

Iron Gauntletstm



HEROIC FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

IRON Gauntlets™

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Join us on a quest for adventure without even leaving your home.

All you need is this book, a handful of ten-sided dice, some paper, a pen or pencil, and two or more friends. And if you can't convince your friends to come over, you can always play via the internet using a messenger program, browser-based chat site, message board, or even email.



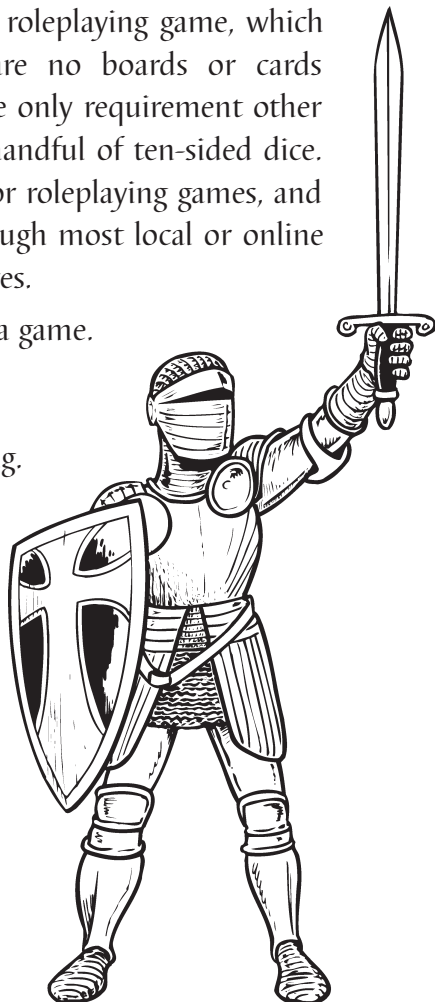
The details of the adventures are left entirely up to your group, but you are not without assistance.

Iron Gauntlets provides all the rules and information you will need to get started, while keeping it simple and not overwhelming you with tons of needless words. But it doesn't end there. Once you get accustomed to the rules and your friends want more, expansion is simple—there is plenty of room for customization. You can add your own twists to the game by designing new abilities, skills, gimmicks, and creatures. Plus, the rules are so versatile that you can easily borrow elements from other games and settings and adapt them to **Iron Gauntlets**. And, finally, if you are looking for a different type of gaming experience, **Iron Gauntlets** is compatible with **Active Exploits Diceless Roleplaying** for a truly diceless gaming experience.

Let us begin...

Iron Gauntlets is a roleplaying game, which means that there are no boards or cards required for play. The only requirement other than this book is a handful of ten-sided dice. These are common for roleplaying games, and readily available through most local or online hobby and game stores.

Once again, this is a game. Its sole purpose is to entertain through interactive storytelling. Don't take it too seriously or you may not be able to fully enjoy the roleplaying experience. Before we get into the actual game, let's just discuss a few concepts—characters, the director, and tasks.



characters

Each player will take on the role of a character, portraying his abilities, skills, personality, background, and so on. This is no different from performing in a play, except that each player picks his own lines; a form of improvisation. A little creativity goes a long way and the more experience you have with roleplaying, the easier it should get. The characters are the most important element of play and develop through the course of the game.

the director

One player must be the director, who acts as referee and narrator. His job is to project the proper atmosphere, advance the plot, and assume the role of all characters in the game not controlled by the other players. Basically, he sets the stage for the players. The director is also an important element because without him, the game would decay into chaos and the story would fall apart.

tasks

Whenever a character attempts to do something out of the ordinary, a dice roll, called a task, is made. Its purpose is to facilitate a balanced method of play and it is the core mechanism for the rules. We will go into more detail about tasks later in the book. The potential to succeed at a task is determined by a number of factors, including ability, skill, and experience.

THE FANTASY SETTING

Fantasy is such a broad term that it can mean almost anything fictional. Iron Gauntlets is intended as a sword and sorcery fantasy setting in which players portray mighty, sword-wielding warriors; cunning, cloak-donned wizards; or even brave, bow-casting elves. The only limit is your imagination.

The setting is intended to be as generic as possible so that it becomes a world of your own creation. At the same time, it is very flexible, allowing customization of the rules with new races, special abilities, and magical powers.

If a custom setting is going to be used for your game, please make sure that it is fleshed out enough so that you can decide on which elements (magic, races, etc.) can be chosen by players when they create characters (this is described a bit later). *If building a custom setting is not your cup of tea, just go ahead and skip to Chapter 1.*

World building can be a daunting task for the director, taking months of patience and devotion to craft the perfect, fully fleshed-out fantasy world which is not only believable, also and interesting and entertaining. The following mini-guide contains important elements to keep in mind when developing a fantasy world for Iron Gauntlets. You can find plenty of sites on the internet for even more detail on fantasy world building, should you be interested.

Even before you set words to paper, you should have a basic idea of the world you wish to create. Start with something that captures the essence of the world. Is it one under siege by forces of evil and chaos? Is it slowly developing into a *golden age of discovery*? Is it one of royalty, power struggles, and espionage?

the physical world

- How different is your world from that of Earth?
- What are typical weather patterns?
- How many continents are located on the planet?
- What are their major geographical features?
- What natural resources exist and how are they utilized?
- Are there any moons in orbit of the planet? If so, do they have religious significance?
- What about constellations?
- What are the seasons for each region?
- What are the most common forms of transportation for each region?

the inhabitants

- What races will inhabit your world and in what ratio?
- Are there any other creatures, such as wild animals or monsters, which inhabit the world? What is their role?
- Do the races have specific cultural and customary rituals, taboos, and mores? How important are they?
- What else is notable about the races? Do they differ from the standard fantasy races included in Iron Gauntlets?

magic levels

- If your world features magic, how prevalent will it be?
- Is there more than one type present (there are three distinct forms of magic in Iron Gauntlets)?
- How does the populace in each region perceive magic?
- Does magic conflict with emerging technology and sciences?

world history

- What are the legends and myths of the world and regions?
- Have any wars defined the world's geopolitical and geographical characteristics?
- What is the current political climate in each region?
- What forms of government can be found in each region (tribal councils, feudal monarchies, representative democracies, etc.)?
- Have any major political events shaped the world or its continents in any way?
- Is world history important to the campaign and in what ways?
- In terms of individual continents, how are relations between countries and kingdoms? Are any currently at war?
- Has history been altered by the victors of wars? Is there a secret history, which, when revealed, would begin a cataclysm?

society and technology levels

- What level of technology exists and does it vary in different parts of the world?
- What about weapons and armor?
- What level of medicine exists and performs healing? Is it based on current scientific principles or is magic involved?
- What level of law enforcement exists on each continent and are there structured legal systems?
- How does trade and commerce operate in the world? Is there a form of currency or is barter preferred? What about trade between countries?
- What range of education is available and what is the average level? Is there specialized education for upper class citizens or does everyone have an equal chance to be educated?
- What calendar or other methods of measuring time are used?
- What are the major festivals and holidays?

culture

Among the various races in your world, what is the cultural significance of the arts, entertainment, leisure, architecture, fashion, and dress, and what forms do each take?

religion

- How does religion exist in the world, and are there different types?
- Are there monotheistic cultures and do some races practice polytheism?
- What gods and goddesses populate the pantheon(s)?
- Are there good and evil-aligned deities?
- Who administers faith in the world?
- Do different races have their own gods and what or who are they?
- Do magic and religion co-exist peacefully, or are they in conflict?

making maps

Once you have decided on key elements of the fantasy world, you may wish to create maps. A visual representation, such as a map, can greatly enhance the feel of the world. There are several different maps to consider: global, continental, political boundaries, etc.

CHAPTER 1

CHARACTERS

SINCE CHARACTERS ARE THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE GAME, WE WILL DISCUSS THEM FIRST. CONCEPTS SUCH AS ABILITY, SKILL, AND BACKGROUND ARE USED TO DESCRIBE A CHARACTER SO THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE IS CAPABLE OF DOING. ONCE THESE CONCEPTS ARE EXPLAINED, WE SHALL MOVE ON TO THE ACTUAL PROCEDURES FOR CREATING YOUR OWN CHARACTERS.

ABILITIES

Abilities represent the potential and raw talent inherent in every character. Each ability is rated on a scale from zero (0) to six (6), although it is possible for creatures to have ratings even higher. This number indicates how many dice are rolled when attempting skills governed by the ability.

ABILITY RATINGS

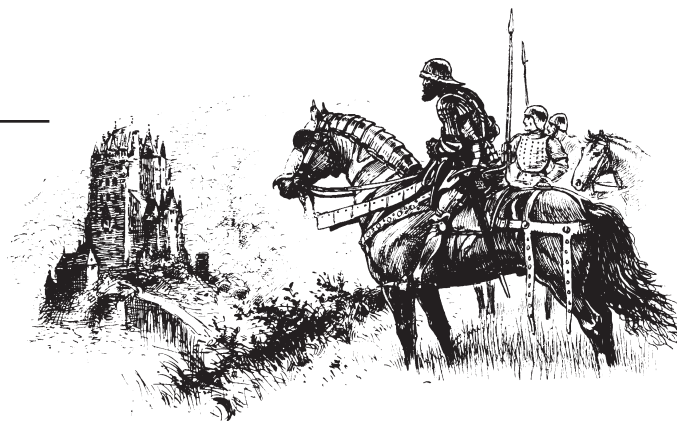
0	Disabled
1	Childlike or Poor Ability
2	Low Average Ability
3	Average Ability
4	Talented
5	Gifted
6+	Unimaginable Ability

fitness

This ability represents the character's strength, agility, and physical health. Skills such as athletics and dueling are governed by fitness. This ability is vital for warriors and other fighting characters.

awareness

This ability represents the character's sensory ability and is the power of observation and intuition. Skills such as gambling and observation are governed by awareness.



creativity

This ability represents the character's spiritual, personal, and artistic affinity. Skills such as forging and masonry are governed by creativity.

reasoning

This ability represents the character's mental ability—logical deduction, rational thought, and memory. Knowledges such as legends and sailing are governed by reasoning.

influence

This ability represents the character's social standing, charisma, and popularity. Skills such as leadership and performance are governed by influence.

luck

This is an unusual ability as it does not govern any skills. Instead, its rating may be reduced in order to increase the odds of any skill task (see task resolution, *page 26*) or decrease the amount of damage sustained (see combat, *page 28*). Luck may be replenished by the director as a reward for good roleplaying (see Chapter 6 for more on this subject).

MAGICAL ABILITIES

Magical abilities are used only by characters who are capable of magic—they must possess a background (*see page 11*) allowing the allocation of points to the relevant magical ability during character creation. This rule may be altered by specific character races, but no character may possess more than one magical ability.

MAGICAL ABILITY RATINGS

0	No Magical Ability
1	Poor Magical Ability
2	Subtle Magical Ability
3	Obvious Magical Ability
4	Talented
5	Gifted
6+	Unimaginable Ability



THE RACES

Arguably, one of the great things that sets fantasy gaming apart from other genres is the collection of different races so typical to the milieu. The races presented in Iron Gauntlets are firmly rooted in their quintessential fantasy stereotypes. Some have

crafting

This represents the character's ability to exploit weaknesses in the fabric of reality in order to weave magical effects. Characters can also use this ability to stabilize reality, thereby blocking the crafting ability of others. Characters with this ability are considered *wizards*, *magicians*, and *sorcerers*.

divinity

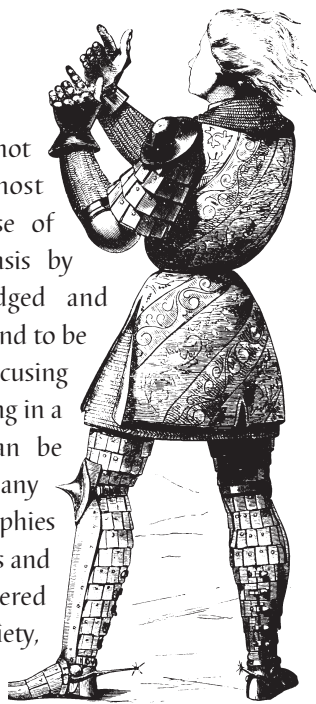
This represents the character's faith and devotion to a deity. A great number of miracles are possible by those with this ability as a result of their connection to the divine. This also gives the character the potential to resist other forms of magic. In order for a character to maintain this ability, he must fulfill certain responsibilities as described in the particular doctrines of his faith, which also includes the regular worship of the deity. Characters with this ability are considered *priests*, *clerics*, and *cultists*.

totem

This represents the character's ability to commune with his spirit guide and travel in the spirit world. This form of magic may be perceived as relatively weak compared to the others, but it is very common, especially with tribal societies. Characters with this ability are considered *shamans*, *wisemen*, and *healers*.

humans

Of all the races, humans are not only the youngest, but the most prevalent and adaptable. Because of these traits, humans are the basis by which all other races are judged and categorized by scholars. Humans tend to be dabblers and generalists, never focusing in any one thing, but rather excelling in a range of disciplines. Humans can be found in nearly any climate and any region. Their outlooks and philosophies are just as divergent as their politics and governments. Males are considered superior to females in human society, except when one of the latter proves herself to be capable and reliable at whatever it is that she does.



The views of humans towards other races can vary greatly. Some towns refuse entry by other races, classifying them as *demon spawn*, while others attempt to enslave halflings and elves, mocking them because of their different values. The majority of humans, however, tolerate their Earthen brethren, but do not consider them equals; prejudice, fear, and plain ignorance abound.

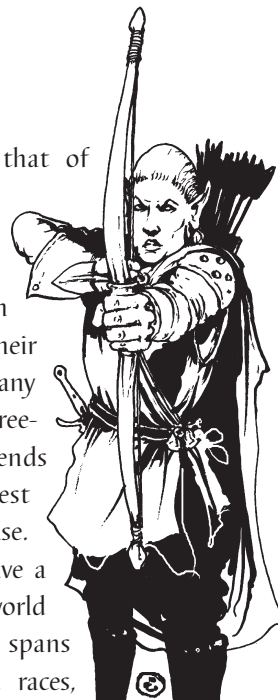
CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

While humans don't have the exotic qualities that the other races do, they are very lucky—all human characters gain an extra point of luck before each gaming session (an episode), provided it doesn't increase a character's luck rating above six (6).

If you'd prefer to spice up the game a bit, try a more interesting race like centaurs or goblins. Alternatively, you could also play an all-human game in which the other races either don't exist or are so fantastic that no human has ever met one.

elves

Having a build sligher than that of humans, Elves are typified by their tall frames, lithe physiques, pointed ears, and almond-shaped eyes. The origins of the elvish people have been long lost to time due, in part, to their extremely long lifespans. Since many elves have been known to live for three-hundred years or more, legends surrounding their culture suggest immortality, but this is not the case. Because of their longevity, Elves have a unique outlook on life, viewing world events with a mindset which spans centuries. Unlike the shorter-lived races, elves will often debate and ponder situations until they are satisfied with the solution. When they do decide to act, they do so very decisively.



Elvish culture is closely tied to nature, so all elves feel a close kinship with it and dislike large urban centers. Their sprawling communities can be found in dense wooded areas, with homes and other structures built high atop tall trees which can support the weight of many.

Elves tend to distance themselves from the affairs of other races, but will ally themselves with them should the need arise, such as during wars or famine. Those who leave the safe confines of their treetop villages, however, are not averse to adventuring with members of the other races, since they value the strength in numbers.

CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

Elves are naturals when it comes to totem magic—the character automatically starts the game with 1 level in the **TOTEM** ability, but may not take any totem-based skills without having the shaman vocation. Elves also possess the **TREEFOLK** background and **FRAIL** gimmick.

DWARVES

Unlike elves, dwarves are sturdy and strong. They rarely grow taller than four feet, but are built solid and muscular. Dwarves also outlive humans, with three-hundred being considered a venerable age. Their love for the earth is cause for them to live in subterranean cities. Many other races consider dwarves greedy, because they love to mine for gems and precious metals. Nonetheless, dwarves are excellent smiths, crafting the most prized armor and weapons.



The dwarves' underground communities span across mountain ranges and within hillocks and foothills. Another important aspect to dwarven culture is the art of battle, which has allowed them to develop a unique fighting style that takes advantage of weapons such as the battle axe and war hammer. Dwarven adventurers and soldiers are also fond of wearing heavy armor, since they are not very quick. And while the armor may make them less mobile, a dwarf would rather trust his life to craftsmanship than to luck.

There is a long-standing hatred between dwarves and orcs, which many believe stems from a legend that maintains orcs were created in the image of dwarves by a Dark God. Dwarves also do not get along well with elves and halflings, who they see as being too lighthearted and flippant. Dwarves are relatively indifferent toward humans.

CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

Dwarves are extremely tough and resistant to crafting magic. Because of this, they possess both the MUSCLEBOUND and RESISTANT (CRAFTING MAGIC) gimmicks. Dwarves also possess the CAVERNFOLK background.

HALFLINGS

Halflings resemble human children, though the similarity ends there. As a race, halflings generally stand between three to four feet tall, with little to no facial hair, large round eyes, curly locks and large feet. Most halflings are also a bit overweight since they are known as great connoisseurs of food and drink.



Halflings are a quiet, private species who want no more out of life than a nice home and something good to eat and drink. Halflings are not overly fond of the wilderness, preferring the safety that a large town provides. This tendency toward civilized life combined with the halfling's love of the finer things discourages many from taking up a life of adventuring. There are exceptions, however.

Halflings generally prefer to establish their communities around low hills and near brooks and streams. Halfling burrows are small dwellings that are built partially underground and usually within the side of a hillock. Large cities may include hundreds of burrows.

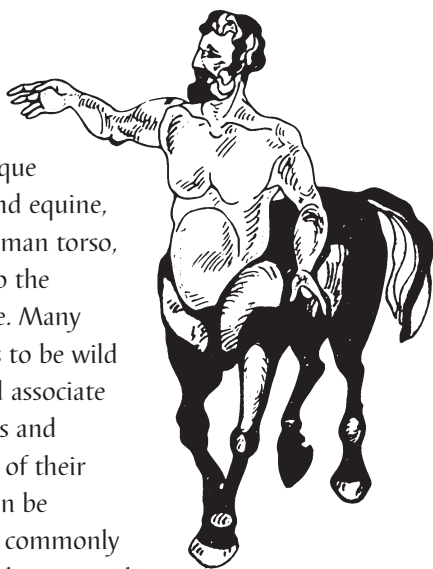
Because of their amiable nature, halflings tend to get along with all the races, although they will distance themselves from irate dwarves; something of a common occurrence.

CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

Since Halflings typically prefer to hide and skulk in the shadows when away from home, they receive a bonus of +2D when using their STEALTH skill for hiding in their natural environment and +1D in their non-native environment (i.e. a Halfling from a woodland community will not be as effective when trying to hide in a desert).

centaurs

Centaurs are the unique combination of man and equine, typically featuring a human torso, head, and arms fixed to the hindquarters of a horse. Many races consider centaurs to be wild and uncontrollable and associate them with drunkenness and debauchery. Regardless of their reputation, centaurs can be formidable opponents, commonly skilled in the use of both spear and bow.



Centaur culture is very eclectic. They dabble in everything, although magic is rare among them. Centaurs typically live in small enclaves surrounded by vast open plains. These enclaves are always home to a single tribe, and once married, the males always become part of the female's tribe, forever cutting ties with those who raised them.

Many centaurs prefer a contemplative life and often become hermits, leaving their sheltered enclaves for the quiet forests or mountain sides. These loners are always despised, as turning one's back on the tribe is one of the worst crimes in centaur society.

Centaurs find the other races to be curiosities and enjoy short adventures away from the tribe with them. They shy away from groups in which there are other centaurs and like to be the center of attention. Centaurs are always suspicious of goblins, because many serve their natural enemies, the orcs.

CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

A centaur's powerful legs allow him to run at great speeds (+2D for determining distances when running) and increase damage rolls by +1D. Because of their awkward frame, however, they possess the OVERSIZED and CLUMSY gimmicks. Hermits gain a penalty of -1D when making contested INFLUENCE rolls against tribal centaurs.

goblins

Goblins are the smallest of the greened-skinned races and are often found in the service of their larger cousins, the orcs and hobgoblins, who use them as slaves for simple tasks. Goblins are not very bright and most stand just under three feet tall. Due to their small stature, goblins often form gangs, preferring to attack opponents in large numbers.

Like dwarves, goblins take shelter underground. Small families live in what they call nests—fortified burroughs interconnected to those of others in their clan. This arrangement results in strong bonds in the immediate family and a sense of community within their clans. Goblins will always come to the aid of their fellow clansmen.

Goblins are not very warm toward other races. This is primarily due to years of slavery by the orcs and hobgoblins. They will work with them if it means riches or protecting their clan, but don't expect goblins to take orders from another race. There is one exception to this rule—goblins who have been cured from illness or rescued from their orc or hobgoblin masters will cling to their saviors and attempt to pay back what they consider to be a life debt.



CHARACTER CREATION NOTES

Goblins possess the SURE-FOOTED and FRAIL gimmicks, CAVERNFOLK background, and their REASONING ability may not go over three (3). Goblins also receive a penalty of -2D on any contested INFLUENCE roll with someone to whom they have a life debt.

BACKGROUNDS

Backgrounds indicate the character's upbringing and family status. A character's future depends on his background, so be careful what you choose.

cavernfolk

The character was raised in caves or underground dwellings. As a result, he has become accustomed to the dark and can see without penalty. The character does receive a penalty of -2D when making AWARENESS rolls in daylight or bright light, however.

cityfolk

The character was raised in a large city, where crime, no matter how rare, does occur. He is familiar with the streets and people which he has seen. It costs one point for every two allocated to the STREETWISE and GEOGRAPHY (THE CITY) skills, and three points for every one allocated to the SURVIVAL skill when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected.

faithful

The character is a member of a church or cult which worships a particular deity or set of deities. Most of these groups travel great distances in order to spread the *word*. The character's faith allows him to call upon divine powers in order to accomplish miracles; points may be allocated to the DIVINITY ability when creating the character.

lord

The character was born into noble blood and as a result has been granted title to his own land. It costs one point for every two allocated to the influence ability or influence-based skills when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected. The character also possesses the WEALTH gimmick.

mountainfolk

The character was raised high in the mountains, where cold weather and a diet of root vegetables and fatty animals are typical all year long. It costs one point for every two allocated to the SURVIVAL skill when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected. The character also possesses the RESISTANT (COLD) gimmick.



nomad

The character was brought up in a nomadic way of life. Nomads *pitch tents* wherever suitable for their livestock to graze, and then once the land's value has been depleted, they simply pick up and leave, in search of better pastures. It costs one point for every two allocated to the RIDING and ANIMAL HANDLING skills when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected.

seafolk

The character was raised on an island or along the coast where fishing, water travel, and trade are necessities. He is familiar with navigating the seas and trading goods with distant neighbors. It costs one point for every two allocated to the BOATING, SAILING, and COMMERCE skills, and three points for every one allocated to the SURVIVAL skill when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected. The character may not possess the divinity, totem, or crafting abilities as his background is not conducive to their development.

slave

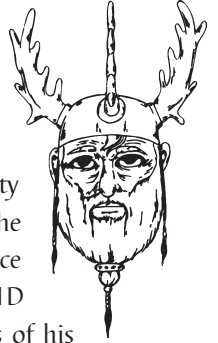
The character is a slave and performs duties as given by his master, a character controlled by either another player character or the director. It costs three points for every one allocated to the **INFLUENCE** ability or influence-based skills when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected.

treefolk

The character was raised in tree-top villages high above the forest's surface. Traversing the narrow bridges and pathways requires a fairly high degree of agility and reliance on athletics—the character possesses the **SURE-FOOTED** gimmick.

tribesman

The character comes from a tribal gathering or village and is not privy to the ways of the city or town. It costs two points for every one allocated to the **INFLUENCE** ability or influence-based skills when creating the character, although raises through experience are not affected. The character also receives +1D on **INFLUENCE** rolls when they relate to affairs of his tribe (it is possible that his fellow tribesmen occupy many provinces or even distant lands).



GIMMICKS

Gimmicks are used to add extra flavor to a character. Instructions for adding them to a character is in the back of this chapter (*see creating characters*).

Blood feud

This gimmick is only available to characters with the lord or tribesman backgrounds. The character is involved in a long-running feud with another noble house or tribe. He can never be allied with anyone from the other feuding party and will always refuse their help. It is unlikely that he will turn aggressive towards them unless provoked, but if he's got the advantage, he just may take a chance. The character receives a penalty of -1D when making non-intimidating influence-based tasks in the presence of an individual or group with which he is feuding.

childe of hell

The character was born from a union of human and orc (or so he tells everyone). His influence ability may not be raised above four and his reasoning ability may not be raised above three. He also receives a bonus of +2D when trying to intimidate someone.

childe of the gods

The character was born from a union of human and god (or so he tells everyone) and is less vulnerable to physical attacks (magical attacks are unaffected). Treat this gimmick as if the character has an armor rating of one (1) against injury and three (3) against fatigue.

clumsy

The character is more awkward on his feet than typical for his fitness ability. Because of this, he receives a penalty of -1D when making rolls dependent on coordinating body movements. This gimmick may only be used by characters with a fitness of 1 or greater.

CURSED RELIC

The character possesses a cursed magical relic. No matter how hard the character tries to get rid of the relic, it always appears on his person. With the director's guidance, choose any one magical item that has a detrimental effect from the list on page 73.

dark aura

The character radiates unsettling vibes which other people and animals can sense subconsciously. All influence-based rolls (except intimidation) receive a penalty of -1D. In addition, animals and primitives will either show aggression toward the character or run away when surprised.

faithless

The character is incapable of believing in a higher power. All divinity-based skills targeting the character receive +3 DIFF and he may not allocate any points to the divinity ability. The group must contain at least one character with the divinity ability.

followers

The character has attracted a following by way of his religious preaching and virtues. The character always has an entourage of a minimum of two people who follow him everywhere in an attempt to become closer to the divine and please the character. Followers must be controlled by the director, who is free to flesh them out as desired. Followers always seem to lack purpose and only wish to find that which is missing from their lives. Because of this, followers are average people with little motivation and may never take central stage—that is the purpose of the player characters. This gimmick can only be chosen if the character possesses the *high priest* vocation.

frail

The character is weaker than normal for his fitness ability. Because of this, he receives a penalty of -1D when making rolls dependent on his strength (including fitness composure rolls). This value also affects damage rolls (see *Determining Damage in the Combat Section*). This gimmick may only be used by characters with a fitness of 1 or greater.

good reputation

The character is well known for being heroic, compassionate, or excelling at his vocation. He receives a bonus of +2D on influence-based skills when interacting with those familiar with his reputation (fellow or neighboring villages, others of the same vocation, etc.).

hideous appearance

The character is horribly disfigured or just plain ugly. He receives a penalty of -1D on influence-based skills at which his appearance plays a part.

infamous

The character's reputation precedes him as a barbarian or sadistic monster. He receives a penalty of -2D on influence-based skills when interacting with those familiar with his reputation, except when attempting to intimidate them, in which case he receives +2D on the roll.

irrational fear

The character is deathly afraid of one specific type of object, creature, or situation. It could be spiders, orcs, or even dark dungeon corridors. Whenever the character is faced with his fear, he must make a reasoning-based composure task in order to

remain calm. A failure indicates that he either cowers in a corner, freezes from panic, or runs away. A note to directors: do not let the character choose something stupid. It should come up in play from time to time.

man's best friend

The character has bonded with a wild dog and treats him as a close friend. The dog requires only food and a little attention in return for continued protection and companionship.

mentor

The character has taken another individual under his wing and is training him in the ways of the crafting ability. This pupil is always at his mentor's side and must be controlled by the director, who is free to flesh him out as desired. The pupil's crafting-based skills may not be raised above four (4), however, since he is still in training. This gimmick may only be chosen if the character possesses the *wizard* vocation.

multilingual

All characters can speak their native tongue, but a multilingual one can speak up to two additional languages.

musclebound

The character is endowed with extra strength not typical for his fitness ability. Because of this, he receives a bonus of +1D when making rolls dependent on his strength (including fitness composure rolls). This value also affects damage rolls (see *Determining Damage in the Combat Section*).

on the run

The character is a fugitive and actively pursued by those he has wronged. These pursuers will always be an active threat and may jeopardize his adventures.

oversized

The character is larger than the typical human. Because of this, all attacks directed at him receive -1DIFF.

poor reputation

The character is well known for being a coward, criminal, or failure when it comes to his vocation. He receives a penalty of -2D on influence-based skills when interacting with those familiar with his reputation.

relic

The character possesses a magical relic. It may have been passed down from his ancestors or bequeathed to him by a dear friend. With the director's guidance, choose any one magical item that has a positive effect from the list on page 73.

resistant

The character is only partially susceptible to a specific substance or magical ability. Resistance against a substance reduces the damage by half (rounding down) when it is inflicted. Resistance against a magical ability (crafting or totem only) causes all relevant tasks to receive +3DIFF when targeting the character for an effect.

squire

The character has been charged with training a squire in the ways of combat. In return, the squire must assist the character in any manner required. This may include carrying weapons when not in use and caring for horses and other equipment. Squires must be controlled by the director, who is free to flesh them out as desired. No more than one squire can be assigned to a character. The squire's combat skills may not be raised above four (4), however, since he is still in training. This gimmick may only be chosen if the character possesses the *lord* background.

striking appearance

The character is extremely pleasing to the eyes. He receives a bonus of +1D on influence-based skills at which his appearance plays a part.

sure-footed

The character is graceful and more agile than typical for his fitness ability. Because of this, he receives a bonus of +1D when making rolls dependent on coordinating body movements.

undersized

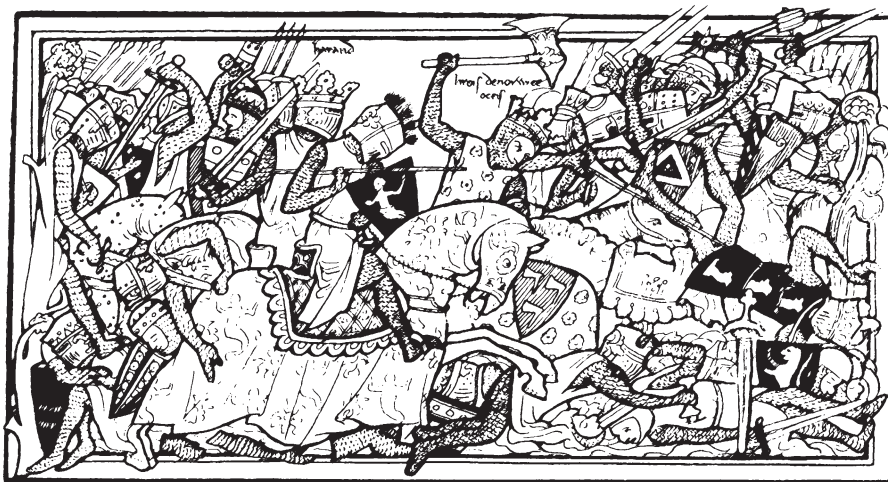
The character is smaller than the typical human. Because of this, all attacks directed at him receive +1DIFF.

vulnerability

The character is extremely sensitive to a specific substance or magical ability. He receives two (2) grades of fatigue when directly exposed and double the normal amount of damage rolls when the contact is the result of an attack.

wealth

The character either comes from an opulent family or has been extremely lucky when it comes to finding treasure. Either way, he begins play with considerably more gold than most people (*see Creating Characters*).



