move, just as for other wilderness quests. Painting the big picture in broad strokes helps when the explorers stray from the predicted course, because this allows the GM to pick a landmark – town, monster lair, river, etc. – and fast-forward the party to it: "The next week goes smoothly. You find plenty to eat, and arrive at a strange henge."

The distance (or time) between points of interest can vary enormously. The customary separation of low-tech towns is one day's travel. Merely creepy sites might be no further from civilization than that – but anything actively dangerous should be more than 24 hours' travel from the nearest settlement at the *monsters'* speed (discouraging Things that won't travel by

daylight), unless the story is about the villagers who foolishly farm in the shadow of Death Mountain. Gaps between such set pieces, and between true *cities*, should be large enough to constitute a journey worth planning for; if the heroes could easily "wing it" for that long, it isn't long enough.

## BOUNDARIES

As *Scale* (above) makes clear, most campaigns benefit from confinement, if only for the GM's sanity. Confining adventurers is tricky, however. The old standbys of writing "Here Be Monsters" on the map and telling horror stories about what awaits beyond the Mountains of Insanity *won't work* on fearless monster killers. As well, a certain kind of hero (and gamer!) likes little better than to travel in one direction forever "just because" – story be damned – while the delver who can *fly* might argue that he paid points for the ability, so he's entitled to use it.

If the GM is willing to push back the edge of the known world at a moment's notice, none of this need be a problem; arguably, unrestricted travel is fundamental to *Sandbox Play* (p. 50). However, if the campaign is supposed to start small and grow gradually, boundaries are required. The delvers will force these outward as they visit Grandmother's house, drop in on Marge's in-laws, and so on – and that's fine, since it's part of the point of having adventures! – but they can't simply up and leave from Day One. This calls for some practical ways to control how far afield they roam.

*Physical Geography:* The most obvious boundaries exist in the real world: icy wastes, lofty mountains, swift rivers, vast deserts, etc. *Spell out* the penalties and consequences by making them common knowledge, spinning them into tavern tales, or having them be evident at a glance ("You reach the Mountains of Insanity. In game terms, you just know that you'll be making daily Climbing rolls at -10, with failure leading to 9d+1 crushing damage."). This won't work forever, but the heroes will need a few adventures to earn enough points to meet the challenges, giving the GM a chance to plan what lies beyond.

*Supernatural Geography:* Extended regions without mana, natural energies (*Nature's Strength*, p. 53), sanctity, and so on will discourage parties that rely on magic for travel, healing, and survival – and quite likely those that count on it for combat. Again, this is a stopgap, as eventually the wizard will learn to climb, the group will recruit a talented martial artist or mentalist whose power comes from within, etc. However, boundaries of this kind offer a near-foolproof way to limit flying carpets and similar conveyances. Be sure to warn everyone in advance so that it doesn't seem unfairly arbitrary, though!



*Resources:* Overcoming physical and supernatural geography – and sheer distance – can call for a staggering material outlay. If the only way across the Infinite Ocean is on a tall ship that costs \$100,000 to \$1 million (no sane captain would *hire out* his vessel for such a voyage!) even before taking on a crew and laying in tons of supplies, the heroes will have to loot a lot of bodies. While still a temporary measure, this gives the GM more control: ships, Amulets of Mana Control, etc. needn't be for sale until the GM is ready to run that adventure, perhaps when a patron is impressed enough to invest in the party.

*Mortal Laws:* Going some places might be Not Allowed. Heroes with Honesty won't earn points if they try; the threat of Social Stigma (Criminal Record) (*Dungeons*, p. 4) will dissuade others. Hard cases might need to meet the Rangers, who somehow manage to keep delvers in line just as do the Town Watch and King's Men. In fantasy, it's reasonable to assume that wizards *will* learn of transgressions that merit the Stigma, and that boss lawmen have things like Higher Purpose 10 (Enforcing the border laws). To get around this, the adventurers need to prove their mettle and earn permission.

*Divine Laws:* Some places might be cursed so badly that nobody dares enter. Again, make the consequences clear: "Spellcasters will be powerless, and everyone will suffer Unluckiness and cosmic bolts of divine retribution: 6d burning at noon." Circumventing this is like dealing with harsh supernatural geography *and* mortal laws. It involves quests in the name of the gods or spirits, sizeable sacrifices, and praying that the unholy warrior doesn't tire of his temporary Vow of Niceness, kick a bunny, and strand the party in the Swamp of Demise as it all turns to acidic quicksand.

## Hard Boundaries

Everything so far assumes that the edges of the explorable world are "soft" (if harsh) boundaries. This doesn't have to be so. Remember: fantasy! The world can be flat, and those who go too far simply fall off and die. The gods are real, and attempts to climb up the side of their home could be outright fatal. These sorts of things are known to even the dumbest 25-point drunkard, so 250-point heroes will *definitely* have a warning.

