

# Gods & Monsters

Charlotte Korde

Charisma: 17	Moral Code: Good
Intelligence: 12	Age: 36
Wisdom: 15	Height: 5'1"
Endurance: 10	Weight: 93 lbs
Strength: 9	Level: 1
Agility: 8	Survival Points: 5 III
	Verve: 8 III

Saving Rolls	Special Abilities
Health: 4	Archetype: Monk
Fortitude: 4	Specialization: Half-Elven
Willpower: 8	Non-Weapon Proficiency
Evasion: 3	Sleep: Imm: +1
Learning: 5	Psycic Pool: 1+
Perception: 10	

Silver: 25

Fields and Skills

- Native Culture: +2 Crosspoint etiquette
- Language Science: +1 English, Frankish, literacy
- Performance Art: +1 acting
- Personality Art: +1 demagoguery, mediation
- Engineering Science: +1 clockworks
- Telepathic Art: +5 illusion
- Psychokinetic Craft: +3 telekinesis
- Fighting Art: +0 quarterstaff

**A fantasy game by Jerry Stratton**



# What is this game?

In “Gods & Monsters”, you and your friends take the role of fantasy heroes. Your heroes will meet, outsmart, and fight fantastic creatures, strange beings, and perhaps even representatives of the gods themselves. You will solve puzzles and riddles, and guide your heroes through the uncharted vistas of your imagination.

Most of the action in Gods & Monsters takes place within the minds of the players. The Guide describes what the heroes see, and the players describe what their heroes do in response.

Sometimes you will roll dice to determine how successful your heroes’ actions are, and you can use your heroes’ mojo to help ensure success.

*Where the hand-scrawled sign warns “beyond here lie dragons,” your stories begin.*

Jerry Stratton

<http://www.godsmonsters.com/>

November 16, 2008



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# What do I Need?

Besides this rulebook, you'll want a notebook for writing your character's information in and for remembering details about your character's adventures. You'll want a pencil so that you can write things down and easily change them and a pencil sharpener to keep your pencil sharp.

You will also need a set of dice. Look for a 10-die set: it will include one each of all the dice, plus an extra ten-sided die (for rolling d100) and three extra six-sided dice (for rolling abilities). You can also buy your dice separately. You'll want four six-sided dice, one eight-sided die, one ten-sided die, one ten-sided die with tens on it, and one twenty-sided die. If you're a completist, a sorcerer, or an Adventure Guide, you'll also want a four-sided die and a twelve-sided die. Any game store will have them.

Go to <http://www.godsmonsters.com/Dice/> for a demonstration of what these dice look like and how to read them.

## Players and Guides

There must be at least three players, four is usually best, and five is fine. Four is often best, because it provides the opportunity to roleplay a narrative of three unique heroes: warrior, thief, and mage.

One of the players will be the Adventure Guide. The Adventure Guide will present the adventures to the rest of the players, who will take the role of heroes in this fantasy world.

If the characters enter a town, the people living in that town are the Guide's responsibility. If the characters open a trapped chest, the Guide not only knows what the trap is, but also what treasures or horrors are inside the chest. The Guide may choose to use treasures, horrors, towns, or complete adventures that were written by someone else. But the effectiveness and tenor of the adventure remain the Guide's responsibility.

This is not to say that players cannot offer input to the Guide, nor that the Guide may not request such input. Both are recommended. But in the end, the Guide is the world that the characters interact with.

# Narration

Gods & Monsters is a game. You roll dice to see if your character in the game is successful at doing adventurous things. Your character has resources. You will use those resources to gain more resources. Just like betting chips in poker, if you use too many resources (such as survival points) your character might die; use too few and your character won't advance. You'll use strategy in Gods & Monsters just as you would in Hearts or Yahtzee. You will maneuver your character into situations where their resources are most effective.

One of the cool things about role-playing games is the role-playing. You tell the Adventure Guide, "my character's going to jump the fence" and then you roll the dice to find out if your character successfully jumped the fence. Or, "I'm going to try to convince the old man to tell us where the xolome went. I'll offer him a little food first, and I'll talk softly, and be very comforting." Then you roll and see if your character is successful, or maybe your role-playing hit all the right buttons and the Adventure Guide just says "yes, you succeed" and then describes what happens.

In Gods & Monsters, much of the role-playing comes from your narration of what your character does. There are three kinds of narration:

**Describe what your character is trying to do.** The most basic narration is when you tell everyone what your character's actions are. Whether it's attacking a demon, sermonizing to a crowd, or offering food to a beggar, it doesn't really happen unless you tell everyone that it happens. Also, when you describe what your character is doing, you're really describing what your character is *trying* to do. Some things will be easy enough that when your character tries them, they are automatically successful. Other things are more difficult, and for those you'll need to roll dice to see if your character is successful.

When you are describing what your character is trying to do, you can also describe how your character is trying to do it. Instead of saying "I'm going to search for a trap in this room", you might say "I'm going to search for a trap behind the tapestry." This kind of narration can both help and hurt your chance of success. If the trap is, in fact, behind the tapestry, you'll get a bonus on your die roll. If the trap is obvious once the tapestry is removed, you won't even have to roll. If the trap is not behind the tapestry, however, you'll either get a penalty or won't have any chance of success.

**Explain why your character is doing it.** In fiction, there's only one writer, so actions lead inexorably to the "correct" consequences. But in Gods & Monsters the Adventure Guide doesn't necessarily know what consequences you're hoping for from your character's actions. If you're offering food to a beggar in the hopes that the beggar will tell you whether he saw anything out of the ordinary, for example, you need to tell the Adventure Guide this. Or if you've decided that the beggar is really the prince your character has been looking for, you should explain how you or your character came to that conclusion.

**Describe the success or failure of your attempt.** After your character succeeds or fails, the Adventure Guide will sometimes describe how your character succeeded or failed, and sometimes will simply say that your character succeeded or failed. This gives you the opportunity to describe how your character succeeded or failed. You don't need to do this; it isn't in any way necessary. It can, however, sometimes be fun to describe how, for example, the nail snapped after your character hit their thumb with the hammer. Brevity is the soul of this stage of narration: the action has passed, and it is time to move on to the next scene.

## Players and Characters

You as a player will play your character in the game. Characters in *Gods & Monsters* advance through a series of adventures. You will begin the game by assigning abilities, skills, and other capabilities to your character. Throughout your character's first adventure you will add further capabilities. For the rest of the game your character will use those capabilities to defeat opponents, solve problems, and complete further adventures.

Your character will (if they survive their adventures) advance through a series of experience levels. At each new level, you will have the opportunity to assign new capabilities to your character's repertoire. Each new level is a new chapter or book in your character's story.

As you play the game, you will describe to the other players what your character is doing. During a game session, Sandy, playing the sorcerer Gralen Noslen, might tell the group that "Gralen casts a spell of dazed enchantment on the Orcs". Gralen is the one casting the spell. Sandy is probably just rolling dice. Each player will very likely end up playing multiple characters over time, as one character retires, dies, or temporarily goes off in another direction from the rest of the group. But when Sandy says that she's going off into the kitchen to get a soda, that's Sandy saying that, not Gralen.

There is also a difference between "player characters" and "non-player characters". "Player characters" hold a special place in *Gods & Monsters*. They are the heroes and anti-heroes of the story. The game really does revolve around them. This doesn't mean that the game is necessarily going to give them any special breaks—sometimes it will, sometimes it won't. But the game does exist for their players' amusement. If the players go somewhere else, the game ceases to exist.

Because the game, like a movie camera, focuses on the player characters, it gives them extra chances of survival in the form of survival, verve, mojo, and reaction rolls.

Here are some sample characters. I'll be referring back to these characters as examples throughout the rules.

<b>Player:</b>	<b>Sandy Thompson</b>	<b>Sarah Dent</b>	<b>John Greeley</b>	<b>Tony Barlow</b>
<b>Character:</b>	Gralen Noslen	Sam Stevens	Charlotte Kordé	Toromeen
<b>Species:</b>	Human	Human	Half-Elven	Dwarven
<b>Moral Code:</b>	Ordered Good	Good	Good	Chaotic Good
<b>Archetype:</b>	Sorcerer	Thief/Warrior	Monk	Warrior/Prophet
<b>Charisma:</b>	12	14	17	8
<b>Intelligence:</b>	15	11	12	12
<b>Wisdom:</b>	9	10	15	15
<b>Endurance:</b>	12	14	10	15
<b>Agility:</b>	12	14	8	10
<b>Strength:</b>	11	11	9	18

When thinking about the character you want to play, you should also be talking with the other players about what they want to play.

## What does it mean to play a character?

Your character is the main character in a story. As a Gods & Monsters player, your part of the game is to find that story, to create it. This is not the Adventure Guide's story; it is yours. The Guide doesn't have a story, only a situation. It is up to you to create a narrative out of that situation. You need to create your character's plot thread.

In any story, what matters are the special abilities of the main character. So, look at what your character can do, and think up scenarios for how those abilities might be helpful. Some of those scenarios will not pan out; that's the life of an author. When one scenario doesn't bring results, think up slightly different scenarios and think up radically different scenarios.

For example, you might be trying to solve the riddle of what happened in an ancient, deserted manor. You look at your character's spell list and think, maybe "see whole" would be useful here. Maybe there's something broken or torn that can be put together. Where would I be able to find such things? How would they have been preserved in all this time, after the building has been emptied? Perhaps some small animal took them away into its lair to nest with. If that's your scenario, you look for nests. Or, perhaps they fell behind something that couldn't be moved. Is there such a thing here? Look behind it.

Take the Adventure Guide's descriptions into account. If it's an empty house and you keep hearing rats, you might make the scenario "my character finds a lost item in a rat's nest". You then keep an eye out for places that rats might build nests.

Maybe your special ability is to beat things up. Who or what, that you could beat up, would help you further your character's thread and make your character matter? Where would those persons or creatures be? What signs would indicate their presence? Start looking for those signs, and start asking the Guide about them.

Pay attention to the adventure's backstory. If your character beats things up and the backstory involves goblin ambushes in this area, you might create the scenario "my characters foils a goblin ambush while we're traveling through this area". Start paying attention to places where goblins might hold an ambush.

Sometimes your first attempt will fail. You'll look in the rafters in the first room of a four-room attic and find nothing. If it was a good narrative, don't give up. Look in the rafters in all four rooms. If it was a flawed narrative, modify it. If you think of a better narrative, use the new one instead of (or in addition to) the old one. But don't give up too easily. Characters in stories persevere. There are always false starts and slow starts. Characters become main characters because they don't give up. They ensure that their special abilities matter.

Your goal is to make your character matter in the narrative. If one scenario doesn't work, try a different one. Later, as your character gains additional abilities, keep two or three scenarios in mind at a time, looking for the things that would trigger those scenarios, occasionally modifying those scenarios according to what you hear from the Guide.

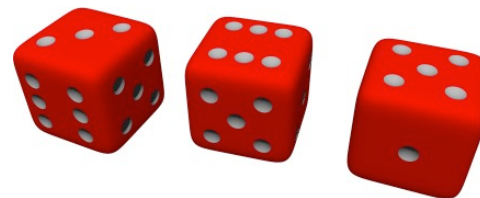
One tool that you have as a player to ensure that your scenarios make sense is that *mojo use must always matter*. You'll find out about mojo later, but if you are willing to spend mojo to be successful, the Guide must tell you if your success doesn't matter, giving you the opportunity to back out of spending the mojo. If you're barking up the wrong tree, chasing a red herring, or otherwise following the wrong clichéd path, the Guide must tell you this if you successfully bid mojo on a roll to follow that path.



# Rolling Dice

The most common dice you'll be using in "Gods & Monsters" are the "d20" and the "d6". You'll use the "d20" on its own. This is a die with twenty sides, ranging from "1" to "20".

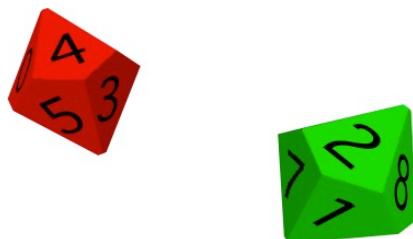
You'll usually use more than one "d6" and add them together. If you see the term "3d6", this means to roll three six-sided dice. Unless the rules say otherwise, you'll add those three dice together. If you roll a "3", a "6", and a "5", this is a "14".



You will also use four-sided dice ("d4"), eight-sided dice ("d8"), ten-sided dice ("d10"), and twelve-sided dice ("d12"), usually for things like survival points and weapon damage. You might see "2d4" for rolling two four-sided dice and adding them together, or "1d8" for rolling one eight-sided die. For all dice except d4, you read the *top* number (just as you do on a d6). The d4 doesn't have a top number, so you read the bottom number, which is usually printed along the sides.

Adventure Guides will sometimes use a "d100". It is unlikely that you have a hundred-sided die. You'll generate a number from 1 to 100 by rolling two ten-sided dice of different colors or sizes. One of the dice will be the "tens" die, and the other will be the "ones" die. If you roll a "1" and a "9", this is "19". If you roll a "4" and a "2", this is "42". If you roll two zeroes, this is "100". Most of the time when you are rolling d100, you are checking a percentage. So if something happens 65% of the time and you roll less than or equal to 65, this something has happened. If you roll 66 or greater, this something has not happened.

Go to <http://www.godsmonsters.com/Dice/> for an interactive demonstration of what these dice look like and how to read them.





# Create Your Hero



## What do I need to do?

Your Gods & Monsters character will be one of five heroic archetypes: a Warrior, Thief, Sorcerer, Prophet, or Monk. You will embellish that archetype using Specialties and Fields.

When you create your character, think about what kind of a hero you wish to play. Some things about your character you'll choose. Others, you'll roll randomly using dice.

1. As a group, decide on goals for the game and choose one to three goals for your character.
2. Choose a moral code for your character.
3. Choose an archetype: a warrior, thief, sorcerer, prophet, or monk. You might also choose a specialty now, but you don't have to. A specialty is some special ability that your character has, such as having a familiar or being an Elf.
4. Roll dice to find your character's six abilities: strength, agility, endurance, wisdom, intelligence, charisma.
5. Read the checklist for your character's archetype. It will help with the next few items.
6. Write down your character's survival and verve.
7. Apply your character's specialty, writing down any special abilities or restrictions it gives your character.
8. Write down your character's first level mojo.
9. Choose your character's initial fields and skills.
10. Write down your characters starting money.
11. Describe your character: what does your character look like, what is their background, why are they adventuring, which other characters does your character know, and why?

If you haven't done so yet, you may wish to read *The Order of the Astronomers* for one idea of the kinds of things that can happen in a Gods & Monsters game.

# Why are we playing this game?

The first thing you'll want to do is talk with your friends and decide what the game will be about. You don't need to get into details—your Adventure Guide will handle the details—but you'll need to all be on the same page. For example, you might decide that this game will be about the quest for knowledge, or small-town heroes make good, black sheep redeem themselves, or military squabbling among nations.

Your game can be about a plot, such as “city resists invasion” or about a style, such as “old-style dungeon crawl”.

It should take five to fifteen minutes to talk about this. Once you've got the basic idea for the game down, there are three things you'll want to talk about as a group, and choose as a group: your goals, your moral codes, and your archetypes.

## Goals

Take a sheet of paper. On the back, write “goals”. Take five to ten minutes to choose your character's goals.

Goals help to ensure that all players are on the same page, and they guide you as you create your character. You should choose one to three simple goals for your character. If this is a short game, a “one-shot”, you'll choose one goal. If it's a longer game, you'll choose two or three.

Goals can be an abstract idea or a specific object. These are the things that your character strives to own, possess, or somehow have. Your character's goal might, for example, be one or more of knowledge, power, heroism, wealth, contentment, family, revenge, war, glory, peace, fulfillment, love, solace, redemption, or adventure.

At least one goal should be a goal that drives the character to adventure with the other characters. That goal might be as simple as “adventure” but it might also be more specific, such as “knowledge” or “glory”, that reflects the kinds of adventures the group wants.

All of the character's goals should in some way drive the character to action. Combined, they make up the character's “story”, the theme for this character if this were a novel.

Often, the group (or the Adventure Guide) will set one goal that every character should have. If so, you'll write that goal down for your character and then choose one or two other goals as well. For a moderately more interesting game, the group might decide that all characters should either have a specific goal (such as *knowledge*) or a goal that ties them to a character who does have that goal, such as *loyalty* or *friendship*.

Abstract goals should almost always be one word. You'll expand upon that word in your character's backstory.

12—Why are we playing this game?

One of your goals might also be a specific, named thing, such as a lost heirloom, a kidnapped friend, or a place. In this case, write down that thing's name, even if it takes more than one word. Or it might be a desire tied to a person, such as a desire to impress them, earn their love, overcome them, or outdo them.

You may find it easiest to arrange your character's goals in order from most important to least important. If your group specifies a goal that each character has, that goal should be first or second.

Your character's goals can change as you play the game. For example, some goals are achievable and once achieved are no longer goals. If your character finds the lost family heirloom, that might no longer be an important goal for your character.

Depending how important the goal is, how it was achieved, and what other goals the character has, the character may become temporarily "lost" when that goal is acquired. What this means and how it affects your character is up to you: goals have no affect on the game's rules. They're there to help you and your Adventure Guide understand your character.

If the group decides on a group goal that all characters should have, that goal shouldn't change unless the entire group decides it should change. Or unless you want that character to ride off into the sunset and be replaced with a new character that shares the group's goal.

## Adventure Guide

If you haven't yet done so, you'll need to choose one member of the group to be the Adventure Guide. The Adventure Guide will not create a hero of their own. The Guide will create the adventures that challenge the heroes. The Guide will act the part of most of the non-player characters, and the fortunes and fates that the characters meet. They will represent the world in which the heroes find adventure. The player chosen as the Guide should read the Adventure Guide's Handbook for more information about being an Adventure Guide.

The Guide may also wish to read the adventures that can be downloaded for Gods & Monsters. The other players should not read these adventures, as it spoils the surprises and contests that the adventure contains.

## Moral Codes

There is a lot more about moral code later in the book; it has its own section, and you'll want to read it. A character's moral code is their morality in the Gods & Monsters fantasy world. Good characters are honest, Evil characters are selfish, Chaotic characters value personal freedom, and Ordered characters value community well-being.

Player characters should almost always be Good if they have a moral code. They can be *only* good, or they can be Chaotic Good or Ordered Good. As a group, you may wish to decide whether you want Chaotic or Ordered characters, or a mix. This will depend on the goals of the game and what the game is about.

## Archetypes and Specialties

It's always a good idea to talk about the archetypes you're going to want in your group, so that you know who wants to play which archetype and you know which of the mental archetypes (Sorcerer, Prophet, and Monk) are available.

If there are four players, one will be the Adventure Guide, one will play a Warrior, one will play a Thief, and one will play one of the available mental archetypes. If there are only three players, one of the player characters must be a physical archetype, and one must be a mental archetype. If there are five players, the extra player can play a warrior, a thief, or one of the remaining mental archetypes (but not the same one already being played). If there are six players, the extra player can choose any archetype that isn't already being played by two players.

Some archetypes won't be available in your game's world. The physical archetypes, warrior and thief, will always be available to play. But of the mental archetypes, often only one or two will be available for play. You'll want to discuss this as a group: what kind of magic do you want to encounter?

In some fantasy worlds, only one of the "magical archetypes" will be available. In others, two or three will be available, but some will be extremely rare. It's up to you as a group what kind of world your characters live in.

Sometimes the world will dictate the kind of magic available. If you're adventuring in a Burroughsian world, you'll probably need Monks available so as to have psychic powers in the game. If you're adventuring in a world similar to ancient Greece, you'll want prophets, and perhaps sorcerors.

# Numbers

Throughout this game you will have “scores” and “levels” and other numbers that describe your character’s prowess and competence. The higher these numbers are, the better your character is at whatever the number describes.

The reason that higher numbers are better is that whenever your character does something at which there is a chance of failure, you will roll dice (usually a d20) and compare the number on that die to one of those scores. If the die comes up lower than the score or equal to the score, your character succeeds at the task.

For example, you might decide that your character is going to climb a rope thirty feet into a tower. The Adventure Guide tells you that this requires a Strength roll. You’ll roll d20 and if the die comes up less than or equal to your character’s Strength, your character successfully climbed the rope. If your character has a 13 Strength and you roll 11, you’ve succeeded by 2. If you roll 18, you’ve failed by five.

Sometimes there will be modifiers. For example, if the rope is slippery the Adventure Guide may say that this is a difficult task and give you a penalty to your strength. If you have a skill for climbing, that skill might give you a bonus for climbing the rope.

When circumstances, such as that the rope is slippery, affect your character’s chance of success, you won’t always know what that penalty (or bonus) is. Sometimes it will become obvious once you attempt the action. Other times it will not.



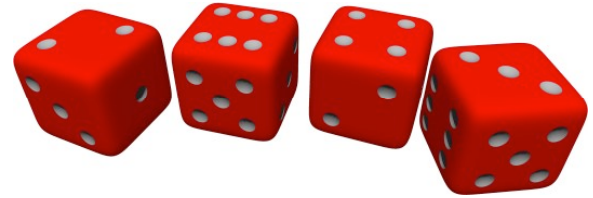
# Ability Scores

On the front of your sheet of paper, make a space for your Charisma, Intelligence, Wisdom, Endurance, Agility, and Strength. These are your six ability scores. Each score ranges from 3 to 18.