VOCATIONS

Vocations describe what a character has been trained to do in order to earn money, care for his people, or simply survive. Some vocations are dependent on specific backgrounds and may not be chosen if the respective background is not possessed by the character. Each vocation lists a number of skills. These are called vocational skills and reflect his vocation training. More information on how to use vocational skills is available later in this chapter. Vocations are not set in stone. They are guidelines for creating the type of character which interests you. If you do not see a vocation which reflects your desired character, feel free to create a new vocation with the director's assistance.

architect [mason]

The character is a designer and loves to create new structures, such as castles, bridges, and towers. With a good sense for business, he sells his talent to the highest bidder and works for nobility and even kings. No job is too large, but many are too small. Once in a blue moon, however, he likes to venture off in search of new ideas. His favorite source of inspiration is old, long-abandoned ruins.

geography, observation, design, masonry, literacy, commerce

bandit [thief]

Living off the burdens of others, the character steals from the rich, not so rich, poor—it doesn't matter. If the character wants something, he usually makes it his. Typically adept at sneaking around and skulking in the shadows, the character is also a confidence trickster.

dueling, legerdemain, stealth, gambling, commerce, performance, streetwise, subterfuge,

constable [ranger]

Totally at home in the wild, the character is charged with protecting his liege's domain and perimeter. Give the character a knife and a bow, and he can survive anywhere and catch any intruder—poachers and highwaymen mostly.

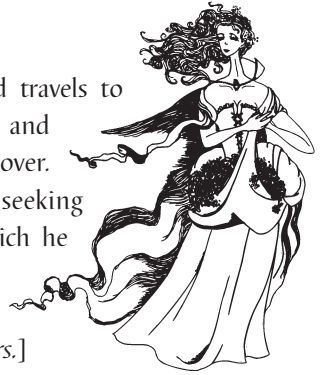
archery, brawling, dueling, riding, stealth, geography, observation, survival, composure



emissary [spy]

The character is a diplomat and travels to distant nations in search of trade and alliances. Actually, that is just his cover. The character is really a spy seeking information about those with which he deals. [**Director:** let the player pick another vocation; this will be his cover and revealed to the other players.]

dueling, legerdemain, riding, stealth, observation, literacy, performance, subterfuge



high priest

The character has pledged his life to the service of a religion or cult, creating a mystical link to the divine. He presides over his congregation of followers and seeks only to bring about their ascension to the divine. Points may be allocated to the divinity ability when creating the character. This vocation can only be chosen if the character also has the *faithful* background.

sacrament, design, effigy, literacy, legends, leadership, performance, benediction, all divinity-based skills

holy knight [cleric]

The character is in service to a congregation or higher religious authority. He protects them from attack and often joins crusades to cleanse the land of unholy invaders. Points may be allocated to the divinity ability when creating the character. This vocation can only be chosen if the character also has the *faithful* background.

athletics, brawling, dueling, melee, riding, sacrament, literacy, leadership, benediction, consecration, gospel, composure



hunter

The character makes a living by hunting animals in the wild and selling them at town markets. The use of traps is essential in order to catch enough animals to make his market profitable. For larger prey, the character can easily be patient and wait for the perfect opportunity to strike. The smaller prey is left to traps.

archery, dueling, stealth, geography, observation, forging, animal handling, boating, survival, commerce, subterfuge

man at arms

A natural fighter, the character signed up with a local militia at a young age, so he could defend his town. He is always on call, but has enough freedom to live his own life, separate from the militia. Spears and pole axes are the standard weapons of the militia.

brawling, melee, riding, survival, commerce, leadership, streetwise, composure

merchant

A born trader, the character can spot good deals easily and is knowledgeable in the transportation of goods, lay of the land, and negotiating.

geography, literacy, boating, commerce, performance, streetwise, subterfuge



prophet

The character has always shared his insight with others. Of late, however, the divine has been speaking through him; warning all blasphemers that they must change their ways. In the past, he has only shared his knowledge with those whom requested it. Now, however, he must steer everyone toward the path of truth.

astromancy, legends, leadership, performance, benediction, effigy, prophecy, gospel

SCRIBE (BARD)

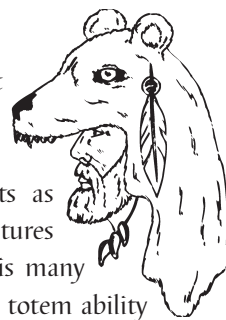
The character is a writer, storyteller, artisan, and musician. He dabbles in anything creative and seeks to bring joy to not only his life, but also that of his compatriots and countrymen. Warriors and knights often employ bards to write epic stories and poems about their exploits on the battlefield. For this reason, bards are always found near battles.

geography, astromancy, crafting, design, instrument, literacy, legends, medicines, leadership, performance

shaman

The character has undergone the right of passage of traveling to *the beyond* and returning with the help of his spirit guide, to which he has now bonded. He acts as spiritual leader of his tribe and often ventures into the wild in search of answers to his many questions. Points may be allocated to the totem ability when creating the character. This background can only be chosen if the character also has the *tribesman* background.

astromancy, design, ritual dance, legends, medicines, leadership, all totem-based skills, composure



TRIBAL ELDER

The character is a born leader and has led his tribe into battle and victory many times over. He now serves as a pillar, the foundation by which holds his tribe together. He solves conflicts and forges treaties with other tribes and cultures. But, a leader is only in power as long as his people are happy. Another individual with ambition could potentially topple the pillar. This vocation can only be chosen if the character also has the *tribesman* background.

archery, brawling, melee, geography, crafts, ritual dance, animal handling, legends, survival, leadership, composure

WARRIOR

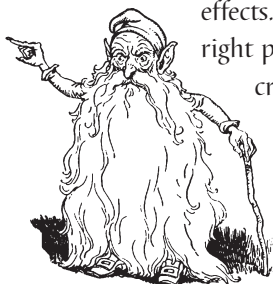
When war breaks out, the character is called to defend the tribe. He is brave, honorable, and revered. When all is peaceful, the warrior serves to explore and expand the tribe's wealth. He also acts as enforcer for the tribal leader's justice.

archery, athletics, brawling, dueling, melee, riding, animal handling, legends, survival, composure

WIZARD (mage)

The character has the latent ability to sense weaknesses in the fabric of reality and with the proper training, can create magical effects. He seeks only wisdom and often lends his services for the right price. Points may be allocated to the crafting ability when creating the character.

circumscription, design, forging, literacy, alchemy, all crafting-based skills



SKILLS

Skills represent general knowledge, training, and fields of study. Each skill is governed by a single ability (or special ability) and rated from two (2) to eight (8). The governing ability does not have to be used for all rolls, however. If another ability is more appropriate for a specific task, then it should be used in the governing ability's place. Any skill may be attempted unskilled unless it has a ⊗ next to it.

For example: *A character drawing a map would normally use the design skill with creativity. If he was attempting to draw a perfect circle, though, his manual dexterity is more important. Therefore fitness would be used in place of creativity.*

SKILL RATINGS

2	Undertrained
3	Novice
4	Capable
5	Proficient
6	Seasoned
7	Professional
8	Expert

fitness-based skills

Archery

Using and constructing crossbows, bows, and arrows.

Athletics

Climbing, swimming, throwing objects, performing acrobatic stunts, and dodging attacks.

Brawling

Punching, kicking, grappling, and parrying.

Dueling

Fighting an opponent using small-reaching, hand-to-hand weapons such as knives, swords, and clubs.

Legerdemain

Picking locks and pockets, performing slight of hand tricks, and contorting one's body.

Melee

Fighting an opponent (particularly in battle) using long-reaching hand-to-hand weapons such as staves, mauls, and great swords. This also includes the use of shields for attacking.

Riding

Controlling and riding horses and other domesticated beasts.

Stealth

Moving quietly and inconspicuously, and knowing where to find the best cover (hiding).

awareness-based skills

Gambling

Playing games of chance and deducing the odds of winning in a given situation. This also covers bluffing when this skill is used with INFLUENCE instead of AWARENESS.

Geography

The knowledge of a specific area's landscape. This also covers predictions of where natural and man-made bodies such as valleys and wells may be found given the scenery provided.

Observation

The art of investigation and surveillance—noticing clues, traps, and suspicious individuals.

Sacrament

The ceremony of pledging one's oath to his deity in exchange for divine assistance.

creativity-based skills

Astromancy

Determining the future based upon the movements of the stars. While this method is not entirely accurate, subconscious predictions are possible based upon the surroundings and the actions of others. The director must determine the amount of information available, but each use of this skill requires analysis for a minimum of twenty minutes.

Circumscription

The technique of marking circles for use in magical castings.

Crafts

Shaping and baking clay pottery.

Design

Painting, drawing, mapping, sculpting, engraving, and forgery.

Effigy

The creation of idols for use with benediction and other divinity-based skills.



Forging

The forging of crude metallic alloys such as bronze for the purpose of making weapons, armor, chains, and tools.

Instrument

Designing and playing musical scores with specific instruments. Each type of instrument is a separate skill.

Masonry

Designing and constructing buildings, towers, and bridges.

Literacy

The art of language and literature: reading and writing. This also covers analyzing the written word when used with REASONING instead of CREATIVITY.

Ritual Dance

Coordinating and officiating over a ritual of rhythm, song, and dance. This is mostly used for totem rituals.

Reasoning-Based skills

⊗ Alchemy

Mixing base elements through conditions of extreme heat, such as in a boiling caldron, in order to create a brew with specific properties. See *Brews in the Equipment Section*.

Animal Handling

Herdng, treating, training and breeding animals.

Boating

Building and navigating small wooden sea vessels, such as canoes, rafts, or rowboats. This also covers steering boats when used with FITNESS in place of REASONING.

Legends

The knowledge of superstitions, fairy tales, and myths.

⊗ Medicines

Using plants and other organic materials to heal and treat the wounded or ill. See *Brews in the Equipment Section*.

Sailing

Navigating sailing vessels on the high seas.

Survival

Staying alive in the wilderness: building shelters, locating food sources, hunting, and following paths.

Influence-Based skills

Commerce

The art of making deals: one character must profit, while the other believes he has done the same. This also covers the knowledge of market prices, trade routes, and jewelry or gem appraisal when used with REASONING in place of INFLUENCE.

Leadership

Delegating responsibility and gaining the trust, respect, and loyalty of one's subordinates (also used for intimidation). This can mean the difference between trust and betrayal.

Performance

Oration, singing, acting, and performing on stage.

⊗ Benediction

Preaching and administering prayer to a congregation of at least ten additional participants.

Streetwise

The urban equivalent of the *survival skill*: surviving in a city without food or shelter.

Subterfuge

Concealing one's true motives, disguises, and sabotage.

Divinity-Based skills

Divinity-based skills can not be used by characters if they do not possess the faithful background. More information on these skills is presented in the Magic section.

⊗ Blessing

The instillment of good fortune and inspiration by a deity.

⊗ Consecration

The channelling of divine energy into a structure with the intent to restrict the presence of blasphemy.

⊗ Curse

The instillment of bad fortune and plague by a deity.

⊗ Gospel

The power to embrace one's faith in order to strengthen his resolve and embrace the true reality.

⊗ Prophecy

The power of vision and the deity's use of a character as his messenger.

totem-based skills

Totem-based skills can not be used by characters if they do not possess the shaman vocation. More information on these skills is presented in the Magic section.

⊗ Familiar

Experiencing sensory information from a spirit guide's animal form.

⊗ Sacrifice

Following a departed soul in the spirit world to *the beyond*.

⊗ Skin Walk

Manifesting a spirit guide's animal qualities.

⊗ Spirit Walk

Sensing the real world from within the spirit world.

crafting-based skills

Crafting based skills can not be used by characters if they do not possess the wizard vocation. More information on these skills is presented in the Magic section.

⊗ Fabrica Ge

The manipulation of spacial properties, including size and distance.

⊗ Fabrica Materia

The manipulation of elemental bonds in order to transform and alter various properties, such as strength, appearance, and consistency.

⊗ Fabrica Sensus

The manipulation of perception, using illusions to affect any of the five senses.

⊗ Fabrica Motus

The manipulation of attraction and repulsion, thereby controlling momentum.

⊗ Fabrica Sphaera

The manipulation of magic itself. Due to many flaws in the way magic is used by practitioners, those knowledgeable in this field can both detect and negate other magical effects.

other skills

Composure

Remaining calm in the face of danger, temptation, or habit. This skill is a valuable asset for any character. This also covers the resisting of totem and crafting-based effects by the faithful. See *Composure tasks in the next chapter*.

STYLES

Styles are used to expand the usefulness of skills.

They represent specialized training, encompassing many skills integral to the style's use.

Individually, these skills may be less developed, but together, they form an impressive aptitude. Styles are always dependent on one base skill.



For example: *Dwarves teach their offspring dwarven arts, a style for use in fighting, climbing, and building with axes—a wide array of uses, but it all comes back to the character's ability to wield the axe as a weapon. Therefore this style is dependent on melee as the base skill.*

A character may only possess a style if he is proficient (level five or greater) in the first skill listed (this is the base skill), capable (level four or greater) in the other skills listed, and it fits his background, race, or vocation (this is ultimately up to the director).

When attempting a task, you must determine which skill is used for the roll. This will either be the base skill or one which is also part of the style, but more relevant to the intended action—whichever is higher.

For example: *Swinging an axe at an opponent normally uses the melee skill. In the case of dwarven arts, melee is the base skill anyway, so the choice is simple—the melee skill is used. Now, suppose the character is attempting to construct a new wall using his axe. Normally the masonry skill would cover that action, but if the base skill (melee) is higher, that could be used instead.*

Some styles also include additional rules such as modifiers to rolls and the like. These are only available if the character makes a task roll covered specifically by the style, but not one for which the style clearly isn't intended.

For example: *Dwarves never throw their axes because they value them too much. The dwarven arts style would not be effective for this action and would not receive any modifiers relevant to that style. Indeed, throwing would use the athletics skill, which isn't even part of dwarven arts.*

All experience earned from tasks using styles is distributed throughout the relevant skills at the director's discretion.



fitness-based styles

Cavalry Training

riding, melee, archery

Riding into battle on a trusted steed and attacking opponents by sword, axe, or bow.

Defensive Training

athletics, brawling, observation

Protecting oneself by remaining alert and focused; using shields, dodging blows, and parrying melee attacks.

High Dueling

athletics, dueling, brawling

Using two short swords in single combat. It is common for one sword to be used for attacks, while the other is used for parries and blocks. The actions of both weapons can occur simultaneously. This is primarily used by humans.

Dwarven Arts

melee, masonry, survival

Dwarves are well known to form a bond with their axes, incorporating them into everyday life—using axes in combat, building small dwellings (such as shelters), or butchering animals for food.

Elven Acrobatics

athletics, brawling, composure

Understanding the relation between mind, body, and gravity to perform acrobatic stunts, such as backflips and rolls. This also covers proper avoidance techniques, including parrying unarmed attacks and lessening damage from falls—reduce the damage from falls by one for each step achieved (steps and falling damage are covered in the next chapter).

Elven Flying

archery, athletics, riding, animal handling, composure

Elves are notorious for their use of Pegasi in battle. They always achieve air-superiority thanks to high-flying archers, who not only train themselves for years, but also their trusted flying steeds.

Goblin Rage Tactics

melee, brawling, composure

Goblins are notorious for their vicious style of fighting—using bladed or pointed weapons (such as spears) in combat, in addition to biting if necessary (+1D injury).

Jousting

riding, melee

Using a lance or other long melee weapon (spear, pole, etc.) while on horseback, in order to inflict damage upon a mounted (or unmounted) opponent.

Swordsmanship

dueling or melee, athletics

The art of the sword—using swords and shields in combat.

Trickery

legerdemain, athletics, performance

Escaping from bonds such as chains or ropes, moving silently and invisibly, contorting one's body, misdirecting audiences, and acting.

Wrestling

brawling, athletics

Grappling, throwing, and immobilizing an opponent. These are typically resisted actions.

creativity-based styles

Traps

forging, crafts, subterfuge, masonry

Designing and creating traps to protect strongholds and unguarded territory.

reasoning-based styles

Hunting

observation, stealth, animal handling

Tracking animals (or people) in the wild with the intent of killing them as a food source.

War Brews

alchemy, crafts, subterfuge

Brewing charging powders and hot oils, and sealing them in pottery. When thrown, the containers shatter and release the brew and its effects upon unsuspecting enemy combatants.

Rune Reading

literacy, legends, design

Reading and deciphering runes which have been inscribed on scrolls or surfaces and intended to release magical effects. A successful task will reveal the purpose of the rune. However, all tasks receive +2DIFF if the character does not possess the crafting-based skill(s) corresponding to the effect.

Influence-Based styles

Interrogation

leadership, performance, subterfuge

Using methods of deprivation, intimidation, discomfort, and possibly torture to gain information from an individual.

Seduction

performance, observation, subterfuge

Tempting others to do as you wish, particularly members of the opposite sex.

Crafting-Based styles

See the Magic section for more information on using these.

Bloodcraft

materia, ge, motus, alchemy, design

The animation of the dead.

Hedgecraft

circumscription, materia, motus, sphaera

The creation of protective circles.

Earthencraft

forging, materia, sensus, sphaera, masonry

The art of forging magical weapons.

Runecraft

design, sphaera, sensus, ge, motus, literacy

The use of seals and wards.

Warcraft

materia, motus, sensus, medicines

The use of magical effects in battle.

Witchcraft

alchemy, sensus, materia, subterfuge, performance, observation

A tradition of trickery, thievery, and vengeance.

Glamourcraft

instrument, sensus, materia, sphaera

The art of enchantment through music and song.

Divinity-Based styles

See the Magic section for more information on using these.

Calling of the Sage

prophecy, gospel, astromancy

Revelation and guidance by prophecy and true faith.

Chosen Disciple

effigy, benediction, curse, blessing

Idol worship for the power-hungry.

Crusade

sacrament, blessing, gospel, prophecy

Education of the ignorant and destruction of the evil.

Preaching the True Word

benediction, gospel, performance, blessing

Enlightening and caring for members of the flock.

Totem-Based styles

See the Magic section for more information on using these.

Spirit Healing

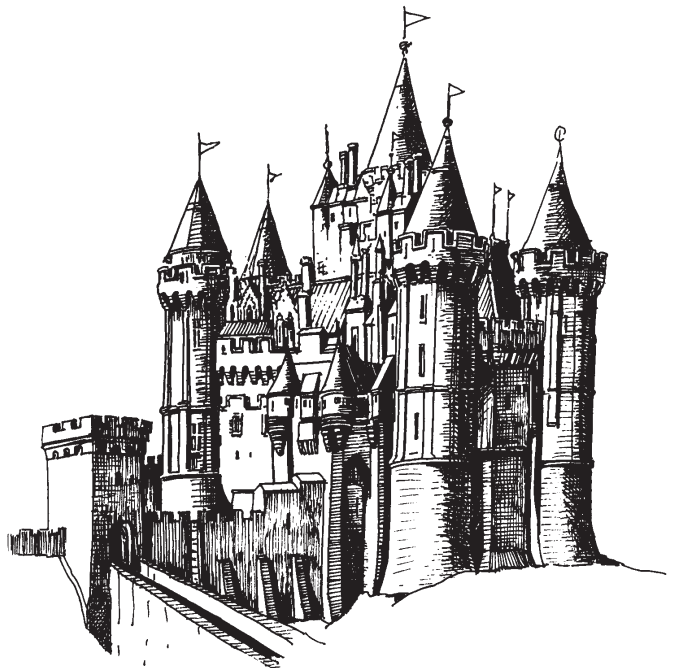
spirit walk, sacrifice, medicines, ritual dance

Restoring health to those souls lost to the spirit world.

Spirit Bonding

familair, skin walk, animal handling

The study of and caring for a spirit guide's manifestation.



HEALTH

Health is used to measure a character's current physical condition. There are two types of health which are measured in these rules: fatigue and injury. Both have five grades of severity. The number of dice which a character can use for a task roll is reduced when fatigued or injured—fatigue affects all rolls, while injury only affects fitness and awareness rolls. This penalty is not applied from fatigue during combat situations, however, since a character is most likely pumping large amounts of adrenaline to keep him going.

Fatigue (noted as *FAT*) represents excessive effort which wears down a character, causing him to tire. Fatigue can also result from blunt trauma and physical strain. When a character has sustained five grades of fatigue, he falls unconscious. If he receives any more fatigue, it is applied as injury.

Injury (noted as *INI*) represents the character's physical well being and can result from lacerations, breaks, and burns. When a character has sustained five grades of injury, he falls unconscious and is totally incapacitated. If he receives any more injury, the character dies.



	FATIGUE	INJURY	PENALTY
1	Dazed	Bruised	-
2	Stressed	Sprained	-1D
3	Strained	Wounded	-2D
4	Exhausted	Maimed	-3D
5	Unconscious	Incapacitated	—

CREATING CHARACTERS

Once you understand each of the elements necessary to define a character (abilities, background, skills, etc.), the next step is to develop a picture in your mind of just how you'd like to proceed with actually creating one. A character should have a past and a purpose. These are entirely up to you to decide, but need to fit within the characteristics chosen for your character and the elements of the story in which you will play. Your director should help you out with this, so that the character is not out of place and possesses the necessary abilities. Remember, the purpose is to create a character you will enjoy portraying. You shouldn't be too concerned with winning every challenge or crushing all of your opponents—that can easily become monotonous. The best characters in films, after all, are the ones who are flawed. If they were perfect and accomplished every task set before them, where would all the fun be? Think about it. You would already know the outcome of everything they tried to accomplish.



One last thing. In order to guide you through this process, the steps will be better illustrated by a sample character, *Rodiern the Wizard*. With that in mind, let us begin.

step 1: determine race

Choose a race for your character (see pages 8-10). The director may limit the availability of certain races or even base a story around a single race. Please check with him before proceeding.

For example: *We'll keep it simple and just make Rodiern a human.*

step 2: determine background

Choose one background for your character (see pages 11-12). If the race that you have chosen already lists a background, you do not get to choose one unless the director permits it. In this case, ignore the one listed with the race's description.

For example: *We shall give Rodiern the MOUNTAINFOLK background.*

step 3: determine gimmicks

You may choose up to three gimmicks for your character (see pages 12-14). If your character received a gimmick due to a background, it does not count towards this limit, nor does it add or subtract any points. Each gimmick you take reduces the amount of points that will be available to you in step 5a by one (1) **or** step 6a by three (3). If the gimmick has a $\frac{1}{2}$ next to it, however, you receive one (1) extra point for step 5a **or** three (3) extra points for step 6a. It is up to you whether the points are modified in step 5a or 6a. Remember to jot down the effects of each gimmick, so you remember them later. Gimmicks are optional—your character does not have to possess any if that is your choice.

For example: *Rodiern will have the CHILDE OF THE GODS, DARK AURA, and VULNERABILITY (FIRE) gimmicks. CHILDE OF THE GODS and DARK AURA cancel each other out, so he gets either 1 extra point for abilities or three extra points for skills. Let's choose to give him 1 extra point for abilities (step 5a). This will help give him a better crafting rating, since he'll need it for magical skills.*

step 4: determine vocation

Choose one vocation for your character (see pages 15-16). This will determine his vocational skills, or put simply, the skills in which he has been given the opportunity to learn through study, training, or experience. Don't worry, he can still learn other skills, but they are more difficult. While vocation skills are easier for characters to pick up at this stage, they are not required. Vocation may also determine if the character is capable of using magical abilities.

For example: *We've already decided that Rodiern is a wizard, so the choice is obvious—the WIZARD vocation. This lets us allocate points to the crafting ability in the next step.*

step 5: determine abilities

- A. You have sixteen (16) points to distribute among fitness, awareness, creativity, reasoning, and influence. If your character has also chosen a vocation or background which allows him to use magical abilities, points may also be allocated to the relevant magical ability. One (1) is the minimum and six (6) is the maximum value for each. Be careful how you allocate points, because abilities are near-impossible to change later.
- B. Roll one die and consult the table below to determine the value for luck. Don't worry too much about this rating because it can change during play.

ROLL LUCK RATING

1-2	1
3-4	2
5-6	3
7-8	4
9	5
10	6

For example: *We'll allocate Rodiern's points as follows:*

Fitness	2	Awareness	3
Creativity	3	Reasoning	3
Influence	2	Crafting	4*

Our die roll for luck is a 6, so his luck rating is 3.

**Don't forget, we've got that 1 extra point from gimmicks.*

step 6: determine skills

- A. You have thirty (30) points to distribute among your desired vocational skills. If your character has also chosen a vocation which allows him to use magical abilities, points may also be allocated to the relevant magical skills. Two (2) is the minimum and eight (8) is the maximum value for each.
- B. You may also allocate these points to non-vocational skills, but you must spend double the amount of points unless special costs are listed with the character's background.
- C. You may also allocate points to styles. Each style costs five (5) points, but your character must be proficient (rating of 5) or better at the base skill and capable (rating of 4) or better at the other associated skills in order to possess the style. Styles are not rated like skills, so there is no need to worry about raising their ratings, just the requisite skills. And there is no need to worry if your character lacks styles. He can always acquire them later through experience.
- D. For each point remaining (not allocated to a skill), you may convert it to one point of experience and attach it to any skill which the character possesses.

For example: Here are the vocation skills and their ratings we chose for Rodiern:

*circumscription 5, design 4, literacy 4, alchemy 3,
fabrica materia 4, fabrica motus 3, fabrica sphaera 4*

So far we have spent 27 points. The following skill costs only half the number of points due to Rodiern's background (mountainfolk):

survival 4

That brings our total up to 29 points. We have one left. We can use it for a skill or convert it to experience. For the sake of example, we'll convert it to experience and attach it to Rodiern's circumscription skill.

step 7: determine possessions

Roll two dice and multiply the sum by ten (10) to determine how many gold pieces the character owns. If the character possesses the *wealth* gimmick, multiply this number by five (5). If the character is from the *slave* background, reduce the number by half. Gold pieces are the standard form of currency, although others exist.

For example: We roll two dice for Rodiern's wealth and the result is $11 \times 10 = 110$ gold pieces.

other options

Character Exploits

Each player creates a list of specific situations, or exploits, in which his character has had previous experience. Should one of these situations arise during play, the character gains the use of extra experience points—these are only usable on tasks related to exploits. Roll one die and divide the result by two (round up) to determine how many exploits a character may have. For each exploit, roll another die to determine the actual number of experience points gained. The director should carefully scrutinize the exploits created by players.

For example: Titus' two (a roll of four) exploits are well known—he always attacks on horseback and has slain many hydra. The result of Titus' player's die roll for mounted combat is a 3, so Titus receives three (3) experience points which can be used for any mounted combat task. Titus' player rolls a 5 for slaying hydra, so he gains five (5) experience points which can be used for combat tasks when fighting hydra.