Actually, it's a lame fantasy world that *doesn't* have at least one place that's never, ever accessible to mortals, so be sure to include a few.

## MAPS

Once you have an idea of what kinds of adventures will take place, the distances these involve, and what boundaries hem in the action, it's incredibly useful to create at least a sketchy map. *Sandbox Play* (p. 50) touches on the big picture: outline the land and water, split it up into zones (swaths of terrain, countries, or whatever), and dot it with important spots (e.g., towns and the sites of future dungeons). Some things to include:

*Compass Rose:* There should be a cardinal direction from which angles are measured; "north" works fine. It's helpful to mark dice rolls on headings for randomly determining enemy movements, where people stray when lost, and so on. Possibilities include rolling 1d and going with hex-sides; rolling 1d even/odd two or three times to get four or eight results which correspond to the traditional compass points; and rolling a four- or eight-sided die to identical effect.

*Map Scale:* Be sure to specify one – preferably one that *just* fits the present campaign scale onto whatever size page is being used, so it's easy to mark important details on the map. For instance, when starting with a 20-mile radius centered on a town, that's a circle 40 miles wide, so five miles per inch makes it possible to cram everything onto a letter-sized or A4 sheet of hex or graph paper.

*Map Key:* Define symbols for terrain types (p. 22) – and if using hex or graph paper, mark each tile with such a symbol so that you know what the area is like when the heroes visit. Also pick line patterns or colors that define roads, rivers, contours, mana shifts, political boundaries, and so on; it's often best to have these follow the *edges* of tiles, so that there are no doubts about partial hexes or squares.

*Labels:* Big swaths of terrain, important roads and rivers, political regions, zones of unusual mana, and so on ought to get evocative names, which should appear on the map.

*Features:* Towns, cities, dungeons, hedge mazes, and other important points should be marked with labeled symbols. If there are lots of them, invent generic symbols and stick to letter codes for labels. If they're relatively few in number, the map will be easier to use if it indicates each with a memorable symbol (e.g., a little henge) and its name. Do the same for boundaries, where distinct from anything already marked.

*There grew up, then,  
a gentleman's agreement  
among mapmakers of  
the period to keep the place  
as secret as possible, lest  
tourists flock there and die.*

*– William Goldman,  
The Princess Bride*

## Annotating the Map

As the party journeys, forages, fights battles, and so on, update the map to reflect their story. Important details include:

*Routes:* Mark the adventurers' paths to show where they've been and what Eidetic Memory and direction-finding magic can recall. When abridging travel to something like "Five days pass, the going is easy, and you arrive unscathed," be sure to show *that* – in the absence of pressing plot reasons, such a trail should work the same way every time, making it valuable for future travels (by the party or whomever buys their maps).

*Events:* If the heroes set a huge fire, lose an important item, bury a friend, leave 100 dead orcs in a pile, or whatever, indicate that. It could be the seed of an entire adventure later on! ("We think the zombie horde started at that bend where you massacred all those orcs last year.")

*Random Features:* If generating *Wilderness Woes* (below) randomly, record the swamps, abysses, mudslide-prone hills, etc. When extending this to actual dungeons and the like, mark those as well. Also note spots where the heroes use Serendipity to find ideal campsites, oases, ore deposits, or whatever; such things become permanent parts of the game world, just like easy paths introduced by the GM.

This can make the map quite busy, which is why it's advisable to use as fine a scale as is practical – more room for annotation. Good mapmaking software can also help.

## Route Maps

For travel adventures along roads, rivers, etc. – particularly *Guard Duty* (p. 47) – an alternative to the *area map* discussed so far is the *route map*, similar to what's used for buses and trains. This amounts to a line with a scale, expressing the order of important landmarks and the distances between them, with notes indicating what's at each marker, where to roll for random encounters, and so on. It should still be annotated with features such as rivers forded and towns visited, and maybe even what's a little off to the sides. This is an idealized visual representation of the trip; the actual path in the game world may be quite squiggly. The GM might annotate an area map with the "true" route later, but it's certainly an option for the campaign map to be a spider-web of routes.

## Maps for Players

The degree to which the players get to see the campaign map is up to the GM. He may want to save copies of the map as he adds progressively more information, because this makes it easy to control who's aware of what details. Cartography software is ideal here, but gamers working by hand can use photocopyers, printers, scanners, etc.

*Everybody* should be allowed to consult the least-detailed version of the unannotated campaign map.

That's what the average person in the game world knows. The GM may include misleading details, especially far from civilization – nothing says that common knowledge has to be right!