Roll 4d6 six times, throwing out the lowest die in each case, to generate six numbers from 3 to 18. For example, rolling 2, 6, 4, and 3 will result in 13: we throw out the lowest number, the ‘two’. Six, four, and three added together give us thirteen.

Once you’ve rolled your six numbers, assign the numbers as desired to each ability.

At least one ability score must be nine or higher in order to choose an archetype. Any player can, after they roll, choose to throw out all of their rolls and instead use 15, 13, 12, 10, 8, and 7 as their rolls.



## Mental Abilities

### Charisma

Charisma measures leadership, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills (noticing how to act and react to others). Charisma is not physical appearance, although physical oddments that would cause ugliness in less charismatic individuals may add ‘character’ to the charismatic individual.

Charisma is not popularity. It is a measure of a character’s facility in interacting with others. A character with a high charisma is better able to perceive social constructs and the intricacies of interpersonal situations, and can, but does not have to, use this to be liked better. A character with a high charisma doesn’t have to be popular. It’s their choice, or at least more their choice than if they have a low charisma. Any character can try to be popular, hated, respected, or feared. A character with high charisma will be more successful at the attempt. A character with a low charisma who does lots of popular things might very well be liked by most people—even though the character would prefer to “strike fear in the hearts of men”. And this popularity will be fickle.

Like the other abilities, charisma has a lot bundled up with it, and leadership is the next biggest chunk of charisma. A character with a high charisma is not only better able to get their commands obeyed, they are more competent at being in command. Some may command through fear, others through respect, but the best commanders in the field have been highly charismatic, even to the point that some are not just respected but loved by the enemy population.

## Intelligence

Intelligence is a character's learning ability and ability to assimilate knowledge and remember facts. Characters with a high intelligence will tend to know more and learn new things faster. They will take all the facts at hand and rationally sift through them to find a course of action that they believe is best. A character with high intelligence is likely to be more curious than a character of low intelligence.

## Wisdom

Wisdom is the ability to make moral decisions ('tell good from evil'). Wisdom is also the courage of one's convictions. It not only helps your character determine the right thing to do, it also gives your character the courage to perform the right act—however your character defines it.

Wisdom is also common sense, especially where common sense conflicts with learned knowledge. Wisdom might also be considered "intuition". A character with a high wisdom can make good decisions without necessarily thinking logically through all the facts at hand. The wise decision will be the right thing to do, but not necessarily the most efficient or advantageous.

## Physical Abilities

### Endurance

Endurance is sort of a character's "long term strength". It is the ability to keep going, physically, as everyone else drops out of the race. It is the ability to stand against harm, disease, and discomfort. Characters with high endurance will tend to endure adversity longer and get sick less often, and will be able to withstand the rigors of battle for longer periods of time.

### Agility

Agility is the character's manual dexterity and overall speed. Running, acrobatics, and musical instruments all demand high agility. The agile character can move quickly and surely.

### Strength

Strength is the character's ability to lift, to bend, and to break things. The higher their strength, the more they than can lift. Characters with higher strength will be more powerful in battle, able to defeat their foes more quickly.

Ability	Major	Minor	Special
1	-5	-3	0
2	-4	-2	0
3	-3	-2	0
4-5	-2	-1	1
6	-1	0	1
7-8	-1	0	2
9-10	0	0	2
11	0	0	3
12-13	+1	0	3
14	+1	0	4
15-16	+2	+1	4
17	+3	+2	4
18	+4	+2	5
19	+5	+2	5
20	+6	+3	5
21	+7	+3	6
22	+8	+3	6
+1	+1	+1/3	Score/3.5

## Ability Modifiers

Often, a roll or score will use abilities to modify the number associated with the roll or score. The ability can be a “major” contributor to the number or a “minor” contributor to the number.

In this table, any number with a ‘dash’ is a penalty to the action: it must always hinder. A number with a ‘+’ is a bonus to the action: it must always help. So, if Tony, playing Toromeen, needs to make a roll less than or equal to 6, modified by endurance (major) and by charisma (minor), this will be 6 with a bonus of 2 (endurance) and a penalty of 0 (charisma). So Tony needs to roll 8 or less for Toromeen to succeed at this particular task.

The “Special” column is used mostly for other species, some of which get bonuses based merely on the existence of an ability.

# Character Archetypes

An archetype is the character's role in the story. It is not the character's profession or vocation. The character might well have been a smith, miner, or scholar before becoming involved in the adventure. Their community will probably still consider them a smith, miner, or scholar. But their role in the story is warrior, thief, sorcerer, prophet, or monk.

Archetypes only apply to the adventurers and other major characters. Most other people are just their jobs, with no archetype at all.

There are five archetypes, each associated with one of the six ability scores and one of the six reactions.

Character Archetype	Archetypal Ability	Archetypal Reaction	Verve Contributor	Fighting Art
<b>Warrior:</b>	Strength	Fortitude	Intelligence	1
<b>Thief:</b>	Agility	Evasion	Wisdom	0
<b>Sorcerer:</b>	Intelligence	Reason	Charisma	0
<b>Prophet:</b>	Wisdom	Willpower	Agility	0
<b>Monk:</b>	Charisma	Perception	Strength	0

As your character increases level, their archetypal reaction will improve faster than their other reactions.

- The character must have an ability score of at least 9 in their archetypal ability to become that archetype.
- Warriors begin the game with *Fighting Art* at +1 to the field. Everyone else begins with *Fighting Art* at zero.
- A character's verve is affected by their archetypal ability and their verve contributor (see later).

After you go through your archetype's checklist, you'll also gain some initial resources for your character, such as skills and money.



(such as attacking from higher ground or attacking an unaware opponent).

Warriors may “save up” points across rounds, as long as the total combat points saved and converted in one round never exceed twice their level (if it does, the extras are lost). A second level warrior might save their two points due to level in order to have four points every other round and gain an extra attack every other round. Saved points are lost when combat ends.

## Warrior

Warriors fight and make war. Their *goals* may be to avoid fights and make peace, but the skills they use to do this are their fighting skills and battlefield prowess.

### Create Your First Level Warrior

A Warrior must have a strength of at least 9. Your Warrior begins the game with five survival points modified by endurance as a major contributor, and five verve points modified by strength and intelligence as minor contributors.

Your Warrior has the *Fighting Arts* field at +1. Within the Fighting Arts, your character knows the *unarmed combat* and *unfamiliar weapons* skills.

Choose one specialty. Choose a moral code. Choose one to three goals for your character.

Determine any other statistics you need to know about your character, such as reactions, defense, age, height, weight, movement, and carry.

If you have not already done so, create a backstory for your character.

### Warrior Combat Bonus

Warriors may use their attack bonuses for more than just increasing their attack roll. They can also use it to avoid being hit, to hit first, or to hit more than one target at a time. A warrior may convert up to twice level attack bonuses into more general combat bonuses. A third level warrior could convert all three of their warrior attack bonuses into combat bonus points, as well as up to three other attack bonuses

Combat Bonus Use	Cost
(+1 to attack)	(1)
+1 to damage	1
+1 to defense	1
+2 to act first	1
+1 to throw off surprise	1
+1 to combat movement	1
+1 to quickdraw	1
1 additional attack	4

## 20—Character Archetypes

Combat bonus points are allocated on a per-round basis, and apply to all attacks that round. If a ninth level warrior applies four points to gain an additional attack, two points to increase damage, and leaves an attack bonus of three, the additional damage and bonus to the attack roll apply to *both* attacks that round.

The bonus to throw off surprise does not apply to the original surprise roll, since there was no opportunity to convert combat bonus points before being surprised.

Combat bonus points applied to damage with unarmed combat styles (such as simple unarmed combat or martial arts combat) do not directly increase damage. They increase the size of the die used for damage. For each damage bonus, the die is increased along the damage progression chart, starting from d2 or d3 to d4, from d4 to d6, d6 to d8, d8 to d10, or d10 to d12. Beyond d12, damage bonuses are applied as normal: modifiers to the damage rolled on the dice.

### Fighting Arts

Warriors begin the game with the *Fighting Art* field at +1. They have the *Fighting Art* skills *unarmed combat*, *all weapons*, and *unfamiliar weapons*.



## Thief

Thieves are masters of stealth, pilfering, and misdirection. Some thieves may specialize in one area or another, but all rely on their agility and cunning. Archetypal thieves are not always criminals: they might be scouts or spies.

### Create Your First Level Thief

A Thief must have an agility of at least 9. Your Thief begins the game with five survival points modified by endurance as a major contributor, and five verve points modified by agility and wisdom as minor contributors.

Choose one specialty. Choose a moral code. Choose one to three goals.

Determine any other statistics, such as reactions, defense, age, height, weight, movement, and carry.

If you have not already done so, create a backstory for your character.

### Thieving Fields

There are several special fields open only to Thieves. Starting thieves gain three Thief fields at +1, with one initial skill each. They gain one additional field bonus or skill each level, and may spend mojo as normal to improve their field bonuses and to add fields and skills.

**Burglary Science:** Locks & Traps, Search

**Impersonation Art:** Acting, Disguise, Forgery

**Memory Science:** Cram, Understand Languages

**Misdirection Science:** Camouflage, Concealed Item, Prestidigitation

**Murder Craft:** Backstab, Poison

**Thief Culture:** Bribery, Criminal contacts, thief's cant, Underworld etiquette

**Scaling Craft:** Climb Walls, Tightrope

**Stealth Art:** Hide, Silence, Pick Pockets

### Fighting Arts

Thieves begin the game with the *Fighting Art* skill *basic weapons*.



## Sorcerer

The Sorcerer is a student of the arcane arts. Whether through intense study, bargain with strange powers, or natural aptitude, the sorcerer can control magical energies and shape these energies to the sorcerer's will. The sorcerer's spells can create, control, and change the natural world. The sorcerer is always seeking out new spells to advance their knowledge and power.

### Create Your First Level Sorcerer

A Sorcerer must have an intelligence of at least 9. Your Sorcerer begins the game with five survival points modified by endurance as a major contributor, and five verve points modified by intelligence and charisma as minor contributors.

Choose one specialty. Choose a moral code. Choose one to three goals for your character.

Determine any other statistics you need to know about your character, such as reactions, defense, age, height, weight, movement, and carry.

If you have not already done so, create a backstory for your character.

Choose the spells that your Sorcerer already knows. Your Adventure Guide may limit, suggest, or require certain spells.

### Number of Memorized Spells

Sorcerers must *memorize* spells before they can use them. The sorcerer starts at level one with one spell slot. At each level advancement, they gain a number of slots equal to their new level. A second level sorcerer will have three slots (one plus two), a third level sorcerer will have six slots (one, plus two, plus three).

Each spell “costs” level slots. A first level sorcerer may memorize one first level spell. A second level sorcerer could memorize three first level spells (three spell slots), or one second level spell and one first level spell.

The sorcerer gains a bonus to their total spell slots according to their intelligence as a major contributor.



Sorcerers may not memorize spells that are higher level than the sorcerer.

For example, a first level sorcerer with a 17 intelligence gains a bonus of three to their total spell slots, for a total of four spell slots. At second level, a sorcerer with a 17 intelligence will have six spell slots, and could memorize six first level spells, four first level spells and one second level spell, two first level spells and two second level spells, or three second level spells.

Casting a spell costs one verve.

## Mnemonic Magic

Magic in Gods & Monsters is mnemonic. Mnemonic sorcerers keep a spell book with all of their spells in it. In order to cast a spell, the mnemonic sorcerer must first memorize the spell by *impressing* the spell formula into their mind. Once an *impressed* spell is used, it is gone and cannot be used again until it is impressed again. However, a Mnemonic sorcerer may *understand* any number of spells and have as many spells as they can pay for, steal, or find in their spellbook. Mnemonic casters are limited only in the number of spells they may have *impressed* at one time.

It takes two minutes times the level of the spell to impress the spell into the sorcerer's mind. The mnemonic sorcerer must prepare for memorizing spells by first meditating for ten minutes. For example, a sorcerer memorizing two first level spells and one third level spell will require twenty minutes total (ten minutes preparation, and five times two minutes for the number of spell levels).

Memorizing a spell also costs verve equal to the level of the spell, plus one point for each spell memorized during that meditation period.

## Spellbooks

Mnemonic Sorcerers always begin the game with *Inscription* in their spellbook.

Spellbooks will have a bulk of one, plus .05 per spell level of all spells in the book.



## Prophet

The prophet is one favored or chosen by a god, demigod, or pantheon. Their patron's favor comes in the form of spiritual aid. These spirits can be used to heal, aid, and protect worshippers, conquer unbelievers, and sometimes even to convince unbelievers to become believers.

### Create Your First Level Prophet

A Prophet must have a wisdom of at least 9. Your Prophet begins the game with five survival points modified by endurance as a major contributor, and five verve points modified by wisdom and agility as minor contributors.

Choose one specialty. Choose a moral code. Choose one to three goals.

Choose the pantheon, deity, or power that has favored your Prophet.

Determine any other statistics, such as reactions, defense, age, height, weight, movement, and carry.

If you have not already done so, create a backstory for your character.

### Spirits

Prophets call upon the spirits of their Gods. Once called, the prophet *holds* the spirit(s) until they need that spirit to manifest. It takes two minutes per level of the spirit to call a spirit, and one verve per level of the spirit. Each spirit may create one show of divine power. It costs one verve to manifest a spirit's power.

The prophet must spend twenty minutes in prayer before calling any spirits, and the prophet must have their holy symbol.

The prophet may keep a number of spirits according to the spirit's calling cost and the caster's level. Each spirit's calling cost is the spirit's level. The prophet begins at first level with one calling point. At each level advancement, the prophet gains a number of calling points equal to their new level. A second level prophet will have three calling points, a third level prophet will have six, and so on.

A prophet cannot call any spirit of higher level than the prophet's own level, nor of higher level than the prophet's wisdom.

Once called, a spirit may not be dismissed without manifesting the spirit's power, except on special dispensation.

Prophets gain a bonus to “spirit calling points” according to wisdom as a major contributor.

## Spirit Types

Each deity and pantheon has a specific sphere of influence. Prophets of Poseidon might call on the spirits of wind and sea. Prophets of Ares the spirits of war, and so on. Spirits have “levels” that denote their power. A prophet may call on spirits of level equal to the prophet’s own level or less.

Every prophet can use the *prophet* spirit type automatically. Access to other spirit types will be acquired by spending mojo through the first level.

Within their sphere of influence, a spirit can manifest numerous powers. A first level Charm spirit, for example, could manifest the powers of Command, Animal Companion, Remove Fear, and any other first level charm manifestations. A second level Charm spirit could manifest those powers, as well as Enthrall, Hold Person, and any other second level charm manifestations. Where a spirit’s manifestations vary with level, the variation is by the *spirit’s* level, not the prophet’s.

## Restrictions

Prophets may be limited in armor usage or weapon usage, depending on the requirements of their religion or order. Some prophets might also have special restrictions placed on them at ordination or at their calling, or at other important points in their service to their deity or deities.

## Religious Symbols

Most, if not all, religions invoke symbols, special objects that symbolize the power or cause of their god or gods. Often, there will be one symbol which is most commonly carried. For Christians, there is the cross, symbolic of Christ’s sacrifice. Some Christians also carry the rosary, to remember and invoke the mother of their god. For ancient Egyptians, it might have been the ankh. For Druids, the mistletoe or holly. Prophets of Thor might carry a hammer, prophets of Ra a sun-like disc. The prophet will use this holy symbol to perform the important rites of their sect. And, where a spirit manifestation mentions a focus but does not describe this focus, it is the prophet’s holy symbol.

Symbols for such use are always blessed, and there are often more symbols that are less commonly carried but also have special purposes. The bread that is the body of Christ is an example of such a blessed symbol that must be carefully guarded, and many good religions will use blessed (or “holy”) water; water is the symbol of life.

Relics are similar to symbols, and are blessed by virtue of their existence. They are generally individual items that cannot be reproduced. The shroud of Turin is an example of a relic, created from the sweat of a dying avatar and the compassion of one of his most devoted followers. Often the bones or prized belongings of avatars or prophets will be considered relics to a religion. Some relics may have special powers, although they do not have to.



## Monk

The Monk is a master of the powers of the mind. Monks are deeply in tune with their own mental and intellectual abilities. Monks train in psychic powers much as sorcerers train in spell casting. Examples of Monks in modern fiction include Marvel Comics' Professor X. In the World of Highland, the Sentar Sentasi of the Kilir are Monks.

### Create Your First Level Monk

A Monk must have a charisma of at least 9. Your Monk begins the game with five survival points modified by endurance as a major contributor, and five verve points modified by charisma and strength as minor contributors.

Choose one specialty. Choose a moral code.

Determine any other statistics you need to know about your character, such as reactions, defense, age, height, weight, movement, and carry.

If you have not already done so, make up a backstory for your character.

### Using Psychic Fields

There are five psychic fields, each with a variety of available skills. Monks start the game with one psychic field at +0. They gain three field bonuses or skills within that field, modified by Charisma as a major contributor.

Psychic Field	Ability Roll	Skills
Corporeal Art	Charisma	Healing, Self-Control, Morphinesis
Dimensional Science	Intelligence	Sensitive, Dimensional Shift, Temporal Shift
Psychokinetic Craft	Wisdom	Pyrokinesis, Telekinesis
Spiritual Art	Charisma	Sensitive, Spirit Host, Spirit Summons, Spirit Travel
Telepathic Art	Charisma	Catalyst, Domination, Empathy, Illusion, Telepathy

To use a psychic power, the player must make an ability roll as noted above, with their field bonus as a bonus (as normal for fields and skills).

Monks have a psychic pool with *level* points in it. This base pool can be re-allotted very round if the character has any effects that last more than a round. The monk can also transfer their field bonus into their psychic pool for that field.

The Monk's psychic pool lets them add effects and increase the chance of success. One point can give them a bonus of one to their ability roll. Points can also be used to add or increase effects.

For example, if the character has *Telepathic Science +4* and is level 2, they have six points to play with. The player might place three levels in 'range', one level in 'targets', and two levels in 'reduce reaction' to attempt to read the mind of a single opponent up to 40 yards away. The target will have a penalty of 2 to any reaction rolls against having their mind read.

Psychic skill use will also use up the character's verve or survival. Verve costs are per round (or per use) and are listed in *Arcane Lore*.

# Moral Code

Characters can choose to follow a moral code, or they can remain unaligned or unaware. You do not *have* to choose a moral code, although moral codes are required for certain specialties and may provide benefits (or penalties) in special situations.

There are two parts to a moral code: Order vs. Chaos, and Good vs. Evil. There are eight moral codes: Ordered Good, Ordered, Ordered Evil, Chaotic Good, Chaotic, Chaotic Evil, Good, and Evil.

The character may choose between Order and Chaos, or remain neutral to that part of the code, and the character may choose between Good and Evil, or remain neutral to that part of the code. A character who cares for neither order nor personal freedom may remain unaligned towards the order and chaos part of the code, but still be “good” or “evil”, for example.

## Order vs. Chaos

Order vs. Chaos is the choice of following order or anarchy. Order is concerned with order, law, and community. Ordered characters promote hierarchy. Chaotic is concerned with individuality, personal responsibility, and rights. Chaotic characters eschew hierarchy.

The Chaotic character believes that the individual is paramount. The Ordered character believes that society is paramount. An Ordered character will be willing to sacrifice individuals to save the group; a Chaotic character would be more willing to put the group in danger in order to save an individual. Ordered individuals believe that the common good is more important than any individual’s well-being.

To an Ordered individual, authority is its own justification. Once authority is established, authority can create other authorities. To the Chaotic individual, authority must be earned, on an individual basis and according to the situation: the most appropriate person is looked to for counsel and guidance according to the needs of the situation. To an Ordered person, it may look like a Chaotic person “does not follow orders”. But give them an order worth following, and they will follow it.

Ordered individuals will say that when there are clear rules to be followed and a clear hierarchy, problems stand out. They are easy to see, and easier to fix than they otherwise would be.

As an example from American history, the Constitution is Order. The Bill of Rights is Chaos. The American Constitution sets down the order of the society. The Bill of Rights says that none of that order may override individual rights. Chaotics are not against freely arisen order. They are against imposed order, order that does not develop freely from the individual. Many of the teachings of Lao-Tzu in the Tao-Te-Ching are chaotic, where Confucianism is often on the extreme end of order. It is hard to find a better description of the beliefs of the Chaotic moral code than “The more regulations, the poorer the people will become. The greater the government’s power, the more unruly the nation will become. The more laws, the more frequently evil deeds will occur.”

## Good vs. Evil

Good vs. Evil is the choice between caring for the well-being of others for their own sake, and of pure self-interest, of caring only for one's self or a close circle of friends, whose friendship may well only last as long as it is useful. A “good” character is likely to keep their word to others, and value others' friendships and lives. An “evil” character is likely to keep their word only if there's something in it for them or they feel like it, and will value others only insofar as others are useful to them. Good is generous of their own time, wealth, and skills. Evil is selfish of their own resources, though they may be generous with others.

Good characters might be willing to die for the lives of others. Evil characters are very unlikely to do so. Evil is manipulative. Evil characters see others as tools for their own advancement. Evil characters will see their actions as “pragmatic”, but their pragmatism is a short-term pragmatism.

Player characters may not be evil.

## Combined Moral Codes

Ordered Good promotes order, law, and community to enhance the well-being of the community.