Veteran Characters

Each *skill* possessed by a character starts with a number of experience points equal to the rating of the ability upon which it relies. Skills which may not be attempted unskilled (those marked with ⊗), however, must have a rating of three (3) or higher in order to gain this bonus.

For example: The effigy skill relies on the creativity ability. If the character's creativity rating is three (3) and his effigy rating is three (3) or more, he begins play with three points of experience attached to the effigy skill.

Heroic Wealth

Some heroes are brave for money and others horde the treasures and valuables they collect. If you wish to play with characters who have already amassed some wealth, multiply the number of gold pieces received in Step 7 by ten (10).

Custom Abilities, Races, Gimmicks, etc.

Guidelines are presented on page 68 for developing new abilities, skills, et al for your own custom setting. These can easily augment the existing rules for creating characters. Once you understand how the system works, feel free to play around with different combinations to expand your players' options.

That's it. You're ready to play.
Let's just recap Rodiern as a character on the sheet below.
(We've gone ahead and applied the heroic wealth option.)

IRON GAUNTLETS™ HEROIC FANTASY ROLEPLAYING							
NAME: Rodiern				BACKGROUND: Mountainfolk			
RACE: Human				VOCATION: Wizard			
FITNESS 2	AWARENESS 3	CREATIVITY 3	REASONING 3	INFLUENCE 2	CRAFTING 4	DIVINITY	TOTEM
SKILLS Circumscription 5 Design 4 Literacy 4 Alchemy 3 Fabrica Materix 4 Fabrica Motus 3 Fabrica Sphaera 4 Survival 4				HEALTH FATIGUE INJURY DAZED <input type="checkbox"/> BRUISED <input type="checkbox"/> STRESSED <input type="checkbox"/> -1D <input type="checkbox"/> SPRAINED <input type="checkbox"/> STRAINED <input type="checkbox"/> -2D <input type="checkbox"/> WOUNDED <input type="checkbox"/> EXHAUSTED <input type="checkbox"/> -3D <input type="checkbox"/> MAIMED <input type="checkbox"/> UNCONSCIOUS <input type="checkbox"/> INCAPACITATED <input type="checkbox"/>		LUCK <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
GIMMICKS Childe of the Gods Dark Aura Vulnerability (fire) Resistant (cold)							
EQUIPMENT 1100 gold pieces							
STYLES							

REFERENCE: RACES

Human	Elf	Dwarf
Halfling	Centaur	Goblin

REFERENCE: BACKGROUNDS

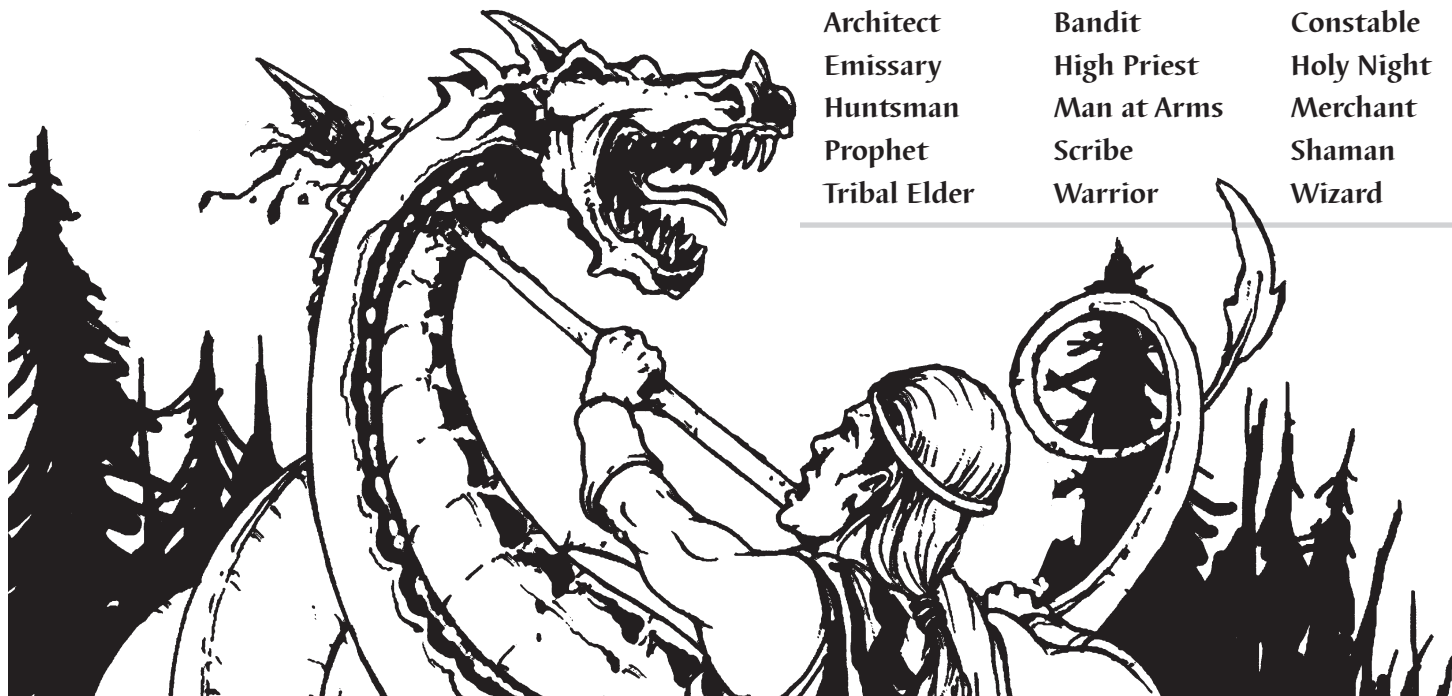
Cavernfolk	Cityfolk	Faithful
Lord	Mountainfolk	Nomad
Seafolk	Slave	Treefolk
Tribesman		

REFERENCE: GIMMICKS

Blood Feud ✂	Childe of Hell ✂	Childe of the Gods
Clumsy ✂	Cursed Relic ✂	Dark Aura ✂
Faithless ✂	Followers	Frail ✂
Good Reputation	Hideous Appearance ✂	Infamous ✂
Man's Best Friend	Mentor	Multilingual
Musclebound	On the Run ✂	Oversized ✂
Poor Reputation ✂	Relic	Resistant
Squire	Striking Appearance	Sure-Footed
Undersized	Vulnerability ✂	Wealth

REFERENCE: VOCATIONS

Architect	Bandit	Constable
Emissary	High Priest	Holy Night
Huntsman	Man at Arms	Merchant
Prophet	Scribe	Shaman
Tribal Elder	Warrior	Wizard





CHAPTER 2

TASK RESOLUTION

THIS IS PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF A FANTASY GAME, BECAUSE IN THE END, THERE IS ALWAYS A MONSTER OR VILLAIN THAT THE CHARACTERS MUST FACE AND ULTIMATELY DEFEAT. THIS SECTION EXPLAINS HOW TO ATTACK, DEFEND, OR ATTEMPT TASKS SUCH AS CLIMBING. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO DO THINGS AND THE DIRECTOR IS FREE TO ADJUST RULES TO BETTER FIT HIS PLAYERS OR DIRECTION STYLE. NO RULE IS CAST IN STONE—JUST HAVE FUN!

Tasks are tests of skill and/or ability. There are many aspects of a task which can affect the outcome. All tasks are resolved with ten-sided dice. The proper notation for dice rolls is xD , where x corresponds to the number of dice used. For example, $2D$ indicates that two dice are rolled.

The number of dice rolled is equal to the rating of the appropriate ability. Luck points may also be expended (and not regained until determined by the director) in order to increase the number of dice rolled by one (1) for each point. The result of each rolled die which is less than or equal to the skill rating is called a step. This represents how close (how many steps) the character has come to succeeding at his task. Unskilled attempts must roll a one in order to achieve a step. The number of steps required for success is dependent upon the difficulty of the task. Some examples of difficulty are shown on the table below. While the table only goes up to 7, it is possible for tasks to have difficulty values much higher.

DIFFICULTY	LIFTING	CARRYING	JUMPING
1 Trivial	100lbs	35lbs	3ft
2 Routine	125lbs	65lbs	5ft
3 Complex	175lbs	95lbs	7ft
4 Challenging	250lbs	125lbs	9ft
5 Formidable	350lbs	165lbs	12ft
6 Improbable	500lbs	195lbs	15ft
7 Impossible	700lbs	225lbs	18ft

If a character achieves more steps than is required for success, this is called overkill. The amount of overkill is equal to the difference between steps required and steps achieved. Overkill is used to determine the outcome of certain magical skills and weapon attacks, and at the director's discretion, may also be used to enhance tasks with more cinematic effects (see Chapter 6).

If a character fails his roll by four (4) steps or more, the outcome is considered to be a calamity. This means that the

character has failed miserably and the worst has happened. If there are any inherent risks associated with the task, they are applied and the character may take damage from them.

For example: *If a character is climbing a wall, he runs the risk of falling. Whereas a normal failure may simply prevent him from getting any traction for scaling the wall, a calamity may indicate that he climbed most of the wall, but has lost his grip and falls. The character now takes normal falling damage (see Determining Damage under the Combat Tasks section).*

automatic tasks

If a character who is at least proficient in a skill (a rating of four) is attempting a trivial or routine task which is not resisted or contested, it is an automatic success as long as the number of dice which would be rolled from the appropriate trait only is greater than or equal to the difficulty.

contested tasks

A contested task is a direct competition against another character using the same ability and skill. The dice roll with the highest number of steps wins the contest. Examples of this are tests of strength (fitness), races (fitness & athletics), and face-offs (influence).

resisted tasks

A resisted task is one which is attempted in order to counter a previously successful task or thwart one which is directed at the character (an attack, for example) using a different ability or skill. The number of steps achieved from the original task becomes the difficulty, although in cases where difficulty can vary (ranged combat, for example), the difficulty is increased by the number of steps achieved instead. Examples of this are attempting to parry a punch, countering a magical effect, or determining if a document forged by another character is genuine.

sustained tasks

Some tasks either require a minimum amount of time dedicated to them or may be easier achieved by spending extra time on the attempt. The director must decide the minimum time required (if applicable; this number can either be in turns, minutes, or hours) and the incremental amount of time at which a character receives a bonus. If a character spends more time on the task than the minimum, add 1D to the roll for each incremental amount of time beyond the minimum spent concentrating. If the minimum amount of time is not met, reduce the number of dice rolled (director's discretion).

For example: *Willem the Bandit is attempting to pick a lock. The director determines that it will take a minimum of ten turns. If the character is in a rush and only spends five turns on the task, the director may decide to penalize him by increasing the difficulty by one (or perhaps two). If the character spends twenty turns so that he gets it right, the director decides that the bonus increment is five turns, so the character's difficulty is reduced by two ($20 - 10 = 10$; the increment is 5, so $10 \div 5 = 2$).*

united tasks

Some tasks can be performed by multiple characters with one acting as the leader. Only the leader makes a roll, but he may add 1D for each additional character assisting who is able to use all his dice relative to the skill (all dice for one specific ability are available) and has a skill level of two (2) or greater for simpler tasks (such as lifting), or four (4) or greater for complex tasks (such as surgery). The character with the highest skill level should make the roll.

prostrated tasks

A character may exert an extra 1D for any fitness or crafting-based task roll by choosing to gain one (1) grade of fatigue. This represents pushing one's physical or magical self by willpower or the release of adrenaline.

composure tasks

There are times when a character must restrain his desires, habits, and responses to stimuli. To do so, he must make a successful composure roll. The difficulty is determined by the director and the ability used is based on the nature of the restraint. Composure tasks always use a number of dice equal to the character's relevant ability rating, even during combat.

Fitness is used when the character is attempting to control responses from physical stimuli such as crying out or flinching from pain.

Awareness is used when the character must recognize and prevent his habits such as nervous tics and unconscious speech patterns like stutters, as well as controlling his temper.

Reasoning is used when the character must prevent either compulsive patterns of behavior such as addictions, or immoral acts such as sadism or infidelity.

Crafting is used after each attempt of a crafting-based skill. The difficulty is equal to the number of consecutive turns which one or more crafting-based skills have been used. A failure indicates that the character receives one grade of fatigue. Once a character fails this roll, the difficulty for the next roll of this type resets to zero (0).

SAMPLE COMPOSURE DIFFICULTIES

Pain	+1 DIFF / Grade of Injury
Rage	2-5
Habits	3
Cultural Values	1-4
Fears	3-5



EXPERIENCE

One point of experience is gained whenever a character succeeds at a task of difficulty 4 or higher. This experience point is attached to the relevant skill. It may be used to add extra dice to task rolls, but the skill rating limits the number of points which can be expended per task.

SKILL RATING	MAX EXPENDITURE
0	0
2-3	1
4-6	2
7-8	3

Twenty experience points can be expended to raise the relevant skill rating by one point or learn a new skill at level 2. Abilities cannot be raised under normal situations. Intense conditioning, however, can result in a slight change in ability (no more than one point). Increasing an ability or gaining a new skill costs twenty experience points which may be taken from any skills based on the relevant ability. Gaining a new style costs five experience points provided the character possesses all the requisite skills (experience may only be taken from the style's required skills).

All changes are at the discretion of the director.

For example: *Intense physical training over a period of several months can increase a character's fitness rating by one, but he must also expend twenty experience points which may be taken from any fitness-based skills.*

COMBAT TASKS



Whenever a situation arises which calls for more detail (like combat), the characters act on a turn by turn basis. Each turn represents five seconds.

In order to determine the order in which characters act, each player rolls 1D. This is called a reaction roll. They may act in the order of lowest result to highest. If there are ties, compare fitness ratings—higher acts first. Players may also add 1D to the roll for each point of either fitness or awareness sacrificed for the turn in order to increase reaction speed (these points may be not be used for the remainder of the turn). The lowest die is used as the result for the reaction roll.

For example: *Joe allocates one point from his awareness rating of 4 in order to increase his character's reaction speed, so he rolls 2D. He may now only roll 3D (4 minus 1) for awareness tasks until next turn.*

The following circumstances can affect the reaction roll. If the number of dice is reduced below one, no roll is permitted. Instead, the character's reaction result defaults at nine (9).

Encumbered

A character who is carrying either bulky items or an excessive amount of items (director's discretion) receives -2D on the reaction roll.

Fatigued or Injured

A character who is injured may receive a penalty depending on the degree of injury (see chart below). Characters who are fatigued only receive a penalty (see chart below) during the first turn of combat or after combat has ceased (once combat is over, adrenaline levels decrease and characters feel the effects of fatigue).

FATIGUE	INJURY	PENALTY
Stressed	Sprained	-1D
Strained	Wounded	-2D
Exhausted	Maimed	-3D

Knocked Down

A character who has fallen to the ground receives -1D on the reaction roll.

Surprised

A character who has been taken by surprise (jumped from behind, shot at by opportunity fire, etc.) receives -2D on the reaction roll.

Wearing Armor

Characters wearing more than four components of partial armor receive -1D on the reaction roll and those wearing full armor receive -2D.

actions

A character may perform one action of any kind per turn, plus as many additional actions as the number of extra dice added to his reaction roll. Additional actions are dependent upon the abilities used to increase his reaction roll—one extra fitness-based task per point of fitness allocated to reaction; and one extra awareness, reasoning, or influence-based task per point of awareness allocated to reaction.

For example: *Hamish the Barbarian added 1D from fitness and 1D from awareness to his reaction roll. He may perform 1 free action; 1 extra fitness-based action; and 1 extra awareness, reasoning, or influence-based action. He does not have to perform all those actions, however, and probably would do well to combine his extra fitness-based action with the free action for an attack or defense.*

The first action occurs in the order determined by the roll. If a character is attempting a second action, it occurs after everyone else has completed their first action; if others are also attempting a second action, the initial reaction roll, once again, determines the order in which they act. This continues in the same manner until all actions have been completed. A character may allocate dice from the appropriate abilities to each action, but once used, they are not available for the remainder of the turn. It is up to the director to determine if multiple actions chosen by a character are feasible given the situation.

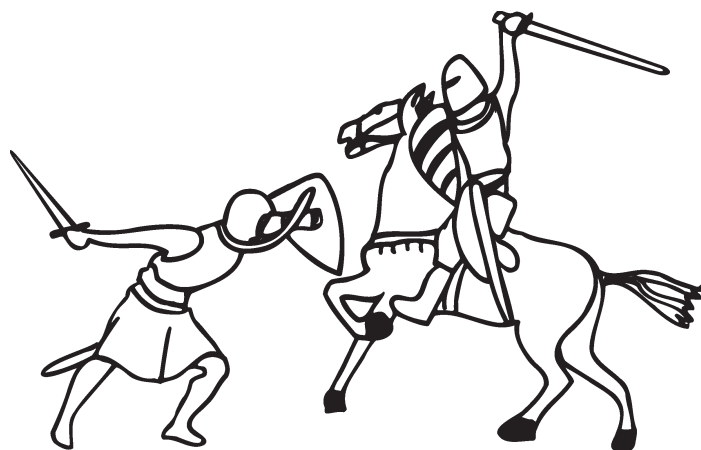
For example: *A character may run across the room and throw his knife, or stay alert while picking a lock, but he cannot run across the room and pick the lock at the same time.*

The following actions may be attempted in a turn.

Move

The character can walk, run, crawl, climb, or swim. Distances are in feet per turn. The amount of dice (or difficulty) used for this action is determined by the desired speed; the skill used is athletics. The director may allow a character to move the desired distance simply by forfeiting the required dice for the remainder of the turn or he may make the character roll dice—the number of steps indicates the actual distance traveled.

DIFF	WALK	RUN	CRAWL/CLIMB	SWIM
1	6ft	45ft	3ft	6ft
2	9ft	60ft	6ft	12ft
3	12ft	75ft	9ft	18ft
4	15ft	90ft	12ft	24ft
5	18ft	105ft	15ft	30ft
6	21ft	120ft	18ft	36ft



The character may attack an opponent. The actual skill used varies by attack. Base difficulty for all attacks is two (2), except for ranged weapons (see chart below), and resisted or contested tasks. Tasks are also modified by certain situations and stunts presented later in this section.

- Unarmed punches, kicks, and grapples use *fitness* and *brawling* (or a specific style).
- Short-reaching hand weapons use *fitness* and *dueling* (or a specific style).
- Long-reaching hand weapons use *fitness* and *melee* (or a specific style).
- Thrown weapons use *fitness* and *athletics* (or a specific style).
- Ranged weapons use *fitness* and *archery* (or a specific style).

WEAPON RANGE	THROWING DISTANCE	DIFFICULTY
Point Blank	9ft	1
Short	18ft	2
	36ft	3
Medium	60ft	4
	100ft	5
Long	150ft	6
	225ft	7

All hits are assumed to be non-specific. In other words, the damage is caused by hits to the chest or from general bruising. If a specific body part is targeted, the attack roll receives +1DIFF. A success indicates that the targeted body part is hit.

Optional: If the roll is not successful, but it would have been successful if a specific body part was not targeted (i.e. one less difficulty), the attack is successful, but the specific body part is not hit.

Defend

The character may defend against an opponent. The skill used varies by defense. The number of steps achieved by the defense roll (except shield blocking) becomes the difficulty for all attacks which are appropriate to the defense. Thrown and bow/crossbow attacks increase the difficulty by the number of steps.

- Unarmed Blocking uses *fitness* and *athletics* (or a specific style) to forcefully stop an incoming attack using only the character's body. No other fitness-based tasks may be attempted in a turn after an unarmed block.

- Unarmed Parrying uses *fitness* and *brawling* (or a specific style) to guide an incoming unarmed, dueling, or melee attack away from the body. This can be done with bare hands, a shield, or any melee or large dueling weapon.
- Weapon Blocking uses *fitness* and *melee* (or a specific style) to forcefully stop an incoming attack using a melee weapon. No other fitness-based tasks may be attempted in a turn after a weapon block.
- Shield Blocking uses *fitness* and *melee* (or a specific style) to forcefully stop an incoming attack using a shield. A success indicates that the character may use the shield's armor rating when computing damage, but this roll does not increase an opponent's difficulty.
- Duel Parrying uses *fitness* and *dueling* (or a specific style) to guide an incoming unarmed, dueling, or melee attack away from the body.
- Melee Parrying uses *fitness* and *melee* (or a specific style) to guide an incoming unarmed, dueling, or melee attack away from the body.
- Dodge uses *fitness* and *athletics* (or a specific style) to avoid an incoming attack entirely.

Reload

Reloading a bow is instantaneous and does not require a separate action, but reloading a crossbow can take one to two turns (director's discretion).

Use Skill

The character may attempt a non-combat skill. Sustained tasks will obviously take longer than a single turn. The director is free to decide which tasks may be used in one turn or require additional time.



WEAPONS

WEAPON TYPE	WEAPON	ATTACK	DAMAGE	PB	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
dueling	axe	-	+1 inj	-	-	-	-
	club	-	+1 fat	-	-	-	-
	commanding sword	+1	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
	dagger	-	+1 inj	*	*	*	*
	hammer	-	+1 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	knife	-	+0 inj	*	*	*	*
	mace	-	+2 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	pick	-	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
	short sword	-	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
	studded gauntlet	-	+0 inj ¹	-	-	-	-
	thrusting sword	+1	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
	war axe	-1	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
melee	broadsword	-1	+2 inj ³	-	-	-	-
	flail	+1	+2 inj	-	-	-	-
	fork	+1	+1 inj	-	-	-	-
	great sword	-1	+3 inj	-	-	-	-
	maul	+1	+2 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	pike	+1 ⁴	+3 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	poleaxe	+1 ⁴	+2 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	spear	+1 ⁴	+2 inj ²	20ft	30ft	50ft	60ft
	staff	+1 ⁴	+2 fat	-	-	-	-
	war pick	-1	+3 inj ²	-	-	-	-
	target shield	-	+1 inj ¹	-	-	-	-
	heater	-	+1 inj ¹	-	-	-	-
thrown	javelin	-1	+1 inj	20ft	30ft	50ft	60ft
	throwing axe	-	+2 inj	*	*	*	*
archery	compound bow	-2 ⁵	+2 inj	20ft	60ft	125ft	175ft
	crossbow	-	+3 inj	25ft	60ft	120ft	180ft
	hunting bow	-2 ⁵	+1 inj	20ft	50ft	100ft	150ft
	long bow	-1 ⁵	+2 inj	20ft	70ft	140ft	210ft
	mounted crossbow	-	+4 inj	30ft	70ft	150ft	200ft
	sling	-1	+1 fat	20ft	40ft	80ft	160ft

* same as standard throwing range.

¹ this adds damage to a punching attack.

² fatigue is used if an attack achieves no overkill.

³ fatigue is used if attacking using a thrusting motion rather than slashing.

⁴ bonus only applies if attacking using a swinging motion rather than thrusting.

⁵ penalty only applies if not firing directly at a target (i.e. firing over a battlefield)

attack modifiers

Certain factors may modify an attack roll. These can either be environmental or situational in nature. The director is free to modify rolls on his own, but the circumstances listed below should provide the framework required to do so.

Aiming

Characters who spend at least one turn aiming their ranged weapons, thus firing on the second or subsequent round, can add +1D to their attack roll.

Cramped Quarters

Narrow corridors, low-ceilinged dungeons, and other confined spaces can be both difficult and dangerous when using melee and other large weapons. The attacker receives +1DIFF and a calamity represents the weapon hitting an obstruction, bouncing back, and causing him damage. The exact amount of type of damage is left up to the director, but should be no more than the weapon's damage value.

Fatigued or Injured

Characters who are injured receive a penalty based on the severity. Fatigue also adds a penalty during the first turn of combat only.

FATIGUE	INJURY	PENALTY
Stressed	Sprained	-1D
Strained	Wounded	-2D
Exhausted	Maimed	-3D

In or Under Water

All non-ranged attacks attempted while submerged in water up to the waist receive +1DIFF. Attacks attempted completely under water receive +2DIFF (if the character is proficient in the athletics skill, the task only receives +1DIFF).

Mounted Attacks

When attacking from horseback, the relevant skill rating is limited by that of the character's riding skill.

For example: Titus, who has the following skill levels: *melee 7* and *riding 5*, is attempting to whack a zombie with his staff while on horseback. His riding skill is not quite as high as *melee*, so for the purposes of this task, his skill rating (in *melee*) is 5.

Moving Target

All ranged attacks made against a moving target (or if the attacker himself is moving) at walking speed or slower receive +1DIFF, and those moving at running speed or faster receive +2DIFF.

For example: Continuing from *Mounted Attacks*, Titus, who is on horseback and whacking a zombie with a staff, receives +1DIFF if the horse is walking or +2DIFF if moving faster.

Obstructed Target

All ranged attacks targeting someone or something partially obstructed by a wall, boulder, or other form of cover receive +1DIFF. Attacks against those who are considerably hidden receive +2DIFF. Targets which are completely obscured may not be targeted.

On the ground

Characters who have been knocked to the ground receive -1D on all fitness-based tasks.

Partial Sight

A melee or ranged attack on a target just outside dueling range which is difficult to spot due to partial darkness, fog, or smoke receives +1DIFF to +3DIFF (director's discretion).

Precision Attacks

Non-ranged attacks targeting a specific body part or bullseye receive +1DIFF. Ranged attacks receive +2DIFF. This excludes punches to the face of any normal-sized (not oversized or undersized) character or creature, however.

Surprised Target

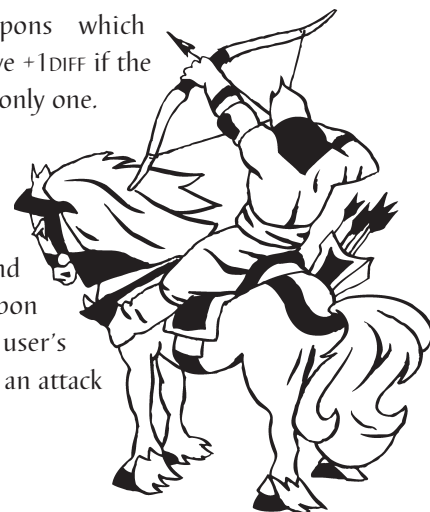
All non-ranged attacks on a surprised target receive -1DIFF.

Two-Handed Weapon

Attacks using weapons which require two hands receive +1DIFF if the character wields it with only one.

Weapon Modifier

Each weapon has its own effect on combat due to its design, size, and lethality. The weapon modifier adjusts the user's **skill level** when making an attack roll (see *weapons table*).



ARMOR

ARMOR TYPE	ARMOR	RATING	PROT.	COVERAGE	NOTES
shield	battlement shield	7	fat/inj	full body	-2d fitness
	buckler	3	fat	one location	
	heater	5	fat/inj	three contiguous locations	
	kite	6	fat/inj	upper body	-1d fitness
	target shield	4	fat/inj	one location	
leather	boots	2	fat	feet, shins	
	cuirass	3	fat	chest, abdomen, back	
	gauntlets	2	fat	hands, forearms	-1d dexterity
	greaves	2	fat	lower legs, knees	
	hauberk	3	fat	chest, abdomen, back, shoulders, groin, upper legs	
	helm	2	fat	head and back of neck	-1d hearing
	vambraces	2	fat	elbows, forearms	
scale	cuirass	5	fat/inj	head, neck, shoulders	
	gauntlets	3	fat/inj	chest, abdomen, back	-1d dexterity
	greaves	4	fat/inj	lower legs, knees	
	hauberk	5	fat/inj	chest, abdomen, back, shoulders, groin, upper legs	
	vambraces	4	fat/inj	elbows, forearms	
meshing	scale mail	5	fat/inj	all except head and hands	-1d fitness
	coif	3	inj	head, neck, shoulders	
	cuirass	6	inj	chest, abdomen, back	
	foot meshing	3	inj	feet, shins	
	hand meshing	3	inj	hands, forearms	
	hauberk	6	inj	chest, abdomen, back, shoulders, groin, upper legs	
	chain mail	6	inj	all except face, hands, and feet	
plate	boots	5	inj	feet, shins	-1d climbing
	cuirass	7	fat/inj	chest, abdomen, back	
	greaves	5	inj	lower legs, knees	
	helm	4	fat/inj	head and back of neck	-1d hearing/vision
	vambraces	5	inj	elbows, forearms	
barding	plate mail	7	fat/inj	all except head and hands	-1d fitness
	scale barding	5	fat/inj	all except face, legs, and abdomen	
	mesh barding	6	inj	all except face and legs	
	plate barding	6	inj	all except face, legs, and abdomen	

Determining Damage

In order to determine damage, roll a number of dice equal to the damage rating. The damage rating for non-ranged attacks (punching, clubbing, slashing, etc.) is 1FAT and +1FAT if the amount of dice used from the character's fitness is three or greater. If a weapon includes a damage modifier, also add that to the damage rating. The damage rating for ranged attacks is equal to the weapon's damage value.