Adventurers who buy suitable maps (*Sages*, p. 14) or make excellent Research rolls (*Travel Arrangements*, pp. 20-21) deserve access to somewhat truer versions. However, nobody gets to start with a map that shows *Terra Incognita* (p. 20) or anything intended as a complete surprise. Delvers who desire such details should go out, have adventures, and annotate their maps. If the explorers engage in *Mapping* (p. 27) and come up with a map that gives a net bonus to Navigation, the GM may wish to reward them with a more-detailed campaign map, perhaps annotated with anything relevant to the mapping mission.

All this assumes the GM wants to bother with differing map versions. That is a lot of extra campaign prep, which might feel like time better used for playing. The GM may prefer to show everybody a detailed campaign map, ad lib *everything*, and have the sites of adventures surprise him and the players alike – exactly like random rolls on tables.

## Nature's Strength

"Nature's strength" affects druidic spells and abilities as explained on p. 19 of *Adventurers*. On wilderness adventures, the modifier to such capabilities should be 0 unless the druid enters some area forbidden to mortals by the gods or spirits of a natural domain, or the story specifically concerns the wanton abuse of Nature. Being able to work at full strength almost everywhere outdoors compensates druids for all those dungeon and town adventures at -3. Given that clerics and wizards rarely encounter zones of depressed sanctity and mana, the GM might even decide that *additional* compensation is due and have potent wild places – ancient henges, forests never before seen by man, etc. – grant from +1 to +5. A similar bonus may apply when Nature is being exploited and the druid is working to remedy this from outside the despoiled area.

# WILDERNESS WOES

Chapter 2 is full of rules for dealing with wilderness challenges, and for the most part, these describe the consequences in sufficient detail to help the GM decide when and how to torture the heroes. It can't hurt to think more about this, though. Well, it can't hurt the GM . . . the *adventurers* might end up soaked, fried by lightning, and snared by the swift tongues of dire numbats.

## MOTHER NATURE

There's an old saying among travelers: "Nature is the mother of dogs." The dwarven version uses less-polite words, one of which isn't "dam." Wilderness can challenge the most seasoned outdoorsman simply by being there.

When the heroes are on a mission to confront outdoorsy foes who lurk in shrubberies, the GM is advised to dial back Nature's cruelty to avoid upstaging the action. However, on long treks to

reach killing-and-looting territory, or when travel is the adventure – and particularly when *exploration* is the adventure – it's time to emphasize the danger innate in wild places.

Rules to use routinely are *Terrain Types* (p. 22), *Harsh Climates* (p. 30), and *Nasty Weather* (pp. 30-31), which can make survival challenging even if there isn't a single outright disaster or monster attack on the entire trip. This is especially true when the GM enforces *Starvation* (p. 43) after the heroes end up in the wilds for longer than planned – or *Water Supplies* (p. 43) if they stray into a desert. Except in a wilderness campaign, these aren't the dangers that most delvers signed up to confront, so it's wise not to be *too* harsh. Still, outdoorsmen such as barbarians and druids deserve a chance to show off, and clerics and wizards who paid for spells like *Coolness*, *Warmth*, *Create Water*, and *Create Food* should get to cast them occasionally. In a wilderness campaign where most everyone is good at this stuff, it's equally important not to go *too easy* on the PCs.

The rules for harsher environments – *Mountaineering* (p. 29), *Water Hazards* (p. 29), *Unnatural Threats* (p. 31), and *Obstacles* (pp. 31-32) – also fall into this category, but should arise more sparingly. It's one thing to say that travel goes slowly, a couple of skills take penalties, and everyone ends up short a few FP. It's another to drop the party off a cliff, drown them, or set penalties so high that horrible critical failures are assured. Consider giving the adventurers cause to suspect and plan for such perils, anyway.

Unfriendly magic-using conditions are a further possibility. *Nature's Strength* (p. 53) is the big one outdoors, but mana and sanctity can fluctuate as well. These headaches, too, should be occasional rather than business as usual.

The GM can take either of two approaches when assessing such difficulties. One is to program them in advance, which suits climate, mountains, rivers, canyons, and so on – and probably magic-using conditions. Such things tend to be associated predictably with locations on a map. In fantasy, even weather might be this predictable; e.g., some places *always* have -2 for rain and wind, because that's how they are.

The other tack is to roll randomly, which is standard for weather and for the penalties that many of the previous concerns inflict. As well, it suits gonzo, old-school fantasy to roll at fixed intervals (hourly, daily, weekly, etc.) to learn whether the party encounters a barrier (e.g., mountain, river, or abyss) or wanders into a no-mana zone – and sometimes even to generate *terrain type* randomly! This entails preparing tables for random terrain, obstacles, supernatural conditions, and the like in advance, which is extra work similar to designing random encounter tables for wandering monsters. No matter how much is left to the dice, though, *Boundaries* (pp. 51-52) of natural origins should be fixed.