Ordered Evil uses order, law, and community to enhance one's own well-being, standing, power, and wealth.

Chaotic Good promotes personal responsibility and civil rights to enhance the freedom and well-being of all individuals.

Chaotic Evil uses the self-centered manipulation of others in order to fulfill the character's own immediate desires.

## Moral Code Examples

“Order” and “Good” are usually easier to understand than “Chaos” and “Evil”. A good example of “Chaotic” (or possibly Chaotic Good) in fiction is Alan Moore's hero “V” in “V for Vendetta”, a character who believes that anarchy is the best thing for the well-being of others. Such a character might well hold, with Rousseau, that people are inherently good but become corrupted by civilization.

Good examples of evil moral codes may be found in Eddison's “The Worm Ouroboros”. Lord Corund of Witchland is Ordered Evil. He works strictly within the confines of Order, and will not deviate from that order. He has a sense of hierarchy that he will not break merely to win battles against a hated enemy, even when his most trusted advisor recommends doing so. When he is assigned a lesser overlordship in Pixyland because the government believes him most suited to govern the newly-vanquished country, he accepts. He does not jockey for the overlordship of more desired lands as others within the court of Witchland do.

Lord Gro, his most trusted advisor, is an example of Chaotic Evil. He cares only for what will bring him and his close circle of friends greater reward. When Corund calls the lords of Demonland to parley, Gro recommends ambushing them; when Corund refuses because one does not do that to royalty, Gro encourages a lesser warrior to do so.

The Kingdoms of Witchland and Demonland are Ordered Evil and Chaotic, respectively. Witchland fosters a strict hierarchy within which advancement is possible. Personal power is gained only insofar as the individual advances the cause of the state, and only insofar as that individual's promotion also advances the cause of the state. Demonland fosters a state wherein individual glory rules. Individuals who perform well on their own will gain power, regardless of whether such is good for Demonland and its peoples as a whole.

The classic example of an Ordered character is the bureaucrat who cares nothing for whether their actions are good or evil, but merely whether the paperwork is filled out and the trains run on time. However, a good example of a person devoted solely to Order, regardless of Good or Evil is d'Artagnan in "The Man in the Iron Mask" by Alexander Dumas. In that book, d'Artagnan is devoted to the preservation of the monarchy, and much of the book is about the conflict between that devotion and d'Artagnan's own friends. In that book, Athos would tend towards Ordered Good and Aramis towards Ordered Evil. Both promote Order, but Athos for a greater good and Aramis for personal gain. Athos is an honorable man. Aramis will do anything to establish an Ordered society—with himself in control. He is always trying to twist his words so that listeners hear something other than what he is saying, and is willing to outright lie if it will further the cause of Order. Porthos is neither Ordered nor Chaotic, but simply Good. He tries to keep his word, and he tries to do the right thing, regardless of royalty or personal freedoms.

## Conflicting Codes

Occasionally the two moral sides will conflict. An Ordered Good character might have to make the choice between something that is more Order or more Good. Different characters will come to different decisions. Different characters will have different commitments to their moral codes and to each part of their moral code.

A character may align themselves to a moral code, but fail to live up to the ideals of that code. The Guide will decide the implications of that failure (and the implications of success) in following a moral code. In some games, a moral code will be purely a personal choice. In other games, Order and Chaos, Good and Evil will be part of the unseen structure—or lack thereof—of reality. Your first level character is likely to be completely unaware of this when you make your choice to follow or not to follow a moral code.

Persons of opposing moral codes may have trouble "getting along" under some circumstances. Those following "Order" and those following "Chaos" are more likely to be able to put their philosophical differences aside than those following "Good" vs. those following "Evil". Organizational enmities, however, are more likely to be built across the abyss of Order and Chaos. Even in the early days of the United States, with its "multiple-personality" constitution, the followers of Order and the followers of Chaos fought bitterly in public. The Chaotics called the Ordered "monarchists" and the Ordered called the Chaotics "guillotiners".

Sometimes, people with the same moral code will also find themselves in conflict. People do not wear signs on their chest proclaiming their moral code. Lower-level characters will not even know that their choice means anything more than basic morals (and in some games, this may well be all that it is). In general, characters who are good will find it difficult to battle other characters who are good, without significant moral quandaries. This also applies to war. Evil characters and unaligned characters will generally not care about the morality of who they make war with.



# First Level Mojo

Starting characters have 12 mojo, modified by their archetypal ability as a major contributor.

Players can increase their starting resources using mojo throughout their first level. Mojo are resource points within the game. Characters may use their mojo for any purpose listed in the rest of the rules, such as affecting archetypal die rolls. But first level characters can also use their mojo for things that non-starting characters can't, and in some cases can use it for things that non-starting characters can but at a lower mojo cost.

Once your character reaches their second level, you may no longer use mojo to acquire equipment and money, nor may you use the discounted mojo rates for resources.

When a first level character's player uses mojo to "gain" something, it is assumed that the character always had the resource in question; it only became relevant at the time the mojo was spent. If the course of play has made it impossible to assume this, then the resource cannot be acquired in this manner.

The same rules for gaining bonuses to die rolls when spending mojo to gain skills applies to discounted first level mojo. This means that it can be advantageous to wait until they're needed to choose fields and skills. If you buy the skill or improve the field at the same time that you make the skill roll, you gain the mojo spent as a bonus to that roll. If you bid mojo on a skill roll, and that mojo is enough to improve the field bonus you used (or to buy the field), then you do.

## Money

Whether farmer's son or princess of the kingdom, player characters have no income. They have no money beyond what the game gives them. Some specialties, such as *nobility* may allot characters more money, and of course characters will find hidden treasure during their adventures.

Beginning characters can trade mojo for equipment: each mojo is worth up to 30 monetary units of equipment. They can trade directly for monetary units at the rate of 10 monetary units per mojo.

## Fields and skills

Players can trade two mojo for one field at +1; this includes one initial skill within that field. They can use mojo to gain extra skills within a field or to increase a field bonus: one mojo gives one additional skill or one field bonus.

Players may spend mojo to gain Fighting Art skills but not to increase their Fighting Art field bonus. The field bonus is tied to their archetype levels. Players may not use mojo to gain the restricted *Fighting Art* skills of the Warrior or Thief archetype.

## Psyhic fields

Monks may purchase new fields, field bonuses, and skills as normal. Psychic Techniques cost 1 mojo during the character's first level if the Technique applies to one Skill, and 2 mojo if the Technique applies to all skills within a Field.

## Spells

Sorcerers must use their beginning mojo to purchase first-level spells. Each spell costs one mojo.

On paying mojo for a spell, the player may choose to have their sorcerer have already memorized the spell, if the memorization points are available for that day.

## Spirit types

Prophets must gain access to *spirit types* during their first level. The spirit types they choose must be relevant to their religion and deity. Each spirit type costs three mojo, except for *war* and *healing* which cost five mojo each.

On paying mojo for a spirit type, the player may choose to have their prophet have already called one or more spirits of that type, if calling points are available for that day.

# Skills and Specialties

## Specialties

The basic fantasy archetypes can be modified and enhanced through “specialties”. A specialty can turn a Thief into an assassin, or a Sorcerer into a wu jen..

At first level, the character has one specialty.

Some specialties have requirements: the character must have a minimum ability score, or must follow a specific moral code, or must *not* follow a specific moral code. Some specialties also have prerequisites: an earlier specialty must be taken first.

## Fields and Skills

When a player wants their character to perform some dangerous or difficult task, they’ll roll against one of their character’s abilities or reactions. To help them do this, each character begins the game with skills. When a character is skilled at a task, their player gains a bonus on any rolls to perform that task.

Each skill must be part of some field of knowledge. Fields are major areas, such as War Craft, Language Science or Gambling Art. Within each field, the character gains a bonus to ability rolls when using any skill within that field. For example, a character with *Gambling Art* at +3 might have the skills *Carousing* and *Poker*. Whenever the player needs to make a roll where *Carousing* or *Poker* skill is applicable, they will get a bonus of 3 on that roll.

In a way, having Gambling Art +3 is like being a third-level gambler.

Characters who have high mental abilities begin with a number of fields equal to intelligence as a major contributor and wisdom and charisma as minor contributors. The fields are at +1 and have one skill within them.

If the character has low mental abilities, a negative total can be ignored *unless* the character is old enough to have extra skills. Older characters will need to first overcome this negative number before gaining extra skills.

The *Arcane Lore* Lorebook contains a detailed listing of fields and skills within those fields, but you can also come up with your own fields and skills, subject to the approval of the Adventure Guide.

You can choose the same field more than once. The first time you choose a field, your character gains one skill and a +1 for skills in that field. If you choose the same field again, your character will gain *either* a field bonus *or* a new skill in that field.

## Native Culture

Your character automatically gains the field “Native Culture” at +2, with the skills “Native Language” and one Etiquette from the available cultures. For example, a nobleman might choose “Court Etiquette”; a farmer “Backwoods Etiquette”, or a thief “Underworld Etiquette”.

You may choose to move your character’s Native Language skill into the Languages field if you have it. Your Native Culture field bonus remains +2.

## The Fighting Art

Warriors begin the game with *Fighting Art* at +1. Monks, Prophets, Sorcerors, and Thieves begin the game with *Fighting Art* at +0.

Non-warrior archetypes are limited in the weapon skills they may choose. Thieves may choose any simple or basic weapon as a skill; and the others any simple weapon.

Simple weapons are small hand-held weapons such as the dagger, knife, or sling. Basic weapons are weapons such as spears, short swords, crossbows, and martial arts. Exactly what constitutes a “basic” weapon or a “simple” weapon will depend on the game world, but suggestions are given on the weapons table.

Prophets may have other restrictions according to their religion or sect.

When in combat, your character will get their Fighting Art field bonus as long as they are using a weapon they’re skilled with. If they are using a weapon they’re not skilled with, besides not getting their field bonus it will usually be at least a *difficult* roll.

Players may not use mojo to increase their character’s Fighting Art field bonus. Their Fighting Art bonus goes up as the character increases in level.

The Warrior skills *unfamiliar weapons* and *all weapons* are available only to Warriors. The Thief skill *basic weapons* is only available to Thieves.

# A Few Good Numbers

## Survival

Survival is the ability of your character to survive damaging events. Getting hit by a sword, falling from a large height, getting punched in the face, all reduce your character's survival points. If your character's survival drops to zero or below, your character risks unconsciousness and possibly death.

At first level, player characters gain five survival points. Survival points are modified by endurance as a major contributor.

The dice used to determine Survival is based on the character's Archetype. The character gains one such die each level beyond first.

## Verve

Archetype	Warrior	Thief	Sorcerer	Prophet	Monk
Minor Contributor:	Intelligence	Wisdom	Charisma	Agility	Strength

Verve is the ability of your character to survive damaging events that result from archetypal actions.

Whenever a character loses survival points for an archetypal activity, the player may instead choose to have some or all of the damage come from verve. Warriors can use verve in combat. Thieves can use it after failing to climb a wall, for example, and Monks after a failed perception roll.

At first level, player characters gain five verve points. Verve are modified by the character's archetypal ability and one other ability as minor contributors.

When the chance of success is governed by the character's archetypal ability or archetypal reaction, damage resulting from that action can come from verve instead of survival.

## Reactions

When your character is taking the initiative to act, you'll make an ability roll. When your character is reacting to something or sensing something, you'll make a reaction roll. For example, when their characters are faced with imminent danger, players will often be given the opportunity to *react* and avoid or mitigate that danger.

Reactions start at 4, modified by the character's ability score in the major and minor contributors to that reaction. For reactions other than their archetypal reaction, the character gains a bonus of 1 to each reaction for each "even" level in any archetype: 2, 4, 6, 8, etc. For their archetypal reaction, the character gains a bonus of level to the reaction.

Reaction	Major Ability	Minor Ability	Archetype	Spell Type	Psychic Power	Uses
Health	Endurance	Strength	None	Summoning	Corporeal	Health dangers, poisons, diseases
Fortitude	Strength	Endurance	Warriors	Transmutation	Psychokinetic	Wide-effect attacks, standing firm
Willpower	Wisdom	Charisma	Prophets	Mental	Spiritual	Mind control, temptations, faith
Evasion	Agility	Intelligence	Thieves	Conjuration	Dimensional	Dodging or avoiding individual attacks
Reason	Intelligence	Wisdom	Sorcerers	Metamagic		Recalling events, learning new things
Perception	Charisma	Agility	Monks	Divination	Telepathic	Seeing hidden things

Reactions improve as the character becomes more experienced.

Reaction	Thief 1	Thief 2 Warrior 3
Health	5	7
Fortitude	4	8
Willpower	4	6
Evasion	6	8
Reason	4	6
Perception	5	7

Here, for example, are Sam Stevens’ reactions, both as a first level thief, and later as a multi-typed second level thief/third level warrior. You’ll see that at fifth level her reactions are higher. Her fortitude has improved most, because she has three levels as a warrior.

If a wizard attempts to take control of Sam’s mind, and Sam needs to make a *Willpower* roll to avoid it, a d20 roll of 4 or less will let Sam avoid the spell when she is first level; and a d20 roll of 6 or less will let her avoid it when she is fifth level.

## Movement

The character’s Movement rating is 10, with agility as a major contributor and strength as a minor contributor.

Players roll against movement just as for their character’s other abilities. A high movement will help them chase or escape opponents.

## Carry

Your character’s Carry measures how many items they can carry during an adventure. Your character can carry up to half Strength items, modified by Endurance as a special contributor. Each item that your character carries must have a bulk that is less than or equal to their Strength.

An item’s Bulk is combines weight in pounds with the difficulty of carrying something. A bulky, light item may have the same Bulk as a compact, heavy item. An item meant for swinging (such as a weapon) will almost certainly have a greater Bulk than a similarly-shaped

item meant solely for carrying. Items meant for wear will have a far greater Bulk carried than worn. An item's Bulk will rarely, if ever, be less than its weight, but it can often be more than its weight if the item is unwieldy.

If your character needs to carry an item with too much bulk, you can use extra carry points to do so, but each extra carry point required gives your character a penalty of one to movement, to attack rolls, and to any agility-based rolls.

Characters can make use of containers, such as pouches, sacks, sheaths, and backpacks, to reduce the number of items they carry and to reduce their bulk. Normal clothing does not count against the number of carried items when worn.

For example, Sam Stevens has a fourteen Endurance and an eleven Strength. She can carry up to ten items; each item must have a bulk of eleven or less. If she carries a tent (bulk 40) her movement is reduced by 3, because she will need to use three extra carry points.

Items meant to be worn well, such as armor and backpacks, can use two Carry points instead of one with no penalty. Weapons or other items used two-handed (such as sacks) can also use two Carry points with no penalty.

Sam Stevens could use a battleaxe (bulk 20) with no penalty by using it with both hands. If she tried to use a great sword, however, its bulk 24 would give her a penalty of one while using it two-handed.

## Defense and Attack Bonuses

Defense is the character's agility as a major contributor.

Close Combat Attack is the character's strength as a minor contributor. Damage bonus is strength as a major contributor.

Thrown Weapons Attack is the character's agility as a minor contributor. Damage bonus is the character's strength as a minor contributor. Thrown weapon range penalties are reduced by the character's strength as a minor contributor.

Propelled Weapons Attack is the character's agility as a minor contributor. There is no damage bonus.

## Age

The character's starting age may be rolled as 15 plus 1d6 or chosen by the player. Older characters will receive a greater number of skills or field bonuses in one or more of their fields.

<b>Older Than:</b>	20	30	50	80	120	170	230	300	380	470
<b>Bonus</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

If the character has low mental abilities, such that their starting field count is negative, their bonus is reduced by that number. For example, a character with a 4 intelligence, a 15 charisma, and a 10 wisdom has negative 1 starting fields. Such a character would have to be at least 30 years old to gain extra skills and field bonuses due to age.

## Height and Weight

Players can choose their character's height and weight, or roll them randomly. If random, characters have a base height of 54 inches and a base weight of 48 pounds. Vary the height and weight by rolling 5d6. Add this to the character's height, and add endurance as a minor contributor and strength as a major contributor to the character's height. Modify the dice by endurance as a major contributor and strength as a minor contributor. Multiply by seven and add this to the character's weight.



# Money and Equipment

Characters begin the game with monetary units equal to their Archetypal ability.

Players may have their characters keep this initial money or spend it to have acquired starting equipment. They may also “have spent it” in the adventure during their first level: at any point during the character’s first level, if the player wants their character to have already acquired an item, they can spend some of this starting money and have the item. Either the money was spent back when it was most reasonable to have spent it, or the character always had the item, perhaps as an inheritance or gift.

As long as it makes sense for them to now have it, it can be assumed that they’ve been carrying it all along.

In some campaigns, *monetary units* will be gold pieces, in others it will be silver pieces or even conch shells.

The equipment that the character “purchases” does not have to have been *actually* purchased by the character. It might have been inherited, given as a gift, or found in the ruins of a destroyed farmhouse in the midst of the woods. “Starting money” is a measure of how much money and equipment the character starts with; it is not necessarily how much actual money the character has to purchase things. Because of this, characters can often start the game with items that are not for sale in their home town, as long as it is for sale somewhere where they or some member of their family might travel.

## General Equipment

Characters will wish to equip themselves with many odd or normal items: lanterns, rope, walking staves, blankets, horses, horse equipment, and more. Prices for such equipment will vary depending on the area, the time period, and the time of year, but the following monetary unit costs may be used as a guideline or in a pinch.

Some items, such as torches, have an “activation” time. If the character attempting to activate the item is in combat, an Evasion roll is required to successfully activate the item.

Some items, such as the pick, might also double as weapons. Such items are not designed for combat and will have a penalty to attack of from 1 to 3.

Characters are not limited to the items listed on these tables, nor are items on these tables guaranteed to be available. It will be up to the adventure guide to gauge the availability and cost of all items. In some games, for example, gunpowder and firearms will be unavailable.

**Food & Lodging**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Bulk</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Beer, pint	.2	3	
Beer, three gallons	3	26	Three gallons is 24 pints; this is a small keg's worth of beer
Room, common	.4		
Room, private	1		Cost is usually increased by .5 to 1 per extra person
Dry food	5	10	lasts 1 week eaten carefully
Meal, simple	.3	2	A meal does not last more than a day without spoiling
Meal, fancy	2	2	A meal does not last more than a day without spoiling
Wine, pint	.5	3	
Wine, three gallons	8	26	Three gallons is 24 pints; this is a small keg's worth of wine

More than other equipment, food and lodging costs will vary widely according to quality and scarcity. Liquid pint bulks assume an open container. Closed containers are easier to carry. Liquids weigh approximately one pound per pint or eight pounds per gallon.

## Animals & Containers

Item	Cost	Bulk	Notes
Backpack	2	2	Difficult to get into quickly; requires one round to 'activate'
Donkey	7		Movement 9 carrying 225 bulk
Flint, steel, tinderbox	.5	1	2 rounds to activate tinder
Horse bit & bridle	1.5	3	
Horse saddle	10	28	
Horse saddle bags	3	5	
Horse saddle blanket	.3	4	
Horse shoe	.4	2	Horses and donkeys already have shoes when purchased
Horse, pack	30		Movement 10 carrying 200 bulk
Horse, riding	75		Movement 14 carrying 250 bulk
Horse, war	200		Movement 14 carrying 300 bulk
Keg, small	3	6	Will hold three gallons of beer
Mule	20		Movement 10 carrying 400 bulk
Ox	12		Movement 5 carrying 400 bulk
Pony	30		Movement 12 carrying 180 bulk
Pouch, belt	.5	.5	
Pouch, shoulder	1	1	
Sack	.2	.5	
Scroll case	.8	.5	
Trunk, Wooden	8	25	Cost and bulk can vary widely according to ornamentation
Wineskin/Waterskin	1.5	1	A skin holds four pints of liquid

To assist them in carrying their equipment, characters will want to purchase sacks, backpacks, quivers, and pouches. Containers specifically designed for carrying food or ammunition will be listed under the appropriate section.

A well-designed backpack, quiver, pocket, or pouch will reduce the Bulk of items inside the pack by half. Sacks do not significantly reduce Bulk but do make it easy to lay down and quickly pick up *en masse* the items carried inside them.

For animals, the bulk carry listed assumes that the animal's load has been packed reasonably, using saddle bags and saddles or other standard pack devices. Generally, reduce an animal's movement by 1 for each 10% increase in bulk carried. Horses, ponies, mules, and donkeys may jog, run, and sprint at twice the speed of a person.

## Ingredients

Item	Cost	Bulk	Notes
Animal part, common	.3	.3	small animal parts such as the beak of a crow
Animal part, uncommon	1.5	.3	small animal parts such as the claw of a wolf
Animal part, rare	4	.3	small animal parts such as the feather of an eagle
Carving, simple	.5	.1	small wooden carvings, such as tiny arrows
Carving, complex	2	.5	small wooden carvings, such as faces, intricate designs
Herb, common	.1	.1	
Herb uncommon	.5	.1	
Herb, rare	1	.1	rare herbs often have bulk .3 to keep them extra safe

Bone and metal carvings cost twice as much as wood. Stone carvings cost four times as much, and have four times the bulk. The material can raise the cost of carvings. Bone and stone don't generally cost anything extra, though they can if they are from specific animals or are specific kinds of stone. Metal "carvings" (usually worked metal) will generally cost at least an extra shilling regardless of how cheap the metal is, and can cost more depending on how expensive it is.