For example: *Hamish the Barbarian successfully hit his opponent, Titus, with his war axe. Hamish's fitness rating is 3, so his total damage value for this attack is 2FAT (his momentum) + 2INJ (the weapon).*

Each die which is equal to or less than the armor rating prevents one point of fatigue or injury from penetrating. Each die which does penetrate inflicts one point of the relevant damage to the character. Characters with a fitness rating of four (4) or greater receive a bonus of one (1) to their armor rating against fatigue (this cannot raise it above eight).

For example: *Titus is wearing plate cuirass, giving him an armor rating of 7 against both fatigue and injury for general hits. His fitness is only 3, so the armor value isn't adjusted for fitness. The damage rating of 2FAT and 2INJ means that we must roll 2 dice to check for fatigue and 2 dice to check for injury. The results for the fatigue dice are 4 and 9, and for the injury dice, we have 2 and 6. Since each die which is equal to or less than 7 prevents damage, only 1 grade of fatigue gets through his armor (only the roll of 9 penetrates). The outcome—Titus receives one grade of fatigue. His armor is very strong.*

Note: Armor rating is used only if the type of armor protects against the appropriate source of damage (fatigue or injury). In other words, if a character is wearing armor which does not protect against injury, the armor rating is not used for attacks which inflict injury.

If the character is not wearing armor and his fitness rating is less than four, no roll is required. Instead, he receives one grade of injury or fatigue (depending on the source of damage) per die.

A character may expend luck in order to ignore one (1) grade of fatigue or injury per point. If a character receives two (2) or more grades of injury, or three (3) or more grades of fatigue, he is knocked down and must either spend the next turn returning to his feet or act on the ground with a -1D on all fitness-based tasks. If the amount of damage dice rolled against a character is greater than his fitness rating, he is also knocked down.

Fire and Smoke

Fire can cause either fatigue from smoke inhalation or injury from burns. If the character is in an enclosed area filled with smoke, a roll is required to determine the number of grades of fatigue sustained. This is treated in the same manner as a damage roll from an attack. The damage rating from smoke can vary from 1FAT to 2FAT depending on the amount, while the damage rating from the actual fire can vary from 1INJ for a small flame to 5INJ for a large one.

Hot Oil

Hot Oil is considered to have a damage rating of 4INJ and requires a damage roll. Any armor will offer protection against it, but will also become useless in the process. The director is free to decide whether the character's armor is still effective and if enough oil was spilled on him to inflict 2INJ the following turn as a result of the oil seeping through the armor or clothing.

Asphyxiation

Characters can normally hold their breaths for a minute or two at the most. But when caught off guard, they can receive damage from asphyxiation. A character in this situation must make a fitness-based composure roll in order to avoid gaining one grade of fatigue. Another roll is then made after a number of turns equal to the character's fitness rating, and so on until he is no longer in this situation or he dies. Once the character is unconscious, he receives injury instead of fatigue. It is also possible to receive other damage from the source of the asphyxiation.

For example: *If a character is being choked by someone, he may also receive damage from whatever is wrapped around his neck, be it hands or a garotte.*



Falls

Falling a great distance can either cause fatigue or injury at the director's discretion. This is treated in the same manner as a damage roll from an attack. The damage rating is equal to one (1) per six foot drop (make a damage roll).

For example: A fall on a padded surface may cause only fatigue damage ('having the wind knocked out of you'), while a fall on jagged rocks would most likely cause severe injury.

Magic

It is also possible to receive damage from magical effects. This is covered in the Magic Chapter.



permanent injuries

When a character has been maimed or incapacitated, there is a chance that he will suffer from permanent injury due to infection or deep lacerations. Roll one die and consult the table below.

ROLL PERMANENT INJURIES

1-2	No Permanent Injuries
3-4	Battle Scars
5-6	Disfiguring Scars
7	Muscle Atrophy
8	Damaged Cornea
9	Damaged Ear Drum
10	Head Injury

Battle Scars

The scar tissue from injuries is barely noticeable to the casual eye, but nevertheless, it is present and apparent to anyone looking carefully.

Disfiguring Scars

The character carries a physical reminder of his experiences. His scar is apparent at first glance and may unsettle some people. The character gains the **HIDEOUS APPEARANCE** gimmick.

Muscle Atrophy

The character's fitness rating is reduced by one (1) due to a period of inactivity during healing.

Damaged Cornea

The character receives a penalty of -1D when making awareness-based tasks involving his vision.

Damaged Ear Drum

The character receives a penalty of -1D when making awareness-based tasks involving his hearing.

Head Injury

The character has suffered from brain trauma and lost part of his mental ability. The character's reasoning rating is reduced by one (1).

wound recovery

One grade of fatigue is restored in a number of hours of rest equal to seven minus the character's fitness rating ($7 - \text{fitness}$). One grade of injury is restored in a number of days equal to seven minus the character's fitness rating ($7 - \text{fitness}$). Medicines can increase the rate at which fatigue and injury are restored (see *Brews in the next chapter*).

Characters who die can be resuscitated by magic or brews, but this must be done within ten minutes of death. Characters who fall unconscious must roll a number of dice equal to their fitness rating and compare the lowest die with the current level of injury on the table below. The result is the length of time it will take for the character to regain consciousness, after which his fatigue level will be reduced to exhausted.

ROLL	NONE/BRUISED	SPRAINED	WOUNDED	MAIMED
1	5 mins	10 mins	20 mins	30 mins
2	10 mins	20 mins	30 mins	45 mins
3	20 mins	30 mins	45 mins	1 hr
4	30 mins	45 mins	1 hr	2 hrs
5	45 mins	1 hr	2 hrs	3 hrs
6	1 hr	2 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs
7	2 hrs	3 hrs	4 hrs	5 hrs
8	3 hrs	4 hrs	5 hrs	6 hrs
9	4 hrs	5 hrs	6 hrs	7 hrs
10	5 hrs	6 hrs	7 hrs	8 hrs

CHAPTER 3

EQUIPMENT

CURRENCY IS PRIMARILY REPRESENTED BY GOLD PIECES. THESE CAN VARY IN SHAPE AND SIZE BY CULTURE AND REGION, BUT ALL ARE EQUAL IN WEIGHT AND, THEREFORE, VALUE. NOT ALL ITEMS COST THE SAME DUE TO REGIONAL TRENDS AND DEPRECIATION—AN OLD, WORN PIECE OF ARMOR IS NOT WORTH AS MUCH AS A NEWLY-FORGED ONE. THE DIRECTOR SHOULD ADJUST COSTS ACCORDINGLY. SILVER PIECES MAY ALSO BE USED IN CERTAIN REGIONS, BUT THEY ARE WORTH HALF THE VALUE OF GOLD.

WEAPONS

dueling weapons

Axe

A wedge-shaped blade connected to a stout wooden shaft, sometimes paired with a second blade of equal or lesser size opposite. The axe is designed for close-quarters fighting, and is most often between two and three feet in overall length. The wedge shape puts great power behind the swing, allowing it to cleave armor and bone alike.

Club

Perhaps the simplest of all weapons, consisting of a stout wooden shaft or stick, often (but not always) thickening towards the business end. Varies in length, but typically between one and two feet in length. In a pinch, any stick or stick-like object can be treated as a club.

Commanding Sword

Typically between two and three feet in length, this sword has only a single, straight cutting edge. The back of the blade is somewhat thickened. This imparts greater strength to the weapon as a whole, gives the cutting edge more strength, and allows the wielder to use the blunt (and somewhat softer) edge of the weapon for more effective parries. It is designed to be wielded with one hand.

Dagger

A dagger is essentially a knife shaped like a sword, with a straight, double-edged blade (between six to eighteen inches in length) and a hilt fitted with pommel and guard. It is designed mostly for stabbing, but also capable of slashing at a foe, albeit within extremely close range.

Fighting Gauntlet

Adding that extra advantage in combat, this gauntlet includes metal spikes and padding at the knuckles and is designed to bloody faces and penetrate skins.

Hammer

At its simplest, a hammer is just a metal head on a wooden shaft, designed for pounding nails and fenceposts. Larger hammers, however, can just as easily crack skulls and split armor. Overall length is typically between two and four feet long, with broader-headed weapons having shorter shafts.

Knife

Generally describes any small bladed instrument attached to a handle, distinguished from daggers in that a knife generally has only a single cutting edge and tends to be somewhat smaller. Most knives also lack a guard or pommel on their hilt, although there are some exceptions.

Mace

One step up from a club, at its simplest this is merely a stone or steel head atop a club, added to inflict more damage to an enemy. More often seen are versions that add flanges, studs or spikes to the steel head. Generally between one and three feet in length, on occasion banded with metal down its entire length.

Pick

Intended for mining to dig rocks and gemstones from inside caves, the pick can easily be used in combat. Combat-oriented picks generally have a longer shaft (up to three or four feet in length) all with a narrow spike-like projection on one side intended to pierce armor and skull alike.

Short Sword

A short, light version of the sword, about two feet in length with a double-edged, straight blade, and a hilt with pommel and guard. The line between a dagger and a short sword is a fine one, but the latter generally has a stouter, broader, and longer blade designed more for slashing and parrying.

Thrusting Sword

A three-foot long, slender-bladed and double-edged sword, designed for use with a single hand. Though the blade is capable of delivering brutal slashing cuts, most attacks tend to be thrusts and jabs aimed at kinks in armor or particularly vital portions of the anatomy (including the face and chest).

War Axe

Generally about four feet in length, distinguished by the fact that the single blade of the weapon typically occupies a full third of the weapon's overall length, giving it a tremendous capacity for damage during close quarters fighting when in the hands of a skilled warrior.

melee weapons

Broadsword

A four-foot long, wide-bladed and double-edged straight blade, commonly with an ornamental pommel and guard. With almost no point, this sword is used for cutting and slicing.

Flail

A mace with a loose steel head (or multiple heads) connected by a hinge, swivel or chain, so that the head can be swung independently of the shaft. The head is often knobbed or spiked, and can consist of anything from a plank of wood with steel bands wrapped around it to several spiked steel balls or rods connected by chains. Generally between three and five feet in overall length.

Fork

The fork was originally designed as a non-military tool, intended for use in shoveling loose materials around a farm. Two, three, or four stiff metal tines up to two feet in length jut forth from a wooden shaft, the overall length of the weapon somewhere between four and five feet. Some versions intended solely for military use lengthen the shaft significantly.

Great Sword

A double-edged sword of such great length as to make it impossible to use with a single hand, generally between five and seven feet in length from tip to pommel, with a hilt of a foot or more in length. Though quite capable of cutting and slicing, the

great length and weight of such swords means that they are primarily used for piercing and stabbing attacks, defending small areas with spear-like tactics, as opposed to chopping and cleaving.

Maul

Essentially a long mace, this heavy-headed weapon consists of a steel ball or block atop a four-to-five foot long shaft, used for crushing stone, or the skulls of enemies.

Pike

Typically used while on horseback or in clustered formations to keep an enemy at bay, this twenty-foot long weapon is relatively ineffective when used by itself, and can never be thrown. A significant portion of the haft just below the tip is usually shrouded in metal, to prevent the top from being cut off.

Poleaxe

An axe blade at the end of a longer shaft, typically six to ten feet in length, used to hack at enemies from a distance. Contrary to what one might think, the blades on such axes tend to be smaller, allowing them to better pierce through armor. The primary blade is often backed up with numerous spikes and knobs, and the opposite end of the shaft often contains a heavy counterweight. The halberd is a variant of the poleaxe, utilizing a thin, elongated blade protruding from the center point.

Spear

A spear is essentially a dagger-shaped blade atop a long pole. Designed primarily for stabbing, thrusting and piercing, some variations with broader, longer blades can also be used for slashing at foes from a safe distance. Spears are typically between five and ten feet long, topped with a blade between six and twelve inches long, and often backed up with a butt spike.

Staff

A shaft of wood between six and nine feet in length. Generally used in combat in one of two ways, either by holding the staff closer to one end and using the other to poke and strike an opponent (quarter-staffing) or by holding it halfway down its length and using both ends to parry and strike (half-staffing).

War Pick

This weapon combines the features of the hammer and the pick to create a long-shafted (up to ten feet in length) weapon capable of piercing armor from a great distance, and with great power. The tip of the weapon generally contains at least two pick-like or hammer-like projections, typically opposite from one another, as well as an awl or spike on the top of the weapon to increase its versatility and a counterweight on the other end for balance.

SHIELDS

Battlement Shield

This large, rectangular shield is more of a movable wall, used by archers, siege crew, and elite infantry to advance on a target relatively unscathed. Although different sizes are available, the primary model can conceal the wielder entirely. Due to its bulk, it is rarely used in actual skirmish combat, typically abandoned if a retreat or quick action is required.

Buckler

This small, wooden shield is very light and provides little protection. The buckler's one-foot diameter is perfect for increasing one's defensive posture while dueling, but totally worthless in battle.

Heater

This light shield is preferred by troops in the field for its good balance of maneuverability and protection. Generally between two and three feet in length at its widest point, the heater resembles the underside of an iron. Wood is the most common material used in its construction, although metal edging and coverings are not unusual. Nobles favor this shield as it offers moderate protection and can display their coat of arms.



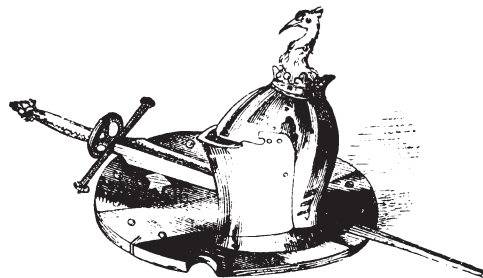
Kite

The kite is a large, teardrop-shaped shield, averaging over four feet in length, constructed of wood, covered with leather or hide and reinforced with metal strips and plates to augment its strength. It is carried with the point down, giving more protection to the upper body. Somewhat awkward to use in close quarters, it is more commonly seen by those using spears or other pole weapons, allowing the user to maintain a defensive distance while harassing an enemy. The shield does not make an effective weapon due to its size.



Target Shield

This shield is so-named because in the usual course of use, the wearer must actively seek out the weapon of his opponent. About one-foot in diameter and round, the target shield is almost always made of wood. The edges and center are often capped with metal and spikes, turning the small shield into an effective off-hand weapon. The target shield may also be strapped on to an arm for additional armor protection when that location is specifically targeted in an attack.



ARMOR

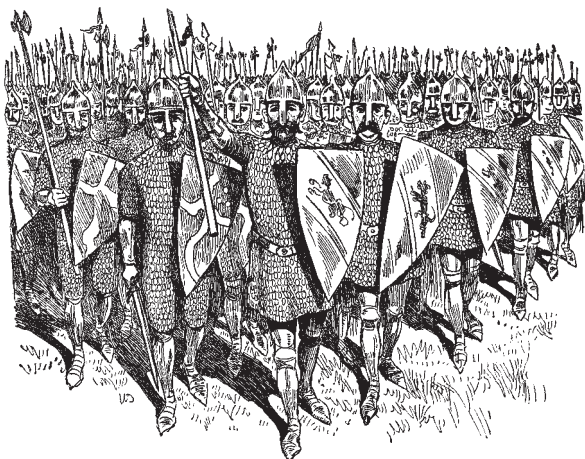
Armor is separated into two sets of components: *partial* and *full*. Partial Armor represents components which are combined to create an effective ensemble, while full armor is a ready-made unit designed for maximum protection.

Since all attacks are considered to strike a general location such as the chest, only armor protecting the chest is used in damage rolls. Therefore, partial armor only provides the benefits of protection when the specific body location it covers is targeted in an attack. Partial armor may overlap—the highest armor protection value is used if both protect against the same type of damage (fatigue or injury). Otherwise, only the value of the armor which protects against the relevant form of damage is used. Full armor always provides the benefits of protection unless a specific area is not protected—a character does not always wear his helmet or gloves.

For example: *Alex is specifically punching Titus in the arm. Luckily, Titus is wearing a form of partial armor which covers his arm. Therefore, Titus' armor rating used in the damage roll is modified by the partial armor value.*

Armor is also constructed of different materials and shapes which affect the way in which it protects the wearer. The sturdier materials will guard better against serious injury, while the lighter ones may only be effective against blunt weapons.

A fitness rating of two (2) or greater is required to wear more than two pieces of non-leather partial armor or full armor.



armor materials

Leather

The lightest and most comfortable material used, leather is made from animal hides and molded to fit the desired shape. Leather protects against fatigue only.

Scale

Scale is made from small metal shingles fastened onto a leather component. This can offer pretty good protection, but also makes for a heavier component. Scale protects against both fatigue and injury.

Meshing

Meshing consists of metal links interwoven and shaped to cover a specific part of the body. This is often used as a secondary component, covering or worn beneath another. Meshing protects against injury only.

Plate

Plate is the most durable and protective material. It is forged from one or two solid pieces of metal to prevent weak or exposed areas. Plate is also the heaviest material used and often makes it difficult to run or perform delicate maneuvers. Plate protects against both fatigue and injury, depending on the component.



partial armor

Boots

Boots are designed to protect the feet and shins, and available in both leather and plate. Characters wearing plated boots, however, receive -1D on all fitness-based tasks involving the use of their feet, such as for climbing.

Coif

Similar to a helm, the coif is a hood made from meshing, designed to cover not only the head, but also the shoulders and entire neck. Helms are commonly worn on top of coifs.

Cuirass

A cuirass is similar to a vest and covers the chest, abdomen, and back. It is available in leather, scale, meshing, and plate varieties.

Foot Meshing

This is mostly used as additional protection and worn over or under leather or non-armored boots.

Gauntlets

These armored gloves are large enough to protect the hands and forearms. They are available in leather and scale. It is also possible to add metal studs to gauntlets in order to inflict additional damage when punching. Characters wearing gauntlets receive -1D on all fitness-based tasks involving the use of their hands.

Greaves

This armor component is designed to cover the lower legs and knees. Greaves are available in leather, scale, and plate.

Hand Meshing

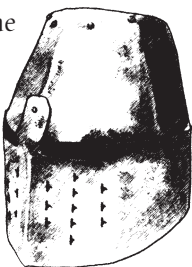
Like foot meshing, these coverings are used to offer increased protection to characters not wearing gauntlets. Characters wearing hand meshing receive -1D on all fitness-based tasks involving the use of their hands.

Hauberk

A hauberk is an extended version of the cuirass designed to cover not only the chest, abdomen, and back, but also the shoulders, groin, and upper legs. These are available in leather, scale, and meshing.

Helm

The head and back of the neck are often the least protected part of the body. Helms, which cover just such areas, can be very uncomfortable, but are crucial in battle. They are available in leather and plate. Visors may also be attached to increase visibility. Characters wearing helms receive -1D on all awareness-based tasks involving hearing. Those wearing plate helms without a visor or with an open visor also receive -1D on all awareness-based tasks involving vision.

**Vambraces**

Similar in function to greaves, vambraces are designed to cover the elbows and forearms. They are available in leather, scale, and plate.

full armor (mail)**Mesh**

Full body meshing is a one-piece gown made of interlinked metal chains. It is also referred to as chain mail and includes chain trews which connect via leather straps.

Scale

Scale mail is custom fitted for a particular size. The leather lining must fit snugly or this armor will become unreliable as it slips out of position. This is a two piece mail, consisting of an upper portion (torso, waist, and arms) and lower portion (legs and feet). The weight of this armor can be very uncomfortable when worn for extended periods of time.

Plate

Plate mail is the most durable and offers the best protection. Unlike the other full armor mails, plate can be found in either two piece or single piece versions. Either version is the same for game purposes. Wearing this armor can be extremely tiring due to its weight.

**BARDING**

Barding is full armor specifically designed for mighty steeds. Only the finest war horses can wear this armor. It offers considerable protection and is available in mesh, scale, and plate.



BREWS



Brews are made from herbal mixtures—plants and naturally occurring substances, such as animal extracts. The brewing process results in a potion, which can be triggered by ingestion, inhalation, injection, or topical application. Specific effects are determined by the category to which the brew belongs.

◆ indicates that it may be created with a successful alchemy task.

■ indicates that it may be created with a successful medicines task.

BREWING DIFFICULTIES

Injection	Routine
Ingestion	Complex
Inhalation	Challenging
Application	Formidable
per turn of effectiveness	+1 DIFF
Delayed effect, per turn	+1 DIFF

■ **Antidotes** are used to counter the effects of poisons. While antidotes do not reverse existing fatigue or injury, they do stop the poison from inflicting additional harm. All poisons require specific antidotes—the director should require players to get their antidotes right or they could do even more damage.

◆ **Aphrodisiacs** use pheromones to cause attraction between the sexes. All influence-based tasks used against a member of the opposite sex in the presence of an aphrodisiac receive -1 DIFF.

◆ **Charging Powders** are essentially unstable mixtures similar to gunpowder. They are used in stage performances and warfare. One dose of powder has a damage value of 1INJ with an effective range of two feet. Additional doses increase damage by one (1) point and range by two feet.

◆ **Coatings** reinforce materials and add one (1) to their armor rating.

■ **Elixirs** reverse the effects of disease and illness. Two grades of fatigue are reduced when ingested and one additional grade of injury is restored during normal recovery time. While this can restore health, it does not counteract poisons.

◆ **Ice** keeps foodstuffs fresh.

◆ **Poisons** inflict injury as either a one time effect (two grades of injury) or a continuing effect (one grade of injury per hour) and represent snake venom, insect bites, or poisonous substances such as arsenic and cyanide. Weaker, non-fatal poisons are also possible—they inflict fatigue instead of injury. The details are left up to the director.

■ **Salves** heal wounds. One grade of fatigue is automatically reduced when applied directly to a wound, and one additional grade of injury is restored during normal recovery time.

■ **Sedatives** promote sleep by inflicting two grades of fatigue per dose.

◆ **Spirits** are created from fermented materials and take the form of wines and ales. It can take several weeks, months, or years, to complete the perfect brew. Drinking excessive amounts of spirits can lead to drunkenness—all reasoning, awareness, and fitness rolls receive -1D to -3D.

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

WEAPON	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
ARROWS (10 FOR BOW)	5	common
axe	4	common
BOLTS (20 FOR CROSSBOW)	10	rare
BROADSWORD	15	common
club	2*	common
commanding sword	10	common
compound bow	25	rare
CROSSBOW	30	rare
dagger	4	common
flail	15	common
fork	5	common
GREAT SWORD	20	rare
hammer	5	common
hunting bow	15**	common
knife	3	common
javelin	1	common
mace	5	common
maul	10	common
mounted crossbow	75	unique
pick	8	common
pike	10	common
poleaxe	15	common
short sword	7	common
sling	2	common
spear	3	common
staff	2	common
studded gauntlet	10	rare
thrusting sword	10	rare
war axe	8	common
war pick	16	common
throwing axe	5	rare

SHIELD	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
battlement	30	rare
buckler	10	common
heater	15	common
kite	20	common
target	8	common

ARMOR	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
leather boots	10	common
leather cuirass	20	common
leather gauntlets	10	common
leather greaves	8	common
leather hauberk	15	common
leather helm	20	common
leather vambraces	8	common
scale cuirass	30	common
scale gauntlets	15	common
scale greaves	10	common
scale hauberk	20	common
scale vambraces	10	common
scale mail	40	rare
coif	20	common
cuirass meshing	35	common
foot meshing	20	common
hand meshing	20	common
hauberk meshing	30	common
chainmail	50	rare
plate boots	50	rare
plate cuirass	60	common
plate greaves	25	common
plate helm	45	common
plate vambraces	25	common
plate mail	75	rare
scale barding	100	rare
mesh barding	75	common
plate barding	150	rare

* Clubs can usually be crafted by hand or found in wooded areas.

** Arrows for hunting bows are commonly crafted by those wielding them.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

ADVENTURING GEAR	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
pack	5	common
climbing gear (rope, hook, spikes)	25	common
lantern	10	rare
oil	2	rare
mirror	20	rare
dried foods	10	common
rope	1	common
sack	2	common
tinder kit	3	common
waterskin	1	common

COMMODITIES	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
wine	5	rare
spices	8	rare
meat	10	common
seeds	30	rare

ANIMALS	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
riding horse	75	common
war horse	200	unique
mule	30	common
sheep	40	common
goats	40	common
shepherd dog	100	rare
war dog	150	unique
guard dog	100	common

TRANSPORT	PRICE	AVAILABILITY
cart	100	common
wagon	200	rare
boat	500	rare
sailboat	1,500	rare

All prices are in gold pieces. Availability indicates how difficult the item is to find in a city. Larger cities may make it easier to find the item, while villages and small town would be even more difficult.

Common

The item can be found in most any city for a reasonable price.

Rare

The item is not something which is found often. Prices may be inflated by as much as 200%.

Unique

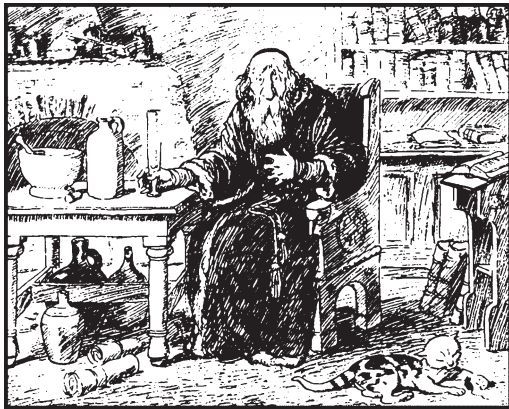
The item can be found in only a few larger cities. Characters should not get their hopes up if looking for a unique item anywhere other than a large city. Prices may be inflated by as much as 500%.



CHAPTER 4

MAGIC

MAGIC IS THE QUINTESSENTIAL FANTASY ELEMENT. IT IS WHAT MAKES THE GAME FANTASTIC AND EXOTIC. MAGIC CAN ALSO BE VERY UNBALANCING, HOWEVER. THE DIRECTOR SHOULD LIMIT THE NUMBER OF CHARACTERS WHO CAN USE MAGIC TO ONE OR TWO. THE THREE FORMS OF MAGIC REPRESENT DRASTICALLY DIFFERENT PARADIGMS AND SHOULD BE VERSATILE ENOUGH TO HANDLE ANY FANTASY STORY. IF NOT, THE DIRECTOR CAN ALWAYS ADD HIS OWN CUSTOM SKILLS OR EFFECTS.



Iron Gauntlets features three distinct forms of magic—divinity, totem, and crafting. While these may seem completely different from one another, this perception is illusory. Magical energy is a simple property of nature akin to lightning or fire. Its application, however, may take different forms, reflecting the beliefs and practices of those manipulating it.

Crafting-based magic is the most conspicuous form, permitting one to alter not only his, but other people's perceptions of reality. Whereas the other forms of magic are societal norms in some cultures, crafting is rare and taught in a more secular atmosphere. Faith in this form of magic is unnecessary—crafting is based on formula and knowledge.

Divinity-based magic is one of deep devotion and faith. It is a person's commitment to these ideals which molds divine (magical) energy into an extension of his own beliefs, sometimes with unexpected results. This form is common among cultures deeply rooted in religion.

Totem-based magic also relies on faith, but is extremely subtle. Magical energy is caused by interaction with the spirit world. Practitioners of this form of magic are not known for their direct application of it—they must often journey to *the beyond* or ask their spirit guides for assistance. This form is common among cultures deeply rooted in mythology and nature.

CRAFTING-BASED MAGIC

The roots of crafting magic can be traced back to an ancient pantheistic religion which claimed that the gods originally walked among man. The ancient gods were so mighty that they were even masters over reality itself. This gave them the power to shape man's world in any way they saw fit.

Eventually, some gods took mortals as mates. Their progeny were scorned by the majority of gods as abominations, and by humans as



dangerous demigods. As time passed, some descendants of the demigods, gifted with partial godly powers (magic), worked together in an attempt to study and develop their talents. The end result was the system of crafting still in use today. Wizards are all descendants of these early practitioners. Other descendants became the other races known to us today, such as elves and dwarves, which explains their talents for crafting as well.

FABRICS

Crafting magic is based upon flaws in reality as studied by practitioners. These flaws are called *fabrics* because they are interwoven in order to create or alter entire areas of reality. Being somewhat elastic, reality only tolerates these changes briefly and eventually reverts to its original state. No crafting effect is permanent without the aid of other methods (skills) to maintain a constant tether to the fabrics of reality. The default method for unleashing these effects is incantation, the recitation of magical phrases. This requires a spell book, since there are numerous variables and alternate effects associated with fabrics. A fabric may not be unleashed without a minimum of one turn spent locating the proper incantation in a spell book. Fortunately, however, a character may memorize a number of specific effects equal to his reasoning rating. Memorized effects (also called spells) will only work in the manner originally learned—targets and the application of a memorized effect must be the same as that which a character is attempting to unleash. Effects using two fabrics count as two memorized spells, three fabrics as three, etc.

For example: *Rodiern has a reasoning rating of 3, so he can memorize 3 effects. He is skilled in the following fabrics: materia, motus, and sphaera. He chooses to memorize abatement (counts as two because it requires materia and sphaera) and salubrity when used on himself.*

More than one crafting-based task may be used in a single turn—this works the same way as taking additional actions (see combat). The base difficulty of all effects is determined by range unless otherwise noted. In addition, the number of targets which a fabric may affect can be increased by one for each additional +1DIFF applied to the task. All crafting-based tasks resulting in a calamity inflict one grade of fatigue to the caster of the effect.