The most important thing is to be evenhanded. It's fair to bring up natural challenges on some adventures but to declare

you're using the simpler *Dungeons* rules (or outright ignoring them) on others because the journey is "routine." Always be consistent *during* an adventure, though – and if using random tables, *roll*, don't cheat. And whether the world is programmed or random, fade in penalties as the party travels and give advance warning where logical (e.g., mention that the travelers see mountain ranges and hear the ocean's roar), so that the situation doesn't reek of "Suddenly, the GM decides to mess with you." Save surprises for disasters.

## BOLTS FROM THE BLUE

Terrain, climate, and oceans often span thousands of miles – and weather and natural obstacles can task the heroes for days, weeks, even months – but Mother Nature also has more abrupt dangers in Her arsenal. The most important of these appear under *Disasters* (pp. 32-35). Such catastrophes are to the wilderness as traps, tricks, gunk, and Evil Runes are to dungeons. Like those indoor threats, outdoor woes can be random or set pieces, but a mix is best.

When the adventurers are exploring a small hedge maze (grove, lair, etc.), or come to a chokepoint such as a mountain pass or a ford, it's best to map out the area – at least in general terms – much like a dungeon, and then to stock it with perils. For disasters that have variable damage dice, penalties, and so on, the GM may note *exactly* how bad each potential calamity is. Heroes who proceed with due caution can avoid trouble, much as dungeon explorers can circumvent traps.

When the heroes are on the road, the GM might roll for disasters just as for wandering monsters, checking daily to see whether anything bad happens – and if it does, rolling on a table for what befalls the group (and, if necessary, who bears the brunt of it). High-risk areas might have more frequent checks, greater odds of calamity, or scarier outcomes on the table (e.g., a rockslide instead of a few falling rocks). Travelers *still* receive the usual rolls to spot these threats, but dangers can menace such broad areas that avoiding trouble costs them travel time.

As with the rest of the environment (*Mother Nature*, pp. 53-54), consistency is imperative. Disasters should occur where they make sense – no falling trees or stinging plants in the barren arctic, and no thin ice or stampedes in the hot, tangled jungle, except in fantasy terrain where the heroes have cause to suspect *Unnatural Threats* (p. 31). When a peril is keyed to an action or a point on a map, avoiding the risky behavior or place should avoid the hazard, too. When it's random, roll dice; it isn't fair to "liven things up" by arbitrarily zapping the unholy warrior with lightning (well, unless he insults the Thunder God). In all cases, ensure that the delvers get their rolls to spot trouble and the benefits of sensible countermeasures.

There are exceptions to these guidelines. Disease (*Fresh Air Is Good for You*, p. 34) is insidious, and needn't offer a warning *or* have countermeasures.

## Optional Rule: Risk Assessment

Adventurers must know of a problem to judge its severity. For hidden dangers such as quicksand or traps, use the associated detection rules – but don't waste time rolling for the self-evident (surrounding terrain, a cliff, a tornado, etc.). Once the heroes are aware of the challenge, the GM decides what to tell the players about skill modifiers (e.g., -3 to Climbing to negotiate a cliff) and any damage or penalties inflicted (e.g., -2 for pain from stinging plants). Such details are obvious by definition for anything intended to send a message, particularly *Boundaries* (pp. 51-52), and the GM may opt to spell out lesser threats to reduce dice-rolling.

When it's plot-critical for the delvers to have doubts, though, the GM should make a single, secret *Per*-based roll against the group's highest suitable skill – one that could *detect* or *be penalized by* the peril – with a bonus equal to penalty size or number of damage dice. At +10 or better, treat the roll as an automatic success; the risk is common knowledge. Success reveals specifics, failure yields "You can't say," and critical failure means a lie.

*Example:* A mountain that's -3 to climb allows a *Per*-based Climbing roll at +3 to know the penalty. Assessing that the ensuing fall does 6d×2 damage would be a separate roll, but as it's a death plunge that gives +12, it would be evident to the least-skilled dullard.



*One does not simply walk into Mordor. Its black gates are guarded by more than just orcs. There is evil there that does not sleep. The great eye is ever watchful. It is a barren wasteland, riddled with fire, ash, and dust. The very air you breathe is a poisonous fume. Not with ten thousand men could you do this. It is folly.*

*– The Fellowship of the Ring (Jackson, 2001)*

It's also a hybrid of fixed and random: Because it can afflict everyone – possibly for a long time – the GM should put it in an area as a programmed threat, not have it turn up on a table of random unpleasantness. However, who's affected is a function of resistance rolls, so it will *seem* random. Be sure to specify the exact stats of any illnesses included in an adventure.