Extremely rare animal parts (such as the parts of Fantastic creatures) will usually be much more expensive due both to their rarity and to the difficulty of acquiring them.

## Miscellaneous

Item	Cost	Bulk	Notes
Axe	4	8	d6 points as hand weapon, -1 to attack
Blanket	.2	5	
Book, handwritten	5+	.5+	Add .03 to bulk per ten pages
Book, printed	1+	.5+	Add .03 to bulk per ten pages
Journal	1+	.5+	Add .03 to bulk and .1 to cost per ten pages
Candle	.01	1	
Canvas	.25	.5	per square yard
Chain, large	1	3	made from iron links, cost is per yard
Chain, small	2	1	made from iron links, cost is per yard
Flint, steel, tinderbox	.5	1	2 rounds to activate tinder
Hunting horn	38	6	a simple coiled horn of the type used in a hunt
Ink	8	.5	
Lantern	8	3	20 yard radius, 6 hours per flask, 1 round activation
Lock	8	1	Better locks can cost double, quadruple, or more
Mirror	10	.1	
Oil	.05	1	Cost is per flask
Paper	.1	.03	per ten pages
Parchment	1	.01	per square foot
Pick	5	10	d8 points damage as hand weapon
Pole	.02		3 yards long, wooden
Quill	.2	.05	
Rope	.2	3	Usually made from hemp, cost is per 3 yards
Rope, light	2	1	Usually made from silk, cost is per 3 yards
Shovel	5	9	d6 points damage as a hand weapon
Spike (iron)	.3	1.5	about seven inches long
Tent	20	32	3 by 3 yard area
Thieves' tools	5	1	
Torch	.01	1	10 yard radius, 3 hour duration, 2 rounds activation

## Weapons

Anyone can attack with their hands for d3 points damage (d2 for Halflings, Goblins, and Gnomes). Most adventurers will prefer using a weapon, however.

“Damage” is the amount of survival points lost by the target of an attack with the specified weapon.

“Range” is in yards. Within “range” yards, there is no penalty to attack. There is a penalty of 1 after that, and another penalty of 1 for every “range” yards beyond. For example, an attempt to throw a spear at a target thirteen yards away will be at a penalty of 2: a penalty of one for being greater than six yards, and another penalty of one for being greater than 12 yards. A sling at thirteen yards would only have a penalty of 1, and a bow would have no penalty at all.

“Hands” is how many hands are required to use the weapon *for mechanical reasons*. One-handed weapons may be used with a shield (or, with the right specialties, another weapon). A two-handed weapon requires two hands to manipulate and leaves no free hand for a shield or other item. Note that a weapon’s bulk may also require that two hands be used to wield it with no Carry penalty.

“Bulk” is the weight and bulkiness of the weapon. If the character will never use the weapon, the Guide may allow it to count for half the listed Bulk. Staffs, for example, will have a six bulk when used as a walking staff but the listed twelve bulk when used as a weapon.

“Fire Actions” is the number of actions required to throw or “fire” the weapon *if it is thrown or is a missile weapon*. Some missile weapons require loading, lighting, or other preparatory actions. Weapons used to beat on opponents directly require but one action.

### Warrior weapons

These weapons may only be used by warriors.

Weapon	Damage	Fire Actions	Range	Hands	Bulk	Cost
Battleaxe	d10	2	2		18	7
Bow	d6	1	20	2	8	25
Great sword	2d6	2	2		22	40
Heavy Crossbow	d8	3	25	2	17	75
Javelin	d4	1	5		4	0.6
Longbow	d6	1	25	2	12	50
Long sword	d8	2	3		8	20
Mace	d6	2	1		12	3
Rapier	d6	2	3		7	20
Scimitar	d8	2	2		8	15
War hammer	d8	2	4		16	5

## Simple and basic weapons

Weapon	Damage	Fire Actions	Range	Hands	Bulk	Cost	Usage
Arquebus	d8	3	10	2	13	55	Basic
Brass Knuckles	d3	--	--		1	1	Basic
Club	d4	2	2		10	0.1	Simple
Crossbow	d6	2	15	2	11	35	Basic
Dagger	d4	1	3		2	2	Simple
Dart	d3	1	4		2	.4	Simple
Hand Axe	d6	1	3		10	2	Basic
Hand Gun	d6	4	8	2	9	45	Simple
Knife	d3	1	3		2	1	Simple
Matchlock Pistol	d6	3	5	2	10	50	Basic
Metal Glove	d4	--	--		1	4	Basic
Quarterstaff	d6	2	1		12	0.5	Simple
Short sword	d6	2	2		6	8	Basic
Sling	d4	1	10	2	4	2	Simple
Spear	d6	1	6		8	0.8	Basic
Wheel Lock	d8	2	10	2	14	150	Simple
Wheel Lock Pistol	d6	2	5	2	8	100	Simple

## Ammunition

All ammunition costs and bulk are for single “pieces” of ammunition. Gun powder is enough for one use, for example. Sellers will usually only sell in larger quantities, such as ten, twelve, sixteen, or twenty.

Item	Cost	Bulk	Notes
Arrow	.1	.2	d3 damage as a hand weapon, -2 to attack
Crossbow Bolt	.1	.2	1 point damage as a hand weapon, -2 to attack
Crossbow Bolt, heavy	.2	.3	d2 damage as a hand weapon, -2 to attack
Gun bullets	.05	.05	
Gun powder	.3	.05	Gun powder must be kept dry
Powder bag	1	.2	
Powder horn	4	.5	
Quiver	1	1	Holds 20 arrows or crossbow bolts
Sling Bullets	.01	.05	

## Armor

Armor makes it harder to hit the character in a manner that hurts the character—that takes away “Survival Points”. The character may wear one type of armor at a time, and may also wear a full helmet. If the character is using a one-handed weapon, the character may also carry a shield in the other hand.

Warriors may learn to use any armor: that’s part of their archetype. Thieves, Prophets, and Monks may learn to use basic armor: shield, leather armor, banded leather armor, or magically light chain mail. Sorcerors may learn to use no armor.

Some armors are harder to use than others. A character must attain a level in at least one archetype that is high enough to use that armor.

Armor	Defense Bonus	Cost	Bulk	Warrior Level	Other Level	Skill Penalty
Cloth	1	3	8	0	0	0
Leather	2	8	5	1	1	1
Banded Leather	3	15	8	1	1	3
Scale Mail	4	45	15	1	-	6
Chain Mail	5	80	15	1	2	4
Splint Mail	6	70	20	2	-	6
Plate Mail	7	300	25	3	-	6
Full Plate	8	1000	30	4	-	7
Ceremonial Plate	9	2000	40	5	-	8
Shield	1	5	6	1	2	1
Large Shield	2	15	12	2	-	2
Small Shield	1 vs. one	5	2	3	-	0
Full Helmet	1	10 or 10%	2 or 20%	1	2	1

Many things that characters do are harder to do if the character is wearing armor. Just about all agility-based skills have a penalty while wearing leather armor or better. Whether the penalties apply to any particular skill is up to the Guide’s discretion.

The Bulk given is the Bulk while worn. If carried, the Bulk should be doubled for cloth, leather, shields, or chain mail, and tripled for metal armor.

Small shields may only be used against a single opponent in any round. The warrior will need to choose which opponent at the beginning of the round. By default it will be the opponent they last chose, or the opponent they are attacking first in the current round, whichever makes more sense.

While wearing a full helmet, perception rolls and attack rolls are at a penalty of one due to lack of visibility. Full helmets cost a minimum of 10 monetary units, or 10% of the cost of the other armor the character is wearing, whichever is greater. Full helmets have a bulk of 2, or 20% of the main armor’s bulk, whichever is greater.



## Equipment for Different-Sized Creatures

The bulk of an item is relative to the size of the creature it was meant for. If a creature of different size attempts to use or carry the item, its bulk will change.

For each increase of one in size of the creature that the item is intended for compared to the size of the creature actually carrying it, item bulk is multiplied by two. For each decrease of one in size, item bulk is halved. For example, a *medium* creature using a *huge*-sized weapon that is normally bulk 20 will find it has a bulk of 80. But a *huge*-sized creature using a *medium*-sized weapon that is normally bulk 20 will find that it has a bulk of 5.

Costs are also relative. For example, a *tiny* Pixie sword will cost 20 Pixie monetary units. But when made in differently-sized cultures, cost changes. For every *difference* in size, the cost of the item is doubled. Both *tiny* and *huge* swords will cost 80 monetary units to make in a *medium* culture.

## Weapons

Weapons designed for a non-medium creature size will do different damage.

Weapon *range* is increased by half or decreased by a third for one difference in size, doubled or halved for two differences in size.

The damage progression is:

1	1d2	1d4	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12	2d8	3d6	4d6	+1d6
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A “Large” creature using a “Large” long-sword will do 1d10 points instead of 1d8. The weapon will have a bulk of 16, a range (should they decide to throw it) of 4.5, and a cost of 30. Here are other sizes of long-swords as an example:

Size	Damage	Range	Cost
Fine	1d2	1	160
Tiny	1d4	1	80
Small	1d6	2	40
Medium	1d8	3	20
Large	1d10	4.5	40
Huge	1d12	6	80
Gigantic	2d8	7.5	160
Titanic	3d6	9	320

Creatures using a weapon designed for a size different from theirs have a penalty of one to attack for each difference in size. The weapon was designed and balanced for a different-sized creature.

# Backstory

You might have gone into separate corners to choose your Fields and buy your initial equipment. Now it's time to bring everyone together and create a backstory that will drive your characters towards adventure.

Your character's backstory should be one to three paragraphs. It should include a sentence about the character's home, a sentence about the character's family, and a sentence about the character's community or culture.

You don't need to use names yet. Your Adventure Guide can help you with that later. But you should know the kind of places and persons you're describing.

As you answer these questions, think about your character's goals, archetype, specialty, and skills. Interpret your character's goals in a manner that will drive your character to adventure. What in your character's backstory will drive them to choose the unknown?

## Who raised you?

What kind of a person or persons raised your character? A farmer? A scholar? A rich merchant or evil landlord? A thief or an ex-con? Or even wolves if it's that kind of game. Was your character's home nearby or far away? What kind of a place was it? Was it rural? A village? A city? A port city? A lawless frontier town? A religious community? If your character's background includes wealth, why has your character lost access to this wealth? Has the wealth itself disappeared, or do the rules of inheritance keep them from any chance of receiving it? Sudden poverty is often an impetus to adventure.

## How do you know the other characters?

How does your character know the other characters? Unless the group has decided to bring the characters together in some other way, your character's backstory should include at least one other player character, and preferably two or more.

Your character must know each of the other characters enough so that they would hang with you and you with them.

## How did you get here?

Where is your character starting the game, and how did your character get there? The Adventure Guide may tell you where your character is, depending on the first adventure. Or your group can choose a place to start.

You may already know where your character started from based on your answer to the first two questions. How did your character get here from there, and why? What happened on the journey? What does your character hope to accomplish by being here?

# Tony Barlow creates Toromeen

## Goals

We'll follow Tony through the creation of his character, Toromeen. Tony and the rest the group get together and decide that all characters must have the goal *adventure* or something that leads them to adventure. Tony chooses the latter. He'll leave that to his backstory, but there's some goal he wants to achieve that will lead him to adventure. For now he just calls it *adventure hook*. He also chooses *faith* as a goal and *building* as a goal.

## Moral Code

The characters must also all be *good*, though they might be Chaotic or Ordered Good, or simply Good. Tony sees himself playing a character with the moral code "Chaotic Good". His character will be very individualistic and value personal freedom and the rights of others highly.

## Archetype and Specialty

Tony offers to play a Dwarven Warrior who might become a prophet. This determines his archetype (Warrior) and his Specialty (Species).

## Ability Scores

Tony rolls four six sided dice for each ability, and adds the three highest dice together.

Roll 1	Roll 2	Roll 3	Roll 4	Total
2	5	3	6	14
1	1	4	5	10
6	5	2	4	15
2	1	5	2	9
6	3	6	6	18
4	5	3	3	12

Tony decides that since he wants his character to be a Warrior and a Prophet, he should have high scores in wisdom, endurance, and strength. He decides on:

50—Tony Barlow creates Toromeen

Original	Ability	Final (as Dwarf)
9	Charisma	8
12	Intelligence	12
15	Wisdom	15
14	Endurance	15
10	Agility	10
18	Strength	18

From the “Species” specialty he chooses Dwarf. This gives him a bonus of one to endurance, and a penalty of one to charisma. He calls his Dwarf “Toromeen”. He chooses “Warrior” as his character’s archetype (he’ll choose “Prophet” at second level).

## First Level Mojo

Toromeen’s 18 strength means that he starts the game with 16 mojo.

## Native Culture

Toromeen’s native culture is *Dwarven Culture*. Toromeen gains that field at +2, along with the skills *Dwarven Language* and an etiquette. Tony chooses *Mountain Dwarf Etiquette*.

Toromeen’s specialty (species: dwarf) gives him the skill *Spelunking* in his Native Culture.

## Fighting Art

As a warrior, Toromeen gains the *Fighting Art* field at +1, along with the skills *unarmed combat*, *all weapons*, and *unfamiliar weapons*.

Tony already knows that Toromeen will be using a battleaxe, so he spends one mojo to acquire that skill. This brings him down to 15 mojo.

## Fields and skills

With a 12 intelligence, a 15 wisdom, and an 8 charisma, Toromeen begins the game with two initial Fields, each with one skill.

Tony sees Toromeen as a traveling builder of defensive structures. He chooses the field *Engineering Science* with the skill *Defenses*. He also chooses the field *War Craft* with the skill *Weaponsmith*.

At 151 years old, he also gains five more field bonuses and skills due to his age. He can save these and use them later when he needs them.

## Survival and Verve

His survival is 5 plus 2 (his endurance of 15 is a major contributor to survival) for a total of 7. His verve is 5 plus 2 (his strength of 18 is a minor contributor to verve; his intelligence of 12 is not high enough to contribute) for a total of 7.

## Reactions

At first level, Toromeen's reactions will be:

Reaction	Base	Major Contributor	Minor Contributor	Special	Total
Health	4	Endurance (+2)	Strength (+2)	Dwarf (+2)	10
Fortitude	4	Strength (+4)	Endurance (+1)	Warrior (+1)	10
Willpower	4	Wisdom (+2)	Charisma (0)		6
Evasion	4	Agility (0)	Intelligence (0)		4
Reason	4	Intelligence (+1)	Wisdom (+1)		6
Perception	4	Charisma (-1)	Agility (0)		3

Toromeen also has a bonus of four (as a Dwarf with a 15 endurance) on any reactions against magical attacks or effects.

## Defense, and Attack

Toromeen's Defense is 0.

Toromeen's Close Combat Attack is 2. His Damage bonus in close combat is 4.

Toromeen's Thrown Weapons Attack is 0. His Damage bonus in thrown combat is 2. His range penalties will be reduced by up to 2.

Toromeen's Propelled Weapons Attack is 0.

## Age, Height, and Weight

Dwarves are 8 times as old as humans. This makes his base age 120. Tony rolls 31 on eight six-siders for Toromeen's age, so Toromeen is 120 plus 31, or one hundred and fifty-one years old. This gives Toromeen an extra five skills. Tony decides Toromeen also knows armorer, mountaineering, and war lore. He chooses war lore one more time, and engineering one more time, so that they are at +1.

52—Tony Barlow creates Toromeen

As a Dwarf, Toromeen has a base height of 41 inches and 2d6 height dice, plus 5 for his endurance and strength. He rolls 10 on 2d6 and is 56 inches: 4 feet, 8 inches tall.

As a Dwarf, Toromeen has a base weight of 80 pounds. His weight will be modified by ten times the ten he rolled for height plus four for his endurance and strength. Eighty plus 140 is 220 pounds.

## Movement and Carry

Toromeen's movement is 8 (as a dwarf), plus 2 (for his 18 strength), or 10.

With an 18 strength and a 15 endurance, Toromeen's Carry is 9 (strength) plus 4 (endurance), or 13. Each item that Toromeen carries must have a bulk of 18 or less.

## Money and Equipment

Toromeen has an 18 strength, so he starts with eighteen monetary units.

Tony already knows that Toromeen will use "his grandfather's traditional battleaxe" and wear banded leather and use a shield. (Toromeen's strength of 18 means that he can use a battleaxe one-handed.)

Since Toromeen is Small, his items cause less damage and have shorter ranges.

Weapon	Cost	Bulk	Small reductions
Battleaxe:	7	18	d8 damage, 1 range
Banded Leather:	15	8	3 defense
Shield:	5	6	1 defense
<b>Total:</b>	<b>27</b>		

This "costs" him 27 monetary units. That's one mojo, leaving him with 14 mojo.

The banded leather and shield will give him a defense bonus of 4.

## Backstory

Toromeen was born in the southern mountains, where his people must continually fight goblins, orcs, and trolls for the best parts of the mountains and forests. His grandfather, whom he knew briefly, died in battle far from home.

The southern Dwarves trade with the humans in the towns north of the Leather Road and east of the High Divide. He is an engineer, and builds devices for castles. He worked with Charlotte Kordé near High Town on a castle overlooking the River Valley.

Toromeen is returning to Biblyon to offer routine maintenance on some work they did in Illustrious Castle. He also wishes to visit a Dwarven Shrine in the northern mountains where, hundreds of years ago, Dwarves and Giants fought a great battle. His grandfather and many of his people are buried there. Toromeen wishes to visit this shrine for guidance from his ancestors.

The Adventure Guide tells Tony that there is a battlefield in the mountains of the Celtic Lands that fits this description, called *Fomhor Achadh*. Tony changes *adventure hook* on his list of goals to *Fomhor Achadh*. This is the goal that will lead Toromeen to adventure.





# **Sample Characters**

# Charlotte Kordé

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 17 (+3/+2)	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Half-Elf
<b>Intelligence:</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Experience:</b> 200	<b>Height:</b> 5' 1"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 15 (+2/+1)	<b>Moral Code:</b> Good	<b>Weight:</b> 93 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 9	<b>Archetype:</b> Monk	<b>Age:</b> 36
<b>Agility:</b> 8 (-1)		<b>Home:</b> Crosspoint
<b>Endurance:</b> 10		
	<b>Movement:</b> 9	<b>Defense:</b> -1
	<b>Carry:</b> 6	<b>Survival:</b> 5
	<b>Mojo:</b> 11	<b>Verve:</b> 7
	<b>Money:</b> 16 shillings 6 pennies	

## Fields

Fighting Art +0  
Quarterstaff

Native Culture +2  
Crosspoint etiquette

Language Science +1  
English, Frankish, Literacy

Performance Art +1  
Acting

Personality Art +1  
Demagoguery, Mediation

Engineering Science +1  
Clockworks

## Reactions

Health: 4  
Evasion: 3  
Fortitude: 4  
Reason: 6  
Willpower: 8  
Perception: 8

## Specialties

Species (Half-Elf): Night vision.

## Weapons

	Damage	Fire Actions	Range	Bulk
Quarterstaff	d6	2	1	12

Note that the quarterstaff is a two-handed weapon for Charlotte.

## Monk Abilities

Psychic pool: 1+

## Psychic Fields

### Telepathic Art+5

Illusion: Sense Count (1, +1); Damage Potential (1); Independent Items (1)

### Psychokinetic Craft +3

Telekinesis: Mass (1 pound); Motion (1 yard per round), Area of effect technique (1 yard)

## Goals

Adventure, Elves, Skill

## Background

Charlotte was born in the mountains to the southeast of Crosspoint to a human mother. She has never met her father, and has only recently begun to realize what her ancestry really means to her—at 36 years of age, she is the youngest-looking of all her friends.

Charlotte currently believes that her psychic powers are from her father's side, that all Elves are psychic. She has received little training in their use. What training she has undergone is all self-performed. Charlotte has been a mentor to Sam Stevens since Sam left the thieves' ring that she'd been a part of in Crosspoint.

# Gralen Noslen

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Human
<b>Intelligence:</b> 15 (+2/+1)	<b>Experience:</b> 0	<b>Height:</b> 6' 6"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 9	<b>Moral Code:</b> Ordered Good	<b>Weight:</b> 217 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 11	<b>Archetype:</b> Sorcerer	<b>Age:</b> 16
<b>Agility:</b> 12 (+1)		<b>Home:</b> Crosspoint
<b>Endurance:</b> 12 (+1)		
	<b>Movement:</b> 11	<b>Defense:</b> 1
	<b>Carry:</b> 8	<b>Survival:</b> 6
	<b>Mojo:</b> 13	<b>Verve:</b> 6
	<b>Money:</b> 15 shillings	

## Skills

Fighting Art +0  
Native Culture +2  
    Sorcerer's Etiquette  
Language Science +1  
    English, Latin, Literacy  
Historical Science +1  
    Ancient history

## Reactions

Health: 5  
Evasion: 6  
Fortitude: 4  
Reason: 7  
Willpower: 4  
Perception: 5

## Specialties

Familiar (Raven) : 5 survival, 4 intelligence, 4 charisma, 4 wisdom.

## Sorcerer Abilities

Mnemonic sorcery

3 spell slots (1 for level, 2 for intelligence).