CRAFTING RANGE DIFFICULTIES

Self or Touch	Trivial (1)
10ft	Routine (2)
25ft	Complex (3)
50ft	Challenging (4)
100ft	Formidable (5)
200ft	Impossible (6)
500ft	Improbable (7)

A crafting-based composure roll is required after each use of a crafting-based skill. The difficulty is equal to the number of consecutive turns in which one or more crafting-based skills have been used. A failure indicates that the character receives one grade of fatigue and may not attempt a crafting-based task next turn due to overactivity; he must replenish his magical energy.

For example: *A wizard who has unleashed a fabric effect three turns in a row makes a composure roll. His crafting ability is 3 and his composure skill is 5. He rolls his 3 dice and achieves only 2 steps. He has tired himself out and receives one grade of fatigue and cannot attempt another fabric effect for one turn.*

Fabrica Ge

This fabric teaches practitioners about the unstable nature inherent in spacial dimensions. Ge can only provide one effect when not combined with other fabrics—the practitioner can create rends in reality which act as portals from any one location to another. Transportation from the entrance to the exit is instantaneous, but due to the resilience of reality, the rend seals itself after only one turn unless the practitioner wills it to stay open by sacrificing one grade of fatigue for each additional turn. The character must be familiar with the exit point of the portal in order to create a successful rend. The difficulty is determined by the diameter of the rend—one (1) per two feet.

When combined with other fabrics, ge can affect the size of other objects or people (with materia), teleport objects without the need for a rend (also with materia), witness events in a far off land (with sphaera), or extend the range of other fabric effects (multiply the range by itself—range²). Other effects are also possible when combining ge with two or more fabrics.

Fabrica Materia

The fabric of materia teaches practitioners about the adaptable nature inherent in the elemental bonds present in all things, from the living to the inanimate. These elemental bonds mold themselves to fit the reality to which they are subject, reverting to their original form when the changes in reality (the materia effect) have subsided. The duration of an effect is equal to one turn plus an additional turn for each point of overkill.

There are five primary effects available when this fabric is invoked. Only one may be unleashed at a time.

Abatement. A targeted living creature receives -1D on all crafting-based tasks when used with the sphaera fabric, plus an additional -1D for each point of overkill. The difficulty is increased by the target's crafting rating.

Alteration. A targeted living creature receives either +1D or -1D (caster's choice) on all creativity-based tasks. This change is also increased by one for each point of overkill. Alternatively, this may be used to reduce or increase a target character's armor rating or that of a piece of armor, although the rating may not go below zero (0) or above eight (8).

Salubrity. Fatigue or injury may be inflicted or restored to any targeted living creature. The number of grades is equal to one plus the overkill amount. This may also be used to increase or decrease the damage rating of a single attack.

Transformation. The appearance of a targeted living creature may be transformed. This can affect its appearance, size, or number of limbs, for example, and may also affect its influence rating if appearance is changed (at the director's discretion).

Transmutation. The shape or consistency of a targeted inanimate object may be transmuted in size or state. This could turn a cube-shaped object into a sphere or convert between earth (solid, rock), fire (combustible, lava), water (liquid, ice), or air (gas, steam). The size of the object affects the difficulty.

MATERIA SIZE DIFFICULTIES

Mouse/Cat	-2DIFF
Undersized	-1DIFF
Oversized	+1DIFF
Large Animals	+2DIFF
Giants/Dragons	+3DIFF
Even Larger Animals/Creatures	+4DIFF to +5DIFF

Fabrica Sensus

This fabric teaches practitioners about the susceptible nature inherent in the way reality allows us to perceive it. False stimuli can be woven into reality, thereby tricking it into radiating illusionary images perceptible by one of our five senses. These illusions appear real, but if an image not radiating sensory information for touch is, in fact, touched by an individual, he may grow suspicious (at the director's discretion).

Like other fabrics, the effects of sensus soon dissipate as reality restores itself. The duration of an effect is equal to one turn, plus an additional one per point of overkill. Each effect can alter one type of sensory information (sight, sound, smell, taste, or touch), although additional sensory information may be added in exchange for +1DIFF each. Limiting the effects to only specific individuals modifies the task roll by +2DIFF for the first one and +1DIFF for each additional.

Fabrica Motus

The motus fabric teaches practitioners about the delicate nature of motion. There are two primary effects available when this fabric is invoked, each lasting until the end of the turn in which it is unleashed. Only one may be unleashed at a time. The size of the target affects the difficulty of the task and the target may resist this with an athletics task.

MOTUS SIZE DIFFICULTIES

Oversized	+1DIFF
Large Animals	+2DIFF
Giants/Dragons	+3DIFF
Even Larger Animals/Creatures	+4DIFF to +5DIFF

Impetus. The practitioner can create a force of attraction or repulsion originating from himself (if using incantation) or a relevant product (if using another method, such as a potion, inscribed amulet, etc.) linked to any targeted object or individual. When an attraction is created, the target is pulled a distance toward the origin equal to five (5) feet, plus an additional foot per point of overkill. Conversely, repulsion sends the target away from the origin by the same distance. When combined with the ge fabric, the character can create an origin at any location. An object which is already in motion may also be slowed or sped up. Since speed is not an in-depth issue for this game, the actual change in velocity is left up to the director.

Latency. A target may be restrained (forced into a stationary position) by applying both attraction and repulsion. This modifies the task by +3DIFF.

Fabrica Sphaera

Sphaera is a fabric unlike any other. It teaches practitioners about the flaws inherent in crafting magic and the ways in which it can be countered and detected. There are three primary effects available when this fabric is invoked. Only one may be unleashed at a time.

Revocation. Another character's crafting-based task may be contested or resisted using the sphaera skill.

Modulation. The steps achieved by another character's crafting-based task may be increased or decreased. This requires that the character altering the task is at least proficient with all fabrics involved in it. The difficulty is increased by the crafting ability of the other practitioner. The change is equal to one plus the overkill amount.

Cognizance. Focusing one's attention to sense whether the crafting ability is currently in use or has recently been used. The difficulty is equal to one (1) per ten-foot radius in which the character is attempting to detect. It is modified by +1DIFF per twelve hours elapsed since the crafting ability was used. The character can also determine the fabrics used to create the effect if he is proficient in those which are relevant.

other methods

It is also possible to use methods other than incantation in conjunction with fabrics to create effects. Common sense must prevail with these methods. These other methods require their own skill roll before a fabric may even be attempted.



Note to director: If an effect used with a particular method doesn't sound right, it probably isn't. Allow the player to attempt it, but give it strange properties or make it fail.

Circumscription

The use of circles to power magic is one of the oldest known forms of magical invocation. The practitioner must draw a circle on the ground with either something that leaves a mark, such as a dye or charcoal, or forms a closed barrier, such as a rope or melted wax. Not only does the placement of the circle matter, but also the pattern in which it is drawn. While the shape of the outline is circular, it is typical for these to display intricate patterns along the path to help channel the magical energy as well as contain it.

The circle's radius determines the base difficulty—one (1) per two (2) feet. The circle is actually a sphere, so the radius applies to the vertical dimension (or z-axis) as well. A successful task allows the character to unleash a fabric within the perimeter of the circle. As long as the circle remains intact and a target remains in the circle, the effect unleashed within it is permanent.

Note to director: The time it takes to draw a circle can be anywhere from four turns to four hours, depending on its intricacy and size. Feel free to modify the roll by -1DIFF to -3DIFF for longer times devoted to it.

Inscription (uses Design Skill)

Some practitioners turned to the use magical symbols in lieu of speaking phrases with the advent of writing. The practitioner either draws symbols or words on a parchment, scroll, or flesh, or

engraves them in rock, wood, or bone. The effect may be triggered by different means and must be chosen beforehand. The trigger determines the base difficulty:

Recitation: the effect is unleashed when the inscription is completely read aloud. Difficulty is routine.

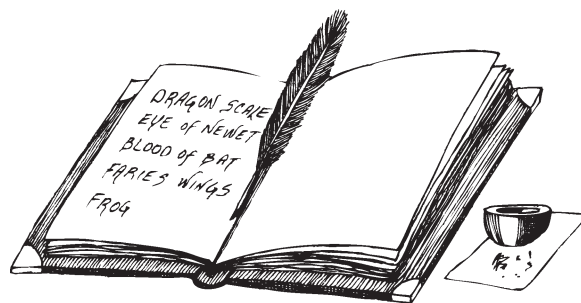
Inspection: the effect is unleashed when the inscription is seen by any living creature. Difficulty is complex.

Proximity: the effect is unleashed as soon as any living creature comes within range of the inscription. The range is two feet, plus double the overkill amount. Difficulty is challenging.

Action: the effect is unleashed when any living creature performs a previously specified action (firing an arrow, igniting a lantern, etc.) within range of the inscription. The range is two feet, plus double the overkill amount. Difficulty is formidable.

Tattoo: the effect is unleashed when the inscription is used in the form of a henna-style tattoo or ritual-style scarring and the recipient performs a previously specified action. Difficulty is formidable.

A successful task immediately creates an inscription capable of channeling one fabric using the chosen trigger. The maximum distance from the inscription which a fabric may target is two feet, plus double the overkill amount. As long as the inscription is intact and the target remains within range, the effect is permanent.



Alchemy

Early practitioners discovered alchemy as an easy way to defer the effects of magical effects. Brews, also known as potions, can be created in advance and used whenever the need should arise. It takes approximately one half-hour to prepare a brew to be used with a fabric and each fabric requires another thirty minutes (not to mention its own specific ingredients and the time it takes to locate them). The base difficulty is complex and receives +1DIFF for each additional fabric after the first one used to create the effect.

MAGICAL INGREDIENTS

Fabrica Ge	feathers from a live bird, honey bees, ants
Fabrica Materia	bones from the same type of creature to be targeted
Fabrica Sensus	the relevant sensory organ from any mammal
Fabrica Motus	moss, mold, fungus, tadpole, water from a stream
Fabrica Sphaera	shattered gem, spider's web, dirt from an anthill

Forging

Modern smiths endowed with crafting ability discovered a way to enchant common items, such as swords, clothing, and even stone walls (using masonry) with magical effects. All enchanted items must be made from scratch in order for the magical energy to permeate them. Metals must be forged, walls must be built from wood or stone, clothing must be woven, and so on. The time required for construction depends on the materials used and the desired object—generally about two to four hours for forged metals and clothing, and several days to weeks for larger untakings such as walled structures. As long as the enchanted item is intact and the target or user is touching it, the effect does not cease.

styles**Bloodcraft**

materia, ge, motus, alchemy, design

Practitioners of this style are masters of the dead. Recently expired corpses may be restored to minimal health (*materia: salubrity*) and invigorated (*materia: alteration*), tracked regardless of location (*ge*), and nudged in the proper direction for them to instinctively proceed (*motus: impetus*). For game purposes, animated corpses are the same as zombies and skeletons.

Hedgecraft

circumscription, materia, motus, sphaera

The utilization of protective circles to ward off damage (*materia: alteration*), incoming projectiles (*motus: latency*), and other magical effects (*sphaera: modulation*).

Earthencraft

forging, materia, sensus, sphaera, masonry

The art of forging magical weapons, armor, shields, cloaks, and jewelry. Weapons, such as swords, daggers, and arrows are designed to inflict additional damage (*materia: salubrity*) upon

their use. Shields and armor are designed to improve armor rating considerably (*materia: alteration*) or protect against magical ability upon their use (*sphaera: revocation*). Cloaks are designed to alter the appearance of wearers or make them invisible (*sensus*), or protect against magical ability (*sphaera: revocation*). Jewelry is designed to protect against magical ability (*sphaera: revocation*), weaken (*materia: alteration*), injure or tire (*materia: salubrity*), alter the appearance (*materia: transformation*), or reduce magical ability (*materia: abatement*) of a character when worn.

Glamourcraft

instrument, sensus, materia, sphaera

The art of enchantment through music and song. Practitioners create illusions (*sensus*) and alter objects (*materia: transformation*) to conform to the illusion, so that they can enforce their own view of a peaceful reality. They protect it by inflicting fatigue upon intruders who, as a result, fall asleep (*materia: salubrity*), or counter magical effects which disrupt their calm existence (*sphaera: revocation*).

Runecraft

design, sphaera, sensus, ge, motus, literacy

The use of seals and wards to protect anything from an individual to a drawbridge. Practitioners inscribe runes above portals to block entry to anyone or just specific targets (*motus: impetus*), creation illusions to scare off people (*sensus*), open rends to other locations (*ge*), or counter magical tasks (*sphaera: revocation*).

Warcraft

materia, motus, sensus, medicines

Magical effects for use in battle, including increasing the range of projectiles such as arrows (*motus: impetus*), launching bolts of energy (*materia: transmutation and motus: impetus*), healing injured comrades (*materia: salubrity*), and creating illusions to confuse the enemy (*sensus*).

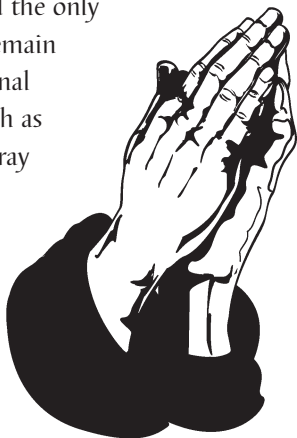
Witchcraft

alchemy, sensus, materia, subterfuge, performance, observation

A tradition of trickery, thievery, and vengeance. Practitioners of this style lure their unsuspecting victims into their grasps with illusions (*sensus*), weaken, injure, or otherwise prevent them from escaping (*materia: salubrity*), curse them with a hideous appearance (*materia: transformation*), and finally rob them. Sometimes practitioners also kill their victims once they are immobilized.

DIVINITY-BASED MAGIC

The hope to become closer to the divine is a common theme among religions, and the only way to achieve it is to worship and remain faithful. Some individuals of exceptional character are granted divine gifts, such as blessings and insights, while others pray for such things only when necessary. This is what separates the faithful followers from the guided prophets—the ability to ask for divine intervention. There are still other men of faith who seek power and guidance not from a glorious and merciful entity, but from one of malice and intolerance.



endowments

When a person is divinely influenced in some way, he is said to have received an endowment from the Powers Above (or Below). The default method for requesting endowments is prayer. Characters may attempt prayer at any time. However, endowments are granted to characters in any way their deities see fit. Put simply, the director is free to choose.

For example: *if a character is going into battle and he prays for a blessing, the deity could reward him with divinely enhanced armor or extreme luck. Or, it may be indirect assistance—someone in front of the character receives extreme luck or an opponent is stopped before even reaching the character.*

The players have no control over how the endowment is implanted. It is just as likely to target another character if in a position to help more people. With the use of other skills, however, it is possible for players to harness endowments with more precision.

The actual skill level for endowments does not represent prowess, but rather the character's connection to the relevant aspect of the divine. No endowment is permanent, because mere mortals are not capable of continually channeling divine energy. The duration of an endowment in turns is equal to one plus the overkill amount. The base difficulty is challenging (4) unless otherwise noted; modifiers may also be applied to the task.

ENDOWMENT DIFFICULTIES

In the presence of a congregation of 10 (except when using the benediction skill)	-1 DIFF
In a temple of the same faith (see consecration)	-1 DIFF
In a temple of an opposing faith (see consecration)	+1 DIFF
In a town where the majority are of the same faith	-1 DIFF
Wielding a holy symbol (except when using the benediction skill)	-1 DIFF

The director is also encouraged to provide a number of *freebie* endowments during a story equal to the character's divinity rating. These should be used to help guide the plot and require no task roll—the director determines when and how they are used. To reiterate, these *freebie* endowments are for the director to control the flow of the story and not to give a character an unfair advantage (unless it is warranted or just plain fun).

Blessing

The focus of this endowment is a character's creativity and well-being. Since a character's comrades (those generally of the same faith, but not exclusively) are important to his own well-being, psychologically and physically, it is common for them to benefit from blessings instead. It is not for us to understand the choices made by the Powers Above. The following effects are possible, but only one may be active at a time.

Intervention. The character receives an increase in his luck rating equal to one plus the overkill amount. It may not be increased above six (6).

Inspiration. The character receives +1D on all creativity-based tasks, plus an additional +1D for each point of overkill achieved.

Touch. The character's injury level is restored by a number of grades equal to one plus the overkill amount.

Aegis. The character receives a bonus on his armor rating equal to one plus the overkill amount. The total armor value may not be increased above eight (8).

Consecration

The character may channel divine energy and bless a structure, such as a temple or shrine. Once completed, no undead creatures

may enter the structure unless they successfully resist this with a composure task. In addition, all divinity-based tasks attempted within the structure by characters of the same faith receive +1D and all divinity-based tasks attempted within the structure by characters of an opposing faith receive +1DIFF, plus +1DIFF per point of overkill. If this endowment is attempted without a successful benediction task first, it will not work. The difficulty of the task is determined by the size of the structure.

CONSECRATION DIFFICULTIES

Cottage or Shrine	Complex (3)
Manor or Small Temple	Challenging (4)
Large Temple	Formidable (5)
Castle	Improbable (6)
Plot of Land (forest, desert, etc.)	Impossible (7)

Curse

This endowment is the total opposite of a blessing and requests to a deity may only target other characters. Only characters of faiths who worship the Powers Below (rather than Above) can possess this skill. The following effects are possible, but only one may be active at a time.

False Promise. The target character's luck rating is decreased by an amount equal to one plus the overkill amount. It may not be decreased below zero (0).

Inspiration Lost. The character receives -1D on all creativity tasks, plus an additional -1D for each point of overkill achieved.

Plague. A plague of biblical proportion is unleashed upon one or more target characters. The difficulty is increased by +1DIFF for each additional target above the first. The plague can manifest in any form, from boils and disease to lice, locusts, or dead livestock. If the source of the plague is something that would harm a character, the target receives either fatigue or injury (director's discretion, but a standard damage roll must be made) equal to one plus the overkill amount.

Gospel

This endowment concentrates a character's own faith and causes him to radiate divine energies. The following effects are possible, but only one may be active at a time.

Trust. The character's morale is strengthened by his faith in his deity. While this endowment remains active, the character receives +1D on all composure tasks, and +1D on all influence-based tasks directed at members of his faith.

Rally. Divine energies radiating from the character can affect the faith of those around him. Anyone within conversation range receives +1D on all composure tasks.

Purity. No undead creature may either approach the character, a location at which he is currently, or a holy symbol he is carrying within a number of feet equal to five, plus five times the overkill amount. Creatures already within that perimeter must flee. This may be resisted by a creature with a composure task.

True Sight. The character is capable of rejecting changes to reality by way of the crafting ability. Once a crafting effect has manifested for one full turn, the character may resist it with a divinity-based composure task—this roll is made in place of the gospel roll.

Prophecy

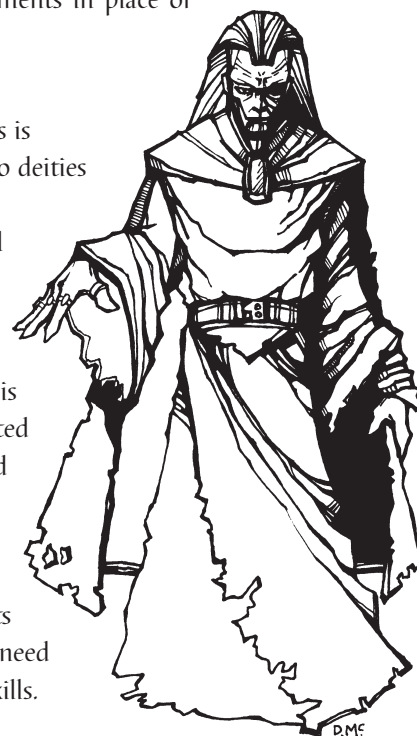
There are times when a deity wishes to use a character as a messenger of his faith. This endowment projects visions of a future event into a character's consciousness via hallucinations or dreams. The visions are more than likely to follow a rule of cause and effect—if a specific action is undertaken by a given individual or group, the events presented in the vision will unfold. Therefore, prophecies are not definite and events may be avoided if intended as warnings of impending doom.

other methods

Additional skills may be used to call upon deities to bestow endowments in place of simple prayer.

Benediction

The use of sacred rituals is typically more favorable to deities than simple prayer. In exchange for a ceremonial routine, the officiating character may choose the target of the desired endowment. This is both a sustained and united task with a minimum and incremental time of fifteen minutes. A congregation of at least ten additional participants is also required, but they need not have any particular skills.



Sacrament

Similar to benediction, sacrament is a ceremony in which a character pledges an oath to uphold a duty for the faith in exchange for an endowment to assist him in his task. This requires someone to officiate over the ritual and, therefore, that person must make a successful benediction roll in addition to the target character's successful sacrament roll. Once the ceremony is completed, the target character receives one endowment until his duty to the faith is completed. Duties may include a holy crusade, driving off an undead army, or even protecting the faith's temple.

Effigy

While this ritual is more common among worshippers of the Powers Below, it is available to any faith. Yet another ceremony, this one involves the creation of an idol depicting a faith's deity. When combined with a benediction, an endowment is bestowed upon the idol, which then acts as a messenger for the deity to which it resembles. The deity (or rather the director) decides on both the proper use and time for the endowment. Idols such as these are often found in temples or on sacred land in order to protect worshippers or treasures. Curses are also commonly attached to such idols as a means to punish trespassers.



styles

Calling of the Sage

prophecy, gospel, astromancy

Some say that the future is the providence of the divine. Mortals given the gift of prophecy are favored by the Powers Above and are expected to share their insights with the faithful.

Practitioners of this style do just that, but more as a way to entice others to heed their warnings of the future. Aside from these visions (*prophecy*), practitioners also see right through illusions (*gospel: true sight*) and their faith drives off the undead (*gospel: purity*).

Chosen Disciple

effigy, benediction, curse, blessing

The Lord of the Underworld commands far greater power than the Celestial Lord—at least as far as his minions are concerned.

They create striking likenesses to him in stone and perform drawn-out rituals in order to receive his powers (*blessing: intervention*) or stop others from discovering them (*blessing: curse*).

Crusade

sacrament, blessing, gospel, prophecy

Some religions are intent on rooting out the evil of heathens and blasphemers. They say that the demons inhabiting the ignorant must be cast out by education and the evil of those who turn their back on the truth must be struck down before their disease spreads. This philosophy is often executed by crusaders, priests, and their followers who wish to cleanse the world of non-believers. They take oaths in exchange for a guarded destiny (*blessing: intervention*), resolve (*gospel: trust*), and the gift of insight (*prophecy*).

Preaching the True Word

benediction, gospel, performance, blessing

The Church of the True Word has a very strict training program for its priests. The benediction ceremony is more important to them than actual miracles. They rely on it to boost their own faith (*gospel: trust*) as well as that of their followers (*gospel: rally*). Their well-being is also paramount and often radiate healing (*blessing: touch*) and protective energies (*blessing: aegis*).

TOTEM-BASED MAGIC

The word *totem* refers to a spirit symbolized by an animal and which acts as guardian to an individual or tribe. The animal is often venerated by the tribe and worshipped in exchange for its service to them. This symbolism connecting animal to spirit stems from rituals in which the wisemen from the tribe enter trances. They commune with the spirits to which they have formed bonds. These are called spirit guides and always take the form of animals.

Wisemen were not always so wise. While their ability to commune with spirits is inherent to them, their skills of entrancement and exploring the spirit world are not. Such skills are only gained from extensive experience and a right of passage known as *the rebirth*.

The rebirth typically occurs voluntarily at the onset of maturity, but sometimes a spirit guide forces the ritual in order to hasten the process. Such forced rituals generally occur when a tribe is lacking a wiseman. The ritual begins with members of the tribe dancing in a circle around the initiate, who is standing beside a fire, breathing in its fumes. Once the initiate falls into unconsciousness (or a trance-like state), he must wait for his spirit guide to escort him to *the beyond*, a realm where the spirits reside. If a guide does not accompany the initiate, he is doomed to search for *the beyond* forever, and will not recover consciousness. The initiate's guide must also bring him back the way they came and force him to regain consciousness. For *the beyond* is the final resting place of the dead and the act of escorting the initiate is symbolic of the bond between the two—a connection which goes beyond consciousness and death.

Once the initiate awakens, he is a new person and will decorate himself with reminders of his ordeal. This may include animal bones (symbolizing the place in which the dead reside), furs and masks (symbolizing the animal which his spirit guide resembles), and even drums (the beat reminds him of his journey to *the beyond*). The bond with his spirit guide is also complete and he can call on its assistance at will. A character may only have one spirit guide and must choose its form during character creation. This ritual elevates the initiate to the high status of healer, soothsayer, and wiseman in his tribe.



entrancements

A wisemen is capable of a great many skills which are either based entirely on his spirit guide's power or his own for traversing the spirit world. The trance is a crucial aspect, because it opens up the character's consciousness to both the spirit world and his spirit guide. It is beyond the ability of a fully conscious character to interact with either. Trances can be accomplished in as quickly as five to ten minutes when using agents known for inducing states of euphoria and ecstasy—fire, peyote, etc.

A character may enter a trance in the hope that his spirit guide will convey information—the location of something, number of people in an army, or reason for a betrayal, for example. This does not require a task and may be performed any number of times during play. However, a spirit guide speaks in symbolism, so the director should do the same by alluding to an answer rather than giving the character a literal one. Additionally, a spirit guide may not have the knowledge a character seeks or he may be unwilling to help the character until the right time. This is the most basic function of entrancement. Other functions vary widely as do their base difficulties.

Familiar

This entrancement allows a character to experience the senses of any one animal which is the same as his spirit guide's animal form. The character can hear, smell, see, taste, and touch whatever the animal does. The base difficulty is determined by the range to the animal from the character's location. The duration is unlimited while in a trance, or one hour, plus an additional hour for each point of overkill if he awakens.



This is particularly useful for domesticated cats, dogs, and birds which have been trained by the character, since they can take commands and usually return home on their own.

FAMILIAR RANGE DIFFICULTIES

less than 50ft	Trivial (1)
100ft	Routine (2)
250ft	Complex (3)
500ft	Challenging (4)
1,000ft	Formidable (5)
2,000ft	Impossible (6)
5,000ft	Improbable (7)

Sacrifice

Normally, a spirit guide is required to traverse the spirit world. However, it is also possible to follow the departing soul of a person or animal. This entrancement requires the character to kill an animal (normally one with which he is most comfortable—the symbolic manifestation of his spirit guide, for example) while performing a sacred ceremony and then immediately induce a trance. At this point, the character can follow the animal's soul to *the beyond*. Getting back may be a problem, but if necessary, he can call upon his spirit guide for assistance (requires an additional challenging sacrifice task).

While at its foundation this entrancement may be seen as having little benefit, its main purpose is to explore the spirit world without need of a guide. Additionally, this can be performed without the sacrifice, provided an animal or individual has died within two minutes time. The intent is to escort that soul to *the beyond* and ensure a safe journey. While on that journey, the soul often confides in the character, providing a wealth of information regarding places he has traveled, people he has met, and the last few minutes of his life.

SACRIFICE DIFFICULTIES

Sacrificing a manifestation of spirit guide	Complex (3)
Following a close friend's spirit	Complex (3)
Sacrificing an animal/character	Formidable (5)
Following a non-sacrificed spirit	Formidable (5)

Skin Walk

This entrancement creates an even tighter bond between a wiseman and his spirit guide. The bond becomes so tight, in fact, that the spirit's energy flows through the character. The result is a manifestation of the spirit's animal qualities in the character. The base difficulty for manifesting one quality is complex (3) and is modified by +1DIFF for each additional quality. The duration is one hour, plus an additional hour for each point of overkill.

Some general guidelines are listed below for different types of animal qualities which characters may manifest. The director is free to make up his own or customize them to best fit a character's animal spirit. The director should limit characters to manifesting qualities which their animal spirit would possess.

Claws. The character grows sharp claws or talons which have a damage rating of +1INJ. All attempts at climbing receive +1D, but all tasks involving manual dexterity receive +1DIFF.

Fur. The character grows fur which helps keep him warm and provides an armor rating of 2 against fatigue.

Ears. The character's auditory system changes in both appearance and function to that of his spirit animal. Cats, dogs, bats, etc. receive +1D on all awareness-based tasks involving hearing.

Eyes. The character's eyes change in both appearance and function to that of his spirit animal. Cats can see in darkness, but are color blind, owls and dogs can see in darkness, etc.

Fangs. The character grows sharp fangs which have a damage rating of +1INJ. Venom may also be present in a bite if the manifestation is of a snake (1INJ/hour).

Fins. The character's legs transform into fins and a tail. This allows him to swim underwater without penalty. Tasks involving moving on land, however, now receive -2D.

Gills. The character grows a set of gills around his neck which permits him to breathe underwater.

Increased Musculature. The character's body mass is increased as is his strength (+1D on all fitness-based tasks involving strength) and armor rating (+1). The character receives one grade of fatigue when the effects of this manifestation end.

Nose. The character's sense of smell is enhanced and he receives +1D on all awareness-based tasks involving scent.