*Getting Lost* (p. 26) is a real disaster but usually not something the environment does to the heroes – it's something they do to themselves. It's only “random” in that it results from bad dice rolls; the GM won't inflict it randomly. Well, not normally . . . but twisted and confusing fantasy regions *can* mean that rolls to avoid becoming lost are penalized, more frequent, or unusual (e.g., IQ + Magic Resistance rolls, or resistance rolls of Per vs. 16, instead of Navigation). Some might even feature random misfortunes tables that include “Lost!” Thus, while getting lost rarely makes sense as a programmed event in the sense that it simply happens, it's possible for *checks to avoid it* to be a fixed feature of a location, much like disease.

*Despoilers* (p. 43) also works something like this. The region wherein bad stuff might happen tends to be fixed (though possibly extremely large), but when and where disaster strikes is variable. Like mundane set-piece calamities, such danger should be avoidable by careful travelers; e.g., just as one takes precautions against quicksand by probing the ground, one avoids thunderbolts by not annoying Mother Nature. When tragedy strikes, though, it often *seems* random to the sorts of disrespectful litterbugs who trigger it. The GM could even tie an area's random misfortunes to Affronts, with higher tallies increasing the frequency or odds of checks, or the severity of consequences. And as with disease, it's important to define the possible outcomes ahead of time.

## FIGHTIN' ROUND THE WORLD

One thing that makes the outdoors great is that it's chock-full of good fights to have! *Perilous Encounters* (*Dungeons*, pp. 20-28) covers this topic in *great* detail, but wilderness adventures merit some additional pointers.

### Outdoor Battles

Wilderness enemies strive to use *Nasty Tricks* (pp. 35-36), *Traps* (pp. 36-37), and *Ambushes* (pp. 37-38) as their intelligence and natural adaptations allow. Canny heroes will doubtless

want to do so as well. *Tricky Environments* (pp. 38-39) and *Poor Visibility* (p. 39) are common outdoors, too. And *Travel Fatigue* (p. 24) is likely when combat breaks out on the road. These things depend heavily on terrain (e.g., it's hard to topple trees if there are none, while visibility is more limited in jungle than in desert) and can be sufficiently major game-changers that a clear understanding of the environment is as important as the combatants' stats.

The GM must think about all this in advance. As with other wilderness woes, fairness dictates giving the players a little warning; e.g., don't fail to mention high ground from which enemies could roll rocks, and grant the adventurers a bonus to detect the obvious hiding place of plains bandits lurking in the only bushes for miles around. When using tactical combat to game out fights, be ready with maps that show vegetation, boulders, slopes, and similar outdoor features – *particularly* nasty complications such as chasms – that might affect the action. Wandering-monster encounters can use recycled “generic” maps while set-piece battles get fancier ones, but no outdoor skirmish should be fought on a bleak, featureless plain. Even plains have stones, holes, occasional trees, etc. that offer cover for concentrating spellcasters and reloading archers, and that challenge melee fighters who are overfond of stepping or retreating.

Wilderness battles have one extra consideration, too: the possibility of *vast scale*. In general, if the heroes are ambushed or stumble upon wandering monsters, the encounter range should be short; see *Ambushes* (pp. 37-38), or simply go with 15 yards. However, it's sometimes possible to see trouble coming from very far away outdoors, which requires the GM to abstract the action by keeping track of distance and who has cover (*Taking Cover*, p. 40). Find the distance to the nearest cover randomly (e.g., 2d-1 yards); this may end up being long enough to require a few turns of movement, or short enough for fighters to dive behind it defensively. In tactical combat, once enough combatants draw sufficiently close that the action can fit on the available map, have the two sides enter from opposite edges and proceed from there.

Large scales allow *Mounted Combat* (pp. 41-42) and *Aerial Combat* (p. 41), too. The GM should prepare for these in advance. The same goes for craziness such as siege engines and fortifications – if the enemy is dug in far away, the delvers might have to charge for many turns to get close enough to cast spells or attack, making Dodge rolls all the while. The GM must be ready to deal with *Stunts* (pp. 28-29) and similar rules if the heroes have to clamber over barricades and climb up siege towers.

## Outdoors-Themed Foes

Wilderness settings offer interesting opponents as well as challenging battlefields. Classic outdoor foes include:

- *Animals.* Regular and giant versions *usually* match terrain – alligators in swamps, tigers in jungles, and so on. Dire ones often don't (consider the frost snake on p. 24 of *Dungeons*), and can have unusual numbers of heads and limbs, unexpected venom, breath weapons, and so on. Hybrids (like half-lion, half-eagle gryphons) are also likely. Any “natural” animal that bites, claws, constricts, or envenoms can be a monster, or part of one.

- *Elementals.* Earth in mountains and deserts, air in high places, water near any large body of water, and fire around volcanoes and forest fires.

- *Faerie creatures.* From territorial fauns, leprechauns, nymphs, and pixies, through predictably nasty trolls, to exotic “animals” such as faerie dragons and flutterbys (pretty, but shoot indiscriminately into crowds).