Maximum first level spells: 2 (1 for level, 1 for intelligence)

## Spellbook

### First Level Spells

Spell	Range	Formula	Duration	Cast	Effect Area	Reaction
Farseeing	Touch	WG	10 min	1 rnd	1 creature	None
Mage Bolt	20+10 yrd/lvl	WGI (arrow)	1 rnd/lvl	1	3 yrd radius	None
Light/Darkness	20 yrd/lvl	WGI (spark)	1 hr+10 min/lvl	1	10+lvl yds	Evasion
Understand Languages	Touch	WGI (mandrake)	5 min/lvl	1 rnd	1 creature or item	Willpower

Currently Gralen has Mage Bolt and Light/Darkness memorized.

## Goals

Adventure, Knowledge

## Background

Gralen knew he would become a sorcerer from a young age. “Poe”, his raven familiar, has been his friend and confidant since he turned eight. Gralen is self-taught, having left home at twelve to study at Illustrious Library just across the mountains from Crosspoint on the way to Black Stag. He stumbled, almost literally, across the magical research of a sorcerer who once lived in the now abandoned Illustrious Castle outside of town.

Gralen believes that there is more magic in the castle, which has a tainted history and is avoided by townsfolk. He hopes to enter the castle soon for exploration. He’s been trying to convince (and goad) Will Stratford into accompanying him.

# Sam Stevens

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 14 (+1)	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Human
<b>Intelligence:</b> 11	<b>Experience:</b> 0	<b>Height:</b> 5' 9"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 10	<b>Moral Code:</b> Good	<b>Weight:</b> 154 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 11	<b>Archetype:</b> Thief	<b>Age:</b> 20
<b>Agility:</b> 14 (+1)	Warrior	<b>Home:</b> Crosspoint
<b>Endurance:</b> 14 (+1)		
	<b>Movement:</b> 11	<b>Defense:</b> 1
	<b>Carry:</b> 9	<b>Survival:</b> 6
	<b>Mojo:</b> 8	<b>Verve:</b> 5
	<b>Money:</b> 1 shilling	

## Skills

Fighting Art +1  
basic weapons, crossbow, short sword

Native Culture +2  
English, Underworld etiquette

## Reactions

Health: 5  
Evasion: 6  
Fortitude: 4  
Reason: 4  
Willpower: 4  
Perception: 5

## Specialties

Multiple Archetype

## Weapons

	Damage	Fire	Actions	Range	Bulk
Short Sword	d6	2		2	6
Crossbow	d6	2		15	14

## Thief Fields

### Scaling Craft +1

Climb walls

### Stealth Art +1

Hide, Silence

### Burglary Science +2

Locks & traps

## Warrior Abilities

Attack Bonus: 0

Combat Bonus Limit: 2

Use unknown weapons at -2

## Goals

Adventure, Escape, Self-defense

## Background

Sam was born on the waterfront in Crosspoint and lived on the streets until she was taken “under the wing” of a burglary and child-fighting ring run by the infamous Will Riley (hanged two years ago for the murder of Crosspoint councilmember James Myers). Since leaving the ring she has worked sporadically as a guard for travelers from Crosspoint to other areas of East Highland. She also spends much of her time avoiding Crosspoint’s obsessive thieves’ guild. She met Will Stratford on a couple of them through Will’s father, who owned a guard company. She’s also known and looked up to Charlotte Kordé for a long time. It was Charlotte who vouched for her as a caravan guard.

# Toromeen

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 8 (-1)	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Dwarf
<b>Intelligence:</b> 12 (+1)	<b>Experience:</b> 200	<b>Height:</b> 4' 8"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 15 (+2/+1)	<b>Moral Code:</b> Chaotic Good	<b>Weight:</b> 220 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 18 (+4/+2)	<b>Archetype:</b> Warrior	<b>Age:</b> 151
<b>Agility:</b> 10		<b>Home:</b> Feltarn
<b>Endurance:</b> 15 (+2/+1)		
	<b>Movement:</b> 10	<b>Defense:</b> 4
	<b>Carry:</b> 13	<b>Survival:</b> 7
	<b>Mojo:</b> 14	<b>Verve:</b> 7
	<b>Money:</b> 18 shillings	

## Skills

Dwarven Culture +2  
 Dwarven Language, Mountain Dwarf Etiquette, Spelunking

Engineering Science +1  
 Defenses

Fighting Art +1  
 all weapons, battleaxe, unarmed combat, unfamiliar weapons

War Craft +1  
 Weaponsmith

## Reactions

Health: 10  
 Evasion: 4  
 Fortitude: 10  
 Reason: 6  
 Willpower: 6  
 Perception: 3

## Specialties

Species (Dwarf): Underground vision (-2), +4 reacting against magical attacks or effects.

## Weapons

	Damage	Fire	Actions	Range	Bulk
Battleaxe	d8	2	1	1	18



Toromeen can use the battleaxe one-handed with no penalties due to his superior strength.

## Warrior Abilities

Attack Bonus: 1

Combat Bonus Limit: 2

Use unknown weapons at -2

## Equipment

Banded Leather (bulk 4, defense 3)

Shield (bulk 4, defense 1)

## Goals

Faith, Building, Fomhor Achadh

## Backstory

Toromeen was born in the High Divide, in the Dwarven city of Feltarn south of the leather road. His people continually fight goblins, orcs, ogres, and trolls for the best parts of the mountains and lower forests.

This is Toromeen's first journey outside of his clan's home in Feltarn. He is a very religious person, and is on a "vision quest" to determine if he has a calling to serve the Dwarven gods. He hopes to find this vision at the great Dwarven battlefield Fomhor Achadh in the far north. He has traveled to High Town with a Dwarven trading band, but will not return to Feltarn with them.

Toromeen was born in the southern mountains, where his people must continually fight goblins, orcs, and trolls for the best parts of the mountains and forests. His grandfather, whom he knew briefly, died in battle far from home.

The southern Dwarves trade with the humans in the towns north of the Leather Road and east of the High Divide. He is an engineer, and builds devices for castles. He worked with Charlotte Kordé near High Town on a castle overlooking the River Valley.

Toromeen is returning to Biblyon to offer routine maintenance on some work they did in Illustrious Castle. He also wishes to visit a Dwarven Shrine in the northern mountains where, hundreds of years ago, Dwarves and Giants fought a great battle. His grandfather and many of his people are buried there. Toromeen wishes to visit this shrine for guidance from his ancestors.

# Will Stratford

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 9	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Human
<b>Intelligence:</b> 10	<b>Experience:</b> 0	<b>Height:</b> 6' 1"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 11	<b>Moral Code:</b> Good	<b>Weight:</b> 169 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 15 (+2/+1)	<b>Archetype:</b> Warrior	<b>Age:</b> 21
<b>Agility:</b> 14 (+1)		<b>Home:</b> Hightown
<b>Endurance:</b> 14 (+1)		
	<b>Movement:</b> 12	<b>Defense:</b> 1
	<b>Carry:</b> 11	<b>Survival:</b> 6
	<b>Mojo:</b> 8	<b>Verve:</b> 6
	<b>Money:</b> 15	

## Skills

- Fighting Art +1  
all weapons, Longsword, unarmed combat, unfamiliar weapons
- Native Culture +2  
English, Caravan etiquette
- Slashing Weapons +1  
Longsword

## Reactions

- Health: 6
- Evasion: 5
- Fortitude: 7
- Reason: 4
- Willpower: 4
- Perception: 4

## Specialties

Weapon specialist (slashing weapons)

## Weapons

	Damage	Fire	Actions	Range	Bulk
Longsword	d8	2		3	8

## Warrior Abilities

Attack Bonus: 1

Combat Bonus Limit: 2

Use unknown weapons at -2

## Goals

Friendship, Respect, Family

## Background

Will's father is the owner of a security company, and Will works as a guard with his father on the leather road, guiding caravans from Crosspoint, across the mountains, and to Black Stag. Will longs for more than the back and forth between Crosspoint and Black Stag. Will is a good friend of Gralen Noslen, whom he met while researching the low roads at the library in Biblyon.

# Valono (NPC)

## Abilities

<b>Charisma:</b> 14 (+1)	<b>Level:</b> 1	<b>Species:</b> Human
<b>Intelligence:</b> 10	<b>Experience:</b> 200	<b>Height:</b> 5' 7"
<b>Wisdom:</b> 16 (+2/+1)	<b>Moral Code:</b> Ordered Evil	<b>Weight:</b> 126 lbs
<b>Strength:</b> 15 (+2/+1)	<b>Archetype:</b> Prophet	<b>Age:</b> 18
<b>Agility:</b> 12 (+1)		<b>Home:</b> Papau
<b>Endurance:</b> 11		
	<b>Movement:</b> 12	<b>Defense:</b> 1
	<b>Carry:</b> 10	<b>Survival:</b> 5
	<b>Mojo:</b> 6	<b>Verve:</b> 6
	<b>Money:</b> 15	
	9 pennies	
	1 half-penny	

## Skills

Fighting Art +0  
Spear

Native Culture +2  
Maori, Island culture

English Culture +1  
English

## Reactions

Health: 5  
Evasion: 5  
Fortitude: 6  
Reason: 5  
Willpower: 7  
Perception: 5

## Specialties

Understand Basic Weapons

## Weapons

	Damage	Fire	Actions	Range	Bulk
Spear	d6	1		6	8

## Prophet Abilities

May call up to 3 points of spirits (1 for level, 2 for wisdom). Tawhiri will send prophet spirits, water spirits, weather spirits, animal spirits, and death spirits. At first level, Valono may call forth first level spirits, which will cost 1 point each. He tends to prefer one animal spirit and one death spirit, in addition to one other depending on circumstances.

## Background

Valono has been called by the god Tawhiri to return the world to order. To Tawhiri, “order” means stagnation and decay. In Valono’s tongue, he is a *tohunga*, or priest.

Valono is not meant as an example of a player character, but as an example of a (possibly recurring) villain. If Valono acts alone, the Guide might wish to increase Valono to second or third level. If used as a recurring villain, Valono’s level might track that of the player characters (that is, their levels or two to three levels higher).

If you choose to use Valono as a villain, watch his intelligence: it is average. Where he excels is in wisdom and charisma. His plots will tend towards simplicity. He will almost always attempt to build a power base of worshippers with which to further his plans.

# Play the Game



# Level Advancement

As the character gains experience, the character will increase in ability, competence, and power. Characters start at first level, and can advance up to any level.

Character Archetype	Archetypal Ability	Archetypal Reaction	Fighting Art Bonus
<b>Warrior:</b>	Strength	Fortitude	Every level
<b>Thief:</b>	Agility	Evasion	Every two levels
<b>Sorcerer:</b>	Intelligence	Reason	Every three levels
<b>Prophet:</b>	Wisdom	Willpower	Every two levels
<b>Monk:</b>	Charisma	Perception	Every two levels

It takes 1,000 experience points to go from first level to second level, and another 2,000 (total 3,000) to go from second level to third level. The requirement to increase in level is always the current level times 1,000 experience points.

## What does advancement mean?

When characters advance in level, they can do more things, and some of the things they used to be able to do, they can now do better. What does this mean? In some cases, it means that they have learned something new that they didn't know before. In other cases, it can mean that the character could always have done these things, they just didn't. Only now have they become relevant. It may mean that the character has gained new knowledge, or that knowledge once secret has been made public.

## How do I gain experience points?

Your character gains experience points for using mojo on archetypal die rolls, for engaging the creatures and people within the adventure, for defeating opponents in conflict, and for donating or losing treasure acquired as part of the adventure.

Experience points for engaging encounters and for defeating opponents will be handled by the Adventure Guide. The more encounters you take part in, and the more opponents you defeat in conflict, the more experience you will gain from those sources.

Experience points from engagements and loot are shared among every member of the group, and are awarded only after your characters complete the adventure.

Experience from mojo is completely under your control. When you use mojo to affect an archetypal die roll for your character, your character will gain fifty experience points per mojo used, immediately.

## 70—Level Advancement

Loot experience is also under your control once your group acquires it. Things looted during the adventure can be donated or lost with no expectation of tangible benefit. One monetary unit of loot is worth two experience points.

For example, donating to a village will give the group experience even though this increases the goodwill towards the characters in the village. “Good will” is not a tangible benefit. On the other hand, a “donation” that is really a bribe to get something from a church official is not experience-worthy. A loss in a gambling casino is not experience-worthy: there was an expectation of an immediate benefit.

However, if the player stipulates that their character will lose, and the Adventure Guide agrees, this then counts as a loss worthy of experience. For example, you might decide to lose your previous adventure’s loot at the beginning of the next adventure.

If you choose to have your characters lose loot, this is an opportunity for you to exercise more control over the narration than you normally do. You might decide, for example, that your characters should be forced to jettison some of their loot in order to escape pursuers, or leave a dungeon, or cross a bridge. If the Adventure Guide agrees, you can (and should) role-play your characters’ loss.

## Survival and Verve

At second level and every even level, the character gains another d10 verve, modified by the character’s archetypal ability and verve contributor as minor contributors. At third level and every odd level, the character gains another d10 survival, modified by endurance as a major contributor.

## Fighting Art Field Bonus

Warriors gain a bonus of one to their *Fighting Art* field every level. Thieves, Prophets, and Monks gain a bonus of 1 at second level, and every two levels thereafter. Sorcerors gain a bonus of 1 at third level and every three levels thereafter.

## Reactions

Characters receive a bonus of one each level to their Archetypal Reaction. Thus, their Archetypal Reaction is at a bonus of level. For other Reactions there is a bonus of one each even level.

## Specialties

The character gains one new specialty at third level and every odd level thereafter.



## Mojo

For everything else, the character gains or can acquire *mojo*. Mojo may be applied to learning skills, researching spells, increasing abilities, or gaining new weapon skills. Multiple characters can join to apply mojo to the same project as long as each character has applicable mojo. In this way, several sorcerors can pool their mojo to research a spell. If different characters in the group have different mojo costs for the task, the most expensive mojo cost is used.

At each new level, the character gains ten plus level mojo. At second level, a character gains twelve mojo, for example.

## Archetype Advancement

### Thieves

#### Enhancing Thief Skills

At each level after first, the thief gains an extra field bonus or an extra skill in any thief field.

### Sorcerors

Sorcerors gain new spell slots for memorization. At each level, the sorceror gains that many new slots. A third level sorceror gains three new slots, for example.

Sorcerors can acquire spells by trading formulas or by spending mojo.

#### Acquiring spells with mojo

Acquiring new spells costs three mojo per spell level. Commonly-known spells cost two mojo per spell level.

The character must also have ten times the basic spell components on hand for experimentation. When spending archetypal mojo, the player may choose to retroactively spend the money necessary for this, if this makes sense.

#### Inscribing Mnemonic Spells

Whether by trading or by mojo, once a mnemonic sorceror acquires a spell formula the spell must be inscribed into the sorceror's spell repository using the *inscription* spell.

When using archetypal mojo to acquire a spell, the player may choose to retroactively spend the money necessary for inscription inks.

### **Spell Compatibility**

Before inscribing or learning any new spell that is not paid for with archetypal mojo, the sorcerer must make a Reason roll at a bonus of six and a penalty equal to the level of the spell.

On a successful Reason roll, that spell is compatible with the sorcerer and the roll need not be made again. If the Reason roll fails, the spell is not compatible with the sorcerer and the sorcerer cannot impress or learn that spell. The player may try again on increasing their character's Sorcerer level.

If the character and spell are not compatible, any practical mojo and experimentation moneys are spent. However, the character may try again at a later level at a cost of only two mojo and five times the spell components on hand.

# Time

## Game Time and Playing Time

In role-playing games, there is a difference between “game time” and “playing time” analogous to the difference between “players” and “characters”. As your character “Gralen” retires to bed in an inn, you might say “Gralen sets an ‘alarm’ spell and goes to sleep.” Your Guide then says, “Gralen wakes up the next morning. Nothing seems to have happened.” In playing time, this may have taken about a minute. But in the game, it probably took about six to eight hours. Your character has spent an entire night in the inn, but you covered that part of the game in one minute. Game rules almost always cover game time. When the rules say that a “round” is “approximately ten seconds”, this means that a “round” is ten seconds *in the game*. Determining what happened in that round might take anywhere from a few seconds to a few minutes of playing time.

## Rounds

In game terms, a “round” is approximately ten seconds and is used mostly for conflicts. Over the course of one round, each character gets their chance to attack, defend, do something else, or do nothing. There are six rounds in a minute.

## Sessions, Adventures, and Campaigns

Where rounds, minutes, hours, days, and so on are relatively specific units of time, there are other units of time that have no specific duration. A game “session” lasts one evening or afternoon, depending on when you play. A game adventure may last multiple sessions, until the adventure is completed. And a campaign is usually a story arc that consists of multiple adventures.

Your game sessions will usually end when someone has to leave. Often, you’ll have a specific time that the game session will end, such as 11 PM or 1 AM. Game sessions can easily stop in the middle of an adventure or even in the middle of a conflict.

Adventures usually have a specific short-term goal, such as searching some ruins or solving some mystery. Finishing that adventure means reaching that goal. Often, that goal will move the characters along towards solving some greater mystery or reaching some greater goal. When your character finishes one adventure, they’ll soon find themselves embroiled in another adventure.

Not all games have campaigns, but when they do the adventures will lead, perhaps with some side-treks, towards the fulfillment of the greater goal of that campaign. When the goal is reached, the campaign ends. Often, your character’s adventures will end when the campaign ends. You’ll put that character away and create a new one, or make a new character in a completely different role-playing game. Other times, your group may decide to take these characters on to further and greater adventures.

# Survival

## Regaining Survival and Verve, and Healing Injuries

When a character gets hit by a weapon or otherwise “takes damage”, they lose survival points or verve points, and possibly gain injury points. They may restore survival points, up to their normal amount, by resting. Each night (eight hours) of rest restores level survival points or removes one injury point if a Health roll is successful. If the roll is unsuccessful, only one survival point is regained. Each full day of rest restores level survival points or removes one injury point with no reaction roll necessary.

For example, Toromeen, a second level warrior, is fighting an Orc. The Orc is using a short sword, which does d6 damage on a successful hit and the Orc has +1 to damage. Toromeen has 7 survival and 17 verve. In the first round, the Orc successfully hits Toromeen and the Guide rolls 4 on d6. This means five points of damage. Because fighting is an archetypal activity for warriors, Toromeen loses 5 verve points, and drops to 12 verve. The next round, the Orc misses. Toromeen loses no verve or survival. In the third round, the Orc again hits Toromeen. The Guide rolls 5 so Toromeen loses six points. Toromeen is now at 6 verve. In the fourth round, the Orc hits Toromeen for seven points. Toromeen is at zero verve and also loses one survival point. In the next round, the Orc hits Toromeen for four points. Toromeen loses four survival and has only two survival. Finally, Toromeen kills the Orc.

Toromeen ends the encounter with 2 survival and no verve. He will have 2 survival points in any future encounters that day. Toromeen’s verve will be fully restored to 17 tomorrow. If Toromeen rests tonight, Tony will roll vs. Toromeen’s health. If the roll is successful, Toromeen’s survival will increase by two, to 4. Toromeen might also receive healing aid through magical, divine, or psychic means.

No matter how much Toromeen rests, or how much healing aid he receives, his survival point total will not increase above his survival maximum of 7, nor will his verve increase above his maximum of 15.

## Using Verve

Because verve returns more quickly than survival, players will want to use verve rather than survival for their characters when possible. Verve can only be used for damage due to archetypal actions. What kind of a survival point loss counts as from an archetypal activity?

1. Loss from a source or action that requires a roll against the character’s archetypal reaction.
2. Loss from a source or action that requires a roll against the character’s archetypal ability.
3. Loss that is the direct physical or rule consequence of an archetypal action, including specialties.
4. Loss to a warrior when the warrior is in combat.

When you are being your archetype, you get more survival. So, for example, warriors will be able to use verve points in combat. Thieves can use verve points if they fall after failing to successfully climb walls. Monks will be able to use verve points for survival point losses incurred because of a failed perception roll.

On the other hand, warriors will not be able to use verve points for damage that isn't related to being a warrior. A warrior in combat will be able to use verve points in defense against any spells cast into the combat. (Almost any damage in combat is likely to be relevant for a warrior, because damage is what combat is for.) But a warrior playing poker with a mage would not be able to use verve points to defend against spells that mage casts against them unless one of the other criteria came into play.

A thief tossed off of a thirty-foot wall cannot use verve points to defend against that damage, even though they could use it if they'd been climbing that wall and failed their Climb Walls roll. Climbing walls is an archetypal activity for a thief. Being tossed off of a wall is not.

Being ambushed is probably not archetypal for a warrior. Triggering a trap accidentally isn't archetypal for a thief—unless they set it off while using their thief fields. Nor is being hit by a spear from that trap archetypal for a warrior.

For all purposes verve points *are* survival points if the survival point loss meets the criteria. For example, characters run the risk of death if they receive injury points in excess of their survival point total. Under rare circumstances characters can gain injury points even when they still have survival points. If the injury points were the result of archetypal damage, verve points count towards the survival point total that is compared against the injury point total.

Verve is fully restored at the beginning of each game day, the moment the character awakens to begin the day's planning and adventuring. Verve is partially restored when characters engage encounters outside of conflict within the adventure. Each character (regardless of whether they take part in the encounter) will regain up to level verve once the encounter has definitely begun. An encounter must have been part of the adventure and must involve non-conflict engagement. An encounter can only be engaged once per adventure for the purpose of restoring verve.

## Injury Points (Zero Survival Points)

Once survival points reach zero, any further damage adds to the character's *injury points*. There are also times when a character will take injury points before survival points reach zero. Whenever a character gains injury points, the character runs the risk of unconsciousness and death.