Odorous Gland. The character grows a gland which can unleash a terrible stench which also sticks to anyone nearby. It takes several days for the stench to dissipate and anyone unfortunate enough to carry it receives +1DIFF on all influence-based tasks.

Quills. The character's body sprouts sharp quills which can prick anyone who gets too close, including attackers. They have a damage rating of +1FAT, but are blocked by any armor without need for a damage roll. If a brawling attack or parrying/blocking defense against the character fails, the quills may inflict damage (make a damage roll).

Saliva. The character is capable of regurgitating extremely acidic stomach enzymes and spitting them up to five feet. The enzymes have a damage rating of +1FAT, but are blocked by any armor without need for a damage roll.

Skin Folds. The character develops extra skin around the ribs which function like wings, allowing him to jump double the normal distance. The character must not be wearing anything over this area in order for him to gain the bonus which it provides.

Scales. The character's skin becomes scaly and tough, and provides an armor rating of 1 against fatigue and 1 against injury.

Tail. The character grows a tail which can be used for brawling attacks at -1D (a reptile) or as an additional limb (a monkey). The tail also provides +1D for fitness-based tasks involving balance.

Spirit Walk

Once in the spirit world (by way of sacrifice or with help from a spirit guide), a character is cut off from the real world. He cannot see or otherwise sense what is happening around his body. This entrancement, however, allows a character to sense not only the spirit world, but also the real world. He receives sensory information from both worlds simultaneously, albeit in a reduced manner, and all awareness-based tasks within the spirit world receive +1DIFF while in this state. No task roll is required to initiate this effect.

The spirit world is not dimensionally the same as the real world. The bulk of knowledge for this effect is reconciling a spirit world location with that of one in the real world. If a character wishes to perceive sensory information at a specific location in the real world, he must make a successful spirit walk task to determine the corresponding location in the spirit world. The base difficulty is determined by the moon's appearance and modified by conditions at the real world location.

SPIRIT WALK DIFFICULTIES

Full Moon	Routine (2)
Half Moon	Complex (3)
Crescent Moon	Challenging (4)
New Moon	Formidable (5)
Myst or Fog	+1DIFF
Rain or Snow Storm	+2DIFF
Electrical Storm	-1DIFF
Desert Area	-1DIFF
On the Sea or a Small Island	+1DIFF

other methods

While entrancement is the only method capable of bridging the gap between man and spirit, ritual dance by tribal members can be very conducive to helping someone in the spirit world find his way back. The beating of drums and rhythmic dance is said to echo throughout the spirit world, though some wisemen disagree. Whether this is true or not is irrelevant, because clearly it does help and has saved many a lost wiseman. For game purposes, a sustained ritual dance task (ten minutes minimum) modifies a sacrifice or spirit walk task by -2DIFF when attempting to regain consciousness.

Although difficult, it is also possible to trap an individual's consciousness in the spirit world if a special ritual dance is performed around the body. A sustained ritual dance task (ten minutes minimum) modifies the difficulty of attempting to return from the spirit world by +2DIFF.

styles

Spirit Healing

sacrifice, medicines, ritual dance

It is said that illness is the result of a lost soul. In order to heal the illness, a healer must enter the spirit world (*sacrifice*), locate the soul (*spirit walk*), and bring it back into harmony with the body. Special herbs are also used to induce entrancement in the patient in order to lessen the gap between his body and soul. This can heal up to two grades of fatigue.

Spirit Bonding

familiar, skin walk, animal handling

A wiseman's spirit guide is his most trusted friend. The manifestation of a spirit guide is just as important, since many of the qualities present in the animal are also present in the spirit. A wiseman will often breed the animal to study its ways and care for it as a physical symbol of his guide.

CHAPTER 5

BESTIARY

FANTASY CREATURES OFTEN INSTILL A SENSE OF WONDER. WHEN OUR CHARACTERS FACE THESE CREATURES, IT IS USUALLY ON THE OTHER END OF AN AXE OR OTHER SUCH WEAPON. THE MAJORITY OF THEM CAN BE QUITE DEADLY, BUT ONCE IN A WHILE, A PEACEFUL, AND SOMETIMES EVEN HELPFUL CREATURE PRESENTS ITSELF. THAT'S PROBABLY THE MOST WONDEROUS SITUATION FOR WHICH WE CAN HOPE—NOT GETTING OUR BRAINS BEATEN IN BY SMELLY, DIRTY, VICIOUS ANIMALS.

abilities

In order to facilitate a bit of variation among the same species of creatures, their abilities are rated on a scale from A to G. Each letter represents a range of ability ratings which can be randomly determined. Put simply, most orcs are very strong, but there are also ones which are weak due to injury or old age. The scale allows you to create creatures to reflect conditions such as this.

When choosing a creature for play, simply roll one die for each ability and consult the table below, using the appropriate column (use column A for an ability rating of A). If the ability's rating is listed as 0 (zero) instead of a letter on the A to G scale, the actual ability rating is zero (0) and irrelevant for the creature.

ROLL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	0	1	1	2	4	5	6
2	0	2	2	3	5	6	6
3	0	2	2	4	5	6	7
4	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	1	3	3	5	6	7	8
6	1	3	4	5	6	7	8
7	1	3	4	5	6	8	8
8	2	4	4	6	7	8	9
9	2	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	2	5	6	7	8	9	10

skills

Skill ratings are not given with the list of skills each creature possesses. Instead, the director should rate the skills appropriate to the desired experience of the creature (proficient, expert, etc.).

creature experience

As an option, creatures may use experience to augment their tasks. Rather than each creature possessing its own experience, however, a pool of points is shared among all the creatures in a

group and can be expended to increase any task in which the relevant creature is skilled. Simply assign a number of experience points (roll one to two dice for a random amount) to any given group of creatures.

creature gimmicks

Flight

The creature is capable of flying because of wings or some magical ability. The distance it can cover is the same as twice normal running speed. Aerial acrobatics may be performed using the athletics skill.

Regeneration

The creature may either restore health levels or regrow a severed part of its body. If it is capable of restoring health, its current number of fatigue grades is reduced by two (2) and its current number of injury grades is reduced by one (1) each turn. If the creature is capable of restoring body parts, the relevant parts will be noted in parenthesis. The body part will grow back in a number of turns equal to the roll of one die. A creature will not possess both forms, unless listed separately.

For example: *Titus is in combat with a deadly hydra and manages to cut off one of its heads. Since the creature has the regeneration (heads) gimmick, the director rolls one die. It's a 4, so the head will grow back in four turns.*

Toughness

The creature is exceptionally tough and receives a bonus to its armor rating. The actual bonus from this gimmick may vary depending on the creature and is noted in parenthesis—a creature with *toughness (2)* indicates that it receives a bonus of two to its armor rating.

Venomous (also see Brews on page 42)

The creature's body creates and stores venom. This venom acts as a poison when injected into a target by inflicting at least 1INJ from an attack. The exact nature of the poison is up to the director.

COMMON ANIMAL SPECIES

Domesticated Animals and Livestock

There are countless varieties of domesticated animals, but a few are listed here.

<u>DOGS</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	C	D	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: undersized

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), claws (1INJ)

<u>HORSES</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	D	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: oversized

<u>MULES</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	D	A	0	0	0

skills: brawling

gimmicks: clumsy, oversized

<u>SHEEP</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	C	A	0	0	0

skills: brawling

Fury Dogs

These odd-looking, two-headed dogs are commonly found as pets and creatures of war among the droll species. With the exception of two heads and an unnatural hunger for killing, fury dogs are very similar to wolves. Each of a fury dog's heads can attack independently of the other (each head can attempt its own free action every turn).

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	D	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: toughness (1), musclebound

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), claws (1INJ)

Giant Spiders

Spiders can be very dangerous; giant ones even more so. They spin huge, elaborate webs to trap their prey (webs are treated like a grapple by the spider).

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: oversized, flight, toughness (2), venomous

natural weapons: mandibles (2INJ)

Griffins

Griffins are essentially singing beasts with wings—a combination of lion and bird. They most commonly stalk their prey from above, although they sometimes lure their victims into deep caves with their beautiful, bird-like songs



fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	0	0	0

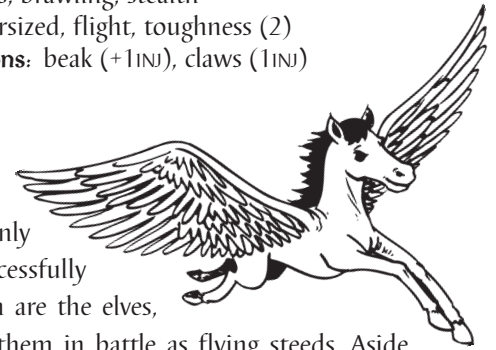
skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: oversized, flight, toughness (2)

natural weapons: beak (+1INJ), claws (1INJ)

Pegasi

Pegasi (*singular: pegasus*) are horses with wings. The only race to have successfully domesticated them are the elves, who make use of them in battle as flying steeds. Aside from having wings and strong will, there is little difference between pegasi and normal horses.



fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: oversized, flight

Singing Beasts

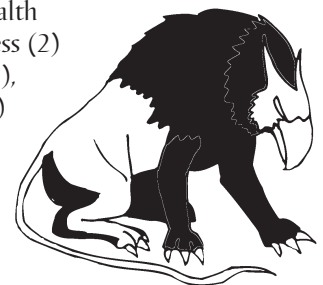
With the head of a bird and body of a lion, this creature is deadly and beautiful at the same time. Their mating and territorial songs are bewitching—this often leads to the demise of the curious.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (2)

natural weapons: beak (+1INJ), claws (1INJ)



Typical Animals of the Wild

Animals such as bears, boars, and wolves always pose a threat when adventuring in the wild.

<u>BEARS</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	D	D	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (2), musclebound

natural weapons: teeth (2INJ), claws (1INJ)

<u>BOARS</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	D	C	0	0	0

skills: brawling

gimmicks: toughness (1), musclebound

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), horns (+1INJ)

<u>WOLVES</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	C	D	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: toughness (1)

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), claws (1INJ)

<u>HAWKS</u>	fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
	C	C	0	0	0

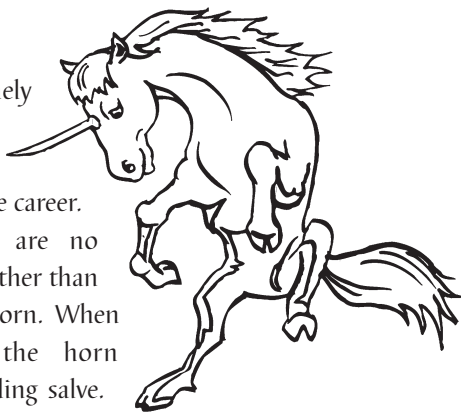
skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: undersized, flight

natural weapons: talons (1INJ)

Unicorns

Unicorns are extremely rare creatures. An adventurer is lucky if he sees one in his entire career. Unicorns themselves are no different from horses other than their single, twisted horn. When removed, however, the horn makes a powerful healing salve. Taming unicorns is near-impossible.



Note to director: Since unicorns represent luck, be generous and give each character one or two luck points whenever they see one.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: oversized

natural weapons: horn (+1INJ)

DROLL SPECIES

Black Orcs

Black orcs are rare creatures with skin much darker than that of other orcs. They are the largest and strongest of the green-skinned races, and seek to enslave other droll species and exterminate all else. Black orcs tend to be much smarter than their cousins and are often better armed, utilizing larger weapons, especially swords and axes.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
E	C	A	C	D

skills: brawling, dueling, melee, composure, leadership

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (2)

natural weapons: sharp teeth (1INJ)



Hobgoblins

Hobgoblins are close relatives to orcs and goblins, but are known for being cowards and sneaks, and frequently attack along trade routes. Like their relatives, hobgoblins have green skin, large teeth, wiry black hair, hooked noses, and pointy ears. Hobgoblins often find employment as foot soldiers and ride fury dogs into battle.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
B	C	B	B	A

skills: brawling, melee, riding, stealth, animal handling

natural weapons: sharp teeth (1INJ)

Ogres

Ogres are brutish creatures with large muscles, very tall frames, and horns similar to that of a ram. They have little intelligence, but are usually smarter than trolls. Ogres tend to rely on brawn rather than brains and are typically recruited as mercenaries since they generally do not care who they fight as long as they get to maim and kill with impunity.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	C	A	B	D

skills: brawling, melee, composure

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (2)

natural weapons: horns (+2FAT)

Orcs

Orcs are short, squat, bow-legged creatures with long arms, dark faces, squinty eyes, and yellow fangs. They are susceptible to the sun and prefer the protection of darkness. As a result, they are usually only found in dungeons, deep caverns, and ruined castle keeps by day. As a race, orcs hate all things of beauty and love to kill and destroy. The majority of orcs grow to be warriors and band together in the fight to subjugate other races. Goblins are most commonly found in their service.

fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence**
 C C A C D
skills: brawling, dueling, composure, leadership, subterfuge
gimmicks: toughness (2), vulnerability (sunlight)
natural weapons: fangs (1INJ)

Timmul Goblins

Upon first glance, timmul goblins are identical to normal goblins. When observing their movements, however, it becomes clear that timmul are very confident and more intellectually advanced than their goblin brothers. These creatures are extremely rare. They have been hunted to the point of near-extinction by the orcs ever since a group of timmuls successfully escaped servitude from an orcish mine and killed the orc overseers.

fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence**
 C C B C B
skills: brawling, melee, riding, composure
gimmicks: faithless, frail, sure-footed, on the run

Trolls

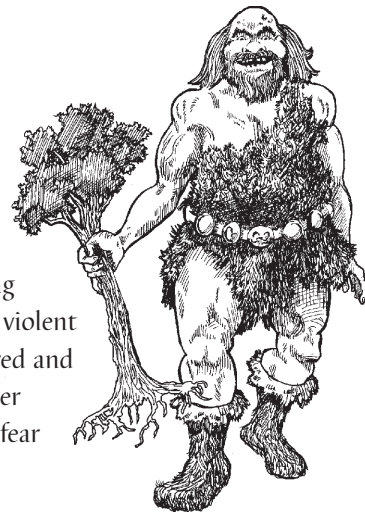
Trolls are big, strong, and stupid creatures who eat anything they can wrap their hands around. Most tower well over eight feet in height, with muscular frames and arms which stretch low to the ground. Their skin resembles stone or hard rock, although their actual appearance depends on the conditions of the area in which they reside.

fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence**
 D C A A D
skills: brawling, dueling
gimmicks: musclebound, oversized, toughness (2)

BEHEMOTH SPECIES

Giants

There are many variations of giants, although most of them all share common characteristics. As a race, giants are huge (often reaching heights of up to twenty-feet), violent creatures who are bad tempered and malicious toward other, smaller races. They delight in causing fear in the people who encounter them.



fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence**
 F C C C E
skills: brawling others variable as with player characters
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (5)
natural weapons: their whole body (+3FAT)

Cyclops

Distant cousins of giants, cyclops differ by their smaller stature and possession of a single eye in the middle of their foreheads. Cyclops are not inherently evil creatures, but they will attack if weaker ones (or player characters) are discovered trespassing in their domain.

fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence**
 E B C C D
skills: brawling, stealth, others variable as with player characters
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (5)
natural weapons: their whole body (+3FAT)

Titans

Titans resemble humans, but are about twice their size. It is said that titans have evolved from the gods. They wield fantastic magical power, and should probably be avoided if possible. While, as a race, they are peaceful and kind, several factions have taken arms against their own kind in an attempt to change their ways—they grow tired of peace and wish to conquer the lesser races.

fitness **awareness** **creativity** **reasoning** **influence** **crafting**
 E C D D D D
skills: variable as with player characters
 (often have crafting-based skills)
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (1)

SERPENT SPECIES

Crocodiles

The masters of swamps and rivers, crocodiles (and alligators) are fierce instinctual creatures with razor sharp teeth and powerful tails. They stalk their prey, remaining still for hours, and then finally striking when the time is right. Once they catch their targets, crocodiles roll their bodies to inflict maximum damage and rip their catches to shreds.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	C	0	0	0

skills: brawling, stealth
gimmicks: toughness (2)
natural weapons: teeth (2INJ), tail (+1FAT)



Dragon

Dragons are colossal and majestic flying lizards who have a keen intelligence and a great love for shiny treasure. Dragons are clever and cunning creatures, often luring greedy trespassers to their cavernous lairs with treasure in order to prey upon them. Their fiery breath is an effective weapon for just such an occasion. While there are many different breeds of dragons, there are few qualities not shared between them. A dragon's skin color is often just a reaction to its environment. Dragons are often mistaken for drakes, but the former rarely ever ventures far from a lair or attacks hordes of people as do drakes.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
G	D	A	D	C

skills: athletics, brawling, legends
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (5), flight
natural weapons: teeth (2INJ), tail (+2FAT), claws (2INJ), fire-breathing (5INJ)

Drakes

As very close relatives of dragons, drakes are much smaller, but nearly as dangerous. Drakes hunt on instinct alone as they are not as intelligent as dragons. They like the heat and build lairs close to volcanic vents and natural hot springs. Drakes love to fly and can cover great distances in search of prey. They also have bad tempers and are known to attack cities from time to time with their fiery breath.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
E	D	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (3), flight
natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), tail (+1FAT), claws (2INJ), fire-breathing (3INJ)



Flying Serpents

Not quite a drake, yet not a snake, these creatures are large, limbless serpents with wings. Their bite is venomous. Flying serpents are no more or less intelligent than normal snakes, but their ability to fly gives them a definite tactical advantage. Flying serpents are mostly found in dry, open areas, such as deserts.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	C	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth
gimmicks: oversized, flight, venomous



Hydra

Similar in appearance to a dragon without wings, the hyrda also has anywhere from three to six heads, each ready to strike at a moment's notice and capable of growing back when decapitated. Each head can also attack independently of another (each head can attempt its own free action every turn). Their faded yellow coloring makes them easy to spot as does their size. Hyrdas are mostly found in lakes, but sometimes wander into dry areas, searching for food. They are highly aggressive when their territory is threatened.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
G	C	0	A	0

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: oversized, toughness (4), regeneration (heads)
natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), tail (+1FAT), claws (2INJ)

Lava Beasts

These salamander-like creatures live only in deep subterranean caverns heated by molten lava. They cannot survive in cooler climates and sometimes even submerge themselves in the lava so they can warm themselves enough to venture away from the heat for food. At a length of up to fifteen feet, lava beasts are dangerous—their hot scales can cause burns and their teeth are razor sharp. They can also regenerate damaged limbs when their body temperature is high enough.



fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	0	0	0

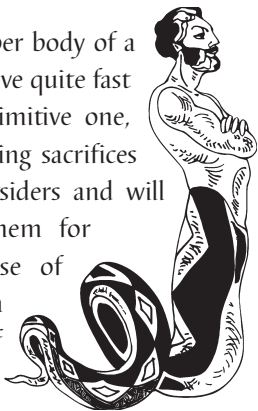
skills: brawling

gimmicks: toughness (1), regeneration (limbs), resistant (fire)

natural weapons: teeth (2INJ), hot scales (1INJ), claws (2INJ)

Nayome

Nayome are a race of people with the upper body of a man and lower body of a snake. They can move quite fast and are very nimble. Their society is a primitive one, worshipping numerous deities and performing sacrifices to appease them. Nayome do not like outsiders and will either execute them outright or save them for sacrifice. Their tails are similar to those of rattlesnakes—if you hear one rattling, turn back, because they always travel in packs of six or more. Their weapons of choice are the spear or fork.



fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	B	B	C	C

skills: variable as with player characters

gimmicks: sure-footed

Sand Serpents

These giant snakes bury deep under the desert in order to stay cool. As master stalkers, they often set traps in the sand for their prey. Their giant jaws can open to easily swallow a halfling whole. While their bite is not venomous, it hardly matters with strength like theirs.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
E	C	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (2)

natural weapons: constriction (+2FAT)

Sea Serpents

What would sea travel be without a threat from monsters? Sea serpents love to attack sailing vessels far from shore and make a snack out of deckhands. They often capsize ships and look for the floating crew.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
G	C	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling, stealth

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (3)

natural weapons: constriction (+4FAT)

Snakes

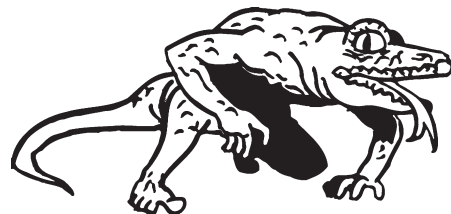
The world is bountiful when it comes to snakes. There are countless varieties, from the harmless two-foot long ones to the deadly, twenty-foot long giant snakes. While the majority of snakes are not venomous, those that are can kill a man easily. Even the non-venomous snakes can be deadly—most constrict their prey, preventing them from breathing.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
A-D	B	0	0	0

skills: brawling, stealth

gimmicks: some are venomous

natural weapons: some use constriction (+1FAT)



Troglodytes

These cavern-dwelling, reptilian bipeds are extremely protective of their underground castles and attack strangers on sight. Their extremely tough hide provides excellent protection against most weapons. Their society is based upon might—whomever is strongest rules. Competition is fierce and many anxiously wait for strangers to discover their domain so that they can prove their worth in battle. Some even venture on to the surface, looking for fights. Troglodytes communicate by hissing at one another. What sounds like a simple exhalation to other races is really a very complex language.

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	C	B	B	B

skills: variable as with player characters

gimmicks: toughness (3), musclebound

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), claws (1INJ), tail

MAGICAL CREATURES

Gargoyles

These living statues are almost impossible to destroy. They remain dormant while guarding a structure and only awaken when intruders are detected. Their stone frames can easily crush the bones of most invaders.



fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
E	B	0	0	0

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: clumsy, oversized, flight, toughness (7)
natural weapons: stone fist (+2FAT)

Mummies

Mummies are the preserved remains of ancient rulers. They are often revived by powerful magic users in an attempt to gain power. Unbeknownst to their would-be masters, mummies cannot be controlled and typically destroy their saviors before beginning their search for ways to restore their former glory. After countless years of fruitless effort, mummies return to their tombs in search of peace. Plunderers and impulsive adventures feel the effects of their pent-up anger and resentment when exploring the tombs. Mummies also carry disease (this acts as poison*).

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	C	A	C	D

skills: brawling, stealth
gimmicks: regeneration, resistant (any magic), venomous*



Medusae

Medusae (*singular, medusa*) commonly take refuge in abandoned temples and shrines. The reason is unknown, but if you happen upon temple ruins, there is more than likely a medusa lurking in the shadows. Medusae resemble human females in every regard except for the top of their heads. Instead of hair, venomous snakes sprout from their heads (up to three snakes can attack each turn). A medusa can also temporarily paralyze anyone who looks into her eyes (*this may be resisted with fitness-based composure roll).

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	C	A	C	D

skills: brawling, stealth
gimmicks: toughness (2), regeneration, venomous
natural weapons: snake bite, paralyze*

Golems

These magical constructs have no mind of their own. Instead they are controlled by a wizard (or other such vocation). Golems can be made from a variety of materials, from wood to stone or even mud.

WOOD

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	0	0	0	0

skills: brawling
gimmicks: clumsy, oversized, toughness (3)

stone

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	0	0	0	0

skills: brawling
gimmicks: clumsy, oversized, toughness (3), musclebound
natural weapons: stone fist (+1FAT)

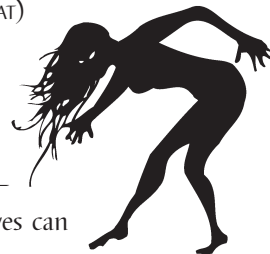
mud

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
B	0	0	0	0

skills: brawling
gimmicks: clumsy, oversized
natural weapons: mud flinging (1FAT)

Sprites

Sprites are otherworldly entities who manifest in our realm using elemental forces such as water, earth, air, and fire—others are also possible. A sprite's motives can vary as with sentient beings.



AIR

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	F	C	D	A

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: sure-footed, resistant (all physical attacks), vulnerability (fire), flight, dark aura

water

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	D	C	D	A

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: resistant (all physical attacks), vulnerability (poisons), flight, dark aura
natural weapons: asphyxiation (drowning)

earth

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
D	B	C	D	A

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: musclebound, clumsy, toughness (5), dark aura
natural weapons: stone strike (+3INJ)

FIRE

fitness	awareness	creativity	reasoning	influence
C	C	C	D	A

skills: athletics, brawling
gimmicks: sure-footed, resistant (all physical attacks), vulnerability (vacuum, water), dark aura
natural weapons: fire (4INJ)

UNDEAD CREATURES

Dragon Bones

Dragons never seem to die. They certainly do not die from old age. When a dragon's remains decay down to the bone, they are given new life and rise to take vengeance upon their slayers. Although they lack their fiery breath, dragon bones are still a force with which to be reckoned.

fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
D D 0 0 0

skills: athletics, brawling

gimmicks: oversized, toughness (4), flight, musclebound

natural weapons: teeth (1INJ), tail (+2FAT), claws (2INJ)

Ghouls

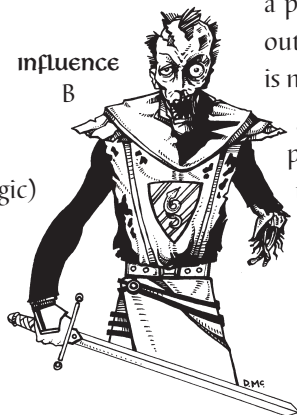
Ghouls are people who have sold their souls to the Powers Below in exchange for eternal life. They walk the countryside in search of flesh as sustenance. Their demonic deal has turned them into demented cannibals. Ghouls also carry disease and spread it to their victims when biting*. They often loot the graves of the dead for weapons and armor.

fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
C C A C B

skills: brawling, dueling

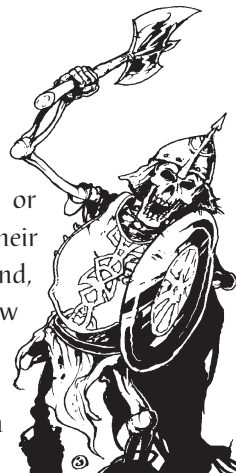
gimmicks: toughness (2), venomous*, vulnerability (divinity-based magic)

natural weapons: claws (1INJ)



Skeleton Warriors

Skeleton warriors are the remains of dead combatants who were either left or buried on a battlefield. They rise from their graves long after their flesh has decayed and, out of vengeance, plan and execute new battle plans, regardless of their victims. Since skeleton warriors have no flesh, it is difficult to hit them when using a thrusting attack (attacker receives +1DIFF).



fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
C C A C B

skills: brawling, dueling, melee, riding

gimmicks: toughness (1), vulnerability (divinity-based magic)

Zombies

Zombies are corpses taken over by spirits. Once the body reaches a point of decay where it can no longer function, the spirit seeks out a new one. Graveyards are the most common source and there is nothing more chilling than seeing a body dig itself out of its own grave. Zombies have no discernable purpose from a mortal point of view. Spirits always have a grand masterplan, but it is usually far beyond our understanding.

fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
B B 0 0 0

skills: brawling, dueling

gimmicks: toughness (2)

OTHER CREATURES

Crimson Folley

The Crimson Folley is a red-colored, carnivorous plant which can grow up to ten-feet in height. While not overly powerful, the plant can launch spores and anyone in the vicinity becomes exposed to a sedative*, causing them to fall asleep. The plant's limited mobility allows it to draw its victim to it using branches.

fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
A B 0 0 0

gimmicks: toughness (1), venomous*, vulnerability (fire)

natural weapons: digestive enzymes (2INJ)



Oozing Death

This slimy creature envelopes its prey and then slowly digests it.

fitness awareness creativity reasoning influence
B A 0 0 0

gimmicks: toughness (5), regeneration

natural weapons: digestive enzymes (2INJ)

CHAPTER 6 BEHIND THE SCENES

PUT YOURSELF IN THE ROLE OF DIRECTOR AND WRITE YOUR OWN STORY, ASSEMBLE THE CAST, AND BRING LIFE TO THE STAGE. THE DIRECTOR HAS A TOUGH JOB AHEAD OF HIM, BUT GIVEN A LITTLE PRACTICE AND UNDERSTANDING FROM THE PLAYERS, AN IMAGINATIVE DIRECTOR CAN BRING FANTASTIC WORLDS AND THE PEOPLE IN THEM TO LIFE.

One person controls both the pace and tone of the game. He is called the director, and his job is to act as storyteller, referee, and guardian angel.

storytelling

As a storyteller, the director is responsible for creating the plot, setting, and cast of characters. He is also charged with propelling the story forward.

A good plot will keep the players guessing. It should be well thought out and planned. Since no one can predict every decision made by the players, many of the roads travelled will need to be improvised by the director. As long as a basic storyline has been prepared, any divergence can be made into an interesting addition. Movies, books, and television can all be good sources for stories and plots, even if they come from different genres—the human condition is a constant.

Powerful wizards and dangerous monsters can make the ultimate villains in a story. This forces all of the characters to pull together for a common goal. Any back story will do, but a more interesting villain will make for a more interesting story. Supporting characters are also an important factor in any roleplaying game. They are friends, family, enemies, and unnamed extras.