- *People!* Areas near civilization are rotten with bandits, brigands, highwaymen, and pirates. Faraway parts are full of “savages” and “natives” who object to greedy visitors. Almost everywhere, barbarians, druids, scouts, and shamans are no more inclined to be Good (or even Nice) than anybody else. Not all people are human, either – gargoyles, lizard men, and wildmen are as territorial as mankind. Elves are all that *and* self-righteous.

- *Plants.* Particularly vines that strangle, trees that walk, and things that shoot thorns, discharge mind-control pollen, or drop exploding fruit. If it has IQ 1+, don't mess with it. If it has Move 1+, it might mess with you!

Not all suitable threats are strongly wilderness-themed, however. Dragons, giants, and other huge monsters routinely dwell outdoors because the subset of “indoors” where they can fit is rather small – though by dint of being so large, such beings are thankfully rare. Flying and swimming creatures of all varieties are common for similar reasons: there are more places to fly and swim in Nature than in subterranean labyrinths.

## Wandering Monsters

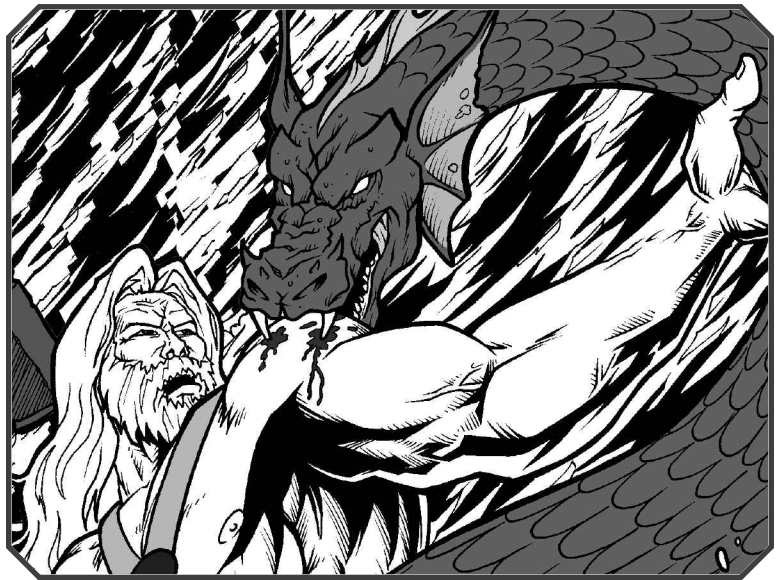
“Wandering” takes on a new meaning outdoors, which features neither walls to keep out recent arrivals (who can stroll into the area, drop in by air, hatch from the ground, grow on trees, etc.) nor a dungeon to clear. Wilderness adventures *force* the GM to think about wandering monsters. Using the parameters outlined on p. 20 of *Dungeons*:

- *Frequency.* In most wilderness, check for random encounters once per day of travel and once per night of camping (or travel, if moving by night). However, the adventures discussed in *Hedge Maze, Size L* (pp. 48-49) are effectively dungeon crawls, for which hourly rolls are more fitting. Roll once per hour *anywhere* if the heroes pause to exploit the environment; e.g., build an igloo (p. 25), attempt *Field Engineering* (p. 33), rig *Nasty Tricks* (pp. 35-36) or *Traps* (pp. 36-37), or take advantage of *Mother Nature's Bounty* (pp. 42-45). Make a bonus roll each time the party tries *Signaling* (p. 28)!

- *Odds.* Go with 6 or less on 3d on patrolled roads near civilization, 9 or less almost anywhere else outdoors. The wilderness is crawling with monsters, but it's also huge – only use higher odds in hedge mazes teeming with enemies. While the GM who feels like being “realistic” might want to adjust the chance downward in harsh terrain that can't support life, or upward for lush areas, that isn't recommended; fantasy worlds are full of weird ecosystems, like arctic snakes that hunt giant arctic rats that live off ice-lichens. Likewise, terrible weather rarely dissuades monsters, and in the territory of powerful elementals or lightning-bolt-tossing giants, the weather penalty might justify an equal-sized *bonus* to checks. Finally, during any day when the party sends people or signals skyward, all rolls are at +3.

- *Tables.* Random encounter tables are essential to outdoor adventures! Each area can have its own table of local denizens (*Outdoors-Themed Foes*, above). The old-school GM might put such encounters on the same table as random calamities (*Bolts from the Blue*, pp. 54-55) and even random terrain (*Mother Nature*, pp. 53-54), but then it's best to roll strictly at regular intervals, make no extra rolls for drawing attention, and omit the +3 for aerial advertising.

Affronts against Nature can affect any of the above, causing extra checks, increasing the odds of an encounter, or bringing more unpleasant enemies; see *Despoilers* (p. 43).