When a character has injury points, those points are a penalty on any attack rolls, reaction rolls, and ability rolls.

Large or larger creatures need only worry about unconsciousness or death if their injury total is two or more (for large creatures), four or more (for huge creatures), eight or more (for gigantic creatures) and sixteen or more (for titanic creatures).

### Unconsciousness

The character must make an immediate fortitude roll at a penalty of the character's current injury total (as normal).

If failed, the character goes unconscious at the end of the round. If successful, the character may continue acting as normal, with their injury point penalty. If the character does not immediately go unconscious, the character may also act normally (with their injury point penalty) up until they do go unconscious.

A character with injury points may at any time choose to go unconscious.

An unconscious character may awaken or be awoken as normal, except that any rolls to awaken a character that has injuries are at a penalty of the character's injury point total.

A player whose character is stricken unconscious in this manner may choose to spend one mojo to bring their character to *semi-consciousness*.

## A Time to Die

Whenever a character gains injury points and their injury total exceeds their *current* survival and verve, the character runs the risk of dying. They must overcome their injuries in a contested Endurance roll against their total injuries. Their injuries are the acting side of the contest: the Guide rolls less than or equal to their injuries, and the player rolls less than or equal to their Endurance (with normal penalties, including injury point penalties). If the player's roll fails and the injuries' roll succeeds, it is time for the character to die.

Death normally takes place after Endurance minus total injuries minutes. If the character goes unconscious, the remaining minutes become hours. If the character's injury total drops to zero before the character dies, death is canceled.

Death rolls are archetypal for all player characters. Warriors gain a bonus of their level on the Endurance roll. Death rolls while unconscious are at a bonus of two. Characters that go immediately unconscious gain that bonus.

When a character's time runs out, they will die by the end of the scene they're currently in. At any point between when the character starts dying and the end of their final scene, the character can make one heroic last effort. The player will gain a bonus of their level on that roll; their injuries will not apply. They may bid any remaining mojo on that roll. Other players may also contribute mojo to that player's roll, regardless of whether it is archetypal for those characters.

For all purposes, a heroic last effort counts as archetypal for all player characters who contribute, and each character gains experience and possible skill/field bonuses as if they had spent the full mojo, not just what they personally contributed.

At the end of their final scene or at the end of their final action, the character dies. At the moment of their death, there is always time for a dying soliloquy by a player character for as long as the other player characters stop to listen.

## Example

Toromeen, after fighting an Orc and a few of the Orc's friends, has four survival points. One more sword-thrust from the remaining Orc does six points damage to Toromeen. Toromeen is now at zero survival points and he has two injury points. Toromeen has to make an immediate fortitude roll to stay conscious.

Toromeen is a second level warrior. His fortitude is 11. Tony (his player) must roll 9 or less (fortitude 11, -2 for injury points) to stay conscious. Tony rolls 6, and Toromeen is still conscious. He has, however, a penalty of two to his attack rolls (and most other rolls).

Toromeen also might die: two (his injury points) is greater than zero (his current survival and verve). The Guide rolls a 1; this meets Toromeen's injury total, so Tony needs to make an Endurance roll for Toromeen. Toromeen's Endurance is 15, he is a second level warrior (+2), and he is at 2 injury points (-2), so Tony needs to roll 15 or less (Endurance 15, +2 for level, -2 for injury points). Tony chooses to keep Toromeen conscious, so Toromeen does not have the benefit of unconsciousness on his death roll. Tony rolls 20; Toromeen is dying. He will die in 13 minutes.

Fortunately, Toromeen successfully hits and kills the Orc on his next action. He crawls underneath a tree and goes unconscious. While he is still dying, the remaining time for his death increases from 12 minutes to 12 hours. If someone can heal his injuries in that time, he will live; otherwise, he will die.

## Temporary Bonus Pools

Some spells and spirits can grant their targets a *temporary bonus pool* of survival points. This temporary pool is separate from the character's normal survival points. Eligible damage taken is removed from the temporary pool first; only when the pool is exhausted (or the spell or spirit's effect ends) does the character begin to lose damage from their real survival points.

For example, Gralen casts *Fighting Prowess* on Toromeen, and Toromeen gains a temporary bonus pool of seven survival points. Six rounds later, Toromeen enters combat. In the next round, a goblin hits Toromeen for three points of damage; the temporary bonus pool is reduced to four. In the eighth and ninth rounds, the goblin misses. In the tenth round, the goblin hits for three points again. The bonus pool is reduced to one. At the end of the tenth round, the spell's duration ends, and the bonus pool disappears. Toromeen has taken no "real" damage; if the goblin(s) had done more than seven points over those ten rounds, he would have taken real damage.

# Contests

For most non-combat activities, players will use simple die rolls to determine the success of the action. Characters either fail or succeed.

## Abilities and Reactions

When a character acts, or when the world acts against a character, that character's player will often have to make an ability roll or a reaction roll. In each case, the player must roll d20 less than or equal to that number. For example, if goblins are sneaking up on Toromeen, Tony Barlow will have to roll d20 less than or equal to Toromeen's Perception. Since Toromeen's Perception is 4, Tony will have to roll less than or equal to 4 on d20.

Situations will often call for modifiers to these rolls. For example, if the goblins were being especially noisy, the Guide might give Toromeen a bonus to the roll, making it more likely that Toromeen will notice the goblins before they surprise him.

## Failure

What does it mean to fail a skill roll? It means that whatever your character was attempting, they did not succeed, and further attempts are discouraged. The rules do not say *why* they didn't succeed. The reason can be anything you want, as long as it means that your character's attempt was unsuccessful. The obvious reason is that your character failed. But it could also be that your character was in too much of a rush, or that something (or someone) got in your character's way.





The default explanation is that your character failed, but if you wish to narrate the unsuccessful attempt differently, you may. Keep your narration to one or two sentences, and do not create an argument. If any of the other players raise an objection to your narration, your character simply failed.

When a contest involves weapons, a failure also means that the loser takes damage and might be injured. Weapons do their normal damage to the loser, and for every die of damage one of the lost points will be an injury point. If the potential damage is one or two dice, a successful Evasion roll negates the injury point requirement.

The Adventure Guide may also rule that contests which don't involve weapons are also dangerous enough to merit potential injury.

## Each action is a single roll

No matter how long an obstacle is, overcoming it is a single roll. Whether a player's thief scales a 20-foot wall or a 200-foot wall, only one roll is required to complete the climb. If, for example, the character climbs a hundred feet, has an encounter, and then climbs another hundred feet, their first climbing roll suffices for the second hundred feet. Similarly, a character making a roll to find information about an event in the underworld doesn't make that roll every night. They make it once, and the contacts start flowing in (or not, depending on the success of the roll). They don't need to roll again for that event.

A failed roll cannot be re-rolled, not even by another character, unless the task is reframed as a different task. The only exception is that if an individual player character has attempted a task once, a group of player characters can also attempt the task once. If a group effort has been attempted once, then an individual can also try once.

The size of the obstacle may affect the difficulty of the roll. Climbing a 200-foot wall will have more penalties than climbing a 20-foot wall, for example.

## Difficulty Adjustments

### Obstacle Size

If an obstacle's size will affect the difficulty of an action, apply larger penalties for larger obstacles. Usually, penalties will increase as obstacle size doubles.

<b>Size:</b>	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024
<b>Penalty:</b>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Sizes will be multiples of a reasonable no-penalty size. Distances will often be based on 10 foot sizes, for example. Climbing a 20-foot wall means a penalty of 1. Climbing a 40-foot wall means a penalty of 2. If the wall is at least 80 feet, the penalty is 3, and so on.

Similarly, searches of a 20 by 20 foot area or 20-foot diameter circle will incur a penalty of 1 on the Perception roll. Searching a 40 foot area will incur a penalty of 2.

Players can choose to divide their actions into smaller actions.

## Difficulty Levels

Often it will be easiest to consider difficulties using a common-sense term such as “easy” or “difficult”.

Difficulty	Bonus	Difficulty	Penalty
Difficult	0	Difficult	0
Easy	2	Very Difficult	2
Very Easy	4	Extremely Difficult	4
A Snap	8	Nearly Impossible	8
Incredibly Easy	16	Practically Impossible	16

## Skills

Skills may modify ability rolls and reaction rolls, if the skill distinctly applies to the action being attempted. For example, the Guide might decide that knowing some bit of historical trivia requires a *Reason* roll. If your character has one point of *History*, you gain a bonus of 1 to the roll. Most often, rolls that skills apply to will be an ability roll.

## Careful Attempts

Normally, attempts are assumed to be made over the course of one round or some other normal, but quick, time period. If a character chooses to spend more time—one minute instead of a round, ten minutes instead of a minute, or one hour instead of ten minutes—they can gain a bonus of 1. If they spend even longer—ten minutes, an hour, or a day—carefully setting up their attempt, they can gain a bonus of 2. It is up to the Adventure Guide whether or not any particular action can benefit from *careful attempts* and what the base time period is.

## Contested Actions

In some cases, two or more characters will be attempting to do the same thing, or attempting to use the same skill to do something/keep the other from doing something. In such a case, each player makes a roll vs. the ability, skill, or reaction in question.

If both fail, the side that was trying to do something fails. If one side was resisting and one side was acting, the acting side fails. If both were trying to achieve the same goal, both fail to achieve the goal. They have battled to a draw. If both succeed, they keep trying until they give up or only one succeeds. If one succeeds and the others fail, that’s the winner. If more than two sides are involved, those who lose do not get to keep trying.

If both sides in a contested action cannot fail, double each participant's final numbers (before any mojo are applied) and increase the time period to the next level.

Player characters can request a doubling of both final numbers if their opponent cannot fail. This also increases the time period to the next level.

Contested actions can, if both sides keep succeeding, take longer than uncontested actions, along the scale of: immediately, one round, one minute, ten minutes, one hour, one day, two days, three days, etc. Start with however long the action would take if it were uncontested.

# Conflicts

Combat takes place during ten-second “rounds” that give each character a chance to do something, whether it be attack with a weapon, run away, cast a spell, use a spirit, or use some other ability.

## Surprise

A character may be surprised if they were unaware of an impending attack. If their characters were unaware of the attack, the players must make a Perception roll. If the characters were aware of their attackers, there is a bonus of four to this roll. If the characters were sleeping, there is a penalty of six to this roll.

Surprised characters are, during the first round of surprise, at a penalty of two to defense and six to attack and other success rolls. In subsequent rounds, they are at a penalty of one to defense and three to any success rolls.

While surprised, characters may not initiate complex actions such as casting spells, calling spirits, using psychic powers, or any of the special conflict maneuvers.

Surprised combatants must make either a Willpower or Fortitude roll to ‘snap out’ of surprise. This roll is made at the beginning of each round, and applies to that round.

Characters may also be surprised during a conflict if something totally mind-boggling happens. If the characters were aware that something mind-boggling was about to happen but aren’t sure what, there is a bonus of three to the surprise roll.

If surprised combatants are removed from the conflict for two or more rounds, they are no longer surprised.

## Order of Events

There is no order to what happens in conflict. Everything happens at once. To make things easier, however, the Adventure Guide will show how all of the non-player characters are moving. Then the players will move their characters and perform their actions. Finally, the Adventure Guide will determine the actions of non-player characters (on both sides of the conflict).

If a player wants their character to know what an opponent is going to do before they choose their character’s action, they can engage that opponent in a Charisma contest (which will be a simple Charisma roll if the opponent isn’t trying to hide their actions). If not immediately successful, the character foregoes their action that round (both characters, if both sides rolled). The player character can also simply wait until their opponent acts (but if the opponent also chooses to wait, both will forego their action this round).

The only time that order of events matters is when a player character defeats a non-player character opponent or applies some penalty to them (without having waited for that opponent to act). In this case, assume that the player character went first.

## Hitting

Each round, every conscious character gets a chance to attempt one action. Often this action is hitting an opponent with a weapon.

The attack roll is made against an 11: the roll must be 11 or less on d20 to successfully attack. The attacker's attack bonus increases and the target's defense reduces the number needed. The target's agility modifies defense as a major contributor.

### Close Combat and Ranged Combat

Characters fighting within hand or extended weapon reach of their opponents are in *close combat*. If characters must fire or throw missiles to attack their opponents, they are in *ranged combat*.

### Damage

Each weapon does a different amount of damage: roll the dice listed for that weapon to determine the damage the weapon causes. Damage is subtracted from the target's survival.

### Close Combat

For hand-to-hand combat, strength is a minor contributor to the attack roll and a major contributor to the damage roll.

### Thrown Weapons

For thrown weapons, strength negates ranged penalties as a minor contributor. A character with a strength minor contributor of two can throw an object up to two ranges away without a penalty to attack.

Strength gives a bonus to damage as a minor contributor.

Agility modifies the attack roll for thrown weapons as a minor contributor.

### Propelled Weapons

The strength bonus to attack and damage do not apply to propelled weapons such as bows. Specially constructed versions of such weapons may, at the Guide's discretion, be able to take advantage of higher strengths. Such weapons will usually cost twice as much, three times as much, four times as much, or more, depending on how many damage bonuses must be "built in" to the weapon. Damage can be increased by up to the character's strength as a minor contributor. Range can be increased by up to the character's strength as a major contributor.

Agility modifies the attack roll for propelled weapons as a minor contributor.

## Firing Into Close Combat

Firing into close combat is as if the target had strong cover if there are two to four combatants, and full cover if there are five or more combatants, including the target.

If the target is in close combat with an individual or individuals, and if the attack would have hit one or more of those individuals, those individuals it would have hit must make an Evasion roll or take the same amount of damage the target did. The attacker may choose to make a called shot to avoid this. On a successful called shot, only the target takes damage.

On a miss, a random adjacent opponent of the target must make an Evasion roll, with their Defense as a bonus, to avoid being hit.

## Number of attacks

Some weapons or attacks require multiple actions. Some creatures and archetypes may attack more than once per round.

When an attack requires multiple actions, such as loading, arming, and firing an arquebus (three actions), the attack will normally require that many rounds to use. The actions need not be done immediately following each other, however: a character might load their arquebus at the beginning of the day, fill the pan with powder when combat is imminent, and then only require one action to actually use the weapon the first time. In later rounds, the character might load the weapon, use their sword to fight off a monster, and then later load the pan with powder and fire.

Attacks which require more than one action to perform gain one “free” action per *use* when outside of close combat. The arquebus above would require only two actions to use if the character using it were not engaged in close combat. Most of the time, if the character has no need to worry about being attacked or hit, the character is not engaged in close combat.

When a combatant attacks more than once per round, each attack must be rolled for.

## Special Conflict Maneuvers

Some of these special conflict situations will apply only to one opponent. If so, then any bonuses which the maneuver or situation gives to the attacker must be applied only to that opponent.

### Attacking unseen targets

If an attacker is aware of but unable to see their target, the attacker has an attack penalty of 3 in close combat, and an attack penalty of 6 for ranged combat.

### Called Shot

A “called shot” can be made to a specific location on a target, with an attack penalty of 3. The target’s defense includes armor, even if the armor is not worn on the specific location. Called shots do damage as normal, and, like normal attacks, do standard “survival point

damage”. A successful called shot does not necessarily mean that the target is wounded at the called location, it merely means that this was the location that needed to be protected. In certain circumstances, the target may be required to make an Evasion or Fortitude roll to avoid special effects. For example, if the target is carrying a potion, and a called shot to the hand is successful, the target will be required to make an Evasion roll or drop the potion. Evasion is called for if the target is trying to avoid the effect by dodging, Fortitude if the target is trying to avoid the effect simply by being big and strong.

A successful called shot also increases the chance that “carried” attacks, such as poisons, will take effect. Most such carried attacks require a called shot. Evasion rolls against those carried attacks that do not are at a penalty of 1 if the called shot is successful.

## Cover

Cover	Warriors	Non-Warriors
Weak Cover	+1 Defense	No bonus
Strong Cover	+2 Defense	+1 Defense
Full Cover	+3 Defense	+2 Defense

In ranged combat, combatants will often try to hide behind obstacles to avoid being hit by their opponents’ missiles. Cover can be weak, strong, and full. Weak cover covers a significant portion of the character, about 50%, but also leaves a significant portion open to attack. Strong cover covers 85% or more of the character, and full cover blocks all of the character from attack. Behind full cover, a non-combatant can usually hide with no

possibility of getting hit, but if a character is trying to attack (especially with missile weapons of their own), or trying to move in a way that brings them partially in the open, then even being behind full cover will afford opponents the possibility of hitting.

Warriors are better at making use of cover than non-warriors. However, if a warrior does not themselves engage in the conflict, but instead “leads” their comrades, they may grant the warrior cover bonus to up to level companions. Successfully granting this bonus requires a Perception roll by the warrior’s player.

## Covered

If one combatant can take aim at another combatant, and both combatants are not moving, the first combatant is said to have the second combatant “covered”. The first combatant can get a free attack against the second combatant at a bonus of four to attack and one to damage. If the “covered” combatant attacks before the “covering” combatant chooses to use their free attack, the covering combatant will still gain the bonuses, but must make a perception roll for that attack to be free. “Covered” cannot combine with similar bonuses such as against immobile targets or unaware targets.

## Defensive Action

Characters may attempt defensive action to the exclusion of any attack. If the character chooses not to attack in a round and focuses completely on avoiding attack, they will gain a bonus of 2 to defense that round.

## High Ground

If a character is attacking from the higher end of a reasonable slope or while mounted on a horse-like animal (and fighting medium-sized opponents), or while attacking from above, the player may choose a bonus of 1 to attack or a bonus of 1 to defense.

## Immobilizing an opponent

Immobilizing an opponent involves grabbing their arms and/or legs. The combatant trying to immobilize their opponent has a penalty of two to their defense.

A called shot is required to immobilize an opponent, and the opponent is allowed an Evasion roll to avoid immobilization. This roll has a bonus of two for every general size level larger they are than the character trying to immobilize them. A Large target would gain a bonus of 4 to the Evasion roll if a small character is trying to immobilize it, for example.

If the Evasion roll is failed, the attacker may attempt to hold the target immobile. Both the attacker and the target make Fortitude rolls, once per round. The larger of the two gains a bonus of 4 to this roll for every general size difference. If both succeed or both fail, neither may do anything. If the target succeeds but the immobilizer fails, the target has broken the hold, and does an automatically successful attack on their opponent. If the target fails and the immobilizer succeeds, the target is immobilized and may not attack with the immobilized limbs; the opponent may continue the contest to break free, but their Fortitude rolls are at a penalty of three.

Allies of the immobilizer may tie up an immobilized target. The immobilizer may also attack, as attacking an immobilized target (although this removes the penalty of three for breaking the hold if the attack is with a weapon).

Attempts to break free are made on the defender's actions.

## Off-Hand

If the character is fighting with their off-hand, there is a penalty of two (for Warriors) or three (for everyone else) to attack.

## Quickdraw

Normally, it takes one action to draw a weapon. A character can attempt to draw and use an available weapon in the same round. An Evasion roll is required to do so successfully. On a successful roll, the character attacks as normal. On an unsuccessful roll, the character acts as if *surprised*, which must be thrown off as normal.

## Size differences

If creatures of varying sizes engage in combat, the smaller creature will gain a bonus according to the difference in size if the smaller creature is not fighting. (This bonus is halved, round down, if the smaller creature chooses to attack back.) The sizes are Fine, Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, Gigantic, and Titanic. A Small creature trying to escape a Large creature will gain a bonus of 2 to defense. A Small creature attacking a Huge creature will gain a bonus of 1 to defense.



## Unaware and non-defending opponents

### Immobilized Targets

There is an attack bonus of 10 against immobile targets: sleeping opponents, bound victims, or subdued targets. This bonus does not combine with similar bonuses such as for covered targets or against unaware targets.

### Killing blow

Only immobile targets (sleeping or bound targets) may be subject to a killing blow.

If the attacker makes a successful called shot to kill, the target takes half the damage (round up) as injury points; the rest go to survival points as normal. Against sleeping or otherwise unconscious or completely unmoving targets, a called shot is not necessary.

### Knockout blow

Only unaware, surprised, or immobilized opponents may be subject to a knockout blow.

The attacker must make a called shot to the head. The target is allowed an Evasion roll. If the target is wearing any sort of head protection, there is a bonus of one to this roll. If the head protection provides a bonus to the target's defense (magical or non-magical), this bonus also applies to the reaction. Creatures whose defense is from tough skin will usually gain this bonus to their roll.

If the reaction roll succeeds, the target takes no damage.

If the reaction roll fails, the attack was a knockout blow: one point of the damage rolled goes to the target's injury point total and the rest to the target's survival points (as normal). The target runs the risk of unconsciousness and death as normal for gaining injury points.

Warriors may allot two combat bonus points to the knockout blow. Up to two points of the damage rolled add to the victim's injuries.

### Unaware and Non-defending Opponents

Opponents who are unaware of the attack are easier to hit. There is an attack bonus of four against any defender who is unaware of the attacker's location or is simply not defending against the attacker. Warriors can use that bonus to gain an extra attack against the unaware/non-defending opponent, assuming that the target is within combat reach.

This bonus does not combine with similar bonuses, such as against immobile targets or having a target covered.