Drama is yet another important factor in storytelling. The director should impart all the gritty details to the characters by using the mood of the setting. If the characters are tracking down a killer in a dark, wooded area, describe what they glimpse out of the corner of their eye, the hoots of an owl, or even how they might be feeling.

When describing what a supporting characters says, do it with feeling. Act it out and make the players really experience it.

refereeing

As a referee, the director must know the rules. It is unlikely that anyone will remember every single rule, but the director should make sure that he understands the basic rules foundation, combat, and dice rolls which will be used most often.

Players will undoubtedly raise questions during the course of play and it is the director's job to answer them. No one wants to sit around waiting for him to find the answer. The longer it takes, the more distracted the players will be. If it takes more than a few minutes to find the answer, make an educated guess. After all, the director is the referee and can make any call he sees fit (as long as it is fair).

It is inevitable for players not to accept decisions made by the director. It is perfectly acceptable to hear them out, but at the end of the day, the director's decision is law. Hostility and sulking can interfere with the enjoyment and pace of the game and should be quashed at the first onset. Try to appease players not enjoying themselves, but not at the expense of the others.

Favoring one player over another is another way to make the game less enjoyable to some players. Although these situations are usually encountered accidentally, a good director tries his best to ensure that he is fair to all players. This also means that all players should be given chances to interact with the world and even become heroes.

There is always at least one player in a group who finds loopholes in the rules and uses that knowledge to create an extremely powerful character. This has the potential to unbalance play for the others. A simple fix is to keep him challenged with other tasks such as puzzles and mysteries. Make him think. And if his character defeats every villain or obstacle put before him, make a new, more powerful one just for him.

acting as guardian angel

The director must also watch over his players without sacrificing the enjoyment of the game. He is the characters' guardian angel and inner voice. There will always be times when players act foolishly or inappropriately. This is a sign for good directors to either question their actions or subtly and fairly punish them.

Players should always be free to have their characters act in any manner they see fit, but just like the real world, actions always have consequences. When a person commits acts that go against their nature, they are viewed in a whole new light. Relationships may be strained and their reputation may either be blemished or elevated.

TIME AND TRAVEL

In order to maintain ease of play, this game utilizes four abstract measurements for time. They are turns, scenes, episodes, and stories.

Turns

Turns are primarily used for combat and contested actions. As previously mentioned, a turn represents five seconds worth of time. It is used to ensure that players may respond in an entertaining manner rather than a purely realistic one.

Scenes

Scenes are more abstract than turns. They do not measure an actual range of time. Instead, scenes encompass an entire exchange of dialog or events in one particular location. Their purpose is to allow a quicker passage of time, which in turn permits the game to run more smoothly, ignoring tedious events.

For example: *Titus and Brutus are having a debate on how to storm the castle. While some skills may be used in the process (leadership, geography, etc.), nothing requiring the precision of turns is required. This series of events is, therefore, a scene.*

Episodes

Each time a group gets together to play, they are participating in an episode. Although it is not a measure of time, the term is used as a reference point and a break to award experience to the players.

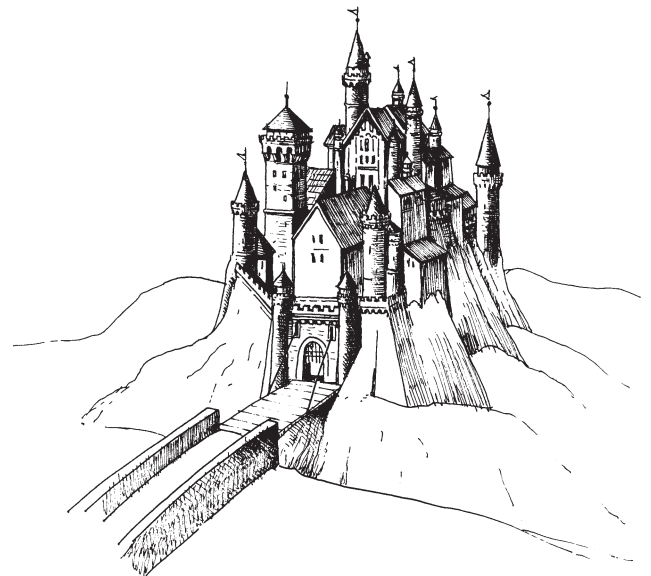
Stories

Stories represent whatever period of time it takes to complete an entire adventure. Characters always gain experience at the conclusion of a story. Think of it as an entire season of a television program.

travel time

Traveling between scenes is always automatic unless a major story concept must be introduced. The director may decide how long the journey actually takes and how tired the characters may be once it is completed. Fatigue may be sustained by characters for long journeys, but this is entirely up to the director.

Characters may travel by foot, horse, cart, or boat. Travel between distant villages is likely to take weeks if not months. Larger cities are usually separated by great expanses of wild and may take up to a year or more. Getting lost is always possible and makes for good subplots.



TASK RESOLUTION EXTRAS

raw ability tasks

There will most likely come a time when a character will attempt an action for which there is no apparent skill. In this situation, the director has three choices.

1. Choose a skill which is even remotely close to what the character is attempting.
2. If the action is something that can normally be attempted unskilled, allow him to roll using the relevant ability and a skill level of 1.
3. If you feel that the character's ability is adequate enough to pass such a task, consider this an automatic task and allow him to succeed.

using overkill

Overkill is primarily reserved for magical effects, but this does not stop you from using it as a guide for normal tasks too. Since it reflects just how well a character has performed on a task, overkill can be an excellent guide for propelling the story. Lots of overkill means a superb success, possibly of high-cinematic proportions. As the director, you may apply overkill to damage, the effects of brewing potions, forging swords, et al. The use of overkill is totally optional for non-magical tasks.

Damage

Applying overkill to damage can be both lethal and necessary at the same time. Without it, slaying a dragon may be impossible for an ordinary knight. There are three methods for applying overkill to damage.

1. **High-cinematics:** Each point of overkill adds one (1) point of damage to a non-player character.

For example: *Titus successfully slashes his opponent with his mighty sword and achieves 3 points of overkill. In addition to the injury caused from his sword, he also inflicts 3 additional points of injury damage. This can really mess up someone's day—those 3 extra damage rolls could prove fatal if his opponent isn't wearing tough armor.*

2. **Cinematics:** Every two points of overkill adds one (1) point of damage. This can be dangerous to your game, since player characters may also receive the effects of overkill damage. You may choose to permit only player characters to inflict overkill damage to other player characters. You wouldn't want a creature killing off your favorite hero.

3. **Penetration:** A number of points of fatigue damage equal to the amount of overkill is converted to injury. This represents a failure in armor, strike to a major organ, or even the effects of a glass jaw.

For example: *Titus successfully punches Brutus with an overkill of 1. Titus, who normally inflicts 2 fatigue, now inflicts 1 injury and 1 fatigue (roll 1 die for fatigue damage and 1 die for injury damage).*

Bonus Effects

Overkill may be used with successful task rolls which add a bonus or penalty to another roll (this does not apply to resisted and contested tasks). They may be applied in the following manners.

1. **Difficulty:** If the nature of a task is to increase (+1DIFF) or decrease (-1DIFF) another task's difficulty, overkill will modify it further. Every two points of overkill adds +1DIFF to an increase in difficulty or -1DIFF to a reduction in difficulty.

For example: *Sephir the alchemist brews an aphrodisiac for his friend Michel. He achieves 3 points of overkill on the task. Since aphrodisiacs add -1DIFF to a future task, the overkill makes it -2DIFF. This is a very powerful aphrodisiac. He's sure to make a lot of money should he choose to sell it at the market.*

2. **Ability:** If the nature of a task is to increase (+1D) or decrease (-1D) a character's ability, overkill will modify it further. Every three points of overkill adds +1D to an increase in ability or -1D to a reduction in ability.

There are other possibilities and you are free to experiment with them. Instead of applying game modifiers, you could just narrate the actions to reflect the accomplishment—add a little style and exaggerate a bit.

Remember that overkill is dangerous. It can be quite unbalancing for the game and should be used with caution. These rules are included here to help you customize the game for your own comfort and enjoyment requirements.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

experience

In addition to characters gaining experience through certain task rolls, it is also awarded to them at the end of every episode and story.

After Each Episode

- Players who chose to forego violence and roleplayed their way out of a dangerous situation receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of creativity, reasoning, or influence-based skills. This is awarded for each occurrence.
- Characters who have won an honest one-on-one duel receive one (1) point of experience in any combination of combat-oriented skills. This is awarded for each occurrence.
- Players who stayed in character the entire episode, not straying from their character's beliefs or background, receive three (3) points of experience in any combination of skills.
- Players who have described their character's actions cinematically or creatively receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of creativity-based skills.

After Each Story

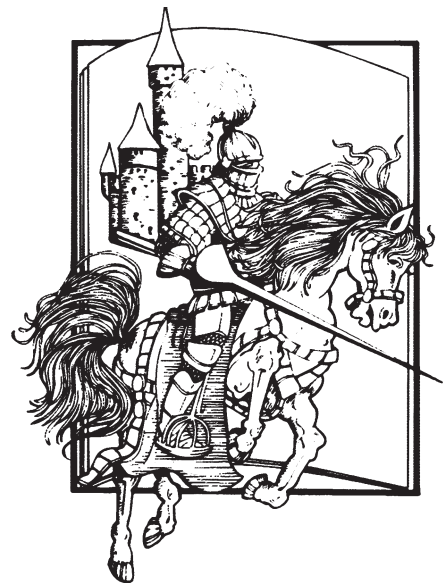
- Characters who acted heroically throughout the story receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of skills.
- Characters who accomplished all goals set before them receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of skills.
- Characters who were successful at uncovering dastardly plans, secret plot elements, etc. receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of awareness-based skills.
- If as a group, the characters' actions were instrumental in assisting a city or region; king or noble house; or entire clan or race or creatures, each receives five (5) experience points in any combination of influence-based skills.
- Characters who have unleashed magical effects in new, creative ways receive two (2) points of experience in any combination of the relevant magical ability-based skills.

luck

A character's luck points can be replenished when the director feels that the player has done a fine job of roleplaying. Gaining luck is both easier and quicker than experience, since the director can award it at any time, rather than waiting for the end of an episode or story. There are three specific situations for which a director can award one luck point, although he may use his discretion to award points for other factors as well.

1. The player has successfully talked his character out of an otherwise violent situation by way of creative dialogue or a vivid description of his actions.
2. The character has accomplished a personal goal or mission directive.
3. The character has attempted an action (successfully or not) which is totally out of character, yet within the potential of his nature. These should be behaviors not present in a character's outward personality, but qualities buried deep within—kept in check, but always a part of the character. The director must, of course, draw a line between inner nature and inappropriate behavior, but this goes a long way to define a character's upbringing, inner-personality, and works well for climactic scenes.

For example: *An unscrupulous thief in his most desperate hour, performing what he believes to be his last noble act in order to enter heaven.*



CUSTOMIZATION

Since this is a fairly generic game, left open for the director to create his own game world, it is only natural that he also be able to create his own abilities, gimmicks, and so on. This is a fairly easy process using the original elements as a template. A few guidelines are presented below to get you started.

abilities

Custom abilities may be created for new magical styles or other game elements such as extra-sensory perception. The first step is to determine if the ability is distant enough from other abilities. In other words, can its potential be measured by an existing ability or will skills associated with it require a new method for measuring their potential? The next step is to determine if anyone can use the ability or if a character is required to first possess a specific background, gimmick, or vocation to utilize it. The final step is determine all skills which will be based on the ability.

RACES

New races require only a little imagination. First, describe how the race looks, typically behaves, and interacts with the other races. Next, determine if the race begins play with any ability modifiers, skill modifiers, backgrounds, or gimmicks.

For example: *Is the race generally quick and nimble? Give it the sure-footed gimmick. Does the race generally dwell in underground regions? Give it the cavernfolk background. Is the race generally endowed with the totem ability? Allow characters to allocate points to the totem ability during character generation.*

Backgrounds

New backgrounds may be required when creating new races or abilities. They should have a clear purpose. Do not use them just for the sake of using them. Each must make some sort of modifications when creating characters.

For example: *The mutant background is required for a character to use the a custom ability called psionics and its associated skills. Since mutants are cast out of society as abominations, they may not choose the lord, tribal elder, high priest, or holy knight vocations.*

gimmicks

Gimmicks provide a means to tweak certain elements of an ability or are oddities and elements of a character's life. They can be just about anything not covered by abilities, skill, or styles. The only rule to keep in mind is that they should not disrupt the flow or balance of the game. In other words, avoid gimmicks that are too complicated or too powerful.

For example: *The photographic memory gimmick increases the number of spells a character can memorize by two and all reasoning-based tasks relying on memory receive +1D.*

vocations

Don't see the vocation one of your players wants for his character? Feel free to create a new one. Vocations can be used as a guide to determine which skills are best suited for a character, or as a way to permit characters to use magical abilities. There are no rules set in stone for vocations. Just try not to make the vocation too powerful or too weak compared to the others.

skills

There may be times when you will need to create a new skill for a custom magical ability, a weapon unique to your setting, or a new piece of technology. Simply describe what it covers, the ability on which it is based, and whether or not it can be used unskilled. This comes in handy when you want to create new magical effects without creating a new magic system (i.e. new ability).

styles

Since styles are based solely on skills, creating new ones merely depends on which skills you group together. Determine which one is most important to the style and make that the base skill.

languages

While each race has its own native language, it is also possible that alternate dialects are present in addition to regional or cultural offshoots. Characters with the multilingual gimmick may choose which languages/dialects they are capable of speaking. For simplicity, we recommend using one language per race.

STORY IDEAS

quests

Whether out of royal decree, ambition, greed, or compassion, people are always searching for something. Have them seek out riches, a ransomed maiden, or even a fell beast in the hope that the completion of their mission will bring them what they desire.

challenges

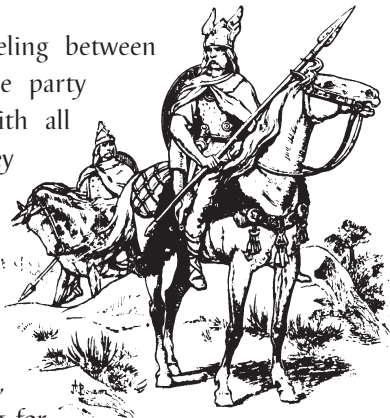
Honor is very important to a great many people, especially nobility. A wrong must be avenged according to the rules of the land. One or more of the characters has wronged someone and now it is payback time. A challenge has been issued and the character(s) must compete in a duel or even greater test—slaying a mighty griffin or dragon. Failure to accept the challenge would result in a show of cowardice or dishonor.

dungeon crawls

Dungeons are dark, damp, and dangerous. They are also home to an assortment of nasty creatures, traps, and treasure. The characters must make their way through the darkness in order to accomplish a quest, challenge, or conquest.

journeys

The characters are traveling between distant provinces. Can the party reach their destination with all members intact or will they lose some along the way? What hazards await them—bandits on the road, marauding trolls, dark minions seeking sacrifices, natural disasters, or faithless nomads waiting for naive passers-by? The journey could be part of a quest, challenge, exploration, or espionage plot, or even be required to reach their challenge.



tournaments

The characters have entered a tournament sponsored by the local nobility. They must compete in tests of strength and skill. While there, the characters could stumble upon other plots such as a challenge, espionage, or magical face-off.

in service to my liege

The characters are knights or otherwise retained by a king, duke, or other form of royalty. They must not only serve their liege, but also protect him and defend his land. Characters could be placed in charge of key positions, such as captain of the guard, local ranger, and chief soothsayer.



exploration

There's always a brave new world and the characters are in search of it. Think of them as Celtic and Norse explorers, sailing the seas, and hoping to establish new colonies. One wrong move can spell disaster for the group. Sea serpents, unknown beasts, and cannibalistic civilizations await them.

conquest

The characters seek to conquer their neighbors and rule the land by might. They must first assemble an army and perhaps sew alliances with foreign powers. Once their army is ready, will they march in with their weapons drawn or sneak in with their own *Trojan Horse*? And what about espionage? Can they destabilize their target or demoralize the enemy troops before attacking?

espionage

The characters go undercover to infiltrate another kingdom's royal house. They seek to either incite rebellion or discover the enemy's strengths and weaknesses to help them wage a successful war. But what happens if they get caught? Looks like a job for the guillotine.

the terrorized village

A village has been terrorized by marauding bandits, foul-tempered ogres or orcs, or even a mighty drake. The characters have either been hired or sent by their liege to combat the problem. They may have even volunteered as the village may be home to one of the characters or a loved one. They must band together to stop the threat, even if it means leaving the village and seeking out the threat on its own turf.

magical face-off

The characters have been thwarted by a powerful magic-user. Now they must summon up all of their magical ability or ally themselves with someone who can defeat their nemesis. This is the ultimate battle and may even spill over into another town. Can they take their opponent or will they fail again? Combine this with a quest, journey, or terrorized village and you have a serious campaign with a potentially epic climax.

heathens

The characters are members of the only *true faith*. They roam the countryside in an attempt to enlighten the heathens among them. But what happens when a less-than-peaceful culture is suddenly told to worship a new god? This could spell disaster for the group, but as holy knights, they should be able to restore order and show the heathens the true way. Or can they?

the witch in the woods

The characters are traveling deep in a forested area as a shortcut to get to an important meeting. Along the way, they stumble upon a lone cottage. Since they are tired, it seems a likely place to rest. The cottage is owned by a devious and twisted witch, who tries to keep them there and steal their belongings. She is a powerful magic-user and uses illusions to keep them coming back to her cottage. Only, they do not even know she exists. If only they brought a wizard. How will they ever escape from the forest and the witch?

they live

It has been a year since boots set foot on this battlefield. But now, the soldiers have returned to settle the score and the characters are in the middle of it. Before the two sides meet, a horde of skeleton warriors seemingly appear from nowhere and attack the other side. Within minutes, the character's enemies are laid to waste. Having seen that, the remaining side flees for the hills. The skeletons are nowhere to be seen, however. When the group returns to their village, it falls under attack by the skeleton hordes. How will they defend it? All of their loved ones and possessions are here. Will they survive?

random encounters

If you would like to add some random encounters with non-player characters to an episode, simply roll one die and consult the appropriate table.



Urban Encounters

Use this table if the characters are in a city or town.

ROLL	URBAN ENCOUNTERS
1	Escaped slave seeking shelter
2	Prophet or high priest
3	Bandit
4	Irate lord
5	Off-duty guards
6	Soldiers returning from a battle
7	Slick-talking merchant
8	Eccentric wizard
9	Rowdy mercenaries
10	Bigoted drunks

Rural Encounters

Use this table if the characters are in a village or nomadic settlement.

ROLL	RURAL ENCOUNTERS
1	Wolves
2	Bear
3	Merchants
4	Runaway livestock
5	Wild horses
6	Attacking orcs with fury dogs
7	Shaman
8	Enemy tribesmen
9	Attacking ghoul
10	Mysterious newcomers

Random Creatures

Use this table if you just want to pit the characters against a random monster.

ROLL	RANDOM CREATURES
1	Ogres
2	Crocodiles
3	Flying serpents
4	Pack of wolves
5	Wild horses
6	Griffin
7	Giant spider
8	Pack of boars
9	Skeleton warriors
10	Ghouls

Other Encounters

You can choose to pit any creatures or non-player characters against the group. Be careful not to pick something too overwhelming, however. Events are also convenient: brush fires, lightning storms/strikes, earthquakes, floods, or even traps laid for unsuspecting travelers by evil wizards or cultists.

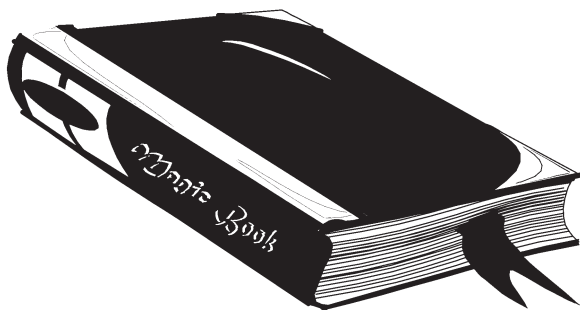
non-player characters

Non-player characters can be designed very quickly for last minute needs. If they are intended to be just extras, or disposable characters, simply determine their abilities and vocation, and then assign ratings to their vocational skills based on their desired experience (proficient characters would have proficient skill levels, experts would have expert skill levels, etc.).



Antagonists and other important non-player characters can be created just like player characters, except that you will probably want to make them a little more powerful. You can spend two (2) extra points for abilities and up to ten (10) on skills. Of course, these are just guidelines. If it helps the story, give our villains whatever ability ratings, gimmicks, or skills you would like them to have.

MAGIC?



By now, you are probably asking yourself where all the traditional fantasy magic is. Believe it or not, it is present. You may just not recognize it. All it takes is a little imagination. A few examples are listed below to help you reconcile the non-traditional magic system of Iron Gauntlets with your favorite traditional spells.

animate

The *fabrica materia* and *fabrica motus* skills can be used to animate objects, such as statues, corpses, and trees.

charm

The *transformation* effect of *fabrica materia* can be used to increase a character's attractiveness, thereby gaining a bonus on influence-based tasks in which the character's appearance is a factor (seduction, for example).

clairvoyance

The *familiar* skill can be used to see and hear what is happening in a different location by bonding with an animal in that location which resembles his spirit guide.

confusion

The *fabrica sensus* skill can be used to cause distractions via sensory illusions, thereby interfering with a character's actions or rational behavior.



create object

The *transmutation* effect of *fabrica materia* can be used to transform one material into another, thereby creating objects or elements, such as fire, stone, and gems.

detect magic

The *cognizance* effect of *fabrica sphaera* can be used to detect if a crafting-based effect is present. If the character is knowledgeable of the relevant fabrics, he can also divine more details.

detect traps

The *intervention* effect of *blessing* in conjunction with an *observation* task can cause a character to notice all the traps in a given location by way of luck.

dispel magic

The *revocation* effect of *fabrica sphaera* can be used to counter another crafting-based effect.

fireball

The *transmutation* effect of *fabrica materia* can turn air or an object such as a rock into a ball of fire. It may then either be thrown at an opponent (athletics task) or aimed at one and projected using the *impetus* effect of *fabrica motus*.

heal

The *touch* effect of *blessing* or the *salubrity* effect of *fabrica materia* can restore an individual's health levels.

invisibility

The *fabrica sensus* skill can be used to create an illusion, convincing the senses of everyone around the character that he is not there.

levitate

The *impetus* effect of *fabrica motus* can be used to repulse the character away from a point on the ground, thereby allowing him to levitate or float.

light

The *transmutation* effect of *fabrica materia* can turn water into a combustive material and used in a lantern. Or, the properties of a cave wall may be altered so that they become phosphorescent and glow.

lightning bolt

The *plague* effect of *curse* can cause a deity to display his wrath by way of a bolt of lightning from the heavens.

paralyze

The *latency* effect of *fabrica motus* can be used to stop a character in his tracks, preventing him from approaching or even running away.

shield

The *latency* effect of *fabrica motus* can be used to stop a ranged weapon before it reaches its target. Or, the *salubrity* effect of *fabrica materia* can be used to decrease the damage rating of an attack. If it is unleashed inside a circle using circumscription, you have an effective circle of protection.

silence

The *fabrica sensus* skill can be used to stop all sound from reaching people's ears. This is illusory, of course, and can be resisted like any other illusion.

smother

The *transformation* effect of *fabrica materia* can be used to alter a character's body, removing his lungs and causing him to suffocate. The *transmutation* effect of *fabrica materia* can also be used to transform the air a character breathes into something toxic, also causing suffocation.

telekinesis

The *fabrica motus* skill can be used to move objects without touching them.

turn undead

The *purity* effect of *gospel* can be used to scare off the undead. The *consecration* skill can prevent them from entering a structure. Some undead creatures are also vulnerable to divinity-based magic, so any effect directed against them is amplified, usually keeping them at bay.

water breathing

The *skin walk* skill can be used to grow gills (if the character's spirit animal is a fish) and breathe underwater. The *transformation* effect of *fabrica materia* can also be used to alter a character's body to include a set of gills.

RELICS

Relics are essentially magical items that characters can find during their stories. These act as a form of reward, since some can be quite powerful. While some characters may be able to create their own magical items, relics are typically more powerful, yielding results or effects not possible by the current state of magic. Indeed, relics are just that—ancient items of power. They may have existed way back when the gods roamed the Earth openly or perhaps even before then.

Relics can be assembled for any occasion by combining an effect with a form. An effect would be the magical power the object holds, like a bonus to damage or making a wearer invisible. The form is its appearance and function, such as jewelry or weapons. Simply combine one with the other and you have a relic. A list of effects and forms are presented below, but feel free to create your own. You can always name your relics whatever you prefer, but for the sake of simplicity, you could just combine the effect and form (Ring of Protection, Scroll of Knowledge, etc.).

Remember, relics are highly prized and should be reserved for special occasions. Some people would kill to get their hands on a relic, so just because a character is rewarded with one does not mean he is in for a smooth game.



effects

Ability

A character in possession of the relic receives a bonus of +1D or +2D on all tasks related to a specific ability (director's choice).

Crafting Effect

The relic may be used to create any one crafting-based effect (director's choice). The relic's ability and skill rating are both equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down).

Darkness

The relic absorbs light and creates a patch of darkness in its immediate vicinity. Only magical effects or relics can light the area.

Detection

A character in possession of the relic can detect the use of crafting magic, the presence of a relic, or any other unique object or occurrence (director's choice) in his immediate vicinity.

Divinity Effect

The relic may be used to create any one divinity-based effect (director's choice). The relic's ability and skill rating are both equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down).

Invisibility

A character in possession of the relic is rendered invisible to those around him. Only certain magical skills (fabrica sphaera and gospel, for example) may resist this. The relic's ability and skill rating are both equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down) for purposes of resisting.

Knowledge

A character in possession of the relic gains an increase in any one skill's rating as determined by the director. The increase is equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down). The skill rating may not be raised above eight (8).

Light

The relic radiates light and can illuminate a dark passage or any other space in its immediate vicinity.

Luck

A character in possession of the relic either receives a decrease or increase in his luck rating. The change is equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down). The luck rating may not go below zero (0) or over six (6).

Nullification

A character in possession of the relic may use an awareness-based composure task to resist a magical effect in which he is the target.

Protection

A character in possession of the relic gains an increase in his armor rating. The increase is equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down). The armor rating may not be raised above nine (9).

Resistance

A character in possession of the relic gains the resistant gimmick.

Restoration

A character in possession of the relic restores two grades of fatigue and one grade of injury per turn.

Silence

The relic absorbs sound and creates a patch of silence in its immediate vicinity. Only magical effects or relics can be used to create sound (illusions, for example).

Totem Effect

The relic may be used to create any one totem-based effect (director's choice). The relic's ability and skill rating are both equal to half the result of a die roll (rounding down).

Forms

Armor

Any armor component from the list in Chapter 3 would be perfect as a relic, as would any new armor pieces you have created for a custom setting.

Clothing

Clothing would include boots, gloves, cloaks, etc.

Jewelry

Jewelry is anything made from valuable materials, such as gold, silver, gems, and pearls, and worn on one's person for decoration. The director has many options from which to choose. Some examples would be rings, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, and scepters.

Scroll

Scrolls are common sources for magical effects, often the result of a magical inscription.

Weapon

Any weapon from the list in Chapter 3 would be perfect as a relic, as would any new weapons you have created for a custom setting.



TREASURE

In many of your games, treasure will probably be the driving force. Everyone wants to be rich and fantasy characters are no exception. Many creatures horde their treasures and anyone lucky enough to slay such a creature



wins his prize. Treasures come in many forms: gems, jewelry, gold coins, silver coins, relics, and many more. There are no limits when using your imagination.

If you would like to randomly determine the worth of a treasure, roll two dice. The first one is your multiplier; consult the chart below and multiply the result of the second die by the value listed on the chart.

TREASURE MULTIPLIER

1-2	Multiply by 5
3-4	Multiply by 10
5-6	Multiply by 50
7	Multiply by 100
8	Multiply by 200
9	Multiply by 500
10	Multiply by 1000



TRAPS

Many creatures (and hunters) set traps for both prey and trespassers. While there are numerous types, all traps have one thing in common—they ensnare or injure those unlucky enough to stumble upon them. Traps can be assembled from natural materials, such as trees and rocks, but are also forged from metals or crafted from wood. A few sample traps are listed below.

snares

Snares are intended to trap their victims, so they can be dealt with at a later time. Some examples are deep pits or wells (falling damage may occur), ropes (entanglement), and sealed chambers (self-locking doors).

ambushes

Creatures like to tempt wary adventurers with food or treasure. When the group gets close enough, the creatures attack.

deathtraps

Old tombs are rife with an assortment of deadly traps. Some utilize falling blades or rocks, poisonous gas, collapsing floor, or even a barrage of poisoned darts.

magical traps

Some magic-users like to scare off would-be invaders or trespassers. They might employ illusions, curses, or effigies, to name a few.

gargoyles

Gargoyles are often employed to protect an area. When intruders enter, the gargoyles spring to life.