## Set Encounters

Outdoor set pieces include preplanned run-ins with bandits and other attackers during a *Guard Duty* (p. 47) mission, the showdown with the party's quarry (possibly after dealing with that adversary's allies or hirelings) on a *Bounty Hunting* (pp. 47-48) adventure, and fixed encounters sited on the map of a hedge maze. The GM can also throw in quasi-random encounters with foes such as rival explorers, people tracking the heroes, and old enemies – there *will* be blood, but it can be fun to leave the where and when of it to chance. Thus, the GM might create planned encounters and assign them daily odds or include them on the random encounter table, with each passing day or week without a confrontation increasing the likelihood of one occurring.

Set encounters have an additional dimension outdoors: the potential for a huge enemy force. In the wilderness, a whole village of pygmies or an entire army on the move might be a single “encounter.” Sufficiently powerful delvers *can* prevail in such combats! The GM is advised to abstract the fight in terms of enemy attacks per adventurer per turn and a running tally of dead bodies. When using a tactical map, limited space and figures often make it necessary to recycle the counters or miniatures representing dead bad guys to the rear of the opposing formation.

## WEIRDNESS

Finally, nothing says that wilderness can’t be home to truly freaky stuff, and not just those mushrooms that druids and shamans eat. Adventurers eventually grow accustomed to the challenges of *Unnatural Threats* (p. 31) and even the supernatural complications of *Despoilers* (p. 43), *Boundaries* (pp. 51-52), and *Nature’s Strength* (p. 53) – primarily because the *players* can quantify and work around these things. There ought to be some places and events that are too rare to typify. Dungeon standbys such as curses, illusions, places where time flows oddly, portals, regions of anomalous gravity, zones of unusual mana, etc. can work, but the sheer scale of the great outdoors supports additional weirdness. A few examples:

*Inconstant Terrain:* People take islands, mountains, rivers, etc. for granted. However, fantasy is full of forests that spring up overnight, archipelagos that emerge from and return to the ocean’s depths, shifting peaks, and so on. Such weirdness can inflict serious Navigation penalties, demand unexpected Survival specialties, complicate exploration (“Who brought the mountaineering gear?”), lure adventurers on side-quests, and bring encounters and perils that nobody planned for. It could also menace nearby regions by threatening to overgrow them, displace them, or infest them with invasive monsters – all excellent excuses for heroic quests!

*Strangely Connected Space:* Most delvers assume that the world maps out as a flat surface on which they can plot nice courses, and tend to notice portals and space warps over short distances. It’s much harder to realize that, say, those plains they set out across two weeks ago just wrapped back to where they started! Deducing that two points are connected when they shouldn’t be calls for a Per roll – at a penalty if the shift is subtle, +3 for Absolute Direction, and with +5 for Eidetic Memory or +10 with Photographic Memory if the travelers pass the same place twice as a result.

*Distorted Distance:* Apparent and actual distances may be seriously out of whack. For instance, landmark-free wastes might insert 1,000 miles into a 10-mile gap, and cities or entire mountain ranges could be “hidden” within because everybody who looks assumes they’re seeing the other side of the region, not the first 1%! *Per*-based rolls against Hiking, Navigation, and so on – again, at a penalty for subtlety – will reveal that something isn’t right, and if nobody succeeds before traveling the expected distance, they’ll clue in after they go that far and are *still* trudging along.

*Supernatural Pathways:* Some places might be accessible only by following a special route *to the letter*.

This isn’t like a treasure hunt, where luck or aggressive searching will do. Maybe walking the path is part of a spell, or perhaps there are strange, subtle portals along the way. The destination might not be anywhere in the real world, even if one can look out from it and see that world (supernatural mountaintops are particularly prone to this). Naturally, there’s something weird and dangerous at the end.

These things can lead adventurers to strange places that don’t appear on any map, or take them far away without warning. Since it’s easy to overuse such devices – and not a lot of fun for jungle-ready travelers to find themselves stranded in arctic terrain 1,000 miles from home – it’s important to go light on this. That is, unless someone is getting 15 points for Weirdness Magnet, or the heroes were warned that something Isn’t Right. In those situations, all bets are off! To make matters a little more challenging for explorers who *are* forewarned, add a *time* component so that the weirdness is only evident if they set out or arrive on a particular day, or travel at a specific speed.

Not all weirdness needs to be on such a grand scale. Plenty of strange stuff is simply too big to fit into a dungeon and too crazy to be believable in town. For instance, ghost ships, sinister traveling circuses that vanish at daybreak, and sudden space-warping fogs might whisk the heroes far away. Almost anything to do with Elder Things rates as weird, too – perhaps in ways as unsubtle as inflicting Fright Checks on people who visit or gaze upon a landmark. The GM should strive to build an atmosphere of apprehension around places with bizarre rock formations, creepy echoes, or oddly colored skies. Or squid.