## Combat Example

There are four combatants in this example. Sam Stevens, a first level Thief, first level Warrior, played by Sarah Dent, is wearing leather armor and bears a long sword and a shield. Charlotte Kordé, a second level monk, played by John Greeley, is wearing leather armor and bears a dagger and a staff. Toromeen, a second level Warrior, played by Tony Barlow, is wearing chain mail and bears a battle axe.

Combatant	Survival	Verve	Perception	Willpower	Fortitude	Combat	Attack	Defense
Sam Stevens	6	15	5	4	5	+1	0	+4
Charlotte Kordé	5	14	10	9	5	+1	0	+1
Toromeen	7	17	5	7	11	+2	+2	+5
Yeti	20		6	6	6	+4	0	+3

Combat begins when a Yeti surprises them in the snowy mountains outside Hightown in West Highland.

### Surprise!

Each player rolls surprise for their character (d20). Surprise is a Perception roll with agility as a minor contributor. Sarah rolls 2. Sam Stevens' Perception is 5, so Sam is not surprised. John rolls 18. Charlotte Kordé's Perception is 10. Charlotte is surprised. Tony rolls 4. Toromeen's Perception is 5, so Toromeen is not surprised.

The Yeti knowingly initiated combat. The Yeti is not surprised.

### Round 1

The Yeti has a defense of +3. Each of the players make their attacks.

Sam Stevens has an attack bonus is 1, so she needs a 9 or lower on d20 to hit. Sarah rolls 4. Sam is fighting with a long sword, which does d8 points of damage. Sarah rolls seven, a massive blow against the small hairy creature. The Yeti now only has 13 survival points.

Toromeen has a combined combat and attack bonus of 4. He needs a 12 or less to hit the Yeti (11 minus 3 plus 4). Tony rolls 17 on d20, a pitiful score. He has no chance this round to sink his battle axe into the Yeti.

Charlotte has a +1 attack bonus, but because she is surprised she is at a penalty of 6 to attack. She would need a 3 or less to successfully hit the Yeti. John has Charlotte stand back and let the others handle things this round.

The Yeti, pained by Sam Stevens' attack, roars and claws at the human. The Yeti has an attack bonus of 4, and Sam Stevens has a defense of 4 due to her leather armor, shield, and agility. If the Guide rolls 11 or less on d20, the Yeti successfully hits Sam. The Guide rolls 9. The Yeti's claws do d6 points damage and the Guide rolls 1. The Yeti roars and claws Sam Stevens but she mostly rolls with the blow. Sam now has 14 verve points. The Yeti claws a second time (because Yeti get two attacks), and this time the Guide rolls 5 to attack. The Yeti claws at Sam Stevens again, this time for 6 points. Sam felt that one, and now has only 8 verve.

## Round 2

Charlotte might still be surprised. She needs to make a Fortitude or Willpower roll to shake off the surprise completely. John rolls 6. This is lower than Charlotte's Willpower of 9. She is no longer surprised.

Tony rolls 13 on d20. Toromeen just barely fails to hit the Yeti.

Sarah rolls 14 on d20. Sam Stevens also fails to hit the Yeti.

John rolls 3 on d20. Charlotte Kordé needs a nine or lower, so Charlotte has successfully hit the Yeti with her dagger. Daggers do d4 points of damage. John rolls a 1. Charlotte Kordé pokes at the Yeti, and it now has 12 survival points.

The Guide rolls an 18 on d20. Sam Stevens successfully avoids the Yeti's claws. The Guide gives the Yeti a fifty-fifty chance of attacking Charlotte Kordé with its second attack. The roll indicates that it continues to attack Sam Stevens. The Guide rolls a 20 on d20 for the Yeti's attack. It fails to successfully attack again.

## Round 3

The Yeti is being attacked by three creatures. The Guide decides that the Yeti will continue to attack, but it will probably leave the next round if things don't go its way. The Yeti is a strong and fierce creature, but it is not stupid. It is a better fighter than any of the player characters individually, but three against one mitigates that advantage (in 'real life', the Guide might not actually let all three characters engage a small creature in combat, especially when one of the characters is using a battle axe).

Tony rolls 16 on d20, and curses his dice. Toromeen fails to find an opening to hit the Yeti.

John rolls 10. Charlotte barely misses her opportunity to hurt the evil creature.

Sarah rolls 17 for Sam Stevens' attack. Sam also fails to hit.

The Yeti roars at Sam Stevens and the Guide rolls 11. That's exactly what the Yeti needs to hit Sam. The Guide rolls 4 on d6, so the Yeti claws Sam Stevens for 4 points. Sam now has 4 verve. She could be hurting soon. The Guide rolls 14 for the Yeti's second attack. The second claw attack misses Sam Stevens as she deflects it with her shield.

## Round 4

The Yeti did well last round and its opponents seem unable to hit it. It decides to push the attack forward. Sam Stevens is tempted to withdraw from combat, but doesn't want to leave Toromeen fighting the creature alone (Sam doesn't have much faith in Charlotte Kordé's fighting skills), so Sam remains in combat one more round.

Tony rolls 6 for Toromeen's attack. His battle axe does d8 points damage, and Tony rolls 8. The dwarf's 18 strength gives a bonus of 4, for a total of 12 points damage. The dwarf's battle axe sinks deep into the Yeti's side. The Yeti only has 12 survival left, which leaves it at zero.

## 90—Conflicts

The Yeti must immediately make a Health roll to remain conscious. The Yeti's Fortitude is 6, its Health is 8, and its level is 4. The Guide must roll 6 or lower for the Yeti to remain conscious. The Guide rolls 3. The Yeti is conscious and decides to run away. The player characters choose to let it go.

# Mojo

## Using Mojo

Any use of mojo during play must be justified from the character's backstory, or from what the character has been doing. Players should generally plan ahead if there is a specific skill or weapon specialization that they want and work this into their character's actions.

## Abilities

Increasing an ability by one point costs three times the current ability score. Increasing the character's archetypal ability costs only twice the current ability score. If the player wants a specialty, and the character is only one point away from an ability requirement for that specialty, the player can increase that ability by spending only the current ability score. For example, if a warrior has a 17 strength and the player wants the Exceptional Ability specialty, they can increase their strength by spending 17 mojo when they choose that specialty.

## Fields and skills

New fields cost 11 mojo. The field comes with one skill and is at +1. Increasing a field by +1 costs four mojo, plus the current bonus. For example, increasing a field from +2 to +3 will cost six mojo.

Adding a skill to a field costs five mojo. Some fields will be partially restricted to certain archetypes. Archetypes other than the preferred archetype, if they are allowed to gain skills in that field, can do so for seven mojo.

If reasonable from the character's backstory, players can buy skills and field bonuses immediately before making a roll where that skill and/or field can help. When bought immediately before rolling, the player will gain the mojo spent as a bonus on that roll.

## Fighting Art

Fighting Art is partially restricted to warriors. New weapon skills cost five mojo for warriors and seven mojo for non-warriors.

The Fighting Art bonus cannot be increased using mojo; it can only be increased by increasing the character's level.

## Rolls

After the failure of any d20 roll involving any of the character's archetypal rolls is announced, the player may choose to bid a specific number of mojo to change the outcome of the roll. If that amount as a bonus would make the roll successful, the necessary mojo is lost (excess mojo is kept by the player) and the outcome is reversed. If the bonus would not alter the success of the roll, no mojo is lost.

Archetypal rolls are rolls against the archetypal ability, the archetypal reaction, a roll involving a specialty, or a roll involving an archetype's special abilities: combat for warriors, picking pockets for thieves, casting spells for sorcerors, etc.

Mojo use to affect rolls is always *useful*. If a player successfully affects a roll using mojo, the results of that roll must be useful. It must matter to the character's success in the adventure. For example, if a Monk uses mojo to affect a surprise (Perception) roll, they will receive more information than simply "you hear a noise". They will receive useful information about the nature of the danger.

If the action that the character is taking is simply not useful to the adventure, and the player uses mojo to be successful at the action, the Adventure Guide will say so and the player will have the opportunity to withdraw that bid. This is the only time that a player can withdraw a successful mojo bid.

### Mojo experience

When mojo is used to affect an archetypal roll during the course of an adventure, the character gains experience points: 50 experience points per mojo used. These experience points are gained immediately.

If the character gains enough of this experience to go up a level, the level change occurs immediately. The benefits of the level change occur immediately only if the player has pre-planned them. If the player needs to ask for advice or assistance, the benefits are gained only after the current scene completes.

For example, if a player bids six mojo to succeed on a failed roll, and needs to spend four mojo, their character gains 200 experience points.

### Mojo increases

If the amount of mojo spent to turn a failed roll into a success is as much as is needed to gain a new bonus or skill in the appropriate field (or even to gain an appropriate field), the character gains that bonus, skill, or field.

For example, a player whose character has *Language Science* at +1 is told that their roll to read an ancient manuscript has failed. The player bids seven mojo to succeed. They need six mojo to succeed. Since it would have cost only 5 mojo to increase Language Science to +2, the character's Language Science is now at +2.

## Practical Mojo

Characters can practice to gain and enhance skills, learn spells, and research spells. Non-archetypal non-player characters will gain all of their skills through practice. Characters study, train, or practice to acquire mojo that works the same as the mojo they receive for advancing in level. However, practical mojo is specific: it must be dedicated to a specific skill or spell during the learning process. If the character has a specialty that uses mojo, practical mojo may be dedicated to that purpose as well.

Practical mojo never offers bonuses to rolls when used.

Practical mojo may only be used for skills, spells, and specialties. It may not be used for other purposes, such as increasing ability scores, weapon familiarities, or weapon specialization.

## Normal study

Characters may practice or study in order to gain one mojo per week. Mojo points cost one monetary unit each for study or exercise materials and instruction. Training in this manner precludes adventuring or any sort of regular, full-time job.

## Free-time study

Characters may also gain one mojo for every month of free-time study. Training in this manner precludes excessive travel, such as adventuring, but does not preclude any sort of a normal job that allows for free time of at least two hours almost every day in the same place. Mojo points gained in this manner cost two monetary units per mojo gained.

Characters may use free-time study for up to three things at once, although this will leave no free time for other things.

## Breaks

Days, weeks, and months of study may not be saved up. Only mojo may be saved. Characters may take a total amount of time off of one day (for normal study), half a day (for intensive study), or six days (for free-time study) per mojo.

## Mojo Resources

Resources such as books, libraries, instructors, and schools can provide bonuses to practical mojo. Resources are rated by their mojo rating and the field or fields that the rating covers. This is the maximum number of mojo that a resource can provide to any one character. A really good magical library might have a mojo rating of 140 for researching magic. A highly-regarded and detailed book on Roman etiquette might have a mojo rating of 10.

Mojo resource	Mojo rating
General (skill) book	1-7
Specialized (skill) book	1-12
General library	30-100 (100-15,000 books)
Specialized library	50-150 (100-5,000 books)
Tutor	level or bonus difference, times ten
School	30-150

Only one book, library, tutor, or school may be used at a time, although different kinds of mojo resources may be combined.

Mojo resources may be “mined” for mojo at a rate that increases according to the mojo resource’s rating. A mojo resource of rating 10, for example, will grant 1 mojo per week of normal study, or per month of free-time study.

If the character is using multiple resources, add all ratings together.

Mojo rating total	Mojo bonus
1	1 per 4 time periods
2	1 per 3 time periods
4	1 per 2 time periods
8	1 per time period
16	2 per time period
32	3 per time period
64	4 per time period
128	5 per time period
256	6 per time period
512	7 per time period

For example, a character using a Mojo rating 60 (intelligence skills) library to assist in their study of philosophy will gain three mojo per week or month of study. If they are also studying under a tutor whose philosophy score is two higher than theirs, that will add twenty to the total, for a mojo rating of 80. This will give them four mojo per week or month of study.

Mojo resources will often have usage fees. Library may require payments for the use of their books, and tutors may require payment for their teaching services. Such payments will generally vary from zero to ten monetary units per mojo bonus that the resource would grant on its own.

When a character gains mojo from a limited resource, such as a book, the resource loses that mojo *for that character*. Players whose characters make use of such mojo resources will need to record how much mojo remains in that resource for them.

Active resources, such as libraries, tutors, and schools, that are continually acquiring new books, do not lose mojo.

## Intelligence

A character's intelligence, as a major contributor, shifts the Mojo bonus up or down on the Mojo bonus chart when the character is using at least one mojo resource. A character with an intelligence of 15, for example, studying from a book with a mojo rating of 5, will be able to mine that book at 3 mojo per time period rather than 1 mojo per time period.

Below "1 per 4 time periods" are "1 per 5 time periods", "1 per 6 time periods", etc.

## Intensive Study

Characters may gain zero mojo for every two days of intensive study. A mojo resource of some kind is required for intensive study. Mojo points gained in this manner cost three monetary units per mojo gained. Characters may not engage in intensive study for more than half Wisdom days at a time. After intensive study, the character may not engage in intensive study for at least the same period.

Intensive study allows for absolutely no free time. Mojo points gained from intensive study must be used within Intelligence days or they are lost.



# Actions and Consequences

Most of the time, you'll use contests and conflict to resolve what the characters attempt to do. Especially when the characters are involved in a contest of some kind you'll want to avoid real-world numbers because they'll bog down the game. If a character chases a monster, the appropriate resolution will be an Agility contest (as described under Chases) rather than a calculation based on the varying Movement rates of the characters involved.

## Aging

In a long-term campaign, characters might start getting old. Some players might choose to play an older character as well.

At age 40 plus endurance, and every year afterwards (modified by endurance as a special contributor), a character will gain an unhealable injury point. The player (or guide, for NPCs) can choose to trade an injury point for a one-point loss in an ability as long as that ability is still above one.

## Ailments: Sickness, Disease, and Poison

Most ailments a player character will encounter are poisons, but they may also represent sickness, or the effects of recreational drugs such as alcohol.

### Ailment strength

Each ailment has a *strength*. Players must make reaction roll at a penalty of the strength of the ailment, or the ailment takes effect. Most poisons will have a strength of from zero to four.

If the character definitely imbibes or injects or otherwise takes the ailment inside, there is a penalty of four to the reaction roll to contract the ailment, and the reaction used is Health. Otherwise, the reaction used is Perception (if the character can avoid the ailment simply by knowing it exists, such as drinking poisoned wine) or an Evasion roll (if someone else is attempting to do it to an unwilling victim, such as with a poisoned sword).

### Ailment effects

Each ailment has an *effect*. This is what happens to a character if they succumb to the ailment. Poisons will usually have an effect of *injuring* the character by d2, d3, or d4 injury points. The effects take place after the *action time* of the ailment. Poisons often have an action time of one round: they take effect at the end of the round in which they were contracted.

Some effects are *temporary*. Once the ailment is gone, the effects go also. Ailments that affect concentration or cause unconsciousness are usually temporary. Most effects are permanent, in that they remain even after the ailment is gone and only disappear through the normal healing process. Injury points remain even after the poison takes effect, for example. The character must heal as normal.

Some ailments are *chronic*. Once the character ails, the ailment stays with them and continues to affect them until they can throw off the ailment. At each action time, the player makes a Health roll. If they succeed, they are no longer affected by the ailment. If they fail, they take the effects again, adding to any previous effects of the ailment. The strength of the ailment will fade over time: the strength is reduced by one for each action time. When an ailment is chronic, its effects are cumulative. For example, if a character has been affected by *giant spider* poison three times, they'll be paralyzed for 3d4 minutes.

Some ailments are *inescapable*. The character can't just succeed once, they need to keep succeeding for every action time of the ailment. Gasses in an enclosed space are often inescapable, for example. There is no roll to throw off an ailment that is inescapable: the roll per action time is only to see if the ailment affects the victim. The strength of a chronic, inescapable ailment will only start to fade once the cause of the ailment is removed (the gas is dissipated or the character is removed from the gassy area). The strength of inescapable ailments increases by one for every successive action time.

### Example ailments

Ailment	Type	Strength	Action Time	Effects
Alcohol	Temporary	-1	20 min	-1 charisma, wisdom, agility, skills, reactions, concentration
Common Cold	Chronic Temporary	1	1 day	-1 concentration
Food Poisoning	Chronic	3	1 hour	1 injury, -1 concentration
Black Widow		0	30 min	d2 injuries
Giant Spider	Chronic	4	1 round	d4 minutes paralysis
Huge Spider		2	1 round	d3 injuries
Large Spider		1	1 round	d2 injuries
Shadow Spider		1	2 rounds	d6 injuries

## Chases

When one character attempts to chase or escape another character, this becomes a contest. The characters will generally make an *agility* roll, with appropriate skills modifying the roll. A success by one character and a failure by the other means that the chase has concluded: the escaping character has escaped, or the pursuer has caught up with their quarry.

If one character has a significantly higher movement than the other character, that player gains a bonus to their roll of one for every difference of three in their movements.

Groups chasing an individual will often use the *group effort* rules.

## Concentration

Some spells, spirits, and psychic powers require *concentration*. While engaged in such an activity, a character may move at no more than half movement, and may not attack or initiate other actions (such as other spells) while concentrating. Their defense is at a penalty of 1.

Anyone engaged in an activity which requires concentration for more than a round, such as a sorcerer, monk, or prophet, may break concentration if they are attacked. If successfully attacked, they must make an Evasion roll or their concentration is broken.

## Falling

Height	Damage	Time	Evasion
0-10 feet	1d6	1 second	Negates
11-30 feet	2d6	2 seconds	Halves
31-60 feet	3d6	3 seconds	No effect
61-100 feet	4d6	4 seconds	
101-150 feet	5d6	5 seconds	
151-210 feet	6d6	6 seconds	
211-280 feet	7d6	7 seconds	
281-360 feet	8d6	8 seconds	
361-450 feet	9d6	9 seconds	
+50 yards	No Increase	+1 second	

Under normal circumstances, characters lose d6 survival points for the first ten feet fallen, another d6 for the next twenty feet, another d6 for the next thirty feet, another d6 for the next forty feet, and so on. In normal circumstances, there is a maximum of 9d6 damage for falling 450 feet or more.

The character takes 1 second to fall for every die of damage. Under normal circumstances, the character will be falling an even fifty yards per second after 450 feet (150 yards, or 5 seconds). These numbers may vary across worlds.

Under ten feet, a successful Evasion roll will negate the damage. Under thirty feet, a successful Evasion roll will half the damage.

One point of survival point loss for every die rolled goes directly to Injury Points. (unless, for falls of thirty feet or less, the character makes their Evasion roll).

## Illusions

Illusions cause no damage unless there is a phantasmal component to the illusion. Mere light shows will not result in victims losing survival points. The illusion must dig into the victim’s mind and coerce it into damaging its own body.

While phantasmal damage is not real, it is real enough to the victim. Phantasmal damage has all of the effects of real damage until the victim makes a successful reaction roll to know that the damage is illusory, or until the victim falls unconscious. Unconsciousness occurs as normal, but bleeding will never occur after unconsciousness. On falling unconscious or on determining that the damage is illusory, the character will “regain” all but one tenth of the phantasmal damage (round the one tenth up, so that there is a minimum of one point lost). It takes one full round to regain the lost survival points.

Despite the increased survival points, unconscious characters will not immediately regain consciousness; while their body is no longer actively hurting itself, it has still switched to a “healing” sleep, a normal deep sleep.

While phantasmal damage rarely kills, a character that fails a reaction roll that would normally result in death if the phantasmal damage were real will be in shock. Their unconsciousness is severe, and cannot be “cured” except with a full night’s rest or magical healing.

“Invisible” damage, such as poison, will almost never take effect. The character’s reaction roll against such effects (if they understand that the effect is in fact possible) are at a bonus of 10. If the character has no way of knowing that such an effect is possible, there is no chance of them taking damage from it.

Players will often want their characters to “disbelieve” things that they think might be illusions. There are two ways of doing this. The normal way is through a Perception roll. The character is actively looking for things that indicate the “thing” is not real, but an illusion. The character is looking for errors in the illusion’s creation. This is often not successful, because it is the character’s mind that is creating part of the illusion. More powerful phantasmal spells will provide penalties to the roll for this reason. Characters may not attack or concentrate on any other action while disbelieving in this way, but they may defend as normal, and are allowed any reaction rolls against possible effects. It takes one round to disbelieve an illusion in this manner.

The second way of “disbelieving” a possible illusion is through a Willpower roll. The character is so certain of the illusion that they are willing to stand and accept the illusion’s effects—because they believe there won’t be any. This is dangerous, because if the effect is not illusory, the character not only will take damage, but will *accept* the damage. The character is foregoing any reaction rolls to ameliorate the effects of the possible illusion, and is foregoing any attempts at dodging it. If it is an illusion, however, and the Willpower roll is successful, the character not only disbelieves the illusion, but also grants a bonus of 2 to other characters’ attempts to disbelieve using their Perception.

The penalties to disbelieving are usually halved for a Willpower roll.

In some cases, a poorly designed illusion will allow an immediate Perception roll to disbelieve. Most of the time, however, players must request a reaction roll of either kind to be allowed one. Their characters may receive a bonus to the reaction roll if circumstances make it obvious that this is an illusion.

## Item Reactions

Material	Fire	Bludgeon	Acid	Bonus
Glass	+8	0	+16	quarter inch
Ice	0	0	+8	half inch
Metal	+6	+5	0	quarter inch
Paper	-2	+6	+8	half inch
Stone	+8	0	+10	inch
Wood	0	+3	+5	inch

Under normal circumstances, items do not have to worry about reaction rolls: items don’t react. If the character survives an attack, items that the character carries also survived, except possibly in cases of called attacks.