RESOURCES

The following items are recommended to enhance play or supplement Iron Gauntlets.

Politically Incorrect Games Collaborative Web Site

Politically Incorrect Games

Look for new material, updates, and errata here. You can even submit your own campaign notes or custom setting/rules information. Content may be saved in PDF format for printing or archival.

[HTTP://WWW.PIGAMES.NET/COLLABORATIVE/](http://www.pigames.net/collaborative/)

Disposable Heroes Paper Minis

Politically Incorrect Games

Disposable Heroes is a collection of paper miniatures in PDF format. Both full color and black & white versions are included in each set. These are very affordable, allowing you to print out new minis whenever the old ones become worn.

[HTTP://WWW.PIGAMES.NET/MINIS.PHP](http://www.pigames.net/minis.php)

Low-Cost Adventures

Politically Incorrect Games

Smuggler's Bane and The Hidden Temple are available for Iron Gauntlets. Other adventures are also in the works.

[HTTP://WWW.PIGAMES.NET/IRONGAUTLETS.PHP](http://www.pigames.net/irongautlets.php)

Fief

Cumberland Games and Diversions

A Look at Medieval Society from Its Lower Rungs. This 100-page sourcebook in PDF format is a terrific primer for medieval life from the viewpoint of the ordinary farmer, priest, and landholder.

[HTTP://WWW222.PAIR.COM/SJOHN/FIEF.HTM](http://www222.pair.com/sjohn/fief.htm)

Master Accessories

01 Games

The Master Accessories line features incredible maps for use with roleplaying or miniatures games. These maps are basically single rooms shown in a top down perspective and feature stunning detail and lighting effects. You can print them on a single sheet of paper, and then put them on the game table, throw on some miniatures, and play. The detail alone helps you build an adventure by drawing inspiration from what you see on the map. These are top-notch.

[HTTP://WWW.OONEGAMES.COM/PAGES/BRANDS/MAC/MAC.HTML](http://www.oonegames.com/pages/brands/mac/mac.html)

DICELESS PLAY

Iron Gauntlets may be played as a diceless game. While it is a relatively simple process of preparing your game to be played in this manner, it is not for everyone. Diceless gaming requires more emphasis on roleplaying, rather than announcing your actions and rolling dice. It is about telling a story, and acting out your character's personality and ability. Before you take the plunge into diceless play, be sure that your players can handle it. It does, after all, require a different mind-set.

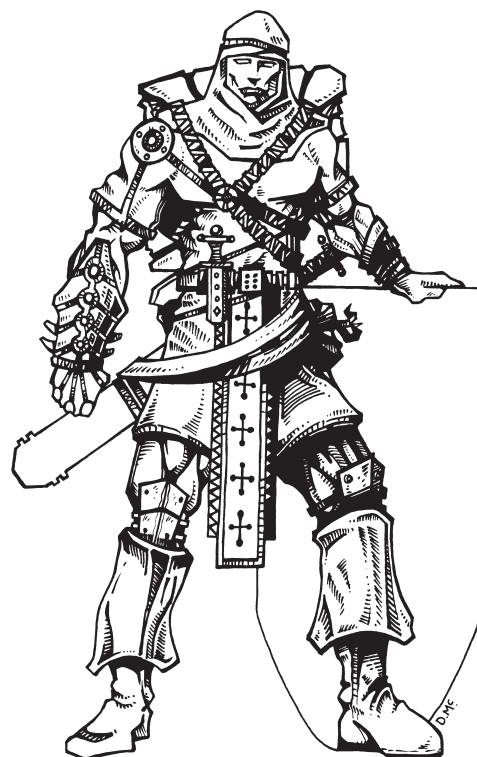
In order to play without dice, you will need the **Active Exploits Diceless Roleplaying** rules. Fortunately, these are free and available at the Politically Incorrect Games web site ([HTTP://WWW.PIGAMES.NET/AE.PHP](http://www.pigames.net/ae.php)). You should become quite familiar with the terminology and rules before attempting to integrate Iron Gauntlets into Active Exploits. All characters should be created normally, but modifications must be made to those characters.

abilities and aspects

Ability ratings need to be converted for use with Active Exploits, but the actual ability names remain the same. Ratings of seven and greater are included on the table below for creatures. Discipline is determined by the character's Fitness rating.

SKILL CONVERSION

IRON GAUNTLETS ABILITY RATING	ABILITY	ACTIVE EXPLOITS LUCK	DISCIPLINE
0	-1	0	1
1	0	1	2
2	0	2	2
3	+1	3	3
4	+1	4	4
5	+2	5	5
6	+3	6	6
7-8	+4	6	6
9-10	+5	6	6



skills

Skill ratings need to be converted, but all skill names and their relevant links to abilities remain the same.

SKILL CONVERSION

IRON GAUNTLETS	ACTIVE EXPLOITS
0-2	Unskilled
3-4	Novice
5-6	Proficient
7-8	Expert

task resolution and combat

- All references to +1D or -1D should be read as +1 effort or -1 effort, respectively.
- All references to +1DIFF or -1DIFF are the same when using the Advanced Exploits task resolution. When using the Basic Exploits task resolution, increase one grade of difficulty for each +1DIFF and decrease one grade of difficulty for each -1DIFF.
- Since damage rolls are not used in Active Exploits, you may want to reduce damage values by one or two, but this is entirely up to you.

REFERENCE

DIFFICULTIES

	DIFFICULTY	CAPACITY		WALK	RUN	CLIMB		JUMP	THROW	RANGE
		LIFT	CARRY			CRAWL	SWIM			
1	Trivial	100lbs	35lbs	6ft	45ft	3ft	6ft	3ft	9ft	Point Blank
2	Routine	125lbs	65lbs	9ft	60ft	6ft	12ft	5ft	18ft	Short
3	Complex	175lbs	95lbs	12ft	75ft	9ft	18ft	7ft	36ft	Medium
4	Challenging	250lbs	125lbs	15ft	90ft	12ft	24ft	9ft	60ft	
5	Formidable	350lbs	165lbs	18ft	105ft	15ft	30ft	12ft	100ft	
6	Improbable	500lbs	195lbs	21ft	120ft	18ft	36ft	15ft	150ft	Long
7	Impossible	700lbs	225lbs	25ft	150ft	22ft	45ft	18ft	225ft	

SKILLS

	RATING	MAXIMUM EXPERIENCE USAGE PER TURN
0	Unskilled	0
2	Undertrained	1
3	Novice	1
4	Capable	2
5	Proficient	2
6	Seasoned	2
7	Professional	3
8	Expert	3

REACTION MODIFIERS

Encumbered	-2D
Fatigued (first turn only)	
Stressed	-1D
Strained	-2D
Exhausted	-3D
Injured	
Sprained	-1D
Wounded	-2D
Maimed	-3D
Knocked Down	-1D
Suprised	-2D
Wearing Armor	
Heavy Partial Armor	-1D
Full Armor	-2D

ATTACK MODIFIERS

Aiming	+1D
Cramped Quarters	+1DIFF
Fatigued (first turn only)	
Stressed	-1D
Strained	-2D
Exhausted	-3D
Injured	
Sprained	-1D
Wounded	-2D
Maimed	-3D
Water	
Up to Waist Deep	+1DIFF
Submerged	+2DIFF
Mounted Attacks	*
Moving Target	
Walking	+1DIFF
Running	+2DIFF
Obstructed Target	
Partial Cover	+1DIFF
Generous Cover	+2DIFF
On the Ground	-1D
Partial Light	+1DIFF to +3DIFF
Precision Attacks	
Non-Ranged	+1DIFF
Ranged	+2DIFF
Suprised Target	-1DIFF
Two-Handed Weapon Wielded with One Hand	+1DIFF

* See Combat Rules

WEAPONS

WEAPON	ATTACK MODIFIER	DAMAGE
Axe	–	+1 INJ
Broadsword	–1	+2 INJ ³
Club	–	+1 FAT
Commanding Sword	+1	+2 INJ
Compound Bow	–2 ⁵	+2 INJ
Crossbow	—	+3 INJ
Dagger	–	+1 INJ
Flail	+1	+2 INJ
Fork	+1	+1 INJ
Great Sword	–1	+3 INJ
Hammer	–	+1 INJ ²
Heater	—	+1 INJ ¹
Hunting Bow	–2 ⁵	+1 INJ
Javelin	–1	+1 INJ
Knife	–	+0 INJ
Long Bow	–1 ⁵	+2 INJ
Mace	–	+2 INJ ²
Maul	+1	+2 INJ ²
Mounted Crossbow	—	+4 INJ
Pick	–	+2 INJ
Pike	–1 ⁴	+3 INJ ²
Poleaxe	+1 ⁴	+2 INJ ²
Short Sword	–	+2 INJ
Sling	–1	+1 FAT
Spear	+1 ⁴	+2 INJ ²
Staff	+1 ⁴	+2 FAT
Studded Gauntlet	–	+0 INJ ¹
Target Shield	—	+1 INJ ¹
Thrusting Sword	+1	+2 INJ
War Axe	–1	+2 INJ
War Pick	–1	+3 INJ ²
Throwing Axe	—	+2 INJ

ARMOR

COMPONENT	ARMOR RATING	PROTECTION
Battlement Shield	7	FAT / INJ
Buckler	3	FAT
Chain Mail	6	INJ
Coif	3	INJ
Foot Meshing	3	INJ
Hand Meshing	3	INJ
Heater	5	FAT / INJ
Kite	6	FAT / INJ
Leather Boots	2	FAT
Leather Cuirass	3	FAT
Leather Gauntlets	2	FAT
Leather Greaves	2	FAT
Leather Hauberk	3	FAT
Leather Helm	1	FAT
Leather Vambraces	2	FAT
Mesh Barding	6	INJ
Mesh Cuirass	6	INJ
Mesh Hauberk	6	INJ
Plate Barding	6	INJ
Plate Boots	5	INJ
Plate Cuirass	7	FAT / INJ
Plate Greaves	5	INJ
Plate Helm	4	FAT / INJ
Plate Mail	7	FAT / INJ
Plate Vambraces	5	INJ
Scale Barding	5	FAT / INJ
Scale Cuirass	5	FAT / INJ
Scale Gauntlets	3	FAT / INJ
Scale Greaves	4	FAT / INJ
Scale Hauberk	5	FAT / INJ
Scale Mail	5	FAT / INJ
Scale Vambraces	4	FAT / INJ
Target Shield	4	FAT / INJ

RANGES

WEAPON	PB	S	M	L
Compound Bow	20ft	60ft	125ft	175ft
Crossbow	25ft	60ft	120ft	180ft
Dagger	*	*	*	*
Hunting Bow	20ft	50ft	100ft	150ft
Javelin	20ft	30ft	50ft	60ft
Knife	*	*	*	*

WEAPON	PB	S	M	L
Long Bow	20ft	70ft	140ft	210ft
Mounted Crossbow	30ft	70ft	150ft	200ft
Sling	20ft	40ft	80ft	160ft
Spear	20ft	30ft	50ft	60ft
Throwing Axe	*	*	*	*

¹ This adds damage to a punching attack.

² Fatigue is used if an attack achieves no overkill.

³ Fatigue is used if attacking using a thrusting motion rather than slashing.

⁴ Bonus only applies if attacking using a swinging motion rather than thrusting.

⁵ Penalty only applies if not firing directly at a target (i.e. firing over a battlefield)

* Same as standard throwing range

IRON GAUNTLETS™

HEROIC FANTASY ROLEPLAYING

NAME:

BACKGROUND:

RACE:

VOCATION:

FITNESS	AWARENESS	CREATIVITY	REASONING	INFLUENCE		CRAFTING	DIVINITY	TOTEM

SKILLS

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STYLES

HEALTH

FATIGUE	INJURY
DAZED <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> BRUISED
STRESSED <input type="checkbox"/> -1D	<input type="checkbox"/> SPRAINED
STRAINED <input type="checkbox"/> -2D	<input type="checkbox"/> WOUNDED
EXHAUSTED <input type="checkbox"/> -3D	<input type="checkbox"/> MAIMED
UNCONSCIOUS <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> INCAPACITATED

LUCK

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>
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GIMMICKS

_____	_____
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EQUIPMENT

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REQUIREMENTS

- SCISSORS OR SHARP HOBBY KNIFE
- STRAIGHT-EDGE IF USING HOBBY KNIFE
- WHITE GLUE OR GLUE STICK
- SPACIOUS WORK SURFACE
- CUTTING BOARD IF USING HOBBY KNIFE

guidelines

1. PAPER

For best results, use 65 to 67lb cover stock. If your printer supports heavier paper, go with 90lb. You will most likely need to use your printer's manual feed in order to accommodate 65lb and heavier stock.

2. PRINTING

You may print as many copies as required, provided it is for personal use. Duplication of the original PDF file is prohibited except for the purpose of backing up your data.

3. COPYING

You may also photocopy (or color laser copy) minis and tiles which you have printed for personal use only.

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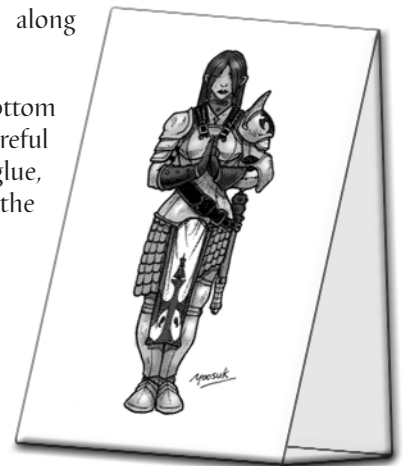
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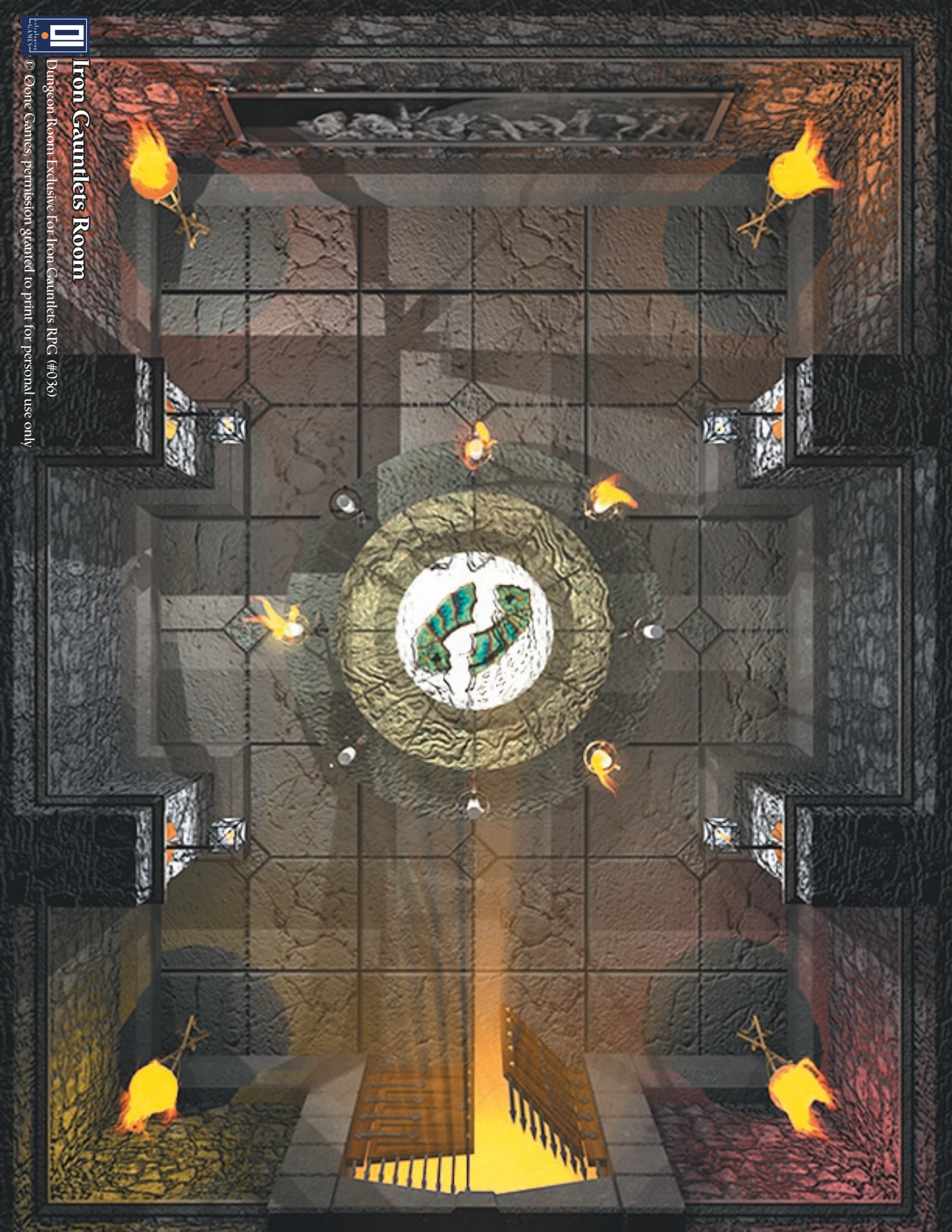
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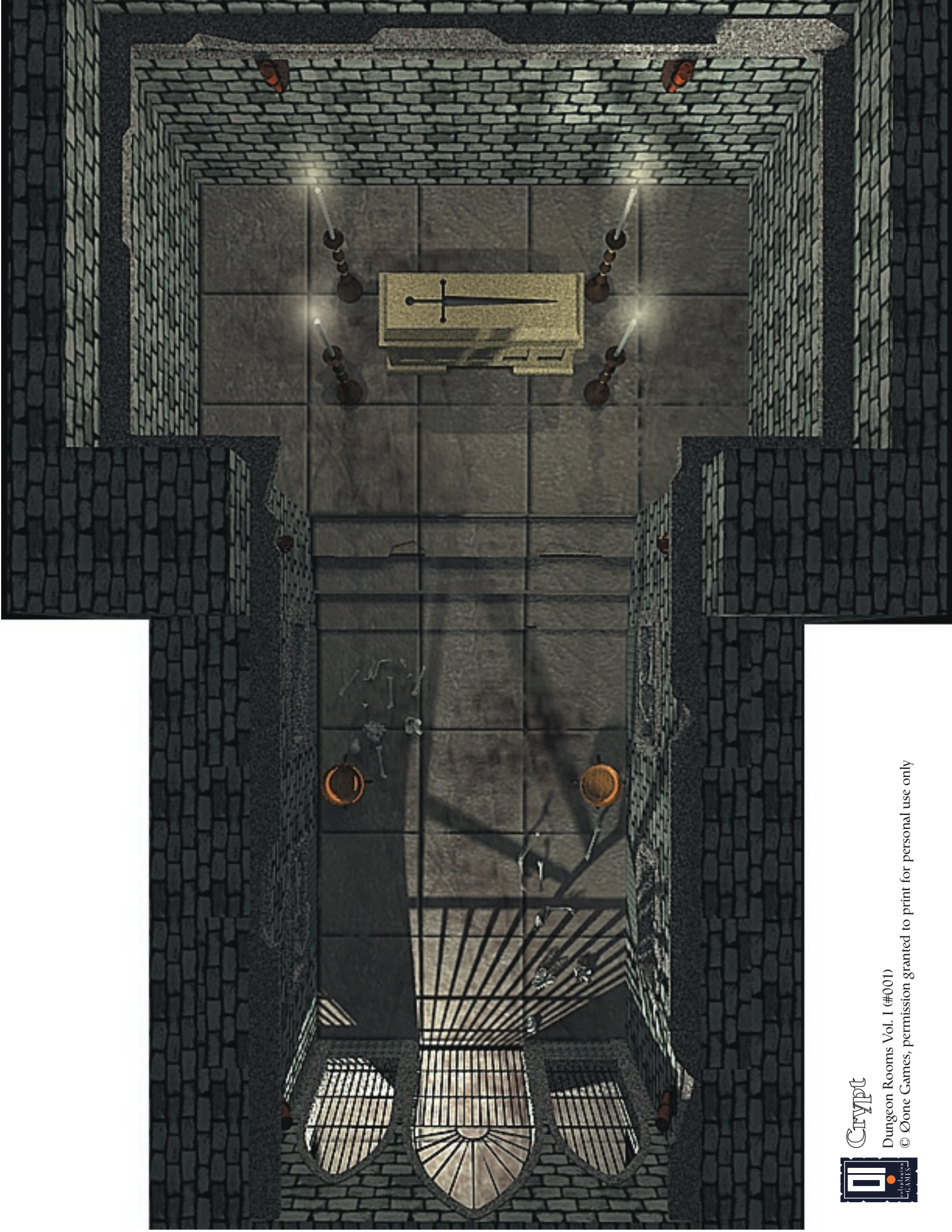




Iron Gauntlets Room

Dungeon Room Exclusive For Iron Gauntlets RPG (#036)

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Crypt

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Ruined Pool

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Vampire Lair Entrance

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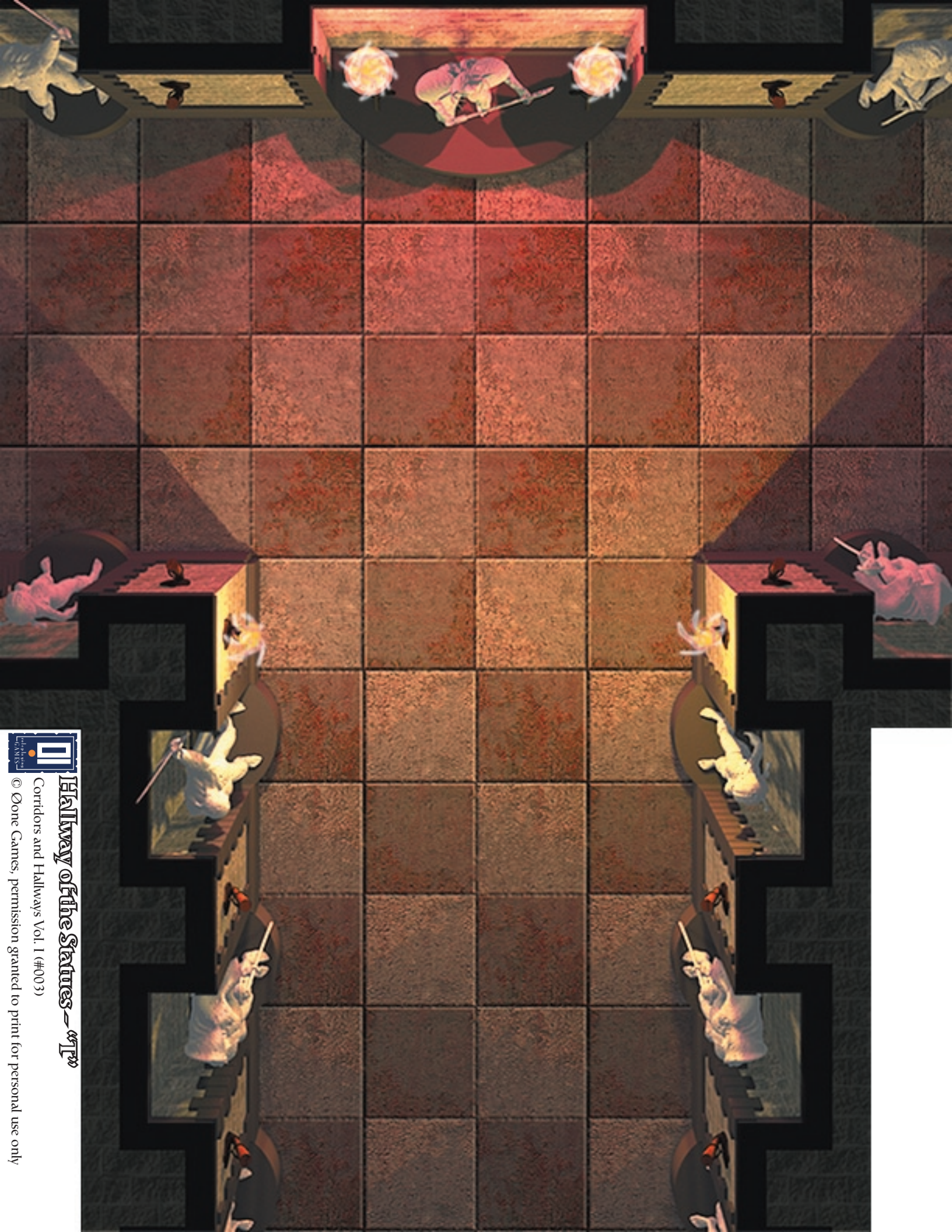




Brewery

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Halls of the Statues - 47

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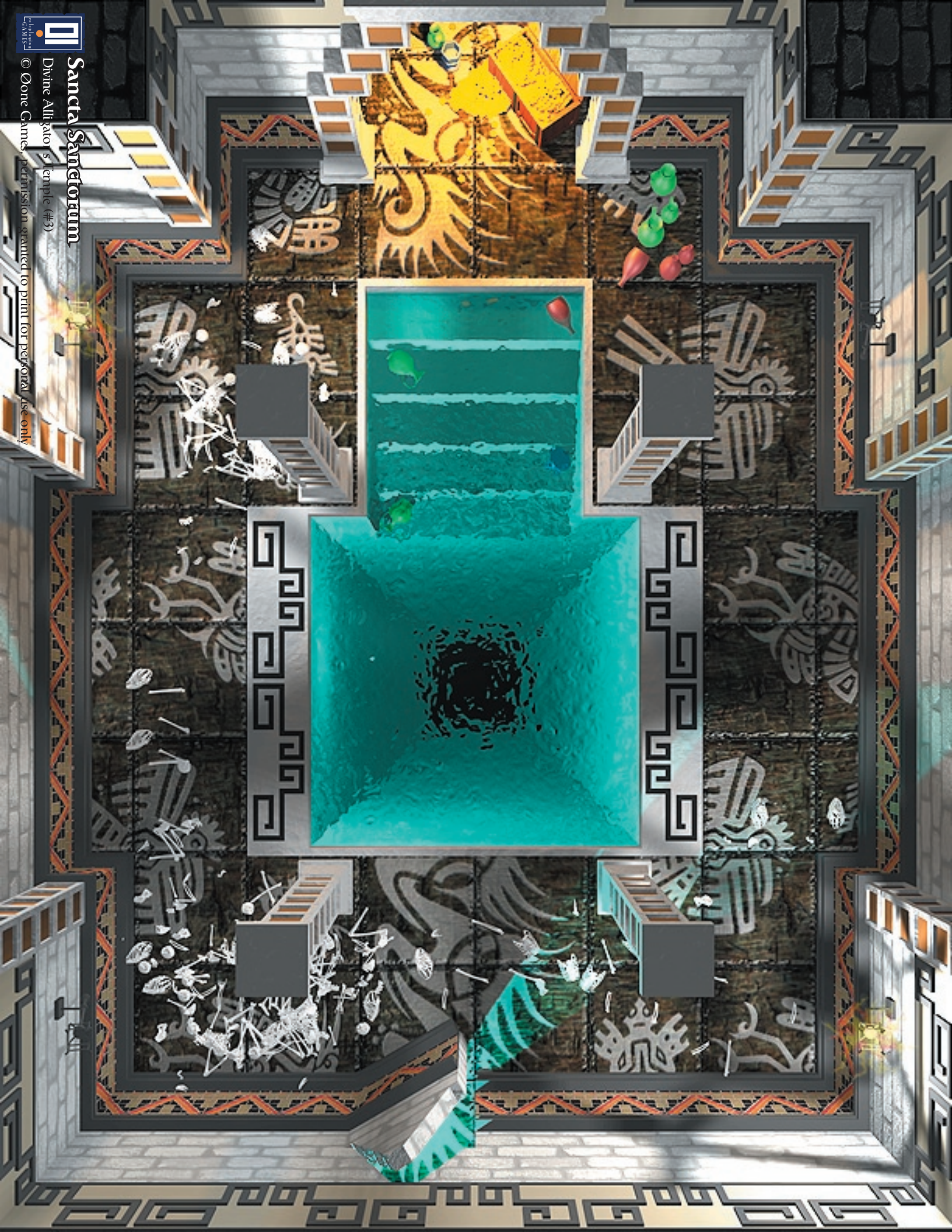


Hallway of the Pillars - “End Door”

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Santa Sanctarium

Divine Alligator's Temple (#3)

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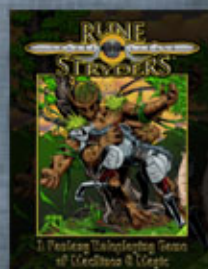
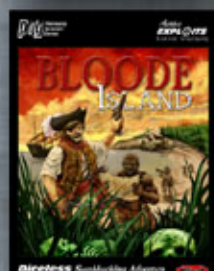
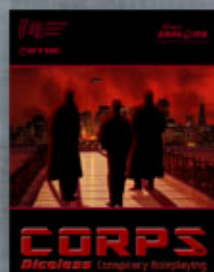
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