## Outdoors, Indoors

*Wilderness Adventures* assumes that the delvers are under the open sky, but a lot of its rules and advice could be of value in the dungeon. Some ideas:

*Old Dangers, New Surrounds:* The GM might simply drag wilderness threats underground. *Obstacles* (pp. 31-32) such as abysses and rivers are as likely there as above ground. Near these, combat often involves *Tricky Environments* (pp. 38-39). A dungeon can never have enough *Traps* (pp. 36-37) – but *Disasters* (pp. 32-35) may come as a bigger surprise to groups who expect concealed crossbows and Evil Runes, but not quicksand or sinkholes.

*Mega-Dungeons:* A dungeon could be so big that clearing or exploring it may take the heroes weeks, months, or a lifetime. In that case, the GM may prefer to use the more-detailed rules in *Travel* (pp. 20-24) and *Camping* (pp. 24-25) – and the delvers might opt to bring mounts and vehicles (*Transportation*, pp. 18-19). *I Wasn’t Trained for This* (p. 31) is likely to apply, pushing the adventurers to learn Survival (Subterranean), uses for which include exploiting *Mother Nature’s Bounty* (pp. 42-45) in the form of fungi, sightless fish, and stalactites.

*Underworlds:* Plenty of real-world cultures believed in subterranean realms as vast as the lands above – and countless fantasy tales borrow this notion. *Every rule in this supplement* could apply in such a place, which might be home to the full range of terrain types and weather found topside. Of course, this is liable to coexist with stranger stuff that requires special Survival skills!

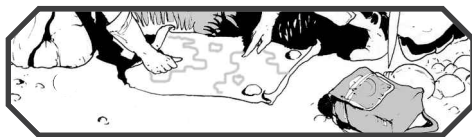


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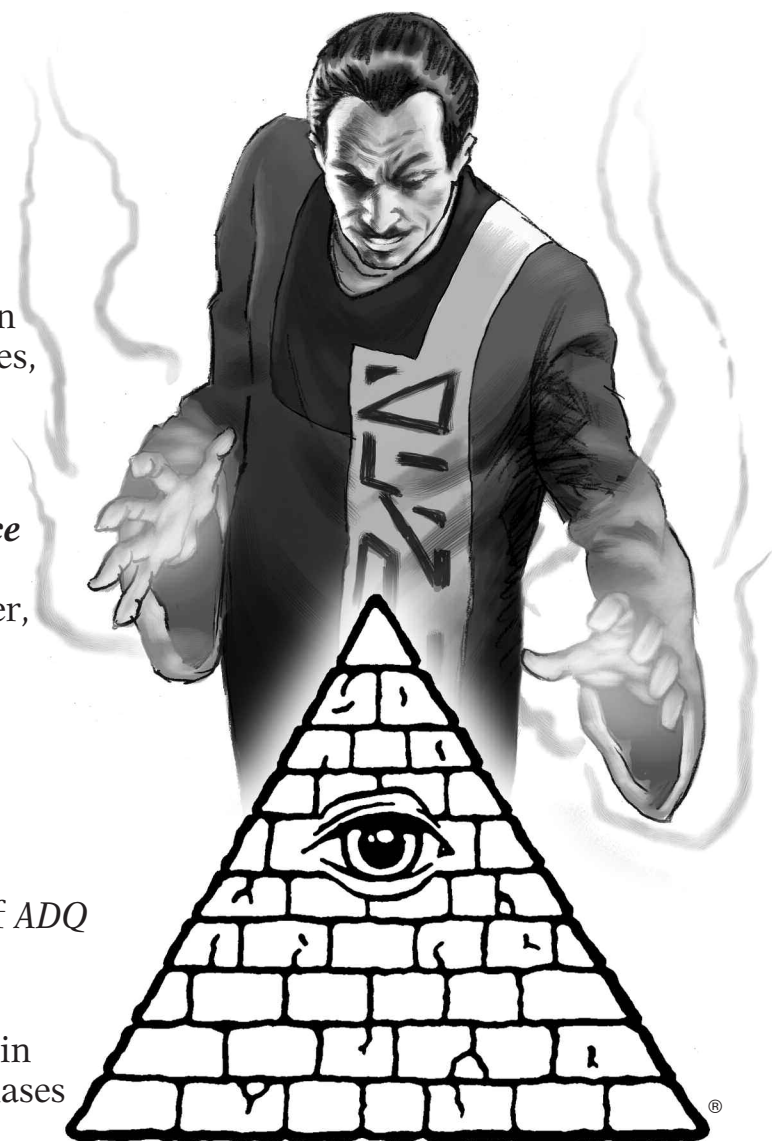
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