If items are not carried, are carried by an unconscious individual, or are carried by an individual who gains injury points as a result of the attack in question, and the attack might well affect the item (for example, a *Great Ball of Fire*, or a fall from a great height), then the player or Guide must make a

reaction roll for important items. The reaction used is generally Fortitude, against four, with bonuses or penalties depending on the material and the attack form. If the reaction roll fails, the item takes damage as normal.

Items also gain a bonus depending on their thickness at the point of impact. Beyond the bonus thickness, they gain a bonus of one; for each doubling, another bonus is gained. So, glass will gain a bonus of one at a quarter inch, a bonus of two at a half inch, a bonus of three at an inch, a bonus of four at two inches thick, etc.

Items usually have a number of survival points equal to their weight in pounds, though characters and attacks can focus on specific points of an item so as not to have to destroy all survival points in order to, for example, break an item in half or punch a hole through an item.

## Jumping

Characters can normally jump as high or as far as half their height. If they wish to jump further, an agility roll, with strength as a major contributor, and a penalty of the extra desired feet (for a long jump) or twice the extra desired feet (for a high jump) is required. Failure means that the jump falls short; the character jumps only as far as normal.

Characters with a running start can jump further (but not higher). If a character has a running start of at least three times the distance they wish to jump, they may jump as far as their height. They can jump further as above, with a penalty of the number of extra yards desired.

## Movement

Characters can move according to their Movement rating. In combat, a character can move this many feet along with attacking. A character can also *dash* up to this many yards during a combat, in place of attacking or performing any other special combat maneuver. *Dashing* characters have a penalty of 1 to any reactions. Attackers in range at any point during the dash gain a bonus of 4 to attack them.

Inside of combat, characters may only move at combat speed or at a dash. Outside of combat (if there are no combatants within reach) characters may explore, walk, jog, run, or sprint. There are bonuses to attack such characters.

Speed	yards per minute	feet per round	time base	reactions	attack
Semi	movement	half movement	endurance rounds	-	-
Combat	twice movement	movement	endurance minutes	0	0
Explore	4 times movement	twice movement	endurance times 10 min	0	4
Dash	6 times movement	3 times movement	endurance minutes	-1	4
Walk	10 times movement	5 times movement	endurance times 30 minutes	-3	7
Jog	20 times movement	10 times movement	endurance times 5 minutes	-8	8
Run	30 times movement	15 times movement	endurance minutes	-13	9
Sprint	50 times movement	25 times movement	endurance rounds	-23	10

The “reaction” listed above is the penalty the character has to reaction rolls while moving at that speed. The “attack” listed is the bonus that opponents have on their attack rolls when attacking the character moving at that speed.

At normal ‘exploration’ speed, such as in a dank cave or moving through an abandoned castle, characters will walk very slowly, observing their surroundings carefully for concealed, hidden, or secret things, as well as performing simple mapping. Characters who move at normal walking speeds or faster will generally not receive reaction rolls to avoid traps or find hidden items, or may receive penalties to those rolls according to the “reactions” column. Those reaction penalties also apply to most any reaction roll.

“Semi” is a special movement for characters who are semi-conscious.

## Contests

These movement rates are used only for tactical movement (such as characters maneuvering for position in combat) or for uncontested distances. In any case where a character is trying to chase or capture another character, ability rolls or reaction rolls are more appropriate.

## Rest

Characters will usually want to rest for ten minutes following the appropriate time base for their movement speed. If they wish to force themselves to continue moving with no rest, the player must make a Health roll. There is a bonus of two on this roll for each reduction of their Movement (for the entire period) by 1. There is a penalty of two on this roll for each previous movement Health roll since last resting. The Health roll may also be penalized for not drinking enough water or salt, by up to four. (At jogging speeds, the character should be drinking about two quarts of water per hour.)

If the Health roll is failed, the character gains an injury point.

For reference, walking speed is approximately a third of Movement miles per hour, and characters should rest for ten minutes following half endurance hours.

## Moving Carefully

If characters decide to move more slowly, the reaction penalty with regards to searching, seeing hidden things, etc., is reduced by one for every two that they drop the movement multiplier by, to a minimum of a zero penalty.

## Daily Movement

Under perfect circumstances, a character will be able to walk twice their Movement in miles per day. Forests and hills can easily halve that (to Movement in miles per day), and bogs and thick undergrowth slow it to a quarter of that (half Movement in miles per day). Characters should rest for a half day following half endurance days of such walking, but may push themselves forward as above. A failure means that the character must rest for half a day plus a number of half days equal to the amount the roll was missed by, before Movement returns to normal.

Characters can increase their daily movement by 50%, but this will incur a Health roll. On a failure, the character gains one injury point for that day.

## Searching

Searching is generally a matter of making a perception roll, with penalties appropriate to the difficulty of finding the hidden item. Searching often takes time, probably about two minutes for every 3 by 3 yard area. Depending on circumstances, characters may be able to do better if they take longer, and can certainly do worse if they hurry.

## Semi-consciousness

A semi-conscious character is vaguely aware of their surroundings. They may not use any agility bonus to defend against attacks (agility penalties apply as normal) but are not at any bonus to be hit as unconscious characters are. They move and think very slowly.

A semi-conscious character may not initiate any action except movement. If directed to do something, the semi-conscious character may choose to follow that direction; if asked a question, they may choose to answer. In either case, the player must make a Willpower roll or take 1d4 rounds to react or reply.

Semi-conscious counts as unconscious for Death rolls.

## Suffocation

Characters without a useful air supply will eventually suffocate. The character must make a health roll every two rounds or lose 1d4 survival and fall unconscious. There is an additional penalty of one to this roll after two rounds, and every two rounds thereafter.

If the character is prepared (is able to take a deep breath) they have a suffocation buffer of six rounds, modified by Endurance as a major contributor. Otherwise, they have a suffocation buffer of 1d4 rounds, modified by Endurance as a minor contributor. For characters with low endurance, it is possible to have no buffer.

During the buffer period, the character may act as normal.

## Tracking

Tracking is much like searching, but it takes place over a space of time and distance. There is a penalty of one to the Perception roll for every day that has passed since the creature or creatures passed, and a standard bonus according to the size of the group that is being tracked. The successful tracker will generally also know incidentals such as how long ago the creatures passed.

Characters may also attempt to cover their own tracks. This is also a Perception roll. Successfully covering their own tracks gives a penalty to the Perception rolls of those trying to track them, of the amount the player made their Perception roll by.

## Upkeep and Living Expenses

General, basic living expenses can be covered by a single monetary unit every day. Poorer living expenses can be covered by as little as a monetary unit every week, but this is not how adventurers normally prefer to live.

More extravagant living expenses can run ten or even a hundred monetary units per day.

Weapons and armor must be maintained in good condition. Maintenance on weapons will usually be 10% of the weapon's cost every year. Maintenance on armor will usually be 5% of the armor's cost every month.

Animals have upkeep as well. Riding animals will have an upkeep of 10% of their cost every month. Other animals will have an upkeep of 5% of their cost every month.



# Spells and Spirit Manifestations

## What is the difference?

Spells tend to be flashier than spirits. Spirits are often either subtle or devastating. Where a spell will let a sorcerer cast lightning bolts, a spirit of nature would call lightning bolts from the skies. A spell could cast a ball of fire around a few opponents; a spirit of retribution would destroy an entire village.

## What is the purpose of spirit manifestations?

Spirits manifestations are grants of divine power to a prophet. There are three basic reasons that spirit manifestations are used: to further a plot or plan of a god, to aid the worshippers of a god, and to increase the number of worshippers for a god or pantheon.

Increasing the number of worshippers can be done in two ways: conversion of non-worshippers, and the spread of current worshippers. Sometimes the two will be combined, as when the worshippers of one pantheon defeat the city or state of another pantheon's worshippers. Often, to complete the victory, the winner will tell the loser that their god or gods are really just (a) lesser deities of the winner's pantheon, or (b) different forms of a similar deity in the winner's pantheon. And then some of the losers will believe it and "convert" without it being called conversion.

## Spell Types

There are six different spell types. Most spells are one of those types. A few will be more than one type.

### Mental (Mentalist)

Mental magic controls and shapes a creature's mental reactions. Mental magic can make friends, influence decisions, create illusions, and link minds.

### Summoning (Summoner)

Summoning magic calls on extra-normal forces to do the sorcerer's bidding. The summoner can call on the spirits of the dead or of their corpses, can summon creatures and forces from other planes or places, and can ward creatures from entering a protected area or attacking a protected creature or thing.

### **Divination (Diviner)**

Divination magic seeks out information, detects information, and discovers hidden truths and concealed secrets.

### **Transmutation (Transmuter)**

Transmutation magic alters existing things. It can change shapes, change materials from one type to another, can even change a creature from one kind to another. It can alter a creature's abilities or change physical aspects.

### **Metamagic (Metamagician)**

Metamagic works with and alters other magics. The metamagician can control the effects of spells, work with and modify spell impressions, and even take advantage of another sorcerer's spells.

### **Conjuration (Conjurer)**

Conjuration magic creates physical things from fire, earth, water, and air, the combination of elements that permeate the world. It can make objects or energy, though often its creations are transitory at best.

# Psychic Conflict

Only those who are psychically aware, such as those with the Monk archetype, may engage in or be engaged in psychic conflict.

Attacks are made as normal on a d20, with charisma as a minor contributor. For defense, Monks may use intelligence as a major contributor. Each combatant in psychic combat generally has two actions in each round of combat.

Initiating psychic conflict costs two verve points and gives a penalty of two during the first round. During the first round of psychic conflict, each combatant gains only one action (engaging in conflict took the first action). If a target does not wish to engage in psychic conflict, the two sides can engage in a Willpower contest, with charisma as a minor contributor.

If a combatant chooses to attempt to use a psychic power or to exit the conflict, this choice must be made at the beginning of a round, and no other actions may be performed that round.

Engaging in psychic conflict uses verve. On any action, the character may use up to *Monk* level points of verve for Defense or Attack. If a combatant chooses to *Defend* on their first action, they may choose to leave this defense in place on their next action at no extra cost.

Action	Verve Cost	Notes
Attack	1+	d4 damage, with charisma as a major contributor, plus one per extra verve
Defend	1+	+2 psychic defense per verve
Use a Power	Special	Special
Exit Conflict	0	Make a Reason roll, with charisma as a minor contributor, to successfully disengage from conflict
Enter Conflict	2	Target allowed Willpower roll, with charisma as a minor contributor to avoid engagement

Psychic combatants are somewhat aware of their surroundings; defense and perception rolls for things going on in the “real world” are at a penalty of 4 while in psychic conflict. Movement is one quarter normal. Combatants may speak simply or move at one-half only at a penalty of 3 to psychic defense and attack.

Psychic damage normally comes from verve, but if verve is gone, it comes from survival points. The defender may also choose to take psychic damage from survival points instead of from verve. However, any psychic damage that goes to survival points also *stuns* the victim. They lose all further actions that round and gain the damage done as a penalty to the next round’s actions.

# Group Effort

Characters with similar abilities can join together to focus their efforts on a single task.

The only addition to the rules for Group Effort over individual efforts is a *morale check* to ensure that the group stays together. The morale check occurs at the end of every set of actions that the group takes: the end of every round in conflict, or the end of every roll-requiring action for contests.

When engaging in group effort, the group is treated as an individual, and has full access to the rules for individuals.

## Group Effort Bonuses

Groups gain a bonus to the skill or ability that they are trying to use together. Group effort bonuses can apply to ability rolls, attack rolls, combat movement, and defense. Look up the size of the group on the Group Effort Bonuses chart.

<b>Count:</b>	1	2	4	8	16	32	64	128	256	512	1024
<b>Bonus:</b>	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

The group will also have more than one action per round or turn. The group gains a number of extra actions equal to the bonus.

If individuals have differing scores, the median *score* is used (median means taking the “middle”: if there are five individuals, each with a score of 9, 10, 11, 13, 39, the “median” bonus is 11). If the median is between two numbers, use the average of those two numbers.

The final score is used. If there are two individuals grouping together to work on a history problem, one with an intelligence of 15 and a History bonus of 2, and one with an intelligence of 17 and no bonuses, each has a final score of 17, and that’s what their bonus of 1 will be applied to.

## Mojo

Player characters may have mojo. Any player can bid mojo to make an unsuccessful roll successful if the roll is archetypal for their character. All members of the group effort gain the experience point bonus from mojo use. Only those for whom the roll is archetypal have the potential for field bonus increases or additional skills. In each case each character who gains the benefit gains it as if they had spent all of the mojo used on the roll, not just what they personally spent.

## Group Effort Decisions

Groups can take longer to change their mind than individuals do. When changing their course of action to something that was not in its original plan, a group will take a number of extra rounds equal to their group effort bonus, to complete the change of direction.

If the decision is not in response to the leader, but is rather a natural reaction that an individual might spontaneously make, such as a retreat, the group can make a roll to *avoid* the spontaneous reaction. This will often be a Charisma roll, and the group bonus applies. If the group fails its roll, the decision time will be a number of rounds equal to the amount the roll was missed by, up to a maximum of the group's decision penalty.

## Leaving a Group

Individuals as part of the group have little control over their actions unless they choose to leave their group. Individuals may leave the group at any point that their group has an action. It takes a number of rounds equal to the group effort bonus to leave a group effort.

When an individual leaves a group, the aftermath applies immediately to that individual.

## Leaders

Leaders must make a Charisma roll to convince the group to do something other than what it is already doing. If the leader fails at the roll, the group continues to do what it is currently doing. If the leader succeeds, the group changes its actions. It takes the normal decision time for the group to change its action, but if the leader's Charisma roll was under the necessary score, the amount the leader made the roll by reduces the decision time penalty.

## Mass Conflict

One common use of group effort will be mass conflict . Mass conflict works pretty much just like normal conflict. Any group of individuals with the same weapon/attack form can join together to fight as a unit. Attack rolls, damage, and any other aspect of conflict is all handled as if the unit were a single combatant.

Any individuals that are not known characters can generally be assumed to have an average number of survival points, average attack bonuses, etc.

## Survival Points

The unit has additional survival points equal to the median survival points multiplied by the unit's size on the Group Effort Bonuses chart. A unit of twelve goblins, with 5 survival points median, has a total of 5 survival points, plus 5 times 3 survival points (12 is three on the Group Effort Bonuses chart), or 20 survival points.

Individuals retain their normal survival maximum for any survival they personally lose.

## Taking Damage

Damage is done to the unit as a whole. While it can be assumed that individuals within the unit are dying or falling unconscious during battle, the effectiveness of the unit does not change until the battle is over.

Groups that fall unconscious are no longer a group. Groups that die have been defeated, and are also no longer a group.

## Other Actions

A group is an individual as far as the rules are concerned, and may perform any conflict action that an individual could perform, including special conflict maneuvers, under the control of the leader.

## Aftermath

After the conflict, some of the group might be wounded or dead. Divide the survival points lost by the group by the group bonus for the base injury level.

Each member must make an evasion roll. If unsuccessful, the member gains injury points equal to the base injury level.

If the group had any injury points when disbanded, those apply as a penalty to these rolls.

## Example of Mass Conflict

Toromeen and his friends are escorting villagers away from a band of marauding goblins. There are a hundred goblins hot on the trail of the group and gaining. When they get to a bridge Toromeen volunteers to stay behind and hopefully slow the goblins down, giving the villagers and the rest of the characters a better chance to escape.

**Toromeen** is fifth level. He is a fourth level warrior and a first level prophet. He has chain mail (+4 defense) and uses a battleaxe (d8 damage, +4 for his strength). He has 25 survival points and 31 verve points. As a fourth level warrior, he has +4 to attack, and his strength gives him another +2, for a total of +6 to attack.

**Goblins** are normally level 1 creatures with a +1 to defense, plus whatever their armor is. The median armor for these goblins is leather armor, which gives them another +2. They are using goblin-sized long swords, for 1d6 damage. Their median survival is 5 points. Their movement is 8.

Because there are a hundred goblins, they have a group effort bonus of 6. They gain 6 actions per round, a +6 to attack, a +6 to defense, and a +6 movement (to 14). They gain six times five survival. The goblin army is thus:

*Goblin Army: (Fantastic: 1; Survival: 35; Movement: 14; Attacks: 7, +6 to attack; Damage: 1d6; Defense: +9)*

Tony is going to have to roll 8 or less for Toromeen to successfully damage the goblin army. The Guide will have to roll 13 or less to successfully damage Toromeen, and will get to do so seven times per round.

Toromeen waits at the mouth of the bridge, leaning on his axe, looking down at the army of goblins.

Toromeen has the high ground; this gives him +1 to attack, so he needs to roll 9 or less as long as he maintains high ground.

“Step aside, dwarf. We have no business with you.”

“You do. There is a toll to cross this bridge.”

“What price do you ask?”

“The price is a life. Mine—or yours.”

“We choose the former. That price is easily paid.”

As the goblin chief steps back, Toromeen calls a war spirit to manifest *Holy Weapon* upon his battleaxe.

*Holy Weapon will give him an additional +1 to attack and +2 to damage, for the next five rounds. This means Tony will need to roll only 10 or less to hit the army, and will do d8+6 damage.*

As the front rank of the army storms the bridge, Toromeen yells defiantly and swings his axe into them. The army swarms up the bridge, their short swords poking and thrusting and slicing at the sturdy dwarf, but Toromeen holds his ground.

*Tony rolls 8 to attack, and then rolls 5 for damage, for a total of 11 points damage. The army is now at 24 survival.*

*The Guide rolls 4, 10, 5, 10, 17, 8, and 5 for the army’s seven attacks. Six of the attacks hit. The guide rolls d6 six times, getting 1, 5, 6, 1, 3, and 6. The army does 22 points to Toromeen. Toromeen is now at 9 verve.*

Toromeen and the army clash beneath the hot sun. Toromeen’s axe drips blood as it slams through the horde of goblins again and again. Sword clangs against chain ring, biting into his skin but his ferocity holds the goblins back.

*Tony rolls 11 to attack, and bids 3 mojo to succeed. Since he needs a 10 to succeed, he spends 1 mojo and the attack is a success. He rolls 4 for damage, for a total of 10 points. The goblin army now has 14 survival. The Guide rolls 2, 7, 18, 12, 19, 15, and 20 for the army. That’s three successful attacks. The Guide rolls 1, 3, and 2, for a total of 6 damage. Toromeen now has 3 verve.*

Faced with the dwarf’s tenacity and prowess, the goblins falter. They stumble backwards, away from the bridge. Toromeen’s axe flashes red in the sun as he pushes the advantage further. The army is in complete disarray as it falls before his axe.

*Tony has Toromeen continue the attack. Tony decides to risk converting some attack bonuses to give Toromeen a combat pool. He moves two points in, and converts them to +2 damage. Tony now needs to roll 8 or less to successfully attack the army, but will do d8+8 points damage if he is successful. Tony rolls 10. He bids 3 mojo again, and pays 2 to turn this into a successful attack. He’s burning mojo pretty heavily, but he doesn’t expect to survive so why not use it now? He rolls 7 on d8, for a total of 15 points damage.*

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*This will give the army an injury point. Tony could engage in an Agility contest to see if it happens first, but the Guide tells him not to bother: the Guide had already decided that it is time to see if the goblin army retreats. The army had lost nearly half its survival fighting this dwarf at the beginning of the round. The Guide decides to make a morale check against a Charisma of 7, at a bonus of 6, or 13. The Guide rolls 14, which means that the goblins retreat, and it takes them one round to do so.*

*The goblin army now has no survival and one injury point. The Guide must make a Fortitude roll or the army falls unconscious. Their fortitude is 4. They have a bonus of 6 to the roll (group effort) and a penalty of 1 (injury points). The Guide must roll 9 or less for the army to remain conscious. The Guide rolls 2; the army remains conscious. The Guide must make a Health roll or the army dies. Their health is 4, with the same bonuses and penalties. The Guide must roll 9 or less for the army to remain alive. The Guide rolls 11. Toromeen has defeated the goblin army.*

The goblin army scatters to the wind, leaving their dead and wounded behind. Toromeen climbs back up the bridge and sits, awaiting the next wave, should the goblins return.

### **Aftermath**

The goblin army lost 35 survival and gained one injury. Divided by their group bonus of 6, this is 6 points.



# Appendix

## Why “Gods & Monsters”?

I wrote “Gods & Monsters” because I wanted a very simple role-playing game that nevertheless provided for great complexity as game play progresses. Basically, I was longing for what I had perceived incorrectly as the games of my youth.

Any particular campaign is likely to add their own specialties, skills, spells, and creatures.

## Compatibility with Other Games

“Gods & Monsters” is a mostly compatible with Wizards of the Coast’s “Advanced Dungeons and Dragons” role-playing game, at least their first and second editions. You can use most any first or second edition adventure or game aid with “Gods & Monsters”.

The original version of this document is available at <http://www.godsmonsters.com/>.

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Why release a game as open source? In some of the discussions on the newsgroups, a few people have said that “open” games can serve to homogenize the gaming community, making it easier for gamers to travel from game to game. My hope for open source is exactly the opposite. I want full balkanization of games. You can take this game and chop out all the parts you don’t want, and put in parts that you feel it needs, and someone can come after you and do the same to your work. Any gaming group can take this document and add their own house rules to it—and then release those rules on the net for potential players to read and other groups to borrow and modify from.

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